

Churches look at SADF proposals

RDM 4-1-83

Co

Mail Reporter

CHURCHES have welcomed the South African Defence Force proposal to recognise conscientious objectors but have expressed concern at the length of alternative service.

According to a Sapa report the SADF has drawn up a proposal which recognises four different kinds of conscientious objection.

Exemption from military service would depend on the political or religious convictions of the individual and no longer on the principles of the religious organisation to which the individual belonged.

This was welcomed by Johannesburg churchmen as a "tremendous advance" on the existing regulations surrounding conscientious objection.

However, the length of the alternative service — which could be double the length of military service in two cate-

gories — was a cause of concern to churchmen.

"It is totally unfair to make objectors work double the time," said Rev Wing, general secretary of the United Congregational Church.

Conscientious objectors who would be recognised if the plan was adopted were:

- Non-combatants who would do military service but not carry arms or receive weapons training;

- Non-militarists who would not wear uniforms but work for the Defence Force outside the military system, serving one-and-a-half times the length of military service together with camps;

- Non-militarists unwilling to be any part of the Defence Force could work as firemen, hospital workers and in other forms of national service for twice the length of national service plus camps; and

- Objectors on political grounds would be jailed for twice the duration of their

military service without remission of sentence for good behaviour.

Applications for exemption would be processed by a committee consisting of a judge, three churchmen from different denominations, one serving chaplain and an SA Defence Force officer.

The Rev Robert Samson of the Presbyterian Church said his church welcomed the improvements to the status of conscientious objectors but was very concerned about the length of alternative service.

"This proposal doesn't exactly meet all our requirements," he said yesterday.

A spokesman for the Catholic Church said he was not prepared to comment until the bishops had met to discuss the proposal.

No comment was available from the New Apostolic Church, the Seventh Day Adventist Church or the Jehovah's Witnesses Congregation.

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Pretoria
Correspondent

South Africa's main churches are divided on at least one aspect of the proposed new legislation affecting conscientious objectors.

Spokesmen for five of the churches which took part in the talks with the SADF this month have indicated what their stance on the new legislation will be.

The main difference between the Anglican, Catholic and Presbyterian churches, on the one hand, and the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk and the Hervormde Kerk, on the other, concerns who should be eligible for alternative service.

The three English-speaking churches have indicated there is a need for alternative service for objectors on "moral and ethical" as well as religious grounds.

The two Reformed churches have indicated separately that religious or "scriptural" reasons could be valid grounds for objection,

Church split on 'moral' objectors

STAR 24-1-83

but that "political grounds" should not be recognised.

The Ned Geref Kerk is to stand by the guidelines on conscientious objection set in a report tabled at its last General Synod.

This report said: "The pacifist standpoint that war should not under any circumstances take place was alien to the tradition of Christendom."

Archbishop George Daniel, of Pretoria, who represented the Catholic Church at the talks, declared: "Moral and ethical grounds for objection to military service should also be taken into consideration.

"Conscientious objection need not necessarily be based on religious grounds," he

said, adding that this view had not been presented as the official standpoint of the church.

The delegate from the Anglican Church, Bishop A S Ammoore, of Cape Town, said the church would stand by its November 1982 resolution, adopted at the Provincial Synod.

The resolution "rejects as inadequate any provision of alternative national service which is not available to all conscientious objectors irrespective of the moral, ethical and/or religious basis".

The official comments of the various churches that met the SADF will be submitted to the Defence Force before Parliament considers the proposed legislation.

Military objectors: Church leaders meet SADF to talk about a 'new deal'

By Kevin Davie

S.T.R. 2-1-83

CHURCH leaders will meet representatives of the SADF in Pretoria on Wednesday to discuss proposals suggested by a SADF committee for a non-military alternative for conscientious objectors.

In a significant departure from its hard-line policy, the SADF has indicated it is prepared to consider alternatives for those who refuse to do national service on religious grounds.

The committee, which was formed to look into the question of conscientious objection, has also recommended that those who refuse to undergo military service on political grounds should not be jailed in military jails, but should be jailed for a period twice the length of military service, and should not get remission for good behaviour.

If adopted by the Government this could mean that men who refuse to do military service for political reasons could be jailed for up to eight years.

Church and Opposition spokesmen, while saying they are reluctant to publicise their views before Wednesday's meeting, have welcomed the attempt by the SADF to provide an alternative to military service for conscientious objectors.

The committee has recommended that those who object on religious grounds, and can show their view has been held for some time, can do other forms of national service such as hospital services and fire prevention. These servicemen would be required to do twice the length of military service, and would report to the Department of Manpower, and not the SADF.

Archbishop Dennis Hurley confirmed the Catholic Church had received an invitation to attend the meeting, and said "there would a lot of discussion".

He said the SADF committee — known as the Naude Committee after its chairman, the Chaplain General Designate, Brigadier Chris Naude — had been formed "some time ago in response to calls from the churches".

Churches had been sent a draft of the committee's proposals, which have also been perused by the Minister of Defence, Magnus Malan, and the Chief of the Defence Force, General Constand Viljoen.

"Any attempt to usefully employ men in such a way as to benefit the entire community of South Africa and resolve this problem should be welcome," says Phillip Myburgh, the PFP's defence spokesman.

"There are certainly a great number of areas where service could be rendered", he said.

Mr Myburgh said that while he agreed that non-military servicemen should do a longer period of service as they would be involved in less hazardous work, he felt that doubling the period of service would not be fair.

Ever since 1646, Baptists have upheld civil, religious and conscientious liberty

BAPTISTS ON THE RIGHTS OF CONSCIENCE

Rather death than violation of conscience, 1646:

"It is the magistrates' duty to tender the liberty of men's consciences . . . without which all other liberties would not be worth the naming . . . Neither can we forbear the doing of that, which our understandings and consciences bind us to do. And if the magistrates should require us to do otherwise, we are to yield our persons in a passive way to their power . . ."

But if any man shall impose on us anything that we see not to be commanded by our Lord Jesus Christ, we should rather . . . die a thousand deaths, than to do anything . . . against the light of our own consciences.

From the first Baptist Confession, drawn up by seven congregations in London in 1646.

South African Baptists against conscription, 1912:

"Resolved that in harmony with the tradition of the Baptist denomination which has emphasised the sacredness of conscience and has stood for civil and religious liberty, we record our regret that the principle of compulsion should have been embodied in the S.A. Defence Act, and hereby urge Parliament to take such steps as may be necessary to withdraw the compulsory clauses as soon as possible."

Absolute religious liberty, 1939:

"Worthy religion rests on the conviction that the individual soul is competent to deal directly with God, and has the right and the need of this direct dealing. To deny any soul the full exercise of this privilege is to deprive the individual of his inherent and most sacred right, and to violate his dignity and worth as a human being. Every form of coercive restraint or constraint of a man in his converse with God is both a sin against the individual and hindrance to human welfare.

Appropriate institutions and forms of religion contribute to a direct experience of God.

"Voluntariness in personal and corporate worship, institution and service is essential to vital religion and to spiritual development of society.

"No man, nor government nor institution, religious or civil, social or economic, has the right to dictate how a person may worship God, or whether he shall worship at all.

"Therefore no civil authority may of right make a law, decree or regulation respecting an establishment of religion, or affecting its free exercise.

"State Churches and Church States are alike in direct conflict with the principle of freedom. A free Church in a free State, each contributing freely and helpfully to the legitimate sphere and functions of the other, is the ideal, but with no financial or administrative dependence of either upon the other. No State may rightly prefer or favour one form of religion above another.

"In continuance of our consistent Baptist practice, we are imperatively constrained again to insist upon the full maintenance of absolute religious liberty for every man of every faith, and no faith".

From a Declaration on religious liberty adopted unanimously by the Baptist World Congress in Atlanta, Georgia, 27 July 1939.

South African Baptists support the rights of conscientious objectors, 1979:

This Assembly of the Baptist Union:

- 1) Reaffirms that the State has the right to call upon its citizens to share in the defence of the country but also recognises the right of individuals to express their genuine and sincere objection to taking up arms on the ground of conscience or religious convictions;
- 2) Recognises that partial provision for such conscientious objection has been made in the Defence Act Section 67 (3) according to which bona fide members of certain religious denominations whose tenets forbid such members to participate in war, the privilege of being allowed to render service in a non-combatant capacity;
- 3) Points out that while the majority of religious denominations do not forbid their members to take part in war there are individuals who have a conscientious objection to carrying arms but not to rendering service in a non-combatant capacity;
- 4) Regrets that as the law now stands, these persons are denied the right which is accorded to members of the so-called 'peace churches' mentioned in 2 above;
- 5) Earnestly requests the Government to end the present anomaly and to amend the Conscientious Objection Clause to cover persons who, regardless of religious denomination, have a sincere objection to carrying arms, and to allow them to fulfil the service required of them, in a non-combatant capacity;
- 6) Asks that, in addition to the above, the Government should recognise that there are those individuals who, on religious grounds, cannot conscientiously serve in any armed forces, and that provision should be made for these persons to serve the community in some civilian capacity for at least an equivalent period of time, and in circumstances as similar as possible to those under which service in the armed forces is performed.'

From South African Baptist Handbook 1979-80.

COME YOU WHOM MY FATHER
HAS BLESSED TAKE FOR YOUR HERI
TAGE THE KINGDOM PREPARED FOR YOU
SINCE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD
FOR I WAS HUNGRY AND YOU GAVE ME
FOOD I WAS THIRSTY AND YOU GAVE
ME DRINK I WAS A STRANGER AND YOU
MADE ME WELCOME I WAS NAKED AND
YOU CLOTHED ME SICK AND YOU VISITED
ME IN PRISON AND YOU CAME TO SEE
ME THEN THE VIRTUOUS WILL SAY TO
HIM IN REPLY "LORD WHEN DID WE
SEE YOU HUNGRY AND FEED YOU OR
THIRSTY AND GIVE YOU DRINK WHEN
DID WE SEE YOU A STRANGER AND
MAKE YOU WELCOME I TELL YOU SOLEMNLY
IN SO FAR AS YOU DID THIS TO ONE
OF THESE PEOPLE OF MINE YOU DID IT
TO ME THEN HE WILL TURN TO THOSE
AT HIS LEFT AND SAY "DEPART FROM
ME YOU ACCURSED TO THE ETERNAL
FIRE PREPARED FOR THE DEVIL AND
HIS ANGELS. FOR I WAS HUNGRY AND
YOU NEVER GAVE ME FOOD I WAS
THIRSTY AND YOU NEVER GAVE ME
ANYTHING TO DRINK I WAS A STRANGER
IN PRISON AND YOU NEVER VISITED
ME" THEN IT WILL BE THEIR TURN TO
ASK "LORD WHEN DID WE SEE YOU
HUNGRY OR THIRSTY A STRANGER OR
NAKED SICK OR IN PRISON AND DID
NOT COME TO YOUR HELP? THEN HE
WILL ANSWER "I TELL YOU SOLEMNLY
IN SO FAR AS YOU NEGLECTED TO
DO THIS TO ONE OF THESE YOU
NEGLECTED TO DO IT TO ME" AND
THEY WILL GO AWAY TO ETERNAL
PUNISHMENT AND THE VIRTUOUS TO
ETERNAL LIFE.

MATTHEW 25: 34-46

Rev. Martin Holdt, minister of the Constantia Park Baptist Church, Pretoria, gave evidence at the trial in 1982 of a Baptist conscientious objector, Mike Viveiros. By sentencing him to a year's jail, the court martial rejected

THE CASE FOR LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE

Mr President,

I wish to thank you for allowing me to put the case for the individual freedom of conscience as it has been held by Baptists for several centuries. I feel that it is very pertinent to the case today to remember that the Baptist attitude towards matters of conscience is not a recent development. As far back as we can see, Baptists have always respected individual freedom of conscience particularly where it concerns matters which are neither explicitly commanded or forbidden in the Word of God.

In the time of the Reformation for example Ana-Baptists took issue with John Calvin for the fact that he endorsed the burning of a heretic Servetus at the stake for his heresy. They insisted that they did not agree with the view-point held by Servetus, but they were adamant about the fact that it was wrong for a man in a place of authority to put pressure on another person in regard to a possible change of his views when this affected his conscience. When, in 1689, certain of our Baptist forebears put down their convictions in writing, this is what they said of the conscience: "God alone is Lord of the conscience. He has set it free from all obligation to receive or obey any such doctrines or demands of men as are in any respect in opposition to His Word or not contained in it. Indeed, to believe and obey such doctrines and demands is tantamount to a betrayal of true liberty of conscience. It is against all reason, and nothing less than the destruction of liberty of conscience, when men demand of their fellows an implicit faith, in other words, an absolute and blind obedience."

In support of this firm conviction they listed several passages of Scripture for the interest of those who wish to look at them and examine them, Matthew 15: 9, Acts 4: 19, 29, Romans 14: 4, 1 Corinthians 3: 5, 7: 23, 11 Corinthians 1: 24, Colossians 2: 20, 22, 23 and James 4: 12. Augustus Strong, a leading Baptist Theologian, has put the case in these words: "As each believer has personal dealings with Christ and for even the Pastor to come between him and the Lord is treachery to Christ and harmful to his soul, so much more does the New Testament condemn any attempt to bring the Church into subjection to any other Church or combination of Churches or to make the Church the creature of the state. Absolute liberty of conscience under Christ has always been a distinguishing tenet of Baptists as it is of the New Testament, Romans chapter 14: 4."

John Locke, 100 hundred years before American Independence said: "The Baptists were the first and only propounders of absolute liberty, just and true liberty, equal and impartial liberty." George Bancroft says of Roger Williams: "He was the first person in modern Christendom to assert the doctrine of liberty of conscience in religion . . . freedom of conscience was from the first a trophy of the Baptists -- their history is written in blood."

In the light of all that I have referred to, Mr President, it needs to be made very clear that whereas we do not all identify ourselves with the reasons for the defendant's inability to comply with the military requirements of the country, we are fully identified with him in his right before God to act according to the dictates of his con-

science as he considers it to be enlightened by God in His Word.

In general, Baptists have been consistent throughout history in their support of conscientious objectors. It is therefore a logical conclusion that should this court convict Mike Viveiros and sentence him for his stand and for his request that he be permitted to do alternative national service, that the judgement so passed will not only be a judgment upon a single individual, but at the same time a judgment upon an entire Church denomination. The condemnation and conviction of Baptist Conscientious Objectors in the past has led to a certain erosion of confidence in the Defence Force on the part of many Baptists in the country. These convictions have been taken to be tantamount to the Defence Forces' condemnation of a long-standing and deeply held view. The last thing that I would like to see, Sir, is a break-down of confidence in the Military authorities of the country.

This, however, is inevitable if the Court passes judgment on the defendant without in any way taking into account the historical support Baptists have always given to conscientious objectors. The issues to me are very clear:

- 1) Either this Court acquits the defendant and requests the Government to allow him to do alternative National Service equal in value to the service that he would otherwise have rendered within the Defence Force, and in so doing strengthens the relationship that exists between Baptists in the country and the SADF because of its past record insofar as co-operation with your Department is concerned.
- 2) Or, on the other hand, this Court convicts and judges the defendant, and in so doing passes judgment on the resolution passed by the Assembly of Churches of the Baptist Denomination when they called for State recognition of conscientious objectors. It will be an indictment on Baptist history and will result in further estrangement between the State and this particular sector of the Church and I feel respectfully, Sir, that we need to take note of the inevitable consequences that will follow such a position.

In conclusion, Sir, the question to us is just this: Is the Court going to be sensitive to our feelings and convictions, or is it going to disregard the same and provoke questions in our minds in which we will begin to doubt the integrity of your department? These are key issues, Sir, and I pray that the Lord will enable you to recognise the validity of our convictions which, we believe, are rooted in the Word of God. Thank you, Sir, for allowing me to address the Court.

Life in

DB

A letter to the Cape Times on the subject of a vigil of prayer for a conscientious objector (25 August 1982) and its subsequent discussion in his column by Defence Reporter, Willem Mankamp, prompted a reply from Mr Peter Moll on 22 September 1982, which we reprint here.

I did my army training in 1974, and a camp in 1975. After becoming a conscientious objector I was court-martialled three times, and finally sentenced to a year's detention barracks in 1979/80.

The price that I and other objectors pay is far greater than the discomfort of military service.

1. You are deprived of your freedom. You can write one letter a week and have one visit from relatives a month. You are locked up from 5.30 pm to about 6 am. On weekends I was locked up all the time but for meal times. One can study. I did in both army and DB — but it is difficult in DB because of noise of people in cells nearby.
2. If your church is not constitutionally recognised or if you do not object on religious grounds, you are regarded as a soldier and must undergo military training in military uniform with DB, i.e. cease to be a conscientious objector.

If not, you are put in solitary confinement for 14 days at a time. I spent 125 days there, the first 10 with underpants only. Richard Steele did 50 days, some of it on spare rations. Charles Yeats had no clothes for his first two days of solitary — in the freezing Pretoria mid-winter. Neil Mitchell had just suffered his first three days of solitary.

Solitary is designed to crush you. You are allowed no writing material, newspapers, letters or books apart from the Bible. You are supposed to be taken out for two half-hour periods per day to get exercise. In my case the corporals regularly forgot.

There is no toilet in the cell, only a pot that stinks to high heaven. You are supposed to get normal food; but the troopie who brings it is also hungry, so you find two

slices of bread becoming one, and one egg none, that's when the corporals haven't forgotten altogether!

3. You may lose your job. When I was imprisoned my firm fired me and demanded R5 187 in bursary repayments. Richard Steele will probably not be allowed to teach although he is fully qualified. Some Jehovah's Witnesses are fired; others are re-employed after imprisonment. You are not paid for your time in prison.

4. Some objectors get criminal records. Charles Yeats and Mike Viveiros are both in civilian prison and will have records on finishing.

5. Opportunities for recreation are limited. One team of Jehovah's Witnesses played soccer on Wednesday afternoons. Besides

that running was the only sport. Early in 1980 the JW's had weights; later they were taken away. I once officially requested a chess set and a Transvaler newspaper; Colonel Friebus turned this down. Staff-Sergeant Marais said, because "DB is not a civilian prison".

6. The discomforts are far worse than in the army. I was allowed no bed or pillow, only a thin foam-rubber mattress. There was no warm water the whole year round. Hand cream did not prevent my knuckles from bleeding sometimes. From March to June we were on dry rations and always hungry, fantasizing about the foods we'd eat on getting out.

Toilet shower/washing area stank, because there was a cement sewage receptor alongside where we emptied our pots every morning. It became blocked regularly, and for days faeces were strewn on the ground for metres around.

7. The jobs some objectors like Charles and Mike do are nowhere nearly as attractive as gardening. But by law this information is barred from the public.

8. Objectors are probably not in physical danger because they are not in the operational area.

However, the objector can never be sure that lengthy solitary confinement will not induce a nervous breakdown: the time-honoured method of enforcing political compliance. When Richard Steele was at Bloemfontein DB, a very close friend of his, a Jehovah's Witness, had a nervous breakdown.

9. The unpleasantness, tensions and hatefulness of DB are far worse than the army. Now some DB corporals and officers are reasonable and fair; some are very kind to objectors. To others, vindictiveness, hatred and violence are second nature. Being yelled at and screamed at; being publicly humiliated and mocked; being led



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South African Outlook is an Independent Journal dealing with ecumenical and racial affairs which, un-interruptedly since 1870, has sought to place its readers in possession of facts and opinion which bear upon the lives of all the people of the sub-continent. Without allegiance to any political party, but according to what it believes to be Christian standards, it seeks to give information and comment on measures suggested either for the regulation or the advancement of any section of the population, by whomsoever proposed.

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Outlook on the Month

South African society has long been deeply divided. Religious and cultural differences, varied racial origins and class cleavages threaten to tear our society apart. On this obvious point even conservatives and radicals are agreed.

In recognition of these disparate interests and beliefs South Africans have traditionally favoured differential military obligation. During the Boer war, for instance, Englishmen resident in the Transvaal were not conscripted by Kruger to do battle with the Boers against the British forces. When conscription laws were first passed by the Union of South Africa, the Baptist churches, in 1912, rejected the "principle of compulsion" embodied in the Defence Act (see page 21).

Conscription was not applied during World War I. Indeed it could not possibly have been applied because anti-British feeling ran so high. The sympathies of many Afrikaners were with the rebel Jopie Fourie. The Dutch Reformed Church even recognized the Christian's right to civil disobedience. Dr JF Potgieter has shown in his doctoral dissertation that not a single chaplain from two of the Afrikaans churches could be found to minister to the volunteer soldiers.

Conscription was not applied in World War II either. One of the reasons for this was the recognition that *people do not fight for causes which they do not perceive as their own*. Permanent Force officers were, moreover, permitted to stay in South Africa and not fight on the British side if they chose; officers who identified with the British cause had to sign a document and wear an orange tab on their epaulettes. Stories are told of the men who wore orange tabs — "Smuts' men" — being excluded from communion by dominees, and of being beaten up at political meetings. So as not to exacerbate the tensions further, Smuts preferred a volunteer army.

In 1980 the Defence Force appointed a commission headed by ds Chris Naudé to overhaul legislation on conscientious objection. In its report which was submitted this year, the Commission recognizes narrowly defined "religious" conscientious objectors only, and conditions for these are made extremely difficult. These concessions come nowhere near meeting the churches' demands for alternative national service.

Thus the Commission has departed from the sense of fairness that previous South African governments exhibited. It does not accept that people do not fight for causes they perceive as alien; it shows scant regard for the deep divisions of our society. The proposed laws will provide the State with a powerful arsenal which could compel young men to fight even if they, backed by their churches, abhor the cause: namely defence of Apartheid. If the laws are passed, they will criminalize young men who might be doing nothing but attempting to be true to their own consciences and ideals.

All of the "mainline" denominations retain a form of the 'just war' theory which dates back to the time of Augustine. St Thomas Aquinas emphasized that it was the responsibility of the individual to decide whether the war was just. The Naudé Commission will have none of this. Its own jejune just war theory argues that the injustice of a government has nothing to do with the justice or otherwise of its wars.

When confronted by Hitler's aggression, the Allies considered that the brutalities of Nazi racism had everything to do with the justice of their cause.

We would be the first to agree that the just war theory is due for revision. But then it should be done openly, with all churches participating in public discussion and debate, taking into account the reflections of theologians in the Americas, Europe and elsewhere. It is not for ds Naudé to summarily erase a millennium's wrestling with ethics by the finest minds of Christendom.

PROPOSED LAWS FOR OBJECTORS

From the text of a letter by Brigadier (ds) C.P. Naudé to the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa in November 1982.

Dear Sir

NON-MILITARY SERVICE FOR RELIGIOUS OBJECTORS

A commission of inquiry into the whole matter of conscientious objections to military service has made the following recommendations to the Chief of the Defence Force and the Minister of Defence:

- a. The individual's religious view and not his church affiliation should be paramount in the consideration of his objection.
 - b. This could be done by a board appointed by the Minister of Manpower.
 - c. The composition of the board could be:
 - i. A Judge or ex-Judge as Chairman.
 - ii. 3 Theologians of different denominations.
 - iii. 1 Chaplain appointed by Chaplain General.
 - iv. 1 SADF member.
 - d. A religious objector would have to apply to the Board.
 - e. He would have to prove and substantiate his bona fides.
 - f. There would be 3 categories of Religious Objectors:
 - i. Non-combatants.
 - ii. Non-militarists but in the SADF.
 - iii. Non-militarists outside the SADF where the Minister of Manpower would decide the critical areas for service in the community.
 - g. Categories ii. and iii. would have to compensate for not being endangered and not doing regimental duties etc. For the non-militarist in the SADF the period of service would be 1½ times the length of initial service and then later 1½ times the length of every camp for which he is called up for. (At present the initial service of 2 years would become 3 years).
For the non-militarist outside the SADF it would be twice the length of initial service and camps in one continuous period. (At present a total of 4 years plus double the number of camp days for which he is liable).
2. The SADF would like to have your comments on these recommendations so as to determine their viability.

(BRIG) (DS) C.P. NAUDÉ (signed)

Secret Court Plan

CASES against conscientious objectors should be heard in secret by a special board and they should not be allowed lawyers, a South African Defence Force committee has recommended.

If the proposals of the committee, chaired by Brigadier C.P. Naudé, are accepted, some effects would be:

● Conscientious objectors could serve up to eight years in prison or in detention barracks.

House arrest

● They would fall under similar conditions to those of people who are banned or under house arrest. It would be an offence

to publish anything they write during or before the "substitute service" they are obliged to do.

● People who have completed their national service of two years plus 720 days of camps would hereafter be able to buy exemption from 12-day annual commando camp.

Objectors were better off before the Commission

The issues at stake

by Steve de Gruchy



ISSUE NUMBER ONE: RELIGIOUS OR POLITICAL

The Naudé Commission distinguishes dramatically between 'religious' and 'political' objectors. The question is whether such a division can be made at all. Indeed, even the Reformational Calvin-Kuiper-Dooyeweerd theological tradition rejects facile distinctions of religion and politics; to Calvin, religion that did not apply to all aspects of life including politics was no religion. Can the Church support such a limitation of its prophetic message?

ISSUE NUMBER TWO: NON-RELIGIOUS PEOPLE

The proposals offer ANS for 'religious' people only. People not deemed 'religious' by the board come off a sorry second best; they would be imprisoned. But the Church cannot use its faith to win privileges; to do this amounts to discrimination. The situation is analogous to the Church's stance on squatters. Should the Church support Christian squatters only? No — the Church has a duty to support all the oppressed. If passed, the Naudé proposals would require that a non-religious pacifist like Joan Baez be incarcerated if she objected. Can the church support such legislation?

ISSUE NUMBER THREE: HARSHNESS

In the Soviet Union the maximum sentence for objectors is 6 years. The Naudé Commission proposes 8 years for 'political' objectors, the kind of sentence given for assault with grievous bodily harm. Rapists often get 5 years in South Africa. Similarly, the 'religious' objector who is granted non-military service would do some 8 years of it under the Naudé system, which, because it is so much longer than normal military service, is actually a form of punishment. Can the Church allow people to be incarcerated and punished for following their conscience?

ISSUE NUMBER FOUR: THE BOARD

The composition and task of the board are stacked against the objector. Firstly, the composition of the board is heavily loaded in favour of the SADF, thus ensuring a decision favourable to the SADF. Secondly, the board may at its discretion decide whether the objector is 'political' or 'religious'. It is conceivable that this decision could lead to a sentence of 8 years in prison. The board is thus invested with enormous powers. Knowing the tendency to private prejudice of all humankind, can the Church allow such sweeping powers to be given the board?

ISSUE NUMBER FIVE: HISTORIC STANCE

The Naudé Commission has excluded by the definition of 'religious' and 'political' all non-religious objection, political, pacifist or otherwise, and also all objection based on the traditional 'just war' position of the Church. Aquinas emphasized in his formulation of the just war theory that it is the individual that must decide on the justice of the war. Can the Church lend its support to legislative proposals which will muzzle its own historic stance on war and hence crush many of its own members' concern for conscience?

ISSUE NUMBER SIX: BACKWARD OR FORWARD

Has the Naudé Commission tried to accommodate objectors, or has it tried to destroy conscientious objection? Put very simply, objectors were better off before the Naudé proposals. Many people who previously faced a maximum sentence of 2 years now face one of 8. Can the Church lend its support to a legislative package which, while offering some concessions to some people, leaves others in a worse position?

Steve de Gruchy, a postgraduate theology student at the University of Cape Town, is a member of the Committee on Conscientious Objection of the United Congregational Church

CPSA Resolutions on

Apartheid and Military Participation

The following resolutions, among others, were taken by the Provincial Synod of the Church of the Province of Southern Africa, in November 1982.

Apartheid — A Heresy

Whereas Apartheid by exalting a biological attribute to a universal principle thereby denies that what gives persons infinite value is the fact that they are created in God's image;

Whereas Apartheid further denies a central teaching of the Christian faith, namely that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself since it teaches the irreconcilability of certain races;

whereas it further has involved an unacceptable cost in human suffering;

This Synod resolves, that Apartheid is totally unChristian, evil and a heresy.

The Synod further resolves respectfully to ask the Metropolitan to appeal to the white Dutch Reformed Church to denounce apartheid as unscriptural and then to enter into dialogue with the SACC Churches.

Role of SADF — Protection of unjust structures

That this Synod

1. Conscious
 - a) of the present state of war in Namibia, and the grave escalation of violence within South Africa and on its borders, which shows ominous signs of developing into an open civil war.
 - b) that a large number of our members are being compelled by law to enter the service of the SADF and that an even larger number will be liable for such 'call up'.
 - c) that many are being faced with a crisis of conscience, having serious doubts about agreeing to serve in the SADF for reasons of faith,
 - d) that those who conscientiously refuse to enter the Defence Force must either leave their country or face imprisonment.
2. Believes
 - a) that we would be failing our people and the demands of the Christian faith if we avoided speaking of these matters, and endeavouring to spell out the implications,
 - b) that in South Africa fundamental democratic procedures which might allow for peaceful evolution towards a more human and just society are lacking, and that there is no adequate evidence of sufficient will to establish such procedures,
 - c) that the essential nature of the conflict stems from the determination to maintain by force a structure of society in which the majority of the people of this land suffer gross oppression and exploitation,
 - d) that as a result, a vital function of the SADF has become the protection of these unjust structures,
 - e) that this is a reason why an increasing number of our members find themselves with a crisis of conscience over the possibility of being compelled by law to serve in the SADF,

f) that where Church members are being forced, on threat of punishment, to serve on a particular side, the Church has the added obligation to protect such individuals, and, as a Body, needs to face the State with a clear word relating the demands of Christ to the specific circumstances.

3. Therefore wishes to make clear that:

- a) allegiance to Christ demands of every Christian that before he takes up arms for any purpose, or enters the Military, he should face our Lord and ask him whether this is truly what he should do.
- b) Although in the last resort each person is expected to act according to his conscience, the Church has an important pastoral duty to give guidance and help members in the formation of conscience.
- c) Given our understanding of the Christian faith and its implications for our life in South Africa, we feel bound to express our serious doubts about the legitimacy of a military system whose role is increasingly seen as the protector of profoundly immoral and unjust social order in which the majority of the people suffer gross oppression and exploitation.

Military Chaplains

That this Synod respectfully requests the Bishops urgently to take all steps possible to enable ministry to all persons engaged in military service by persons who can be identified easily as members of the CPSA; and that preferably it be parish based.

That this Synod respectfully requests Dioceses to incorporate in their programmes of lay training such instruction as will help all who are caught up in military service to be more effective witnesses to and ministers of the Gospel.

Conscientious Objectors

That this Synod aware of the Honourable the Minister of Defence's statement in Parliament in June of this year that legislation on Conscientious Objectors is being prepared for the next Session of Parliament

- 1) records appreciation that the South African Defence Force is giving attention to this vitally important and urgent matter;
- 2) Recognises the right of all people Christian and non-Christian alike to object conscientiously to service in national defence for moral, ethical and/or religious reasons
- 3) calls on the Government to provide an alternative non-military form of National Service for conscientious objectors which is acceptable to all conscientious objectors;
- 4) regards as inadequate any provision of National Service which is not available to all conscientious objectors whether or not it is upon moral, ethical and/or religious basis upon which such objection is made;
- 5) respectfully asks his Grace, the Metropolitan to appoint a committee
 - a) to work in close co-operation with other denominations and organisations similarly concerned with this matter of conscientious objection;
 - b) to compose a brief memorandum supporting this resolution for presentation to the Honourable the Minister of Defence.



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South Africa Outlook is an Independent Journal dealing with ecumenical and racial affairs which, uninterruptedly since 1870, has sought to place readers in possession of facts and opinion which bear upon the lives of all the people of the continent. Without allegiance to any political party, but according to what it believes to be Christian standards, it seeks to give information and comment on measures suggested either for the regulation or the advancement of any section of the population, by whomsoever proposed. The editorial board welcomes articles, letters, and criticism. All correspondence, including orders for subscriptions, should be addressed to the Editor, South African Outlook, PO Box 245, Rondebosch 7700.

Political comment in this issue is written to express the views of South African Outlook by F Wilson, G Hewson, M King and P Moll, PO Box 245, Rondebosch 7700.

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Outlook on the Month

MINISTRY DURING WAR-TIME

Since the SACC's theologically motivated criticism of the military in 1974, the military chaplaincy has been the subject of heated debates by the churches. Arguments rage about details like the Geneva Convention's prescriptions about the chaplain's dress, the officer status of chaplains and their subjection to the Military Discipline Code. All of these are important. But thus far, precious little thinking has been done on the underlying issue of the church's essential purpose vis-a-vis the military. What is that purpose? And having defined it, how will the church achieve it?

Thus far it seems that this purpose has been summed up in military chaplaincy. However, we believe that military chaplaincy is too limited a concept to define the church's mission in this arena. The concept suggests (a) that the church's ministry is essentially a ministry to military personnel, and (b) that this ministry occurs chiefly under military auspices.

But, the church's mission is broader than a ministry to military personnel. The church is placed in the world; it communicates God's love to all people; among its tasks is to witness to the state and all human institutions. Therefore it cannot restrict its ministry solely to military personnel. It must minister to the military system too, by engaging in prophetic criticism of aspects of its activities which fail to measure up to Gospel standards of justice and peace. It may even exercise its prophetic role by questioning the very existence of the military, as churches in Europe are doing in response to the danger of nuclear cataclysm.

The church in South Africa has to do ministry in a war situation. It should minister to soldiers on both sides. It should minister to conscientious objectors, whether they are contemplating the action, leaving the country, or in prison. It should minister to civilians in the military-occupied areas — particularly people who feel themselves oppressed and manipulated by the military. It should concern itself with the difficult position of young black men who for economic reasons are forced to volunteer for service in the army. On no account can the ministry of the church be restricted to ministry under military auspices.

In light of the inadequacy of the concept of military chaplaincy, the church needs to reformulate its purpose with respect to the military. It can no longer afford to confine its ministry within military constraints. It should reformulate its task as that of *full-orbed ministry under war-time conditions*. On this model its chaplains will, as representatives of their churches' concerns about the evils of the war, occupy themselves in an evenhanded fashion with all the needs and suffering arising out of the armed conflict. The chaplains will have to shed military paraphernalia which obscure the church's commitment to justice and peace, like uniform, officer status and rank. Lippert's personal testimony gives a moving account of why he, as a chaplain in Vietnam, felt his entire ministry to be compromised through its intimate association with the war crimes of the US Army. The article about the West German chaplaincy shows that demilitarization is a workable and tested alternative. Peter Moll's article suggests several ways in which the chaplaincy of the South African churches can be demilitarized, and at the same time debunks the myth that the Geneva Conventions require uniformed chaplains.

This issue of SA Outlook is shorter than usual, on the understanding that the May edition will be a bumper 24 pages on African Literature.

05/83

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3

of Editors

Francis Wilson
Glyn Hewson
Sarah-Anne Raynham
Peter Moll

Editor



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Outlook on the Month

Destabilisation and the Church

As a small contribution to this thinking we wish to lay the foundation for subsequent discussion by clarifying both the reasons for our participation in worrying about such matters and the criteria necessary to help inform our judgements. We are concerned, in this editorial, not so much to criticise this or that aspect of military policy but rather to lay the basis on which a process of reasoning may take place in which the churches and the wider society will be fully involved. War is far too serious to be left either to generals or to politicians. The ordinary soldiers who may die, their families, their friends, and the civilians likely to be 'caught in the crossfire' or killed as innocent bystanders must have a say in what is going on. This is true under any circumstances but is particularly valid in our own situation where, as we have been arguing for many years (see, for example, the editorials in this journal June 1969 and November 1970) we are caught in a civil war involving South Africans on both sides of the escalating conflict. And the Church, whose members are involved on both sides, has a profound obligation to help stimulate and to contribute to that debate.

There are, we believe, three fundamental principles which must underpin any thinking, discussion, or action about these matters. The first is the principle of accountability. In any civilised society the army is subject to the authority of the political leaders who in turn are subject to the broad will of the people. It is worth remembering that it was President Roosevelt not General Eisenhower; President Truman not General McCarthy; and Mr. Churchill not General Montgomery who decided foreign policy and the role of the army. More recently South Africans have been left, whether correctly or not, with the uncomfortable feeling that military tails have been wagging the political dogs. A fundamentally necessary constraint on the use of power is that those who wield it must be accountable. Part of the progress of mankind has been the broadening of the concept of accountability so that the power of the state as exercised by political leaders and their bureaucrats (whether in the army or in other branches of the civil service) is ultimately subject to the approval of those affected by their decisions and actions. The fact that Churchill could be dismissed from office in 1945 by the people he governed was a necessary protection against the abuse of power.

The second principle is the necessity of public debate. Apart from those secrets which are required to protect the lives of soldiers and civilians (such as advance information on the place and date of the Normandy landings) it is essential that military policy be subject to the same open discussion and criticism that applies to other public policy matters. Two corollaries flow from this principle. A. Accurate information must be made available and widely disseminated quickly. The most reliable method yet devised to ensure that this happens is a free press with access both to decision-makers and to those areas where the events being reported are actually taking place. B. Independent analysis and assessment of military matters must not only be tolerated but actively encouraged.

The third principle relates to the moral criteria against which policies and actions must be judged. In the light of biblical teaching Christians must always test the actions of those in authority by asking what effect they will have in promoting justice and, consequently, peace. We intend, in subsequent issues of this journal, to focus on the questions of war and peace with which we are all grappling in our country at this time. There are profound moral questions lurking around every corner of current affairs. We have sought, in this editorial, to establish the necessity (and the right) of the church, indeed of all citizens, to tackle these issues openly and without fear of being stifled.

The few pages of 'For the Record' in this issue of the Outlook make profoundly disturbing reading. If these reports are to be believed it would seem that the South African military, with the connivance of our political leaders, are actively involved in either raids upon or sabotage within a number of countries around the borders of South Africa. These include Lesotho, Angola, and Mozambique. There has been considerable debate on these matters in parliament whilst throughout the country many people, of whom the Stellenbosch students are a good example, are raising anxious questions. The Prime Minister's response to much of this has been to say that reports of such activities border on treason. In the increasingly emotional debate about military issues cool, clear, rational, and moral thinking is essential.

FOR THE RECORD

LESOTHO

Raid into Lesotho

PRETORIA—A crack SADF strike force attacked 12 African National Congress targets in Maseru early today, killing about 30 alleged terrorists in the daring raid.

The Chief of the Defence Force, General Constand Viljoen, said five women and two children had died in the crossfire. Four members of the strike force had been wounded.

General Viljoen said the strike force had had strict instructions to avoid women and children and Lesotho citizens not involved with the ANC. The SADF "regretted that the innocent also had to suffer".

He said the targets had served as "planning control headquarters" and as a springboard for ANC terrorist action against South Africa, Transkei and Ciskei.

According to information received recently, the ANC was planning to carry out "deeds of terror in South Africa, Transkei and Ciskei during the festive season".

A number of "well-trained terrorists" had moved from other Southern African states to Lesotho during the past month to execute the plan.

General Viljoen said the ANC headquarters had been deliberately located among civilian houses spread throughout the residential suburbs of Maseru to complicate action against them.

"It is emphasised that this attack was aimed only at ANC terrorists, and everything possible was done to prevent contact with the forces of Lesotho and innocent civilians," he said.

"The South African Government repeatedly warned governments of all neighbouring countries not to allow terrorists to use their territories and facilities as springboards against South Africa."

Argus 9.12.1982

Exile tells of terror and death in Maseru

A South African exile today told of terror, devastation and death in Lesotho's capital, Maseru, as South African forces attacked ANC targets.

May 1983

ANGOLA

SA raid on Angola oil refinery

PARIS—A South African raid deep inside Angola had caused damage of R46-million to the Luanda oil refinery and only an accident had prevented it from being completely destroyed, United Nations officials said here yesterday.

Previously undisclosed details of the alleged raid by SADF commandos were disclosed at the UN conference on SWA Namibia by Mr Mohamed Sahnoun, Algerian Ambassador to the UN and head of the UN Special Committee Against Apartheid.

"There have been South African commando attacks deep inside Angola, in particular one daring attack on the Luanda refinery," he said.

Mr Sahnoun said that during a visit to Angola last month the manager of the refinery had told him that if a bomb had not blown up in the hand of one of the commandos, the refinery would have been destroyed.

However, the raid had been so successful that the commandos had caused damage of 46-million. Mr Sahnoun did not say when the raid had been carried out.

Turning to the broader picture of

South Africa's involvement in Angola, Mr Sahnoun told a press conference on the second day of the conference that South Africa had 5 000 troops in occupation of the Angolan towns of Kassinga and Kahama, in Kunene province. Between 1975 and 1982 about R9.2 billion in damage had been inflicted on Angola's infrastructure.

South African troops had sown landmines on most of the common borders between South Africa and Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Angola. He said South African jets regularly flew low along the borders "with the intention of terrorizing the population".

South Africa also gave encouragement and support to movements like Unita, the MNR (Mozambique's National Resistance Movement) and to a movement in north west Zambia whose leader, a certain Mashala, had been killed recently.

Mr Sahnoun repeated charges, denied by South African authorities, that a group of Bishop Abel Muzorewa's supporters were undergoing military training in the Northern Transvaal.

The exile, who did not want to be identified, said that as helicopters roared overhead and gunfire and explosions ripped the night apart, vehicles crossed back and forth through the border post on the city's outskirts.

In a telephone interview from Harare early today, the distraught exile said: "I do not know what happened at the customs post."

"I do not know if anyone was killed there."

The exile said 41 people had been killed in the attack. Among the dead was Mr Zola Nini, a former Robben Island prisoner released recently after six years in detention.

"Young boys and women have been killed."

"I have just been to a home that was blown to pieces. There were three children there, I do not know how they survived."

"Among the dead was a woman who had arrived only yesterday to see her exiled husband."

"Cars have been burnt, homes have been burnt."

Argus 9.12.1983

MOZAMBIQUE

SADF officer died 'on sabotage mission'

WHERE and how did Lieutenant Alan Gingles of the South African Defence Force (SADF) die?

A British Sunday newspaper says he was killed while on a sabotage mission inside Mozambique. The SADF merely says he was killed in action in the operational area.

At the weekend, 16 months after Lieutenant Gingle's death, the Observer newspaper claimed it had "the first direct evidence" that South Africa was attacking non-military installations in black Africa.

Railway line

The Observer's report, first quoted this week by the Burger in Cape Town, said it had identified Lieutenant Gingles

as a Northern Irishman in SADF service who had been shot dead while attempting to blow up a railway line between Mozambique and Zimbabwe.

The Observer had come by what it said was a page from a hand-written novel found at the scene of Lieutenant Gingle's death, and the writing was the same as those in a number of his letters shown to the newspaper by his father.

A spokesman for the SADF did not dispute Lieutenant Gingles had been a British subject serving in the South African Permanent Force at the time. "No comment"

However, he would not comment on the exact place or circumstances of Lieutenant Gingle's death, referring in

quiries to a statement of October 17, 1981, in which the SADF had announced that Lieutenant Gingles had died in action against terrorists in the operational area on October 15, 1981.

The same statement gave Lieutenant Gingle's address as the military base at Phalaborwa in the north-eastern Transvaal.

Phalaborwa is near the western border of the Kruger National Park, some 70km from the Mozambican border. The Maputo-Harare railway line runs almost parallel to the border about 140km inside Mozambique.

Cape Times 28.2.1983

outh Africa's aim is to show that no peaceful society is possible under a majority rule," Mr Sahnoun

recently led a team of UN investigators on a tour to several "frontline states", whose findings will soon be published by the UN.

The Benguela-Lobito railway, he said, was now practically useless to Angola, which previously exported 70 per cent of its exports that way. Now Angola was reliant on the goodwill of the African Railways.

Mr Sahnoun also accused South Africa of using radio propaganda to Zimbabwe, Zambia and Angola in local areas.

This underlines the very exploitation in Southern Africa today, in economic situations of South Africa's neighbours, which are very serious, have been exaggerated by the drought.

Today I appeal to the international community to put pressure on South Africa to stop its acts of destabilization and assist South Africa's neighbours through the storm," Mr Sahnoun

Zimbabwe's Foreign Minister, Mr Moses Mangwende, called for an emergency meeting of the UN Security Council to consider the "consequences of international peace and stability" caused by South Africa's "campaign of racial destabilization".

Observers believe there is a strong possibility of a Security Council hearing on this year, as Zimbabwe takes over the Security Council chairmanship and Mr Mangwende's appeal is expected to have strong backing from the Organisation of African Unity, the African People's Movement and other groups represented in Paris.

South African Defence Force spokesman said last night that the Defence Force could not be expected to be "blatantly biased and totally discredited" by allegations emanating from the mercenaries.

He said: "The South African Government and the SADF have repeatedly stated the facts of the Southern African situation are perfectly clear, but certain individuals choose to ignore these facts in favour of their own biased views."

Some of these allegations were made at a press conference in Windhoek on Monday.

The Cape Times 27.4.1983

SEYCHELLES

Seychelles questions

The Prime Minister has done nothing to ease public disquiet about a possible government role in the Seychelles coup attempt. His refusal to answer pertinent questions about the duties and actions of senior Defence Force officials is simply not good enough. Nor is his statement that nothing more will be said because further revelations are not "in the national interest" — that all-embracing cover for matters of genuine national interest as well as issues merely of political embarrassment to the government. The PFP is right to reject Mr Botha's answers as totally inadequate and to continue to press for further details. For what is in the national interest is the removal of any suspicion of government involvement at any level or of a subsequent cover-up.

Mr Botha told Parliament this week that neither the cabinet nor the State Security Council knew in advance of the coup attempt. He announced that unspecified action had been taken against unnamed members of the Defence Force and National Intelligence Service who, in the words of a previous statement, exceeded their authority. Have these people, who gave logistical assistance to a group planning the armed overthrow of a government with which we are not at war, merely been reprimanded? What sort of security system do we have when the Director of NIS, the Minister of Defence and the Prime Minister himself were not told what was afoot? Exactly how high up the intelligence and Defence Force rungs did the information go? Are the officers who stopped it going any higher still there to keep their bosses in the dark about future plots? How can it happen, in a country experiencing low-level guerrilla warfare, that mercenaries can assemble an attack force, complete with deadly weapons of war, without the ever-vigilant security authorities finding out?

The Prime Minister believes his government has been cleared by the Seychelles mercenary trial court and a UN investigation. We do not share his belief. Mr Justice James, who heard the mercenaries allege senior government ministers knew of the coup attempt, found these claims had not been proven. His court was also prohibited by General Malan from hearing evidence about Defence Force operations prior to the coup attempt. The UN investigation concluded that "if respon-

sible ministers were unaware of what was being planned, this was difficult to reconcile with South Africa's reputation for tight and effective control. This is hardly a clean bill of health.

The government should appoint a judicial commission to investigate all aspects of the coup attempt, including matters alleged to be in the national interest. This commission, not departmental investigations, should determine the actions which need to be taken, including the political fate of the accountable minister, General Malan. South Africa's national and international credibility also requires that its government be cleared by respected judges who have heard ALL the evidence, including that of the ministers concerned.

Cape Times Editorial 3.2.1983

REACTIONS: STELLENBOSCH

Destabilization: Maties rap MP

STELLENBOSCH—The National Party MP for Benoni, Mr Chris Rencken, came under heavy fire from University of Stellenbosch students last night for refusing to give an answer on South Africa's alleged destabilization of its neighbours.

He described the allegations as "far-fetched" but when asked whether the South African Government, through the SADF, was actively aiding Unita in Angola, Mr Rencken replied: "Not to the best of my knowledge, no."

Asked whether if South Africa were supporting Unita, his answer would have been "yes", he replied: "My answer remains the same."

Mr Rencken was debating the issue of destabilization with Mr Joe Lelyveld, of the New York Times, and Mr Michael Spicer, Director of Programmes of the SA Institute of International Affairs. The meeting was organized by the Stellenbosch Aktuele Aangeleentheid Kring (SAAK).

Mr Spicer, however, said: "There is no doubt in my mind that directly or indirectly, assistance is going to Unita and that is being sanctioned by the government here."

He said earlier there was "no doubt" that the anti-Lesotho Government Lesotho Liberation Army was operating from South African soil "whether by acts of commission or omission".

Turning to South African involvement in the Seychelles coup attempt, Mr Spicer said there had been "bland answers from the SADF" to questions

on its involvement.

If, as the government said, the cabinet had not known about the attempt in advance, then he had to ask: "Who is making foreign policy and who is controlling the military?"

He added that South Africa's policy towards Zimbabwe was "a prime cause of economic destabilization".

Mr Rencken replied later that the government had had no hand in the Seychelles coup attempt because "if we wanted to overthrow the Seychelles by military means, we would not do that; we would do it properly".

Referring to the extent of the South African warnings to the Lesotho Government before the Maseru raid last December, he said the Foreign Minister, Mr Pik Botha, was in "daily contact" by telephone with the foreign ministers of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland.

"We simply pick up the telephone and tell them: 'If you don't stop these ANC hoods from operating, we will hit you.'"

It was put to him that both the United States State Department and the New York Times had "stated as fact" that South Africa was supporting the anti-Frelimo Mozambique National Resistance Movement.

Mr Rencken replied: "Many facts that are stated as facts are often not factual... we are saying that is not so."

Mr Lelyveld said South African cabinet ministers were on record as saying that members of the intelligence services were "engaged in clandestine activities across borders for purposes of information-gathering".

Cape Times 21.4.1983

REACTIONS: ANGLICAN ARCHBISHOP

Melusi Ncubi

I do not suppose you have ever heard of him. He is a former member of the Zimbabwe-Rhodesia Security Forces currently on trial in Harare. It is alleged that he received training by the SADF in bushcraft, AK-rifle use, G3 and FN rifles, rocket launchers, unarmed combat, etc., in a camp in the Caprivi Strip; underwent parachute training courses at Mtubatuba; and completed his training on a farm near Pretoria. Now none of these allegations has yet been proved — any more of course than those made by the SADF in respect of the

cent Maseru raid. But they do give rise to an interesting speculation.

Say that the allegations are correct — would Zimbabwe be entitled to conduct a pre-emptive raid into the Republic? And if they do, what would happen to the raiders? We can give an easy answer to that, all right! But in answering, are we not, however unconsciously, falling into the power-game trap: might is right. Right to sock the ANC in Maseru; right to knock the daylight out of any invader.

There is of course nothing new in all this sort of thinking. It is as old as Cain and as new as the latest Cruise missile and we in South Africa are no worse and no better, no holier or less holy than anyone else in the world. We possibly swallow the militaristic propaganda of the Government more easily than others do, because of the monopolistic control of radio and TV, and the networks of laws governing military information etc.

But, as Christians, we have got to hear alarm bells ringing when the 'Lohan' might is right' (however camouflaged, of course) is even an unquestioned part of our national thinking. This is particularly so if it is yoked with the easy equation 'right = the SADF' for then truly frightening prospects start opening up.

Archbishop Phillip Russell
(Good Hope Feb. 1983)

REACTIONS: SADCC

Sabotage in Lesotho seen as evidence of SA attempts to destabilise neighbouring states

A view of the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC) conference

by Jasper Mortimer of the *Argus Africa News Service*.

MASERU—The saboteurs who sneaked up to two small reservoirs outside Lesotho's capital early on Thursday did more harm to the South African Government than to their targets.

The blasts, which occurred minutes later, did not rock Maseru, as was reported, either literally or figuratively.

But they provided the 315 delegates to the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference — including the Foreign Ministers of Sweden, Norway and Denmark — with what was seen as a clear case of "South Africa's economic destabilisation of neighbouring states".

Censure

Exploding only hours before the conference's start, the bombs set the tone for the most vigorous censure of South Africa ever heard at an SADCC meeting.

Founded in 1980 as a pooling of resources of nine Southern African states, the SADCC has up to now been noted for its emphasis on economic concerns. Its members are Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Though its aim is to reduce members' reliance on South Africa, it has been low-key in its condemnation of the apartheid government.

Only last August did the Times of London say the SADCC had won the respect of Western governments and aid agencies through its "seriousness of purpose, sensibly limited objectives and refreshing lack of cant and political posturing".

Frenetic

But since then the "destabilisation"

campaign has grown at an almost frenetic pace. On one day last year — December 9 — the Mozambique National Resistance (which the US State Department says is South African-backed) blew up 34 fuel tanks at Beira and the SADF itself provoked a world outcry with the attack on Maseru which left 42 dead.

Elsewhere, Zimbabwe has endured weeks of petrol queues because of an MNR attack on the Beira-Mutare pipeline, has killed three SADF soldiers who were making an "unauthorised sortie (allegedly to attack the railway), and has lost a dozen jets to unknown saboteurs at Gweru airbase.

In Angola, the Unita rebels, widely believed to be South African-supplied, continue to render the Benguela railway inoperative and 14 days ago "whites with beards" sabotaged the Lomaum hydro-electric power station.

Little wonder, then, the knives were out in Maseru.

Development

"It is not much use developing ports and pipelines, roads and railways and then watching in silence as they are blown up," said the chairman of the SADCC council of ministers, Mr Peter Musi, who is also Vice-President of Botswana.

"We," he said pointedly, "have not blown up the Durban facilities to force South Africa to use the Beira pipeline. We have not sabotaged the South African rail link to Maputo to enforce use of the (Zimbabwean-Mozambique) line.

"It is vital that something be done to halt South Africa's attacks," he urged the representatives of 28 countries and 22 donor agencies.

He suggested they use intense diplo-

matic pressure and selective sanctions on critical goods and air transport.

Deplored

In reply, speaker after speaker deplored apartheid, criticised South Africa's presence in SWA/Namibia and said the Maseru raid was "tragic" (US), "brutal" (Norway and Denmark) and "barbaric" (Commonwealth).

Strongest of all was Swedish Foreign Minister Mr Lennart Bodstrom, who reiterated his country's call for "comprehensive" sanctions against South Africa. However, this option, it is often said, would cost the West more than it is prepared to pay.

Argus 1.2.1983

REACTIONS: PRIME MINISTER

Reports seen as 'treason'

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY—The Prime Minister, Mr PW Botha, yesterday rejected as nonsense allegations that the South African Government was deliberately destabilizing neighbouring black States.

He also stated that press reports of destabilization claims bordered on treason. These reports suited the real destabilizers in Southern Africa—Russia and her Cuban and East German lackeys.

He warned however that South Africa would not tolerate neighbouring territories being used as bases for Swapo or the ANC.

Cape Times 2.2.1983

LESOTHO: INVASION AND DEATH

Michael Savage

The following address was given to the memorial service for those killed by the SADF in Lesotho. The service was held at St Marks Church, Bontehuwel on 16 December 1982.

At the heart of today's meeting lie forty-two bodies — of men, women and children. In the eyes of most of white South Africa these people died because they had the extraordinary idea that South Africa should be a democratic and non-racial society. We are here to affirm that this idea is not extraordinary and to mourn their deaths. Whether or not those in power in South Africa like it, in the eyes of the world and of very large sections of the South

African population the people who died in Maseru are regarded not as enemies, but as martyrs. They are seen as South Africans, killed by other South Africans because they detested racism and had a vision of a free and democratic South Africa.

Let us focus on the wider tragedy of their deaths. The SADF invasion of Lesotho could usher in a period of escalating blood-letting. In particular the deaths of at least seven women and children, coupled with the earlier deaths of Soweto school-children, help drive armed conflict onto a more intense plane in which every person becomes liable to military attack. Up to this point the military wing of the ANC (unlike the SADF) has held back from indiscriminate actions that could involve civilians. It is likely that this policy in the ANC will

continue, but that the arena of armed conflict and the definition of what is considered to be a military target will be enlarged. The South African invasion of Lesotho has escalated a spiral of violence. Further, an ANC source in Zimbabwe is quoted as saying that the question asked by all ranks now was

"If any house containing black South African refugees and a gun constitutes an ANC military base, then by the same logic does every white South African household with a gun not constitute an apartheid military base?" (*Star* 10 Dec 1982)

The real tragedy of the Lesotho invasion is that the SADF, on the command of its few masters, has enlarged the arena of military conflict and by so doing diminished the possibility of inevitable change tak-

place peacefully. The increasing militarization of this society, at all levels; growing frequency of incursions and invasions into Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and now Lesotho have resulted in the continent of Africa becoming one of the greatest theaters of violence in the subcontinent and dim the chance of a new society here being born peacefully. Nothing could be more tragic.

Mr Philip Myburgh, PFP Spokesman on Defence is quoted as saying that the Defence Force had no choice but to carry out a preemptive strike into Lesotho. If this is what the PFP believes then it places them squarely in the camp of those prepared to take any steps whatever to defend white privilege and supremacy. I mention this as an indication of how all the propaganda is out in an attempt to convince a

sceptical world that the decision — a decision made by only a small group of men — to invade Lesotho was a just or necessary decision. When the propaganda guns of much of the media, of parliamentarians of several persuasions are booming loud and in unison one can be sure that they are attempting to hide a big lie. The big lie is that it is impossible to create in South Africa a non-racial and democratic society and that white supremacy is justified. That lie lies at the heart of the Lesotho raid and it is one that can be contemptuously rejected.

It is appropriate that we meet in a church where reconciliation of brother to brother should take place. The Lesotho invasion is the antithesis of reconciliation and yet we meet here to affirm the necessity of reconciliation and to dedicate ourselves to a true brotherhood of man that cannot be based

on violence or racism.

When fighting Nazism, Albert Camus wrote four open letters to Nazis in which he proclaimed the basis for a true patriotism. Let me end by quoting from his final letter (found in his book *Resistance, Rebellion and Death*)

"... despite all the tortures inflicted on our people, despite our disfigured dead and our villages peopled with orphans. I can tell you that at the very moment when we are going to destroy you without pity, we still feel no hatred for you. And even if tomorrow, like so many others, we had to die, we should still be without hatred. We cannot guarantee that we shall not be afraid; we shall simply try to be reasonable. But we can guarantee that we shall not hate anything. And we have come to terms with the only thing in the world I could loathe today, I assure you, and we want to destroy you in your power without mutilating you in your soul." □

Destabilising South Africa:

GENERAL MAGNUS MALAN ALLEGES

Under no circumstances would the Government allow the continent of Africa to be destabilised by hostile elements in the region. The Minister of Defence, General Magnus Malan said last night.

General Malan said certain states in Southern Africa were bent on destabilising the region — and wanted to drag

South Africa into the same mess in which they now found themselves.

(Rand Daily Mail, 11.08.82)

Mr Malan denied that South Africa was pursuing a policy of destabilisation of its neighbours and said that, on the contrary, it was countries like Mozambique . . . that were bent on destabilising the Republic through acts of terror.

(Rand Daily Mail, 10.08.82)

PRESIDENT SAMORA MACHEL RESPONDS

Zimbabwean President Samora Machel responded to Malan's allegations in an August 1982 speech. He sug-

gested that the only threat Mozambique poses to South Africa is as an example of an alternative form of society.

Two days ago, the South African regime alleged that Mozambique is threatening it by concentrating sophisticated weapons on its borders. What are these sophisticated weapons that the regime is referring to? Do they not represent a threat to anyone, whether militarily nor economically. No sensible person could think that an underdeveloped and poor country like ours, with many wounds of war still bleeding,

could threaten the sovereignty, territorial integrity or stability of any state, especially a power like South Africa.

Fearing our example

In fact the only thing the regime has to fear is our example. This, yes. What is the sophisticated weapon that the regime refers to? The answer is the work we are doing. What is this work?

Giving worth to women, as mothers, as wives, as educators, as companions and comrades, the example of protecting them and loving them as symbols of affection and peace, as the guarantors of future generations. This is what South Africa fears.

The sophisticated weapon is making the home the centre of fulfilment and not, as

We say in all sincerity that the white South Africans . . . are not foreigners in their country nor in our continent. They are African people, like us.

The sophisticated weapon is having children as the only privileged sector of our society, keeping the best for them, keeping the most beautiful for them. It is surrounding children with love and affection, innocence and happiness, and not, as in Soweto, making them targets for police brutality and murderous weapons.

The sophisticated weapon is guaranteeing all citizens the right to study, culture, health, justice, progress, to the benefits of society. The sophisticated weapon is putting our resources into carrying all this out and not into the manufacture of weapons, the production of death.

The sophisticated weapon is the people's right to create their own history, by directing their own destiny, by exercising their sovereign power.

In short, the sophisticated weapon that really threatens apartheid is the alternative of civilisation that our society now represents. For this reason, the survivors of the Soweto massacres feel at home in Mozambique. For this reason, the intellectuals, the artists, the scientists, victims of South African racism and fascism, feel fulfilled working amongst us.

The sophisticated weapons are the UNESCO conference, the Dollar Brand and Myriam Makeba concerts.¹ The sophisticated weapon is a woman, a scientist like Ruth First. They are men and woman of all races who do not see colours, regions or tribes, and who identify with the same ideals of equality, fraternity, harmony and progress.

A way of life

Because it is socialist, Mozambican society defines people and their fulfilment as its strength and reason for existence. On the African continent, and especially in southern Africa where the scars and wounds of slavery and colonialism, historically predominantly European and white, are still felt and present, we have built a Party, a nation, a way of life in which colour does not matter, race does not matter, region or tribe does not matter. Everything that causes unnecessary division has begun to fade from people's con-

sciousness. This is the sophisticated weapon that threatens apartheid.

Ours is not a society in which races and colours, tribes and regions coexist and live harmoniously side by side. We went beyond these ideas during a struggle in which we sometimes had to force people's consciousness in order for them to free themselves from complexes and prejudices so as to become simply, we repeat, simply people. For this reason, in the war against the colonial system we were able to distinguish between the Portuguese people and Portuguese colonialism. In the war against Rhodesia we were able to distinguish between what was the white community and the minority rebel racist regime.

We say in all sincerity that the white South Africans, the boers, are not our enemy. They are not foreigners in their country nor in our continent. They are African people, like us.

It was racism and fascism that deformed the mentality of South African whites, that led them to cast themselves in the role of 'the chosen people'.

It was racism that made them unable to regard themselves as normal South African citizens, equal to all other South Africans, equal to everyone else in the world.

For this reason, it is the South African whites themselves who are the victims of their complexes and prejudices. They are the very ones who cut themselves off from the community of all South Africans and set themselves apart as a privileged minority, as a superior race to be preserved.

This logic is what has led to the obsession of systematically dividing South African society up into races, colours, tribes and bantustans, into special and nonspecial foreigners, even to the ridiculous extent of having 'honorary whites'.

With this logic, in order to define themselves as South Africans, they must defy the nationality and identity of all other South African people.

Alienation

It is they who alienated themselves from their identity as African people. Our enemy is apartheid. Our enemy is fascism. Our enemy is a small handful of interests hiding behind a barbaric ideology

and philosophy in order to safeguard their privileges.

The destruction of the stronghold of apartheid will come from inside South African society. The destruction is spurred on by the blood of white martyrs like Neil Aggett and Ruth First.

We repeat what we have already said: apartheid will fall when children from the white suburbs join hands with black children from the bantustans and the Soweto ghetto, with Indian and coloured children, and all of them describe themselves simply as South African children in a country that is theirs equally.

Our nation is historically new. The awareness of being Mozambicans arose with the common repression suffered by all of us under colonialism from the Ruvuma to the Maputo.

FRELIMO

FRELIMO, in its 20 years of existence and in this path of struggle, turned us progressively into Mozambicans, no longer Makonde and Shangaan, Nyanja and Ronga, Nyungwe and Bitonga, Chuabo and Ndau, Macua and Xitsua.

FRELIMO turned us into equal sons of the Mozambican nation, whether our skin was black, brown or white.

Our nation was not moulded and forged by feudal or bourgeois gentlemen. It arose from our armed struggle. It was carved out by our hard-working, calloused hands.

Thus during the national liberation war, the ideas of country and freedom were closely associated with victory of the working people. We fought to free the land and the people. This is the reason that those, who at the time wanted the land and the people in order to exploit them, left us to go and fight in the ranks of colonialism, their partner.

The unity of the Mozambican nation and Mozambican patriotism is found in the essential components of, and we emphasise, anti-racism, socialism, freedom and unity. □

Work in progress 20 1983

¹ *Translator's note: UNESCO-sponsored conference on social science held in Maputo in August 1982. Exiled South African musicians Dollar Brand and Myriam Makeba have both given concerts in Mozambique.*

GETTING RID OF TURBULENT PRIESTS:

Margaret Nash on Anglican response to the Maseru Raid

December 1982 SADF raid on Maseru led deep distress and anger to countless people throughout Southern Africa. A few months later that distress was compounded by the news that in the wake of that raid Michael Lapsley, Anglican chaplain of the University of Lesotho at Roma, had been relieved of his post.

According to an Argus report Bishop Iald Nestor stated that Fr Lapsley's Church membership made him "a possible target for South African attacks" and that his presence at Roma "made our (Anglican) work there extremely precarious" (Argus, February 1983).

Over the past five years Fr Lapsley has continued sacramental ministry and doctrinal preaching with active involvement in the life of the university and pastoral care of many South African refugees, and done so in a remarkably caring and sacrificial way. He thereby borne a powerful Christian witness to politicised youth alienated from (often by) mainstream church life. But the hierarchy and no doubt to Pretoria seems to have been a turbulent priest whose presence and activities threatened status quo.

The news that the Church has acted to rid itself of this turbulent priest will surely increase tensions and divisions within our church and exacerbate church-state, church-nationalism stresses in Southern Africa as a whole. And with its emphasis on institutional self-preservation the decision raises very serious questions about how the Church, spanning as it does so many countries in Southern Africa, can "be the church" in the midst of intensifying con-

ditions. This time it is instructive to turn back to a crucial period in recent church history, namely the church struggle in Nazi Germany, and see how the young theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer reacted to the naked aggression of the Hitler movement. Three examples come to mind: early 1932 before he was elected chancellor; July 1932 when "German Christians" swept to power in the church; and April 1933 when the infamous Aryan clauses were promulgated.

1 Early 1932: *The Nature of the Church*

In a lecture on this topic Bonhoeffer struggled anew with how the church should relate to a "lost and godless world" and to the "order of politics". With prophetic insight he commented:

... in the present situation nothing can be so damaging and soul-destroying for the Protestant Church as unconsciously to be exploited (in the party struggle) as the last still-unused political power in Germany.

(*No Rusty Swords*: 152)

2 July 1932: "Who do you say that I the son of Man am?"

On Church Election-Day Bonhoeffer preached powerfully, and some would say provocatively, on the Matthew 16:13-8 text concerning the confession of Christ. He challenged his hearers to resist compromise and the natural desire for institutional self-preservation:

... No man builds the church but Christ alone. Whoever is minded to build the church is surely well on the way to destroying it; for he will build a temple to idols without wishing or knowing it.

We must confess — he builds. We must proclaim — he builds. We must pray to him — he builds.

We do not know his plan. We cannot see whether he is building or pulling down. It may be that the times which by human standards are times of collapse are for him great times of building.

Church, stay a church! But confess, confess, confess! Christ alone is your Lord, from his grace alone can you live as you are. Christ builds. And the gates of hell shall not prevail against you.

(*No Rusty Swords*: 212)

3 April 1933: *The Church and the Jewish Question*

In this lecture Bonhoeffer led the church into yet more direct and dangerous conflict with a brutal state. In it he defined three possible ways in which the church can act towards the state:

... it can ask the state whether its actions are legitimate and in accordance with its character as state, that is, it can throw the state back on its responsibilities;

... it can aid the victims of state action. The church has an unconditional obligation to the victims of any ordering of society, even if they do not belong to the Christian community;

... the third possibility is not just to bandage the victims under the wheel but to put a spoke in the wheel itself. Such actions would be direct political action, and it is only possible when the church sees the state fail in its function of creating law and order.

And Bonhoeffer noted:

A state which includes within itself a terrorised church has lost its most faithful servant, for the church is called by God to protect the state *qua* state from itself, and to preserve it.

(*No Rusty Swords*: 221-2)

The parallels are not exact: no two situations of testing are ever the same. But when a church removes a priest not for disciplinary reasons but in order to "protect its work" from possible disruption from South African attacks, has it not come dangerously close to the state of intimidation and indeed of heresy, against which Bonhoeffer was warning the church of his time?

Our responsibility

It is easy and unfair to stand on the sidelines and criticise parts of our church — in

Lesotho, Namibia, Mocambique — that are under pressures almost unimaginable to parishes in white middle class areas of South Africa.

The question is

- whether and how we can develop a real solidarity with one another and prayer and burden-bearing?
- and how the CPSA can tackle the theological homework and political

analysis needed for understanding and fulfilling its calling *as church* in strife-torn Southern Africa of the 1980s?

An urgent and essential first step in the latter process is for the diocese of Lesotho to review its decision to remove Fr Lapsley and, in fellowship with the Bishops of our Church, to find ways of healing the wound that this action inflicted on its own people,

on the CPSA as a whole and on so many people outside the corporate life of the church. □

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WAR MEANS ANTICULTURE

Yevgeni A. Yevtushenko

Yevgeni Aleksandrovich Yevtushenko is perhaps the Soviet contemporary poet best known around the world. His many trips abroad to read his works have done much to make foreign publics aware of the continuing vitality and emotional force of Russian tradition in poetry. Unesco's World Conference on Cultural Policies — MONDIACULT — took place in Mexico City in July 1982. As well as reviewing what had been accomplished since the first such conference in Venice in 1970, MONDIACULT allowed its

participants to think aloud on major problems of culture today and spell out fresh guidelines for strengthening the cultural dimension in development and for facilitating international cultural cooperation.

As part of its contribution to MONDIACULT, the Unesco Office of Public Information invited Yevtushenko and other distinguished figures in the domain of culture around the world to comment on the contemporary scene. The views he expresses in this article are his own and not necessarily those of Unesco.

Planning for culture implies first and foremost planning for peace. However magnificent the edifice that mankind might erect, the temple of man's genius and culture is destined to remain a fragile vessel such as those still being fashioned by the glassblowers of the island of Murano near Venice. Today all that is required is a single outbreak of individual madness or collective psychosis in, say, the guise of the notorious chauvinist syndrome, and all culture — past, present and future — will be blown to splinters. That is why I regard as unthinkable any talk about culture divorced from talk about peace.

Culture and peace are inseparable, just as culture and life are inseparable. The experience of the Latin American writers who have breathed new life into the novel, acquiring world-wide recognition, demonstrates that even the most daring imaginings of an author's mind are rooted in life's deeper furrows, in popular lore, which itself constitutes a highly complex and still imperfectly understood laboratory where the mysterious forces of popular spirit are ever melding human experience and earth-

ly stones into cultural treasures of untold value. The destruction of life on earth means not only the destruction *ab initio* of the culture of future generations, but the annihilation of any hope for the continuance of civilization as we know it.

I advocate a culture, a literature fully aware of the fundamental tasks and needs of humanity. Certainly that culture is manifold, as variegated as the wildflowers in a forest meadow. What is unacceptable is the chemically shampooed, artfully manicured and cheaply primped-out culture being foisted upon us by the flimflam artists who have set up trade in the temples. Tarted-up art — all those mawkish novels, detective mysteries, and "porn" — is nothing but a soporific for the human conscience. And the sleep of conscience wakens war. It was precisely this narcotic culture that T.S. Eliot had in mind when he wrote of "mass culture" invariably serving as a substitute for true culture. With this one cannot help agreeing. Yet I cannot agree with another of Eliot's notions — the idea whereby the preservation of minority culture is essential to the preservation of

high cultural values. I am against a culture which turns away from the broad masses of people in the interests of self-preservation.

On the side of the people

The question of the relationship of poetry on the one hand to life, history, and the masses on the other is not new. It was discussed back in the 18th and 19th centuries. Poet's ratiocinations and musings concerning the ivory tower which would elevate them to the empyrean whilst thwarting the worries of the world might perhaps still arouse nostalgic yearning in some poets, but from the vantage of the history of literature and of civilization the issue has been adequately resolved. Literature and poetry are just as much, and as powerful, social forces as are workers' or peasants' demonstrations. And it is far from adventitious that poets and writers have been known to storm barbed-wire barricades, to brave bullets along with revolutionaries with fire in their minds and hearts. With Russian literature one need only think of

ovikov, Radishchev, Pushkin, Lermontov, Dostoevsky and Gorky, to cite a few names from its past, in order to understand that the poetic word may be a prayer for happiness and love, but is also a bulwark behind which there are always the people. It is no gratuitous metaphor, but today's is to prosaic reality. By virtue of the very fact that true poetry and literature hold up before man the true scale of his being they themselves revolutionary. If today millions of people must be counted among the insulted and the injured, this means simply that we, the writers and the poets, stand on the enormous fallowness is divided up by frontiers, walls, and border posts. The great joy of poetry and literature is that words are free to skim and roam the world in neither visas nor residence permits. It is certainly a great joy, but it is also a heavy responsibility.

During a recent stay in Paris, I was asked what I had chosen to subtitle a work of mine "epic" novel. For me the attempt to write an epic novel had to do with a desire to break through the confines of regionalism. The events in the novel are set in Western Europe and in Siberia, in Latin America and India. I am repelled when civil servants in the ranks of literature attempt to denigrate the calling of the artist and his work, ordering him to be global versus local, popular versus elitist. It is up to the artist himself to choose the yardstick of his work, setting against its scale its own measure of life's lessons and of his own purpose. In pondering the writer's role in the world, I am reminded of Gabriel Garcia Marquez' profound image of the writer's labor is represented by a fig tree whose roots sink deep into the fertile soil and whose top reaches to the sky which belongs to all.

Work for peace is a sacred undertaking for the poet and writer. Let the ignorant and philistine object that the artist's first duty is to lull our imagination with the quill and fantasy! I am for any task in literature which serves to pave a little further the way to peace or to render somewhat firmer our defenses against war. At the rallies in Moscow and Leningrad in the 1930s young ladies flanked by the cynicism-mongering critics accused that Mayakovsky, a lyric poet, of wasting his talent on "primitive" revolutionary propaganda. But Russia in his day, just as parts of Africa, and Latin America today, were filled with tens of millions of illiterates. Mayakovsky did on occasion temper his language in order to be comprehensible to the masses. It was he who uttered the bit of proud phrase "But I did myself tame, I tamed my own song's throat". Another poet cut of the same cloth was Pablo Neruda's inheritance belongs to all

mankind. He too wrote superb poetry in the most accessible language. He was one of those happy poets who were able to stay in day-to-day contact with the people.

Understanding poets

The task of society and politics in the cultural realm consist in part in seeing to it that the cultural level of the broad popular masses is raised to a level such that poets and writers, in order to be understood, need not, as Mayakovsky, "trample the throat of their own song". I should also like to recall the great Pushkin. There was a time long ago when his poetry was regarded as elitist: he was held to be a poet of the gentry writing for the gentry. But now he is esteemed a genuinely popular poet, his verses and longer poems published in the USSR in millions of copies, his work studied in the schools and universities. In today's Russia there is not a single person who does not know his Pushkin. What accounts for such understanding? Poets of the scale of Pushkin, Lermontov, Shakespeare, Byron, Neruda, and Apollinaire, even though they wrote in different languages, and addressed, to use the fashionable expression, somewhat different audiences, are related to one another by what they endeavoured to convey to humanity — the simple message that it was, indeed, *humanity*. Therein lies the great mission of literature. A poet, the writer, the philosopher may not be understood today. And it is his right not to be understandable. But if he is inspired by the great ideas of human commonality and unity, then he will certainly be understood tomorrow. Understood and appreciated at his true worth.

Why is it that Dostoevsky is so dear to present-day sensibility? Why was the one-hundredth anniversary of his death marked last year as an event of worldwide importance under Unesco auspices? After all, Dostoevsky makes difficult reading. In experiencing Dostoevsky you feel yourself crawling through prickly underbrush, your skin tortured by thorns. Today, in the 101st year following his death, Dostoevsky may well be closer and more meaningful to us than to the people of his own generation, who often jeered and despised him. Why? He was one of those writers who are able to pass all of the world's hurts and sorrows through his private heart. Dostoevsky was a sick man, and his malady has a precise medical tag: epilepsy. But he was also ill of another disorder, which God grant might afflict each and every living writer: he suffered from a febrile hypersensitivity to all forms of wrong done to, and humiliation of men, women and children. He was a writer who suffered social ulcers as wounds on his own body. I hold that Dostoevsky

by his writing and his suffering, accomplished more for the defense of peace and justice than have all of the world's diplomats and international civil servants put together. A Peace Forum convened by Unesco in Paris in 1979, brought together some of the best-known representatives of world society and culture. At this forum for peace different languages and different contexts were used as a sounding board for one, as I see it, very important theme: the peoples of the world simply cannot afford to rely on diplomacy alone to solve the problems of preventing war. Far too great a measure of the responsibility for this task was placed on diplomats in the past. Is not the scale of the movement against war which we are now witnessing in Europe, partly the result of Unesco's Forum, of a realization by broad sections of society of the need to make their voice heard on behalf of peace? The Unesco Forum with its ardent appeal for peace aroused new hope. We writers must not allow that hope to wither away.

Defences of peace

The first sentence of the Unesco Constitution proclaims that "since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed". What sort of role can culture play in this mission? The poet addresses himself to the reader. Will the poetic word reach him? Will it be necessary for that word to penetrate the forest of ignorance and accretions of prejudice, or will it enter the reader's mind without hindrance, as through an open window?

Culture is the road which leads to the human heart, a road built through the muck of selfishness, ignorance and lawlessness. But such a road cannot be laid by one person alone. What is needed here is the concerted effort of all those who believe in the ultimate victory of reason so that the road might be extended to the farthest corners of the globe. We, the generation living out the end of the 20th century, have the pleasure and satisfaction of seeing before our eyes the strengthening and broadening of people's general will to peace, though a sense of realism in this regard is certainly in order.

The Bible tells us that "in the beginning was the word". But before "the word" came peace, and it is only under conditions of peace that "the word" has a chance for survival.

In 1935, when I was only two years old, Paris was the scene of the Congress of Writers in Defence of Culture. That congress sounded every possible alarm alerting the world to the danger of fascism and world war. But those alarms were of no avail and several years later a world war did

break out. The paving stones of Paris streets that had been warmed by the hands of the members of the Paris Commune, now tell the demeaning imprint of Nazi boots. That bitter lesson will not be repeated only if we master the major science of transmuting noble words and intentions into noble deeds, if we stop anticulture in the guise of war from trampling the spiritual values transmitted to us by our forebears.

War as a phenomenon of anticulture cannot be banned by a mere resolution. What is needed is evolution. I am thinking here

of a shift in people's thinking whereby not only war, but even the thought of war will have been rendered impossible and inconceivable. But what determines man's psychology are the conditions of human existence. These must be altered to avert the possibility of war. But how? Nearly one hundred years ago, in a letter to his publisher Suvorin who was demanding clarification concerning "paths of development", Anton Chekhov wrote: "... You are confusing two notions: the solution to a problem and the correct statement of the prob-

lem. Only the statement of a problem is required from the artist. In neither 'Anna Karenina' nor in 'Eugene Onegin' will you find the answer to a single problem, but nevertheless they satisfy you fully because all of the problems are stated correctly". I do not have answers to many of the problems to be posed at Mondiacult-82. But I would like in this connection to recall a line from one of my poems: "goodness must have fists". Not only goodness, but art and culture. They can and must fight. □

● UNESCO FEATURES

A VERY WISE AMERICAN

Robin Hallett

Occasionally, very occasionally one comes across a piece of writing about the contemporary world situation so cogent, so luminous, so profoundly wise that one longs to thrust it into the hands of all those who are concerned with great issues and say to them, "for heaven's sake read and think about this." I have recently read such a piece in the New York Review of Books. It is based on a speech made at Dartmouth College in the United States by the veteran American diplomat, George Kennan. Mr Kennan is now Professor Emeritus in the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton. In the 1950s he was US Ambassador in Moscow. He has studied the Soviet Union for more than half a century. It is on the basis of profound knowledge that he takes issue with current US government thinking about the Soviet Union.

Precipitating the Holocaust

'On Nuclear War' is the title Mr Kennan has chosen for his address. He begins by expressing his sympathy for the growing European movement in favour of some practical form of nuclear disarmament — a movement that he sees as 'largely a reaction to the negative and hopeless quality of our own cold war policies, which seem to envisage nothing other than indefinitely increasing political tension and nuclear danger'. He urges an alternative policy, starting with 'deep cuts on the long-range strategic missilery', 'the complete denuclearization of Central and Northern Europe', 'a complete ban on nuclear testing'.

There must, he argues, be a renunciation of the strategic concept that a Soviet attack with conventional weapons would be met by a counter strike using nuclear weapons. Such a move should be seen as unthinkable, a fatal precipitation of Holocaust. There must, he urges be much greater stress laid on the development of conventional weapons.

But the changes he wishes to see taking place must be accompanied by a radical alteration in the attitude towards the Soviet Union at present prevailing in Washington. 'The almost complete militarization of thinking and discourse about Soviet-American relations that now commands the Washington atmosphere... could not be different if we knew for a fact that we were unquestionably to be at war with the Soviet Union within a few months.'

'I find the view of the Soviet Union that prevails today in large portions of our governmental and journalistic establishments so extreme, so subjective, so far removed from what any sober scrutiny of external reality would reveal, that it is not only ineffective but dangerous as a guide to political action.'

'This endless series of distortions and oversimplifications: this systematic dehumanization of the leadership of another great country; this routine exaggeration of Moscow's capabilities and of the supposed iniquity of Soviet intentions; this monotonous misrepresentation of the nature and the attitudes of another great people and a long-suffering people at that, sorely tried by the vicissitudes of this past

century; this ignoring of their pride, their pride, their hopes — yes, even of their illusions (for they have their illusions, just as we have ours; and illusions, too, deserve respect): this reckless application of the double standard to the judgement of Soviet conduct and our own; this failure to recognize, finally, the communality of many of their problems and ours as we both move inexorably into the modern technological age; and this corresponding tendency to view all aspects of the relationship in terms of a supposed total and irreconcilable conflict of concerns of aims: these, believe me, are not the marks of the maturity and discrimination one expects of the diplomacy of a great power, they are the marks of an intellectual primitivism and naiveté unpardonable in a great government. I use the word naiveté because there is a naiveté of cynicism and suspicion just as there is a naiveté of innocence.'

Common failures

Even if the terrifying possibility of nuclear war can be eliminated, many other grave problems remain, problems that are common to both the super powers. 'There are the great environmental complications now beginning to close in on us; the question of what we are doing to the world ocean with our pollution, the problem of the greenhouse effect, the acid rains, the question of what is happening to the topsoil and the ecology and the water supplies of this and other countries.'

'And there are', Mr Kennan continues, 'the

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