

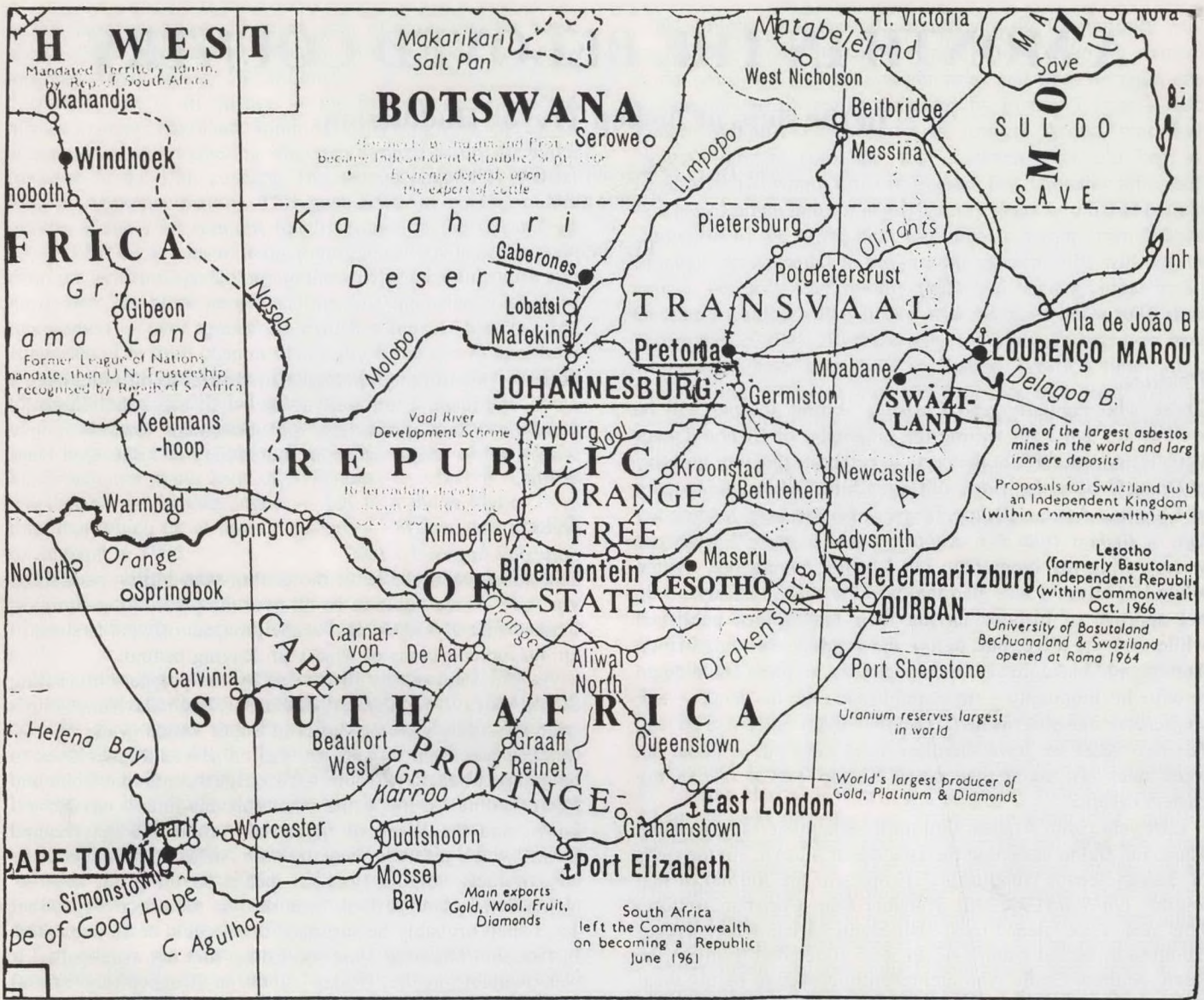
A MONTH IN THE BELOVED COUNTRY

In the steps of Bishop Trevor Huddleston





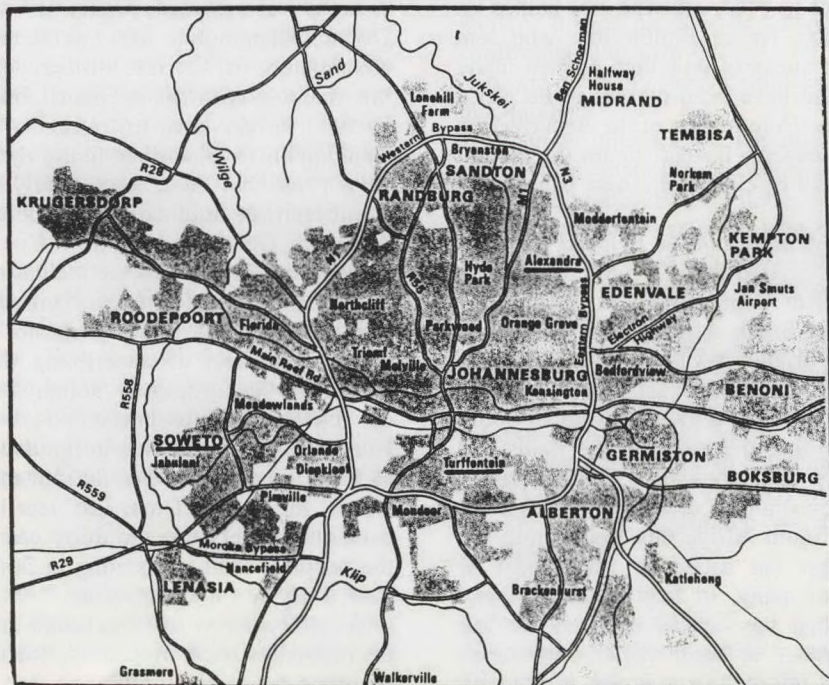
+Trevor Huddleston with a class at St. Peter's, School, Rosettenville, Johannesburg, during his time in South Africa 1943-55.



For Christmas 1992

from

to Tuxor City.



A MONTH IN THE BELOVED COUNTRY

In the steps of Bishop Trevor Huddleston

The Diary of a South African Journey

August 1992

by

Eric James

Preface

Those who regularly read Christian Action Journal will be well aware that I am writing the biography of Bishop Trevor Huddleston. In 1987, at the party to celebrate the 70th birthday of Diana Collins, the widow of Canon John Collins, the founder of Christian Action, Bishop Trevor, who had been reading my *Life of Bishop John A.T. Robinson* said to me: "I wish you were writing my biography; but I'm not having one written while I'm alive." I was glad that was the case, for I myself do not approve of bishops having their biographies published while they are alive; but, before the evening was out, Bishop Trevor and I had agreed to meet regularly, so that I could begin to write his biography — to be published after his death — and so preserve many of his memories that might otherwise be lost. For five years we have therefore been meeting, at about six week intervals, and I now count Bishop Trevor one of my closest friends.

Last year, from August 28th until September 14th, I visited Tanzania, and in particular the Diocese of Masasi, "in the steps of Bishop Trevor Huddleston". (Copies of the Journal of that journey *On Safari* are still available from Christian Action.) This year it was clear I must visit South Africa, where Trevor Huddleston served from 1943 to 1955. I decided to invite the Revd. Andrew Grant, who had recently ceased to be my vicar in Kennington and will shortly be beginning work in Ghana, to come with me. Andrew, as Vicar of St. Anselm's, Kennington, had been a good friend to me and to Christian Action — the Christian Action HQ was in his parish: and I knew that in South Africa I would need not least someone with Andrew's skill as a driver.

Andrew and I are grateful to everyone who has helped us in this last month: to Bishop Trevor Huddleston, who sent many letters of introduction ahead of us which opened many doors which would otherwise have been closed; to the Prior and the other members of the Community of the Resurrection in Johannesburg who were heavenly hosts to us for the month; and to many others who it will be clear from these pages were wonderfully generous to us.

I have called this journal *A Month in the Beloved Country*. Few will miss the reference to Alan Paton's masterpiece *Cry, the Beloved Country* (Jonathan Cape, 1948). But some may say: "Do you really think of South Africa that way?" — as "beloved"? Yes. I have gone around this last month looking at people, black and white, and loving them: school children, for instance, playing in Soweto. There is a loveliness about South Africa's climate; the winter sun; the red soil; the fields and flowers; the birds and trees; the mountains; and the cities. Johannesburg by day and by night is dramatic. But there is much that I have hated in South Africa this last month: the inheritance of apartheid that has killed or imprisoned or ravaged the education of so many, or kept them in abject poverty. I have hated all that has caused such waste. The loveliness — the belovedness — of South Africa only serves to heighten its tragedy. Yet I returned from South Africa with

Hope — one of the great Christian virtues, so different from a naive optimism. I am well aware — to use Athol Fugard's words — "how precarious our movement towards a new reality, a new dispensation in our society is". But: God bless Africa.

Diary

Saturday August 1st 1992

Emotions, when you leave the land of your birth — and those you love — are liable to be all over the place. At such times, I rarely find myself excited at the prospect of what is ahead: I am far too conscious of what I am leaving behind.

As yet, I am not at all excited by the prospect of visiting South Africa — for a variety of reasons. Pooh Davison, Colin's widow — they were my hosts in South Africa in the 60's — 'phoned last night to wish me well. She would have loved to be going out again to South Africa. But there are no Colin and Pooh waiting for me at the other end this time — as far as I know; and the Week of Industrial Action and the General Strike, which get under way in South Africa on Monday, make an extremely volatile situation that is anything but inviting. Yet, when I come to look back on this month on September 1st, I shall probably be surprised that I could be so unexcited. In fact, the *Financial Times* on Friday (not my usual paper! It was available in the "Today" studio at Broadcasting House) had a headline: "Hopes rise of South African breakthrough". And my "Thought For The Day" yesterday was on Hope. So I must practise what I have preached!

I'm very lucky to have Andrew Grant as my travelling companion for these four weeks. He has gone ahead of me to Johannesburg on a different 'plane. I've known Andrew ever since he was ordained, twenty-seven years ago, to St. John the Divine, Kennington. He has been Vicar of St. Anselm's, Kennington, for the last thirteen years, until he left at Easter this year to go to work in Ghana. Since I arrived in Kennington in 1983 he has been my vicar — and a close friend. From Kennington to Ghana *via South Africa* is not exactly "as the crow flies", but there were clearly some things that Andrew could learn in Southern Africa before he proceeded to West Africa in October. And, now I've reached the ripe age of sixty-seven, Andrew agreed to do for me what Sam Bickersteth did so splendidly for me in Tanzania last year. Sam 'phoned unexpectedly last night, and, not surprisingly, it had the immediate effect of underlining that my journey to South Africa this year is not just "holiday". It has the precise objective of enabling me to meet those who knew "Fr." Trevor Huddleston when he was in South Africa. He was there 1943 to 1955, whereas he was in Tanzania 1960 to 1968. In other words: the people I met last year in Tanzania were looking back only twenty-three to thirty years to the Huddleston days; the people I shall be meeting in South Africa will be looking back thirty-seven to fifty years.

Gwen Rymer — who has been a good friend to me ever since my ordination to St. Stephen's, Rochester Row, forty years ago — drove me to Heathrow, and then I had an hour and a half

in the departure lounge. I spent most of it reading the book about which I spoke on "Thought For The Day" yesterday morning: *South Africa: The Solution*.

Its first part is all history — the first chapter, surprising history to many: that black South Africans were very successful at agriculture and marketing what they farmed before the white invasion in the 19th century. The second chapter is a fresh look at Afrikaner history. This goes back, of course, to the middle of the 17th century; but it centres on the Great Trek 1834-1854: the exodus of many thousands of Afrikaner farmers from the British Cape Colony to the territories to the north and north-east. The black people and the Afrikaners had a lot more in common — over against the British whites — than is often suggested. The third chapter traces afresh the rise of apartheid — from 1660. Lord Milner, the great imperialist British High Commissioner, contributed more than most to apartheid: "One of the strongest arguments why the white man must rule" he said "is because that is the only possible means of raising the black man, not to our level of civilisation — which is doubtful whether he would ever attain — but to a much higher level than that which he at present occupies." Milner was recalled to England in 1905.

There is an important section in this history on the Failure of Trade Unionism where apartheid is concerned. "Workers of the world unite and fight for a white South Africa" was their cry!

When the National Party came to power in 1948, the structure of apartheid, developed jointly with the British colonial government and English speaking South Africans, was already there. All the Nationalist Party had to do was to systematize it. Put it another way: the situation that met Trevor Huddleston in 1943 was one for which his own country bore huge responsibility.

Sitting in the airport lounge at Heathrow, I felt it very valuable to go over again these pages of history: the background to the situation I would be meeting in Johannesburg in only a few hours.

Just before we were summoned to the departure gate, I remembered my good friend Alan Judd, who lives nearby in Kennington — who writes novels as well as recommends them! — counselling me to take with me at least one novel that had nothing to do with South Africa. I spotted a Penelope Lively in W.H. Smith's — *The Road to Lichfield* — and a hundred pages — and 3,000 miles — had vanished before 1.0 a.m. We were already half way to Johannesburg — via Chad, Zaire, Ndola (where Dag Hammarskjöld's 'plane crashed) and Bulawayo. The night was long, for I had a rather lovely seventeen month old American baby boy in the next seat who had little desire to sleep; but it was worth being awake to see dawn over Africa: the blaze of red fire in the East that precedes the dawn gradually turned to gold, and then the sun itself burst above the horizon in all its blinding glory, eventually revealing Africa — wild Africa, the Great Rift Valley, and lakes, and rivers — below.

For various reasons, I had been very apprehensive about what would happen when I got to South Africa — I had purposely not applied for a visa — and I wasn't the only one: so, too, was Bishop Trevor. However, all went well, and by 9.0 a.m. I was being greeted by Fr. Timothy Stanton C.R., at Jan Smuts Airport, and there alongside him stood Andrew. Fr. Tim was soon transporting us to the Priory of St. Peter, the Community's headquarters in South Africa — in Turffontein, Johannesburg.

Sunday August 2nd 1992

The Priory is really a couple of bungalows that have been made into one community house, with a chapel, in a "poor white" area of South Johannesburg, which is not only poor white but black too.

Fr. Timothy was the only member of the Community who was not out doing Sunday duty somewhere when we arrived; so we got down to work straight away and went through, one by one, the list of people drawn up by Bishop Trevor — and Walter Makhulu (Archbishop of Central Africa, who had known +Trevor since he was a seven year old boy in Johannesburg) whom I met in London last Thursday afternoon — I have known him for nearly twenty years — a list of people I must try to see in the next four weeks: people from Nelson Mandela downwards! In the present situation this will not, of course, be easy. Fr. Timothy (who had been a curate in St. George's Camberwell where I was vicar — but a long time before me i.e. 1948-50) is the only one of the Fathers now here who would have been here in Bishop Trevor's time. Alas, Timothy did not know what had happened to a good many of the people named on the list, but he could not have been more helpful.

After an hour with Timothy, Andrew celebrated Holy Communion in the chapel just for the three of us. Ever since we began to touch down at Jan Smuts airport this morning, the Huddleston prayer

*God bless Africa
Guard her children
Guide her leaders
Give her peace*

had been reverberating in my heart and mind, and it did so all through the Communion, and no doubt will continue to do so.

By lunch time, the other members of the Priory had returned. Fr. Crispin Harrison, who is in charge; Fr. Francis Blake, who I had not seen since he was a novice, in about 1946, and Fr. Andrew Norton, who I knew as *John* Norton ages ago when he was a curate at St. Mary Redcliffe, Bristol, in the Fifties. The other members of the house, Fr. Kingston Erson and Fr. Jeremy Platt, are away at the moment. They were novices under +Trevor when he was Novice Guardian, so that is unfortunate.

After lunch, Andrew and I went for a brief walk in the neighbourhood. It was suggested I take a stick with me because house dogs are liable to spring out! And, certainly, each bungalow-type house on the estate looked heavily defended. It would be difficult to find a more colourless suburb, off one of the major motorways: little stucco-plastered houses on eighth-of-an-acre plots, surrounded by prefab walls, many in wagon-wheel designs, many with concrete gnomes in the garden. It was clean everywhere — in a rather frightened, conformist, dull sort of way.

It was a lovely crisp cloudless sunny day, like springtime in England.

When we got back, Fr. Timothy had produced Minute Books of the time when Trevor was in charge — detailing what the "Father Huddleston Charitable Fund" was spent on and the resolutions that were passed by the Chapter on, for instance, the Bantu Education Act, and — most revealing — the Visitors Book, and a photograph album going back years. What more could I want?

I did some 'phoning, and I did some work on the Minute Books etc., but it was Sunday, and it was important to get to know the Fathers in the house, so that, after a little duty free whisky I had brought for the House from the 'plane, it was time for an early night, to catch up on last night — it was dark by 6.15 p.m. — well satisfied with the day, and thankful — as we said at Compline — to lay down in *peace* in Johannesburg.

Monday August 3rd 1992

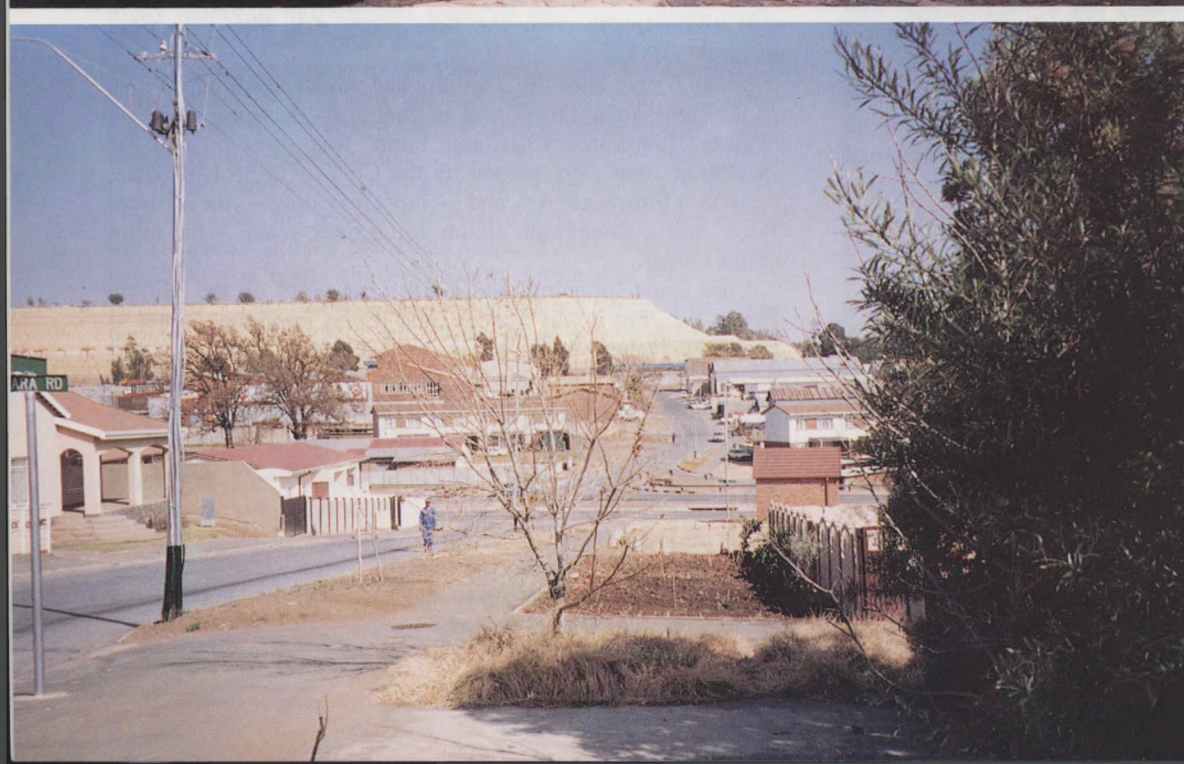
The General Strike is going to make this a Quiet Day whether I like it or not, so — I thought — "Why not like it?!" Most



Fr. Andrew, Fr. Francis, Fr. Timothy and Fr. Crispin, the Prior, in the garden of the Priory of the Community of the Resurrection, Johannesburg.



Fr. Timothy and Andrew Grant, outside the Priory, Turffontein, Johannesburg.



The view from the front of the Priory.

people will keep off the streets. The news bulletins, so far, have a kind of cautious anxiety about them.

The Quiet Day began for me with Mattins and Holy Communion at 6.30 a.m.; so here I am, sitting in my own room at 8.0 a.m., breakfast over, ready for a morning's reading and writing.

9.0 o'clock news . . . three men have just been shot by the police in Soweto. I wonder what's happening to their families.

At 'religious' Quiet Days, people try to think afresh about God — and themselves. Perhaps it might be more valuable, I thought, to reflect afresh on what lies behind this particular Quiet Day: the General Strike.

To put it simply in little more than headings:

1. Racism
2. The problems of power and its sharing
3. Justice and Order
4. Education
5. Poverty and Disadvantage
6. World Economy
7. Drought and Famine
8. The Arms Trade

Andrew and I went out for an hour's walk at eleven, to the supermarket. Shops were open but empty, and streets had little traffic. It was like Good Friday — in the old days; but you could breathe anxiety in the air.

When we got back to the Priory, Michael Stern, the founder of the black-white Waterford School in Swaziland, just over the South African border — after he was headmaster of St. Martin's, Johannesburg — was waiting with his son to see me. I had seen him at Waterford in the 60's when I had gone — with Colin and Pooh Davison — to stay in Mbabane, the capital of Swaziland, with John and Margaret Tibbs, when John was Rector there. Michael Stern was appointed head of St. Martin's by +Trevor and they are kindred spirits. Michael promised to send me his thoughts on +Trevor.

The best thing I read this morning was a review by Charles Hooper, C.R., in the Christmas 1988 "CR" (the quarterly journal of the Community) of *Trevor Huddleston: Essays on his Life and Work* — which was published by the Oxford University Press to celebrate his 75th birthday. It is really, by, for instance, criticising what the book leaves out as well as what it includes, another very valuable assessment of +Trevor.

After lunch, Fr. Timothy drove us to Rosettenville — to St. Benedict's, the convent and conference and retreat centre on one side of the road where there were two Sisters of the Order of the Holy Paraclete, Whitby. Sister Maureen (who had spent a term at Lincoln Theological College and knew Gwen Rymer well) and Sister Patricia, who had served in Ghana just where Andrew is going. Their meeting was very helpful to Andrew, and I found it equally valuable to go across the road to what was once the Priory of the Community of the Resurrection — I had conducted a conference there in 1972 for the clergy of the Diocese of Johannesburg. It was Trevor's base when he was Provincial of the C.R. Alongside was St. Martin's School — where Michael Stern had been headmaster and John Tibbs had been Chaplain.

So the Quiet Day has not been utterly silent!

In the evening, I got down to 'phoning and making appointments, and it was clear that even in this rather strange situation, with people lying low if they possibly can, this visit to South Africa will be worthwhile, and Trevor's letters of introduction, which he has sent on ahead of me, are beginning to do their work.

Tuesday August 4th 1992

At 2.30 a.m. I was woken by a very heavy shower of rain. It was the first rain for months, and none had been expected until October. I lay awake for some hours. It seemed that in an odd way *Nature* was responding to this tragic country's need.

(When we were out walking yesterday, Andrew had said: "However did this country get itself into this terrible state: so many good people, ordinary people, longing for peace for themselves and their children . . .") The rain in the night, falling on the parched earth, seemed like a "shower of blessing". As I lay awake, I suddenly remembered a fragment I had learnt in plainsong nearly fifty years ago when I first visited Mirfield — the Community of the Resurrection — as a student:

*"Drop down, ye heavens, from above,
and let the skies pour down righteousness."*

This afternoon Fr. Timothy took us to see Helen Joseph. I last visited her when she was under house arrest in 1972. She had been in gaol with Timothy's sister, Hannah, who will be out here later in August. (Timothy himself — as gentle a man as you could ever imagine — was in prison for six months in 1983 for refusing to give evidence against someone who had stayed in the Priory — "contempt of court"!) Helen must be one of the most remarkable women there ever was. She is 87 now and virtually housebound. She was invited to serve on the provincial committee of an organisation which was to become the South African Congress of Democrats. It was on that committee — in 1953 — that she first met Trevor. Although Helen was born in England, and taught in India, she moved to South Africa in 1931, and joined up in the 1939-45 war as a welfare officer in the S. African Air Force. In 1951 she became Secretary to the medical aid fund of a Union, and began to learn politics. In 1956 she helped to lead a mass protest of 20,000 women. She was arrested on a charge of high treason in 1956, and her life became one long saga of police persecution. King's College, London, has made her (like me!) an Honorary Fellow. She has had cancer, and heart attacks, and her eyes are going, and her hearing, but — banned four times, jailed four times, and on trial for four years — she was as full of life today as she was twenty years ago. Fr. Timothy celebrated Holy Communion in her bedroom, and we also celebrated her return to the Church in 1966 — for most of her life she had been rather disgusted with the Church! "It was God's touch that reached me in gaol and during house arrest" she has written. We read the prayer in the South African Prayer Book for "St. Peter's Chains" — which seemed highly appropriate: "O God, who didst cause thy holy apostle Peter to be loosed from his chains and to depart without hurt: Break, we beseech thee, the chains of our sins, and mercifully put away all evil from us . . ."

Helen having said "It was God's touch that reached me in gaol . . ." it was curious that I should have come across a poem today by a South African friend of mine, Hugh Lewin, who worked for Defence and Aid for a while when he got out of South Africa after being in prison at a young age. (He has written a book *Bandiet: Seven Years in a South African Prison: Barrie and Jenkins 1974*. Hugh's father was the Anglican parish priest of Irene, near Pretoria. When Hugh was at St. John's College, Johannesburg, he spent some time in Sophiatown at Trevor Huddleston's invitation. Hugh wanted to become a priest. After university, he became a member of a secret sabotage group, to do acts of sabotage which would not endanger human life.) It is so powerful a poem that I must simply set it down:

TOUCH

*When I get out
I'm going to ask someone
to touch me
very gently please
and slowly
touch me*

*I want
to learn again
how life feels.*

*I've not been touched
for seven years
for seven years
I've been untouched
out of touch
and I've learnt
to know now
the meaning of
untouchable.*

*Untouched — not quite
I can count the things
that have touched me*

*One: fists
At the beginning
fierce mad fists
beating beating
till I remember
screaming
Don't touch me
please don't touch me.*

*Two: paws
The first four years of paws
every day
patting paws, searching
— arms up, shoes off
legs apart —
prodding paws, systematic
heavy, indifferent
probing away
all privacy.*

*I don't want fists and paws
I want to be touched
again
and to touch,
I want to feel alive
again
I want to say
when I get out
Here I am
please touch me.*

When we returned this afternoon, we called at the local post office, part of the local major supermarket. In the car park is a tower and in the tower, surveying the scene, was an armed guard.

Wednesday August 5th 1992

Last night was bitterly cold, with several degrees of frost. (Johannesburg is a city set six thousand feet above sea level.) This morning, the sun shines — again — from a cloudless azure sky.

I've got used to the rhythm of "early to bed and early to rise": straight to bed after Compline at 8.30 p.m.; up for Mattins and Mass at 6.30 a.m. Andrew is much better at all this 'religion' than I am! But the Fathers here — Crispin, Timothy, Francis and (the other) Andrew — are being very good to us; and it is good for me to be reminded that life needs to be lived corporately, not simply individually and individualistically.

Helen Joseph said something yesterday which lodged in my mind. She talked of "culture" as one of the huge dividing forces and factors in this society. But is "culture" different from

education, history, religion, race, deprivation, poverty, music, art, occupation — or lack of it?

I'm well aware that since I arrived here I've spoken only a few words with a black person, and those have been courtesies and pleasantries to Rea, a kindly woman who does most of the cooking — very good cooking. This is, of course, in large part due to the fact that Fr. Crispin has said that he thinks it would be unwise for Andrew and me to go into Soweto — even in 'dog-collars' — during this Week of Mass Action: ethnic and political tensions, wretched living conditions, unemployment in the third year of recession, make the possibility of violence, particularly from migrant workers living in the notorious "hostels", too great. So we have to accept the fact that *for the moment* there are "no-go" areas and "no-meeting-with" people. For that, one can only feel dismay.

What enabled Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu and Oliver Tambo to be accepted? — to transcend the *cultures*? Was it "only" education?

Early this morning, Avis delivered the car Andrew and I have decided to hire, and, after a little more 'phoning to fix interviews — including one to Cape Town to Archbishop Desmond Tutu — we were soon on the way across Johannesburg to visit Olga Horowitz.

Olga is now in her eighties. She was born in Dublin, but was raised in Kimberley, and in her early years thought it perfectly natural that black people should walk in the gutter. She did well at Kimberley High School, and, at an early age, became the first woman journalist on the Kimberley paper, reporting cases in the local magistrates' court, but also interviewing Smuts. It was in 1942 that she went to Johannesburg and joined the Johannesburg *Star* as a journalist.

Soon after we arrived she went to make us some coffee, leaving us a copy of Trevor's book on his recent return to South Africa: *Return to South Africa: The Ecstasy and the Agony* (Fount 1991) and said "Please read these pages before we start talking". This is what we read:

When we first met, sometime in the early 1940s, Olga Price (as she was then, before her marriage to Charles Horowitz) was a journalist on The Star. At some point, and I now forget exactly when or why, I needed to reach the widest public I could. Television did not exist. Radio did, of course, but it was strictly controlled and censored by the government: increasingly so after the Nationalist Party came to power in 1948. The Star was the evening paper most widely read by the English-speaking sector in the Transvaal. So, to The Star offices I went with my story. It may well have been about the launching of the African Children's Feeding Scheme, but it was followed by so many other stories that I cannot now be sure which was the first. I was directed to Olga's desk in the large, open-plan reporters' room, and found her at her typewriter, fingers poised for action and (I am sure) a cigarette in her mouth. I was a chain smoker in those days and, as I recollect, all our interviews took place in a cloud of smoke. But what was unique about Olga was her ability to write her articles straight on to the typewriter. She never took notes and transcribed them later, her articles had an immediacy, an urgency, about them which made compelling reading. All I had to do was to tell the story. She would begin at once, pause occasionally to ask me a question, the exact spelling of a name, the description of a place, but there was never the need to explain the purpose of what I had come for. She was the most intuitive and sensitive journalist I have ever known. Without her I know I could not have reached across the barriers of racial prejudice or touched the hearts and minds (and pockets!) of the white community. Sometimes, coming back in the car from Pretoria or Roodeport or Krugersdorp, I would reach the outskirts of the city and



Sister Maureen and Sister Patricia OHP with Fr. Timothy CR and Andrew Grant at St. Benedict's Rosetenville, Johannesburg.



Helen Joseph.



Olga Horowitz.

find Star posters with banner headlines which I knew instantly to refer to my interview with Olga that morning. That could mean a massive mail of support for some project or other; it could equally well mean 'hate' telephone calls and abuse. But it always meant a heightening of public awareness on the issues which mattered most to us both.

We kept in touch through the years by post — always using pseudonyms on our airmail envelopes. In those long intervening years since 1956 we met occasionally in London. Her journalistic life at The Star still continued, and even after retirement she was recalled to write a daily article, 'Stoep Talk', which she still does.

I found her, now a widow, living in a beautiful tenth-floor flat with a view across Johannesburg. We simply talked as if we were still in that Star press-room (but neither of us smoking now!) about the politics of the present and the hopes of the future.

Olga wanted us to read that passage because, she maintained, that what Trevor said about her wasn't true. Everything that she said later underlined the fact that it was, and is, true! But she undervalues what she has meant to Trevor. She is devoted to him, and her skills were just what he needed at the time: "Surrounded by friends and surrounded by enemies". She, "swept away by causes, always sad causes" was caught up in his work in Sophiatown . . . "No man is an island", and he happened to meet someone else on his island . . . "To know him was to love him". "He was always in a hurry, the skirts of his cassock flying, surrounded by children, patting them, laughing with them. He had never had the love of children as he had their love in Sophiatown . . ." "He would come into my office, articulate, sincere, angry . . ." "One day he came in on the edge of a diabetic coma, exhausted: 'Olga get me food immediately' he said, as he collapsed into a chair." Olga was one of those who went to Trevor's famous "Shoe Parties" at Rosettenville ("like the old woman who lived in a shoe, there was such a mix of people, races and ideas — which bluntly broke the apartheid colour-lines — that they overflowed the shoe!") "Some people think Trevor is publicity mad" I said. "Well, I have never known him mad on publicity for himself" Olga replied. "He is mad on publicity for the things that concern him."

We stayed with Olga for nearly three hours: eating so many cheese cookies and almond cookies and drinking so much South African sherry that we needed no lunch!

It was only as we began to leave that Olga began to open up about her disagreement with Trevor. Although her sympathy with the Afrikaner was small — "They simply want this as their own land with their own language" — she had little sympathy with the Week of Industrial Action and the present policies of the ANC. She revealed some of the dilemmas of a top journalist of a top newspaper. She could take refuge in "stories"; policies had to be left to others. "My job was to keep my readers!" she said. "All life is a compromise".

In the afternoon, I saw a very different person: Cyprian Ramosime: now assistant priest at St. Mary's Orlando, a "worker priest", whose secular job is Headmaster of Olifantsvlei Bantu Farm School. Born in 1927, he grew up in the country, and was sixteen when he first met Fr. Huddleston — at school at St. Cyprian's, Sophiatown. As a lad, he was a server in Christ the King, Sophiatown; did gardening, and cleaned out the swimming pool adjacent to the Priory; went to the Servers' Guild every Sunday afternoon. "Fr. Trevor would take us to various places of interest." Cyprian was sent to the Diocesan Training College at Pietersburg. "Fr. Trevor arranged for me to go to College, and the College fees were paid by him. Twenty-seven of us at that time were paid for by bursary. We were sent to SAFRIC'S store in Johannesburg to get shoes, stockings, shirts, trousers, etc. We were told Fr.

Huddleston would pay. He looked after our families, too. Once, when I came home on holiday, there was a message from Fr. Huddleston. He had some clothes for me. Then he said: 'Cyprian, here is some money. You must go home at once — to Boons. Your mother is sick there.' The same night, I went off to the country and stayed a couple of days, when my mother passed away. If Fr. Huddleston had not done what he did, my mother would have passed away without my seeing her."

"When I returned to the College, where I was a prefect, there was a strike over the food at the College (We called it 'The Black Hole'!) Although I was not involved in the strike, I was expelled with three others — Michael Rantho, Aron Legwale and Johannes Chiboy Palatse. They had a group which was good at American music *The Diamond Horse Shoes*. I was expelled because I was 'too influential and not safe for the College to keep there'. But the students had love and respect for me. The majority of the students were from the country and they did not like those of us from Sophiatown. I tried to be a responsible leader. Fr. Huddleston went to Pietersburg himself to get the facts, and called us to tell us an agreement had been reached and that we were allowed back. But we all left the College and went out to work. I went to work in industry as a First Aid attendant, and, after two years, went to Wilberforce Training College. Then I taught at Christ the King. But that was the year of the Bantu Education Act. St. Cyprian's School was closed down. The Church started its own school, but that, too, was closed down by the State. We started Family Centres — counter to the Bantu Education Act — but we were called 'the product of a Protest School.' At the Family Centres we could not teach the 3 R's, and without a Certificate, what could the children do? We agreed 100% with the aim of refusing Bantu Education, but there was no real alternative. Even to handle chalk for the blackboard made us liable to arrest. In the end I was forced to take up a post with the Government Education Department. I was by then a Sub-Deacon (having been server, then lay reader). Eventually, in 1979, I was ordained priest."

"Fr. Huddleston was very popular. He was looked upon as a saviour — not only by Anglicans. A thug in his twenties — who actually killed somebody — a 'tsotsi', who didn't attend church — Fr. Huddleston and he became close friends."

"The people knew well what the C.R. was doing."

"I went to a meeting at the Cathedral Hall with Fr. Huddleston. (I was not politically informed then). Fr. Huddleston. was in the chair. There was a cross-section of the people. They were looking for strategies to bring the Government to its senses. They talked of sport as a weapon and of a sports boycott. It was unbelievable to me then that ordinary sports could be used as a weapon. I was stunned when South Africa was thrown out of international sport. Now I see that the Church is called to be in every rook and nook of life."

Cyprian has gone off with a list of people I want to see, and whom he knows, and says he will do what he can to get them to see me.

Thursday August 6th 1992

Today, the Feast of the Transfiguration, is one of my favourite days of the year, and it seems particularly appropriate to spend it here. If any society needed transfiguring and transforming South Africa does — though Britain doesn't come far behind!

I was taken out to lunch at the Zoo Restaurant — a very fine restaurant — by "Chippy", who is one of the half dozen top executives of one of the largest building concerns in South Africa, owned by Anglo-American i.e. Oppenheimers. I had been Chaplain to him at Trinity College, Cambridge 1955-59, though we had not met since 1972. I conducted his first marriage. He is now married to a TV presenter, Penny Smythe.

It was a happy lunch, though neither of us gave any quarter! I told him early on I was writing Bishop Trevor Huddleston's

life and that is why I was in Johannesburg. He made it clear he was on terms of personal friendship with "F.W." i.e. de Klerk, the State President. "Chippy" it has to be said, is one of my dearest friends — in spite of this gap of twenty years. I put very direct questions to him, like: "What is your motivation?" — He was born in England. He responded: "I am committed to this country. Political theories have failed in every African country. The future here now is in the hands of businesses like mine: the future of blacks as well as whites. I think I am 'colour-blind'. I spend much of my life flying to Zaire, Ghana, Uganda, etc. I do business with black executives as much as white. I tell "F.W." he needs peace for there to be prosperity for black as well as white: for white as well as black. The education of the poor white and the poor black depend on successful business and investment. My motivation is my family — just as my driver Alphaeus's motivation is his family — my family and South Africa."

Chippy had grown and learnt since I last saw him. He said: "You know I have had a good education:" (one of the top South African public schools and then Trinity College, Cambridge, and then accountancy.) "But I was ignorant after all that of many of the facts of life of my own country — its housing, its employment and unemployment, its pay rates for black and white, the history of apartheid, civil rights and the lack of them. But in this age television reveals all. You cannot keep the facts of life hidden. Was it that I was ignorant or that I did not want to know? The fact is I *didn't* know — in spite of being 'educated', which is still true of so many." What Chippy did not refer to is the *cost* of this kind of ignorance: in suffering and death: dead children, men and women.

After lunch Chippy drove me to his beautiful house for a quick visit, then he left me to his driver to take me back to the Priory in his BMW. Alphaeus lives in Soweto. He, of course, knew of Bishop Trevor. He told me how bad the schools were his three children went to. He has been Chippy's driver for ten years — which says something for them both. What I could not make out was whether Alphaeus knew Trevor Huddleston because of the publicity given him here in his two returns to Africa in the last two years or whether he remembers him from years back. The "myth" of Huddleston is now as powerful as the reality! Chippy is flying to England and Ghana and Uganda next week.

Friday August 7th 1992

I was meant to see Oliver Tambo this morning. We went across Johannesburg in the car to his home — a kind of St. John's Wood diplomatic house — but early in the morning he had had to fly suddenly to the Ciskei because there had been a shooting incident at Fort Hare, the University where he is Vice-Chancellor — and the ANC had asked him to be their representative there. That's life — here — at the moment.

We met Mrs. Tambo and some of her grandchildren, and then used the opportunity to go into Johannesburg itself, which so far we have hardly seen. It was important to do this: to 'stand and stare'. We parked the car in the car-park which is three floors below the ground of a fifty floor new tower block, the Carlton Centre. The main airways offices are on floors above ground — we needed to go there to book a flight to Cape Town — but the ground floor and first floors, down and up, are one huge supermarket, alive and crowded with shoppers; and most of those shoppers are black. Johannesburg's centre is now black, and, somehow, the blacks are coming to power — purchasing power. Many white people are too frightened to enter the *mêlée* of black shoppers: they warn you that you will be mugged. We saw no signs of violence this morning — though the police are everywhere and armed. There were plenty of signs of life and vigour and fun. Somehow, a black middle-class is being born — a young jeans-wearing middle-class. Andrew and I had a couple of sandwiches for lunch.

We bought them at the sandwich bar and took them to tables in the shopping mall. At a table near to us was a happy black family out shopping. In +Trevor's time this would have been inconceivable.

Saturday August 8th 1992

On Thursday, August 6th, when I went to have lunch with "Chippy", Andrew went into Pretoria, to attend an "assessment" of the Further Ministerial Training of the Diocese of Pretoria, in the hope that he might learn something that would profit him in Ghana. There he had met Robert and Diana Gilbert, who kindly asked us both to spend the week-end with them. They had a fruit farm at Ridor Reitfontein, between Rustenburg and Pretoria, but had also built on their land a retreat and conference centre, which was used not only by the Diocese of Pretoria but by groups from miles around, indeed, from the whole Province of the Church of South Africa. I was at first reluctant to go — I wanted to see more people of the Huddleston era from Sophiatown, if that was possible, but, when it was clear that was unlikely, I agreed to go, and we set off for Rustenburg this morning at 9.0 a.m. I felt there might be something to be said for seeing what people like the Gilberts had made of Trevor Huddleston — in the 40's and 50's and now.

I hadn't been to Rustenburg since the 60's, when Colin Davison was its vicar and I preached there: the first sermon I ever gave in South Africa. The seventy mile drive there was full of interest, past the Magalisberge Hills. Rustenburg itself had changed and grown out of all recognition. It is now a large centre for shopping and all its rather old-world attraction had vanished. We bought some sandwiches and made a quick get-away.

The Gilberts had given Andrew good directions to their farm and we found it with little difficulty — in a remote area not unlike the Yorkshire dales, thirty miles from Rustenburg. But what greeted us astonished us. The Gilberts had themselves built their own spacious house, and, a little below, they had built a smaller house, with accommodation for visitors like Andrew and me; then they had also built a conference house, alongside, for two dozen people, and all this looking out onto a lake, twenty yards away, and their large fruit farm, with peach trees in blossom — like a Van Gogh painting. We were greeted by half a dozen dogs, of different shapes and sizes, all of which, mercifully, proved friendly — and the Gilberts.

I soon left Andrew with the Gilberts, to take myself off to walk and to sleep. Out from the reeds in the lake, a huge heron which I had startled took sudden flight. There are over three hundred other birds in the immediate area; it's a kind of natural sanctuary.

It was over tea and supper that we really got to know the Gilberts. They had lived in Rustenburg until they bought the farm and they were — small world! — great friends of Colin and Pooh Davison. Pooh had come out from England to stay here since Colin's tragic death two years ago. Robert was by profession a pharmacist but had been ordained as a self-supporting priest. He had used a legacy to buy the farm and build the centre. He and Diana worked together now in a remarkable joint ministry. She is a deacon, a preacher and a teacher. She is also skilled in community and group work. He saw his priesthood as enabling people in the locality to have a priest, but all the time in ways that released their gifts. We went through some of the training material they had found useful which might be of particular use to Andrew: they had used the material mainly with the local black people.

Then we turned to the subject of Trevor Huddleston. Robert had been born in Johannesburg in 1942, a year before Trevor had come to South Africa. "We heard of him as a 'trouble-maker' and a 'Communist'! When we moved to Rustenburg, with Colin as our vicar, he was a left wing vicar



The Retreat and Conference Centre which Robert and Diana Gilbert have built at Ridor Reitfontein.



The congregation outside the Church at Imfdikwe.



The Union Building, Pretoria.

in a right wing town.” (Colin was, in fact, expelled from South Africa.) They had not read *Naught for Your Comfort* because in South Africa it was not easily available then. They were clear that South Africa in the last two years has radically changed and is still changing, and can never go back to apartheid, even though much still needs to be changed. They told us how one of their sons used to go round Rustenburg at night with his friends removing the notices which said “For Whites Only”, and they were rightly proud that their daughter, Rea, as a 16-year old, had won the prize in a national “Women for Peace” competition for a painting that took as its subject the Huddleston prayer “God bless Africa...”. Harry Oppenheimer had bought it for his art collection.

Sunday August 9th 1992

After breakfast, the Gilberts drove us to the village of Imfdikwe, a dozen miles from Rustenburg. It is dominated by a mine: the Rustenburg Platinum Mine. Almost all the men of the village are employees of the mine. The village was, in the main, a series of small shacks, plus a hostel or two: for two thousand villagers in all. There was only one tap for all the villagers. Pigs roamed around the tap. It looked a situation made for cholera. Garbage was blowing round in the spaces between the shacks. It was curious, even ludicrous, that the Mining Company which provides medical care for its workers (but not their families), does nothing about the supply of water — which seems elemental and elementary. It was a cold, windy morning, though bright: too cold for many to come to church. There were thirteen adults present and thirteen children, in a very bare church: walls and windows and corrugated iron roof. The hymns were to English tunes with African harmonies and most of the service was in Tswana. Mary, the wife of a black taxi-driver who is also a priest (but away elsewhere this morning) guided Andrew and me through the service. She led all the hymns and gave me a push downwards when I needed to kneel. Robert presided at the altar and Diana preached — or, rather, taught with visual aids and with the help of a Tswana translator. The children sat in the two rows in front of me and enjoyed kneeling down so that they could play about, with their faces close to the ground and their bottoms high in the air. The service came most alive at the “Peace” and at the Offertory. Robert and Diana’s commitment was impressive, but it was clear that most of the prosperous church-goers of Rustenburg cared little about the existence of this village so near to — and yet so far from — them. Such a morning begs all the questions about our being “members one of another”. I took a photograph of the congregation after the service — which made everyone happy. Apartheid legislation may have gone, but *de facto* apartheid remains. On the way home, we visited Mary’s humble house, and then had lunch with Robert and Diana before taking our leave of them: grateful for a memorable twenty-four hours.

We returned to Johannesburg via Pretoria. I hadn’t seen the Union building for more than twenty years. In spite of the evil that must have been planned and perpetrated there by the South African Government, it has to be said Sir Herbert Baker had created a most wonderful building — which compares with Lutyens’ buildings in Delhi. Pretoria is a dramatically beautiful city. Now, Pretoria and Johannesburg are virtually joined together, not only by a motorway but by industrial development and housing.

Monday August 10th 1992

I have been snatching time to read whenever possible — and when my eyes would not immediately shut!: *The Mind of South Africa: The Story of the Rise and Fall of Apartheid*: Allister Sparks: Heinemann 1990. He was editor of the Rand Daily Mail from 1977 to 1981. *The Struggle for Liberation in South Africa: A Short History*: Govan Mbeki: David Philip 1992.

Mbeki is a veteran ANC leader and intellectual. *The Power of the Powerless: A study of 3316 disenfranchised South Africans*: Madiba Publications 1991 — concerning the network of power mobilised by the powerless to overcome their day to day problems — and *South Africa: The Solution*. But I have also been re-reading “in situ”, so-to-speak, *Naught for Your Comfort*. It is now thirty-six years since it was published and has gone through seventeen editions; but what is astonishing is that so little of it needs to be altered. The laws have changed, of course, but most of the realities are unaltered. “The roots of the African housing problem go much deeper than the past seven or eight years of Nationalist rule. They flourish in the sort of apathy and selfishness which belongs to man himself, but which seem to find a peculiarly strong expression in the wealthy city of Johannesburg” wrote +Trevor in 1956.

At ten, at his home, we had the postponed interview with Oliver Tambo, who is Chairman of the National Executive of the ANC. He is recovering from the stroke he had two years ago. He finds it difficult to get up from a chair and one of his arms is fairly useless. Sometimes his speech is slow and his thought processes are a little impeded but he has made a remarkable recovery, for he was at death’s door in a London Hospital, and it is simply amazing what he has been so courageously doing at this crucial hour in the ANC’s and South Africa’s history. He is a very gentle man and, indeed, a lovely man. He greeted me with immediate warmth and trust. We talked first about his own up-bringing in the most Easterly part of the Cape: at Bizsana, six miles from the border of Natal. Both his mother and his father died when he was very young. He spoke of having “two other mothers”. His father was uneducated, and there were six children, four of whom died. He first came in touch with the Church through the Holy Cross Mission, Pondoland.

There was not time to fill in all the gaps that eventually led to him becoming a teacher at Rosettenville; but it was while he was a teacher that he and +Trevor first met. “Trevor influenced me to take the decision to train as a priest. I planned to go overseas to train. Trevor had written to Archbishop Clayton about my training but there were awkward comments which suggested the unwillingness of the Archbishop. The Executive Secretary of the ANC was too much of a politician to be a priest!”

It needs to be said that in Trevor’s time, Oliver Tambo, the student friend of Nelson Mandela, was part of the Youth League of the ANC, with Walter Sisulu. The Youth League drew up a radical Programme of Action that called for civil disobedience, strikes, boycotts and stay-at-homes. It committed the ANC to a strategy based on mass action in defiance of the law.

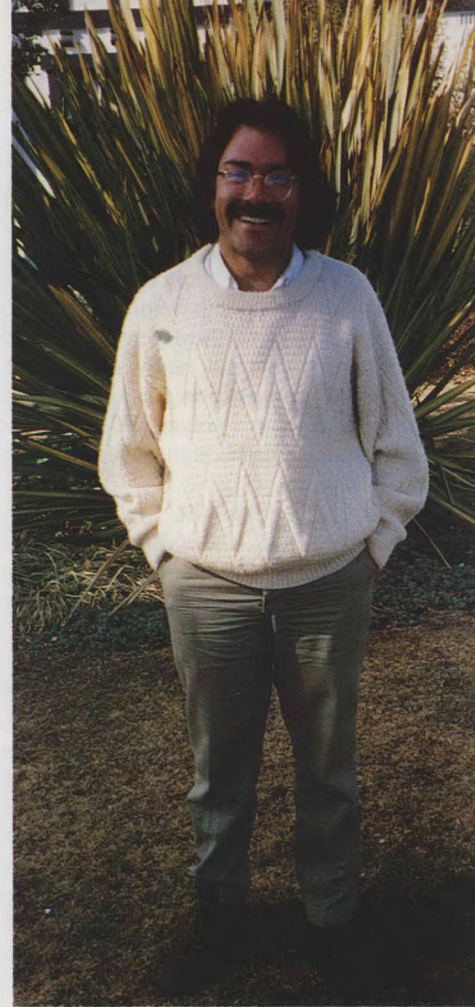
Chjef Luthuli, Mandela, Oliver Tambo and Walter Sisulu appeared in a special court in Pretoria for a trial that went on for five years — 1956-61 — before the State case collapsed.

The ANC reorganized itself to function underground, and sent Oliver Tambo abroad to lobby international support. He was exiled for thirty years and was President of the ANC-in-Exile. He went to Canon John Collins, then head of Christian Action, to plead — successfully — for the initiation of what became International Defence and Aid.

Trevor Huddleston has said “It would be hard to find a more devoted churchman than Tambo” but in South Africa, he had his movements restricted for two years. It seemed “quite incomprehensible” to +Trevor that the Church of the Province of South Africa should keep silent when a man of Oliver Tambo’s stature was victimized in this way. To +Trevor, Oliver’s banning presented “a unique opportunity for the Church to protest and to demand to be heard, on behalf of one of her most faithful sons.” “Sadly” he added “she did nothing”. On 5th December 1956 — by which time +Trevor had been



Oliver Tambo — addressing a Christian Action meeting some time ago.



Michael Worsnip.



Canon Reginald Dove in retirement in Johannesburg.



The Drakensberg Mountains — en route from Pietermaritzburg to Johannesburg.

recalled to England — there were multiple arrests, including Oliver Tambo.

In 1958 Tambo began training as a lawyer.

At our meeting, Oliver Tambo said of +Trevor: “He has been a great influence on my life: particularly through his involvement in our politics, for this gave me the assurance the Church was with our people and encouraged me to have faith in the work of the Church. +Trevor was the man we could rely on. He never hesitated to express his opinions. I only wished that many priests could have been like him but most of them were all too cautious.”

“I believe that Trevor Huddleston has played a very significant part in the history of South Africa” he said. “It was no accident he was chosen to receive the highest honour that the ANC could bestow: the presentation of the Isitwalandwe award for outstanding service in the cause of South Africa’s freedom.”

“I thank him also for his personal friendship and for his role as a priest. It has been a great thing to have Fr. Huddleston as a friend because he has also been a Father.”

“I cannot deny I persuaded him, when he was still very reluctant, to return to South Africa: to do what he could to see that what remained of apartheid was totally removed.”

When I said to Oliver Tambo “Many people over here say that +Trevor has no capacity for compromise” he first of all smiled, then his smile turned into a laugh, as much as to say “I’ve heard this before”. Then he said “There are some things on which there can be no compromise — like apartheid. It is on those +Trevor has refused to compromise.”

In the afternoon, we went out to Edenvale, a suburb of Johannesburg, to visit Reg Dove, a retired priest who had worked in Sophiatown under +Trevor, when +Trevor first arrived. He had only good words to say of +Trevor; “but he smoked like a chimney”! He emphasized how those on +Trevor’s staff were given their freedom. But what I found most moving was that tears filled his eyes when he talked of how caring +Trevor had been after he and his wife had left Sophiatown for Basutoland, and their six-year old daughter died, and again, only six years ago, when their third daughter died.

It was surprising — and delightful — when I said to Reg: “Wasn’t it awful working where you did?” “No” he said “It was exciting and it was fun”! He covered much the same ground that other staff members have covered but he managed to convey the difference between areas that were under Trevor: Sophiatown, Newclare, Pimville, Kliptown, Orlando.

Tuesday August 11th 1992

One person in South Africa I knew I must meet: Michael Worsnip: but he lives in Pietermaritzburg. So at ten to eight this morning, we set off. It was new motorway virtually all the nearly 300 miles: because of such good roads we were able to average 80 mph. There was relatively little traffic; and by one o’clock, we were booking into a small hotel which Michael had recommended — the Hilton Hotel, Hilton (!) Pietermaritzburg. The first half of the way would have been boring bad it not been the first time we had traversed it: the country is so undistinguished and the road so interminably straight; but, half way, you enter the Drakensberg mountains, and, from then on, the scenery is dramatic. What became obvious through such a journey is the terrible drought that South Africa is suffering: thousands of trees dead and dying; river beds dried up, and grass not green but brown everywhere. We were in “a barren and dry land where no water is”.

After a light lunch, we spent the afternoon reconnoitring Pietermaritzburg — a lovely city, lying in a large valley — and were back at “the Hilton” in time for tea with Michael Worsnip.

Michael is the author of a remarkable book, published by the University of Natal in 1991: *Between the Two Fires: The*

Anglican Church and Apartheid 1948 to 1957, to which Trevor Huddleston has written a foreword, and in that foreword wrote: “Michael Worsnip has produced a book which is of seminal importance to all who are seriously committed to a proper understanding of the Church’s role in the struggle for liberation in South Africa.”

Michael is a surprising person. He is only thirty-four — so he is a historian: the period of his book ends before he was born. He is ordained, but at the moment he has ceased to lecture in theology and is involved in AIDS education through local Primary Health Care. He has degrees from three universities: Rhodes University, Grahamstown; Cambridge University — where he studied under John Robinson, Don Cupitt, Morna Hooker and Rowan Williams, and held the John Reeves Scholarship at Sidney Sussex College. (John, the son of Bishop Ambrose Reeves of Johannesburg, was tragically drowned); and Manchester University, where he wrote *Between the Two Fires*, with Dr. Anthony Dyson to supervise his research.

Although Michael *looks* white, and was classified in South Africa as white, he has black relatives and has caused a not untypical apartheid problem for the authorities! When, as a matter of conscience, he refused to do military service — “you cannot go and kill people for apartheid” — they wanted to arrest him, and he had to flee to Lesotho, where he was General Secretary to the Christian Council. But, when he had established he was wrongly classified as white, he was able to return to South Africa, as only whites are called up!!

Michael is now writing the biography of Michael Lapsley, a priest of the Society of the Sacred Mission, born in New Zealand, who on 28 April 1990 received a parcel bomb in Harare — posted in South Africa — which exploded, leaving him just about alive, though without hands for the rest of his life. Michael Lapsley was Michael Worsnip’s friend and confessor.

Needless to say, he is not the “normal” historian/theologian/priest and we had a fascinating two hours together. We talked about the characters in his book: Archbishop Geoffrey Clayton, Michael Scott, Bishop Ambrose Reeves — and, of course, Trevor Huddleston. We talked about the reception Michael’s book has been given in South Africa today — for, although in many ways, it is about the *past*, how you react to that past says a lot about how you react to the present. We talked of Archbishop Desmond Tutu. We talked of Michael Lapsley, whose first contact with South Africa as a thirteen-year old was through Trevor Huddleston’s *Naught for Your Comfort*, which made an indelible impression on him. Michael Worsnip had interviewed +Trevor in 1984 when he was writing *Between the Two Fires*.

Both Andrew and I were clear that it had been an extremely valuable meeting: certainly worth the journey. At dinner, we mulled over the meeting, and then turned in early — not least so that I could read Michael Worsnip’s manuscript of his book on Michael Lapsley.

Wednesday August 12th 1992

I awoke at five, and read through the manuscript, entitled *No Need to Speak*, which made it clear what a major figure Michael Lapsley has been in the Province of South Africa in the last decade — because of his being letter-bombed, of course; but this ‘turbulent priest’ has had running battles not only with the State, which exiled him to Lesotho, but with bishops and archbishops — in particular of Capetown, Pretoria, Lesotho and Harare, Zimbabwe, and with the Provincial of his own Order, the Society of the Sacred Mission. Michael Worsnip’s biography of him is important, because it sees and asks the fundamental question: “Should a priest belong to the ANC?” — as Michael Worsnip does — “or any political party?” The House of Bishops has given a unanimous “No”. Michael presses the question — as a turbulent theologian! It is not an

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