

1. The Conference, while appreciating the work of the Naude Committee of the SADF and the positive aspects of the Defence Amendment Act of 1983, finds the new provisions for conscientious objectors as a whole to be inadequate and calls for:
 - (a) the recognition of ethical, moral and philosophical objections to warfare,
 - (b) the recognition of the Just War objector whether or not his position involves a religious basis or political assessment,
 - (c) the composition of the examining Board for objectors in a less partial form,
 - (d) an adequate discussion with the churches to review these and other aspects of the Act.

2. The Conference calls:
 - (a) on persons who qualify for and accept alternative community service according to the 1983 Defence Amendment Act to do this work whole-heartedly as servants of Christ in accordance with Col 3:22-25,
 - (b) asks conference^(?) to offer prayer on the Sundays preceeding the January and July SADF intakes for persons known to them who are subject to conscription whether such persons accept or refuse their conscription.

(Wouldn't agree to embargo on ministers serving on Boards)

- 29.9.17.2.3 Most South Africans are deprived of their citizenship without their consent and are forced to take up citizenship and even residence in a "national state" which may not be the place of their birth, or the place of their choice.
- 29.9.17.2.4 People are being uprooted from areas in which they have been living for generations and are being dumped in non-viable "homelands", without work or any means of subsistence.
- 29.9.17.2.5 There is subtle propaganda justifying the division of the people into rural and urban ethnic mini-states. The primary aim seems to be the perpetuation of exploitation and suffering of people in depressed areas which become reservoirs of cheap labour.
- 29.9.17.3 The Conference recognises that many people are compelled to live and work within the "homelands". In the circumstances, therefore, it is inevitable that some Blacks, many of them members and leaders of our Churches, are drawn into participation in the system. The Conference totally abhors the "homelands" policy and is not persuaded that the so-called independence will bring an end to oppression. It acknowledges, however, that the Church has a continuing responsibility for the pastoral care and physical welfare of the people in the "homelands". It believes that the Church is set in the world as a "sign of the Kingdom", and must work within every political ideology.
- 29.9.17.4 The Conference affirms that the Church is called to preach and to practice the Gospel in every situation. It therefore resolves:
 - 29.9.17.4.1 to continue to evangelise and provide pastoral care;
 - 29.9.17.4.2 to engage in a ministry of compassion to those who have been removed and resettled;
 - 29.9.17.4.3 to exercise a prophetic ministry and to support movements for peaceful change that make for justice.

- 29.9.18 Conscientious Objection:
- 29.9.18.1 Conference recognises that Christian opinion has always been divided on the question of how Christians ought to respond to the call to bear arms in times of war or national crisis, and that this division still exists.
- 29.9.18.2 Conference affirms that the position of the conscientious objector has a legitimate place within the Christian tradition and that the right to discuss, question or advocate this position must be regarded as an integral part of the religious liberty fundamental to the health of our society.
- 29.9.18.3 Conference acknowledges that the South African Government has made provision for certain categories of conscientious objection, either through (i) the option of "non-combatant" duties, or (ii) in the case of refusal to wear military uniform at all, a single prison sentence.
- 29.9.18.4 Conference seeks a reconsideration of the latter position (ii) suggesting that there are more creative and useful ways whereby such conscientious objectors might serve the country.
- 29.9.18.5 Conference points out that conscientious objection is not always based on purely pacifist convictions, but has sometimes arisen through the peculiar circumstances of a specific conflict, leading a person to refuse service because of his inability to share or accept the relative "rightness" of the cause for which he is called to fight, and that the present conflict on our borders provides no exception.

Conference points out that this approach will of necessity involve political judgements made on the basis of faith and understanding of Gospel.
- 29.9.18.6 Conference declares that in terms of para. 5 (b), conscientious objection has a legitimate place within our Methodist tradition and that any Methodist who, for reasons of conscience, either cannot present himself for National Service with the S.A.D.F. (i.e. total conscientious objection) seeks non-combatant status within the S.A.D.F. should be granted the same treatment as apply to members of the so-called "peace churches". Conference resolves that this declaration be clearly conveyed both to our Military Chaplains and the S.A. Defence Force authorities.

29.9.18.7 The Conference directs that the General Secretary prepare a document on War and Peace with particular reference to conscientious objection, for submission and approval of the Conference.

29.9.19 Conscientious Objectors:

The Conference, while appreciating the work of the Naude Committee of the S.A.D.F. and the positive aspects of the Defence Amendment Act of 1983, finds the new provisions of Conscientious Objectors, taken as a whole, to be inadequate and calls for:

29.9.19.1 The recognition of ethical, moral and philosophical objections to warfare.

29.9.19.2 The recognition of the Just War objector, whether or not his position involves a religious basis or political assessment.

29.9.19.3 The composition of the Examining Board for objectors in a less partial form.

29.9.19.4 An adequate discussion with the Churches to review these and other aspects of the act.

29.9.20 Conscientious Objectors - Community Service:

The Conference:-

29.9.20.1 Calls on persons who qualify for and accept the alternative community service according to the 1983 Defence Amendment Act, to do this work wholeheartedly as servants of Christ in accordance with Colossians 3: 22-25.

29.9.20.2 Asks congregations to offer prayer on the Sundays preceding the January and July S.A.D.F. intakes, for persons known to them who are subject to conscription, whether such persons accept or refuse their conscription.

29.9.21 District Counselling Team for Conscriptees:

In view of the need for pastoral counselling of men who have been called up for National Service and in the light of the Defence Amendment Act, Conference recommends the appointment of District Counselling Teams with the following functions:

29.9.21.1 to advise the Chairman of the District on the motivation of any person's claim to either non-combatant or non-military conscientious objector status, to enable the Church to decide upon its stand in any military or civil court;

29.9.21.2 to assist men in ethical, moral and practical decisions about military service;

29.9.21.3 to assist ministers in counselling men and their families;

29.9.21.4 to enable congregations to provide pastoral counselling for those who are conscripted;

29.9.21.5 to assist Churches in their response to those in military service and those who are conscientious objectors;

29.9.21.6 to assist men in their reintegration following military service or detention.

29.9.22 Ministry to Refugees:

Conference views with concern the apparent lack of provision of pastoral care to Methodist exiles and refugees outside the Republic of South Africa, many of whom are teenagers:

29.9.22.1 Conference requests the General Secretary of the C.C.D. to visit or contact affected areas to investigate what is being done to provide for the humanitarian needs of these refugees;

29.9.22.2 Conference requests the Justice and Reconciliation Committee to give attention to the following concerns:

29.9.22.2.1 that ministry to exiles and refugees in neighbouring independent states be established in consultation with other Departments within the Church; further to set aside a spiritual worker/s to work in liaison with the Christian Council of Churches in these areas;

29.9.22.2.2 as an expression of concern within South Africa to appeal to parents who have grave fears and anxieties for children in exile to bring these to the General Secretary in order to co-ordinate with similar agencies pursuing this type of ministry;

29.9.28

Mocambique:

Conference, as the highest elected body of the Methodist people in Southern Africa, condemns the latest raid into Mocambique as futile and unjust and calls on the Prime Minister and the Minister of Defence to order all such raids to cease and to initiate meaningful dialogue both within and outside South Africa.

We would further remind those who ordered this strike that the Methodist Church of Southern Africa has an active and growing work in Maputo and, indeed, in all Mocambique. We know, therefore, that there are Christians in Maputo whose lives are endangered by these raids.

29.9.29

The South African Military Budget:

The Conference expresses its concern at the rapidly growing military budget in South Africa and at the proliferation of arms for government and private use.

It reminds people that true security is to be found in Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, and not in weapons of war and preparation for war.

It calls on the Government to increase its efforts to achieve a just settlement in Namibia and to move rapidly away from discrimination, injustice and oppression within South Africa.

29.9.30

Handling of Prisoners:

Conference expresses its alarm and regret at the violent death of persons in the custody of the Department of Prisons and requests the Minister of Justice:-

29.9.30.1

to ensure that greater care is taken in the handling of prisoners,

29.9.30.2

to ensure careful selection and adequate training of prison warders.

29.9.31

Improper Use of Weapons:

Conference regrets that incidents involving the improper use of weapons by the police have continued to occur in spite of assurance by the Minister of Law and Order.

Conference urges the Minister of Law and Order to ensure that police in training be warned against the improper use of weapons, to issue clear guidelines to all policemen on the use of weapons, to formulate regulations restricting the use of weapons and to take severe disciplinary action against policemen who ignore the guidelines or infringe the regulations.

29.9.32

Educational Programme:

Conference recognises that indoctrination in racial attitudes takes place in many educational institutions by other means, and accordingly instructs the Christian Citizenship Department in collaboration with the C.E.Y.D. to prepare an education programme which will instil the principles of Christian Citizenship and Christian attitudes for use in confirmation classes, teen worship and youth organisations.

29.9.33

Simpler Lifestyle:

Mindful of the impoverished circumstances of many South Africans, Conference urges all Methodists to adopt a simpler life-style and to give expression to Christ's command to care for the needy.

Conference calls on all organisations within our Church to explore how they may respond to such needs.

29.9.34

Literature for New Members:

The Conference directs all ministers in pastoral work and all who have the responsibility of training young people for Church membership to incorporate in their curricula the concerns of Christian Citizenship with particular reference to the social implications of the Gospel and using the leaflet "Are you a Christian Citizen?"

29.9.35

The Conference recognises the dangers of subversion in the Republic of S.A. and the need to provide for security and measures to guard against such activities. Conference nonetheless reaffirms its deep concern that legislation is being implemented which provides for bannings, detentions, deportations, withdrawal of temporary residence permits and refusal and confiscation of passports without recourse to processes of law.

It acknowledges, however, that the Church has a continuing responsibility for the pastoral care and physical welfare of the people in the "homelands". It believes that the Church is set in the world as a "sign of the Kingdom", and must work within every political ideology.

- 29.9.20.4 The Conference affirms that the Church is called to preach and to practice the Gospel in every situation. It therefore resolves:
- 29.9.20.4.1 to continue to evangelise and provide pastoral care;
- 29.9.20.4.2 to engage in a ministry of compassion to those who have been removed and resettled;
- 29.9.20.4.3 to exercise a prophetic ministry and to support movements for peaceful change that make for justice.

29.9.21 Conscription:

This Conference refers to Circuit Quarterly Meetings and Synods the question of calling for an end to conscription on the grounds that it is the moral right of South Africans to choose whether or not to serve in the SADF.

29.9.21 Board of Religious Objection:

29.9.21.1 Conference believes that Ministers on the Board for Religious Objectors should be nominated by their Churches, requests that the procedures governing the appointment of members of the Board be amended accordingly and asks that this request be conveyed to the competent authority. Conference further resolves that no Minister or Supernumerary Minister may serve on the Board unless appointed by Conference.

29.9.21.2 Conference resolves that the Rev V W Harris be permitted to serve on the Board for Religious Objectors.

29.9.22 Conscientious Objection:

29.9.22.1 Conference recognises that Christian opinion has always been divided on the question of how Christians ought to respond to the call to bear arms in times of war or national crisis, and that this division still exists.

29.9.22.2 Conference affirms that the position of the conscientious objector has a legitimate place within the Christian tradition and that the right to discuss, question or advocate this position must be regarded as an integral part of the religious liberty fundamental to the health of our society.

29.9.22.3 Conference points out that conscientious objection is not always based on purely pacifist convictions, but has sometimes arisen through the peculiar circumstances of a specific conflict, leading a person to refuse service because of his inability to share or accept the relative "rightness" of the cause for which he is called to fight, and that the present conflict on our borders provides no exception.

29.9.22.4 Conference points out that this approach will of necessity involve political judgements made on the basis of faith and understanding of Gospel.

29.9.22.5 Conference declares that in terms of para. 29.9.22.2, conscientious objection has a legitimate place within our Methodist tradition.

29.9.23 Conscientious Objectors:

The Conference, while appreciating the work of the Naude Committee of the S.A.D.F. and the positive aspects of the Defence Amendment Act of 1983, finds the new provisions of Conscientious Objectors, taken as a whole, to be inadequate and calls for:

29.9.23.1 The recognition of ethical, moral and philosophical objections to warfare.

29.9.23.2 The recognition of the Just War objector, whether or not his position involves a religious basis or political assessment.

29.9.23.3 The composition of the Examining Board for objectors in a less partial form.

29.9.23.4 An adequate discussion with the Churches to review these and other aspects of the act.

924.5.1

- 29.9.24 Conscientious Objectors - Community Service:
The Conference:-
- 29.9.24.1 Calls on persons who qualify for and accept the alternative community service according to the 1983 Defence Amendment Act, to do this work wholeheartedly as servants of Christ in accordance with Colossians 3: 22-25.
- 29.9.24.2 Asks congregations to offer prayer on the Sundays preceding the January and July S.A.D.F. intakes, for persons known to them who are subject to conscription, whether such persons accept or refuse their conscription.
- 29.9.25 District Counselling Team for Conscriptees:
In view of the need for pastoral counselling of men who have been called up for National Service and in the light of the Defence Amendment Act, Conference recommends the appointment of District Counselling Teams with the following functions:
- 29.9.25.1 to advise the Chairman of the District on the motivation of any person's claim to either non-combatant or non-military conscientious objector status, to enable the Church to decide upon its stand in any military or civil court;
- 29.9.25.2 to assist men in ethical, moral and practical decisions about military service;
- 29.9.25.3 to assist ministers in counselling men and their families;
- 29.9.25.4 to enable congregations to provide pastoral counselling for those who are conscripted;
- 29.9.25.5 to assist Churches in their response to those in military service and those who are conscientious objectors;
- 29.9.25.6 to assist men in their reintegration following military service or detention.
- 29.9.26 Ministry to Refugees:
Conference views with concern the apparent lack of provision of pastoral care to Methodist exiles and refugees outside the Republic of South Africa, many of whom are teenagers:

- 29.9.26.1 Conference requests the General Secretary of the C.C.D. to visit or contact affected areas to investigate what is being done to provide for the humanitarian needs of these refugees;
- 29.9.26.2 Conference requests the Justice and Reconciliation Committee to give attention to the following concerns:
- 29.9.26.2.1 that ministry to exiles and refugees in neighbouring independent states be established in consultation with other Departments within the Church; further to set aside a spiritual worker/s to work in liaison with the Christian Council of Churches in these areas;
- 29.9.26.2.2 as an expression of concern within South Africa to appeal to parents who have grave fears and anxieties for children in exile to bring these to the General Secretary in order to co-ordinate with similar agencies pursuing this type of ministry;
- 29.9.26.2.3 a caring and concerned ministry be exercised to exiles and refugees in distant countries; further that this Justice and Reconciliation Committee be encouraged to work closely with other agencies throughout the world to help such persons who are found to be in these situations.
- 29.9.26.2.4 that the Conference observe Refugee month annually in June and note that Refugee Sunday will be Sunday 23rd June 1985.
- 29.9.26.2.5 further to authorise the sending of monies and clothing collected during the month of June to the Standing Committee for Ministry to Refugees through the C.C.D.
- 29.9.26.2.6 agree to the appointment of a Refugee worker in Namibia and pledge support for this appointment and note the establishment of a Refugee Office in South Africa.
- 29.9.27 Refugees in the British Consulate (Durban):
The Conference expresses its full support for the men seeking refuge in the British Consulate in Durban.

Conference Notes:

- 29.9.27.1 That the initial action of the men in the Consulate was a protest against the new dispensation based on the unchanged and unchanging South Africa ideology of fragmentation.
- 29.9.27.2 That the appeal against their unjust detention and subsequent release was violated and made null and void by the redetention order issued by the Minister of Law and Order.
- 29.9.27.3 Conference expresses solidarity with them and the members of their families in their present plight.

WE APPEAL -

To the British Government not to evict the "refugees" still in the Consulate against their will but to grant continued sanctuary.

To facilitate the process of negotiation between the "refugees" and the South African Authorities.

We call upon the Minister to cancel the redetention orders against them and against all detainees who have not been charged under the law.

Conference notes with appreciation the pastoral care given to the men and their families by ministers of the Methodist Church.

29.9.28 Amnesty to South African Refugees:

The Conference requests the Executive President and his Council of State to declare an amnesty to the young people who left the country after the Soweto Events of 1976, so that those of these young people who wish to return home be allowed to do so without incrimination.

29.9.29 Control of Nuclear Weapons:

Conference believes that the development and deployment of nuclear weapons constitutes a major threat to the survival of mankind.

recognises that many people within and beyond our borders fear that the Republic of South Africa is developing such weapons, and therefore,

appeals to the South African Government to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and other International instruments for the control of nuclear armaments.

29.9.30.1

War and Peace:

The Conference calls Methodists to inform themselves of the consequences of increasing militarism both in South Africa and the rest of the world.

It encourages the work of the Christian Citizenship War and Peace Committee and asks that this committee prepare a creative education programme for peace.

This programme should include the scriptural and theological basis of our action for peace and justice, show the dangers and costs of preparing for war, and enable Methodists to learn practical ways of peace making.

29.9.30.2

Investigation and study of Peace Church Concept:

Noting:-

the increasing crisis of conscience which the involvement of the SADF in urban townships is causing many Methodists;

the concern with which our Church and the ecumenical movement views the conflict in Namibia and elsewhere in Southern Africa.

Conference resolves that the CCD make a study of the implications of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa declaring itself a peace Church and to report back to Conference in 1985.

29.9.30.3

The Conference requests the Standing Committee on War and Peace to continue with its work and to report to the next Conference through the Christian Citizenship Department. Convener: Rev J W Massey.

29.9.31

Violence and Firearms:

The Conference notes with concern the high and rising number of incidents involving firearms and the reliance of many of our people on the assumed security of guns. As a Church we have repeatedly stated our belief that reliance on violence is contrary to the Gospel.

Since private ownership of guns can so easily predispose people to violence, we urge all Methodists who own firearms to re-evaluate their ownership of them. The Conference, therefore, instructs the General Secretary to publish and distribute to Circuits a full paper on:

- 29.9.31.1 the criteria for the availability of firearms to people;
- 29.9.31.2 the Christian attitude to the possession and use of firearms;
- 29.9.31.3 a theological perspective on violence and non-violence.

29.9.32 War in Namibia:

The Conference notes:-

The continuing occupation of Namibia by South Africa;

The breakdown once again, of peace negotiations, and therefore believers:

That this war must end and that a just peace is urgent;

that our Christian sisters and brothers in Namibia have expressed themselves clearly in favour of an end to South Africa's presence in Namibia and for immediate free and fair elections so that they can determine their own future;

That the Cuban presence in Angola should not be allowed to retard the independence process in Namibia.

The Conference therefore resolves:-

To call for the speedy withdrawal of South African troops from Namibia and the immediate implementation of UNO resolution 435;

Calls on Circuits and Societies to educate their members about the unjust nature of the war in Namibia;

To pray for the new Namibian District of the Methodist Church as it seeks to minister in that situation.

29.9.33

The South African Military Budget:

The Conference expresses its concern at the rapidly growing military budget in South Africa and at the proliferation of arms for government and private use.

It reminds people that true security is to be found in Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, and not in weapons of war and preparation for war.

29.9.34

Youth and the SADF:

The Conference views with alarm the increasing encroachment of the South African Defence Force into the lives of young people through so-called youth camps in Black Schools and the cadet system in White Schools and Veld Schools.

Conference therefore urges its ministers to exercise their pastoral ministry towards these young people by:

29.9.34.1

encouraging ministers in black congregations to raise the awareness of those congregations as to the implications of the so-called youth camps offered by the S.A. Defence Force;

29.9.34.2

Informing white congregations that under Section 57 of the Defence Force Act of 1957 parents are legally entitled to refuse to allow their children to participate in the cadet system.

29.9.35

Handling of Prisoners:

Conference expresses its alarm and regret at the violent death of persons in the custody of the Department of Prisons and requests the Minister of Justice:-

29.9.35.1

to ensure that greater care is taken in the handling of prisoners,

29.9.35.2

to ensure careful selection and adequate training of prison warders.

29.9.36

Improper Use of Weapons:

Conference regrets that incidents involving the improper use of weapons by the police have continued to occur in spite of assurance by the Minister of Law and Order.

29.9.23. * Conscription:
In the light of District responses to this issue, which indicate a majority who are opposed to conscription, the Conference believes:

1. That conscription compels thousands of young South Africans to fight an ultimately futile war in Namibia and to fight against fellow South African inside our borders;
2. That increasing conscription and ever higher defence budget do not resolve violent conflict but make it worse;
3. That extending conscription to Coloured and Indian youth will sharply escalate civil war;
4. That present conscription does not recognise the right of many individuals to object in conscience to military service;
5. That men who are conscripted are required to assist in the implementation and defence of Apartheid policies. Those who refuse military or alternative service, or who do not qualify for the latter, are faced with the choice of a life of exile or penalties of up to six years in prison;
6. That the racist indoctrination which results in a deep hatred of Black people, in particular, is suicidal for South Africa.

The Conference commends the work of "The End Conscription Campaign" and other similar groups and encourages members to participate in such a campaign.

29.9.24. * Board of Religious Objection:

1. Conference believes that Ministers on the Board for Religious Objectors should be nominated by their Churches, requests that the procedures governing the appointment of members of the Board be amended accordingly and asks that this request be conveyed to the competent authority. Conference further resolves that no Minister or Supernumerary Minister may serve on the Board unless appointed by Conference.
2. Conference resolves that the Rev V W Harris be permitted to serve on the Board for Religious Objectors.

29.9.25. * Conscientious Objection:

1. Conference recognises that Christian opinion has always been divided on the question of how Christians ought to respond to the call to bear arms in times of war or national crisis, and that this division still exists.
2. Conference affirms that the position of the conscientious objector has a legitimate place within the Christian tradition and that the right to discuss, question or advocate this position must be regarded as an integral part of the religious liberty fundamental to the health of our society.
3. Conference points out that conscientious objection is not always based on purely pacifist convictions, but has sometimes arisen through the peculiar circumstances of a specific conflict, leading a person to refuse service because of his inability to share or accept the relative "rightness" of the cause for which he is called to fight, and that the present conflict on our borders provides no exception.
4. Conference points out that this approach will of necessity involve political judgements made on the basis of faith and understanding of Gospel.
5. Conference declares that in terms of para. 29.9.22.2, conscientious objection has a legitimate place within our Methodist tradition.

29.9.26. * Conscientious Objectors:

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29.9.27. * Conscientious Objectors - Community Service:

The Conference:-

1. Calls on persons who qualify for and accept the alternative community service according to the 1983 Defence Amendment Act, to do this work wholeheartedly as servants of Christ in accordance with Colossians 3: 22-25.
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1. to advise the Chairman of the District on the motivation of any person's claim to either non-combatant or non-military conscientious objector status, to enable the Church to decide upon its stand in any military or civil court;
2. to assist men in ethical, moral and practical decisions about military service;
3. to assist ministers in counselling men and their families;
4. to enable congregations to provide pastoral counselling for those who are conscripted;
5. to assist Churches in their response to those in military service and those who are conscientious objectors;
6. to assist men in their reintegration following military service or detention.

29.9.29. * Ministry to Refugees:

Conference views with concern the apparent lack of provision of pastoral care to Methodist exiles and refugees outside the Republic of South Africa, many of whom are teenagers:

1. Conference requests the General Secretary of the C.C.D. to visit or contact affected areas to investigate what is being done to provide for the humanitarian needs of these refugees;
2. Conference requests the Justice and Reconciliation Committee to give attention to the following concerns:
 - 2.1. that ministry to exiles and refugees in neighbouring independent states be established in consultation with other Departments within the Church; further to set aside a spiritual worker/s to work in liaison with the Christian Council of Churches in these areas;
 - 2.2. as an expression of concern within South Africa to appeal to parents who have grave fears and anxieties for children in exile to bring these to the General Secretary in order to co-ordinate with similar agencies pursuing this type of ministry;
 - 2.3. a caring and concerned ministry be exercised to exiles and refugees in distant countries; further that this Justice and Reconciliation Committee be encouraged to work closely with other agencies throughout the world to help such persons who are found to be in these situations.
 - 2.4. that the Conference observe Refugee month annually in June and note that Refugee Sunday will be Sunday 22nd June 1986.

29.9.22.2.3 a caring and concerned ministry be exercised to exiles and refugees in distant countries; further that this Justice and Reconciliation Committee be encouraged to work closely with other agencies throughout the world to help such persons who are found to be in these situations. The S.A.C.C. be asked to set up an ecumenical agency in consultation with similar organisations that can be of assistance.

29.9.23 Amnesty to South African Refugees:

The Conference requests the Hon. Prime Minister and his Council of State to declare an amnesty to the young people who left the country after the Soweto Events of 1976, so that those of these young people who wish to return home be allowed to do so without incrimination.

29.9.24 Control of Nuclear Weapons:

Conference believes that the development and deployment of nuclear weapons constitutes a major threat to the survival of mankind.

recognises that many people within and beyond our borders fear that the Republic of South Africa is developing such weapons, and therefore,

appeals to the South African Government to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and other international instruments for the control of nuclear armaments.

29.9.25.1 War and Peace:

The Conference calls Methodists to inform themselves of the consequences of increasing militarism both in South Africa and the rest of the world.

It encourages the work of the Christian Citizenship War and Peace Committee and asks that this committee prepare a creative education programme for peace.

This programme should include the scriptural and theological basis of our action for peace and justice, show the dangers and costs of preparing for war, and enable Methodists to learn practical ways of peace making.

29.9.25.2 The Conference appoints a Standing Committee on War and Peace which shall report to the Conference of 1984. Convener: Rev. J.W. Massey.

29.9.26 Violence and Firearms:

The Conference notes with concern the high and rising number of incidents involving firearms and the reliance of many of our people on the assumed security of guns. As a Church we have repeatedly stated our belief that reliance on violence is contrary to the Gospel. Since private ownership of guns can so easily predispose people to violence, we urge all Methodists who own firearms to re-evaluate their ownership of them. The Conference, therefore, instructs the General Secretary to publish and distribute to Circuits a full paper on:

- 29.9.26.1 the criteria for the availability of firearms to people;
- 29.9.26.2 the Christian attitude to the possession and use of firearms;
- 29.9.26.3 a theological perspective on violence and non-violence.

29.9.27 Violence, Bomb-blasts and Retaliation:

Conference deplores the escalation of violence in Southern Africa as evidenced by recent bomb blasts in Pretoria, Warmbaths and elsewhere and the retaliatory action of the S.A.D.F. in Lesotho and Mocambique, and expresses sympathy with and deep concern for all victims of these tragedies. Conference condemns violence by whomsoever it is committed and recognises that both sides in the conflict share responsibility for the present incidents. It nevertheless believes that the Government of the Republic of South Africa has the power to de-escalate the violence and promote an order that is just. Conference accordingly appeals to the Government of the Republic of South Africa:

- 29.9.27.1 To recognise that the present violence has the nature of a civil war.
- 29.9.27.2 To exercise restraint and avoid contributing to the escalation of violence.
- 29.9.27.3 To address the problems at the root of the violence in a manner compatible with its professed adherence to a Christian lifestyle by dismantling the apartheid system.

vrymoedigheid hulle stemme gee vir beide die formuleringe van Pretoria en Sydney oor gesamentlike aanbidding. Die afgelope sinode het dan ook die besluit van Sydney eenparig onderskryf.

Dat die Sendingkerk 'n bepaalde siening oor die wet op gemengde huwelike het behoort niemand te verbaas nie. Net soos die N.G. Kerk vanuit 'n bepaalde verbondenheid aan 'n bedreigde seksie van die Afrikaners by die owerheid aangedring het op die daarstelling van 'n wet op gemengde huwelike, dring die Sendingkerk vanuit sy verbondenheid met 'n gemeenskap wat die wet ervaar as 'n ongunstige refleksie op hulle menswaardigheid aan op die afskaffing van die wet. Reeds by Pretoria het die afgevaardigdes van ons sinode teen die daar aanvaarde formulering gestem. Die afgelope sinode het die besluit van die G.E.S. te Sydney oor gemengde huwelike onderskryf. Uit die beredenering was dit duidelik

- (a) dat afgevaardigdes nie gemengde huwelike begeer nie
- (b) dat sowel die Kerk as die Staat 'n rol te speel het by die daarstelling van 'n huwelik en dat hulle ook die reg het om op bepaalde Skriftuurlike en etiese gronde huwelike te verbied, maar
- (c) dat oorwegings van ras of kleur nooit een van daardie gronde kan en mag uitmaak nie omdat geen skrif of etiese beginsel deur so 'n huweliksluiting verbreek word nie.

Met hierdie selfstandige besluit het ons sinode nou teenoor die standpunt van die N.G. Kerk te staan gekom. Dit is die gevolg van ons selfstandigheid waarvoor ons dankbaar is. Maar die Sendingkerk begeer nie 'n selfstandigheid wat hom van u vervreem nie.

Derdens is ons innig dankbaar dat u ons, sowel as die ander Dogterkerke, aangemoedig het om saam met u ekumeniese betrekkinge aan te knoop. Weens die plek wat ons inneem in die bevolkingsgroep wat ons bedien is ekumeniese verkeer vir die Sendingkerk 'n onvermydelike noodsaaklikheid.

Omdat ons lojaliteit teenoor u en die ander lidkerke van die N.G. familie ons hoër prioriteit in ekumeniese betrekkinge is, waardeur ons die binding van die Federale Raad. Daarom het ons afgelope sinode 'n voorstel dat ons volle lid van die S.A.R.K. word eenparig verwerp en besluit om eers die hele saak na die Federale Raad te verwys. Aan die ander kant het die sinode besluit (deur op te staan) om die bestaande bande met die Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland te verstewig. U kan dus begryp waarom daar so 'n groot ontsteltenis in die Sendingkerk was oor u besluit om die „band” met die Gereformeerde Kerke as verbreek te beskou indien nie aan sekere voorwaardes voldoen word nie. Die beskouing het by ons posgevat dat so 'n verbreking van die band noodwendig moet lei tot 'n verbreking van bande met die G.E.S., 'n verbintenis waarop ons hoër prys stel. Dr. Vorster en Dr. Gericke het ons egter namens die Breë Moderatuur verseker

- (a) dat die betrokke band beslis nie 'n ekumeniese band is nie, maar 'n historiese band van toegeneentheid en broederlike gesprek wat by verbreking vir u smart sal veroorsaak.
- (b) Dat die aanknoop van en verbreking van gespreksverhoudinge tot die selfstandigheid en vryheid van ons kerke behoort en nie deur die ooreenkoms oor raadpleging deur die Federale Raad beheer word nie.
- (c) Dat 'n verbreking van hierdie gespreksband deur die N.G. Kerk hoegenaamd geen uitwerking het op die

verhouding tot die Dogterkerke nie of op die verhouding van die Dogterkerke tot die Gereformeerde Kerke nie.

- (d) Dat die Sendingkerk deur sy korrespondensie met die Gereformeerde Kerke eerder kan help om die struikelblokke vir goeie verhoudings tot die N.G. Kerk uit die weg te ruim.

—David Botha.

No direct Methodist reaction to Hammanskraal Resolution

CAPE TOWN — October 21-25: Although it passed no resolutions directly reflecting on the SACC "Hammanskraal resolution" on conscientious objection, the Annual Conference of the Methodist Church of South Africa passed several other resolutions which indirectly touched on the issue.

At one stage there was a full-scale discussion in the conference on Hammanskraal; however this was held in committee, and no statements were forthcoming. Towards the end of the Conference, when the Hammanskraal issue was raised during the report of the Christian Education and Youth Department, the following resolution was decided on:

This Conference is concerned for justice and peace in this country, and therefore supports the expression of concern of the SACC in this regard, and pertinently draws the attention of its membership to conditions in our country that have resulted in a growing situation of violence."

Another indirect response to the Hammanskraal resolution concerned the issue of conscientious objection. The Conference adopted the following resolution:

This Conference

- (a) Recognises that Christian opinion has always been divided on the question of how Christians ought to respond to the call to bear arms in times of war or national crisis, and that this division still exists.
- (b) Affirms that the position of the conscientious objector has a legitimate place within the Christian tradition and that the right to discuss, question or advocate this position must be regarded as an integral part of the religious liberty fundamental to the health of our society.
- (c) Acknowledges that the South African Government has made provision for certain categories of conscientious objection, either through (a) the option of "non-combatant" duties, or (b) in the case of refusal to wear military uniform at all, a single prison sentence.
- (d) Seeks a reconsideration of the latter position (b), suggesting that there are more creative and useful ways whereby such conscientious objectors might serve their country.
- (e) Points out that conscientious objection is not always based on purely pacifist convictions, but has sometimes arisen through the peculiar circumstances of a specific conflict, leading a person to refuse service because of his inability to share or accept the relative "rightness" of the cause for which he is called to fight, and that the present conflict on our borders provides no exception.

An observer commented that while it was "quite clear that the Conference did not give blanket approval to the Hammanskraal resolution, these resolutions made it equally clear that the general sentiments of Hammanskraal were favourably viewed."

- At the Synod the N.G. Kerk meeting Cape Town at the same time as the Methodist Conference, delegates unanimously voted for a motion rejecting the SACC Hammanskraal resolution. The Synod "recognised the right and privilege of every citizen to defend his people and fatherland and to protect the life and freedom of its citizens." The SACC resolution was seen as encouraging people to nurture conscientious objection and thus to be disobedient to the constituted authority, in conflict with Scripture, particularly Romans 13.

—*Ekunuus, 30.10.74.*

N.G.K. MAAK MEER DEURE TOE AS OOP

WORCESTER — Hoewel daar in die jongste tyd na kontakpunte tussen die blanke en die Kleurlinge gesoek word, bestaan daar die wesentlike gevaar dat skeiding hul steeds verder van mekaar kan drywe. Dit baat nie om versoening te soek en kontakpunte te skep en in skeiding te leef nie.

So het ds. J.C. Smith assessor van die N.G. Sendingkerk in Suid-Afrika gisteraand gesê toe hy die een-en-twintigste sitting van die sinode op Worcester amptelik geopen het.

Ds Smith het ook sy teleurstelling uitgespreek dat die N.G. Moederkerk „meer deure toehou as oopmaak". Dit is teleurstellend dat daar met die implementering van die beginsel van gesamentlike aanbidding nog weinig vordering gemaak is, het hy gesê.

—*Transvaler, 19.9.'74*

VERKLARING DEUR KOPANO YAA BARUTI LI BA BOKDI (DIE BROEDERKRING VAN SWART PREDI- KANTE EN EVANGELISTE VAN DIE N.G. KERK IN AFRIKA, TRANSVAAL)

Bogenoemde Broederkring het op Maandag 14 Oktober 1974 te Warmbad vergader. Die byeenkoms is toegesprek deur ds. S.S. Tema, oud-Assessor van die N.G. Kerk van Afrika (Transvaal) wat as tema gekies het: *Die Strydende Kerk*. In sy toespraak het hy sy blydschap betuig dat die Kerk bewus word van homself as Kerk van Christus en het hy beklemtoon dat die strydende kerk altyd betrokke moet wees in die stryd om geregtigheid maar dat hy in die stryd nooit die beoefening van die liefde mag verloor nie.

Die Konferensie het versoek dat die volgende verklaring uitgereik word:

1. Die Konferensie bid in die naam van Christus dat die Here die familie van N.G. Kerke deur sy Heilige Gees sal



lei en dat die bande tussen die N.G. Kerk in Afrika, die N.G. Sendingkerk, die Indian Reformed Church en die N.G. Kerk asook die Gereformeerde Kerke van Holland prakties nouer getrek sal word en dat die Here aan die Sinode van die N.G. Kerk die regte leiding ook in hierdie verband sal gee.

2. Die Konferensie vertrou dat in die huidige kerklike beraadslaginge en vergaderings die getuienis van die Woord van die Here gehandhaaf sal word en nie 'n politieke stem nie, ook wat betref die suggestie dat kerklike bande verbreek moet word, wat alleenlik op Skriftuurlike gronde kan gebeur.
3. Die Broederkring voel baie sterk ten gunste van die gedagte van rentmeesterskap om die gemeentes tot finansiële selfstandigheid op te hef en versoek die N.G. Kerk in Afrika om ampsdraers uit ons eie geledere aan te stel om die saak onder die gemeentes te bevorder.

Uitgereik deur die Kommissie daartoe opgedra deur die Broederkring.

Ds. S.P.E. Buti
Ds. E.M. Tema
Ds. C.M. Molope

—*Johannesburg, 18.10.74*

Collection Number: AG1977

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PUBLISHER:

Publisher:- Historical Papers Research Archive

Location:- Johannesburg

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