

November 5, 1968.

6/7

Central Methodist Deaconess Society: Welcome to President
of the Conference, Rev. C. Wilkins - 10.30 a.m.

Welcome to Rev. C. Wilkins - President of the Conference.

Ties of Methodist Church with Johannesburg, as old as
Johannesburg itself.

Congratulate Church on the work it is doing.

Congratulate Rev. Wilkins on being elected to his high
office.

Refer to my association with the Bantu in Johannesburg, and
to the recent survey on cultural change in Soweto, which was
published in 1965, when an endeavour was made to assess the
cultural trends.

2/.....

The yardstick used was the practice of Bantu customs in relation to attitudes, opinions and the aspirations of individuals. Because every individual is unique, it is very difficult to draw conclusions on which to base one's thinking.

The people of Soweto have adopted much of western culture, but Bantu customs are practised side by side with western customs. For instance, the custom of lobolo has been linked to a large extent with the christian marriage ceremony.

The customs which have the greatest appeal involve ancestors. The ancestors are appealed to, praised, fed, appeased, and satisfaction, happiness and security result. For example, the ancestors are called up, and a goat is slaughtered, when a member of the family loses his job; a child becomes ill and beer is brewed and set aside for the ancestors;

a visit is made to a grandfather's grave because a child is doing badly at school; a ceremonial sacrifice to the ancestors is held because a member of the family has died; the ancestors are given a thanksgiving ceremony because the family head has been given a bonus by his employer.

It was found that the emergent cultural pattern in Soweto is neither predominantly orientated to western ways, nor to traditional tribal ways, it is a blending of the two. Western customs, when practised, have been modified to include traditional elements, and purely traditional customs not only have been suitably modified, but are practised out of the tribal context.

The difficult position of the Church in this transitional period,

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