SECOND CARNEGIE INQUIRY INTO POVERTY AND DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

Church, Poverty and Development in Southern Africa

by

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CHURCH, POVERTY AND DEVELOPMENT

IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

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1 Composition
The working group was convened by Dr Francis Wilson, Director of the Carnegie Inquiry and Dr Allan Boesak (chairman) with Dr M Fash as part-time coordinator and later hon. secretary. Members were invited from a variety of backgrounds - denominational, rural/urban, etc. Owing to pressure of work some church hierarchs were unable to attend meetings so the core consisted of Revd W Gill (Methodist OFS), Ds M Maphoto (NGKA Rietfontein Trust), Mr T Matsetela (SACBC/J&P), Mr M Mpulwana (Order of Ethiopia Eastern Cape) and Mr J Seremane (Anglican/Council of Churches Mafikeng). They did not officially represent their respective Churches but there was official consultation and cooperation with the NGSK Commission on Poverty (chairman: Ds J de Waal).

2 Meetings
Three meetings were held including one in conjunction with other Carnegie working groups. These were devoted to information gathering, review and analysis of church situations vis-à-vis poverty and development, identifying resources and exploring possibilities of practical action, especially in community development projects.

3 Workshops
Some members took part in two workshops arranged by the NGSK commission on poverty, one at Montagu on rural community development the one at Lavender Hill on urban community development. Local leaders from both took part in the June meeting (see reports in dossier). Another workshop, on Church and Rural Poverty in the Northern
Transvaal, was convened by the regional council of churches in conjunction with SACC/J&R. A booklet entitled *Rural Poverty challenges the Churches* contains a report of the workshop and supplementary material.

4 Field trip
Two members backpacked for a week through a rugged and drought-stricken area of the eastern Transvaal/Lebowa interviewing people and obtaining firsthand information.

5 Liaison with the Churches
A letter to church leaders drew attention to the Inquiry and invited churches to place the issue of poverty and development high on their agendas. Most are awaiting the findings of the Inquiry.

6 Biblical-theological resources
Much attention was given to biblical theological perspectives. Resources include Dr Boesak's address on the Church and the Poor to the October 1982 NGSK congress on poverty (to be published in a manual for circuits and Dr Kistner's sermon on the same theme to the Pietersburg workshop. That and other relevant material including bibliographies appear in the *Rural Poverty* booklet and in working papers prepared for the group (see items 5, 6 and 7 in this dossier).

7 Ecumenical Perspectives
In many parts of the world churches are struggling with the same issues. There is much to learn from their experiences and experiments and reflection on these, for example the basic Christian communities and liberation theology of Latin America and the WCC/CCPD (Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development).

8 Church as object and sponsor of change
Churches need to change as well as to sponsor change. Ideally change should come from the bottom-up rather than from the top down but this is not an either/or. Change needs to be taking
at all levels. The practical question is how to stimulate, service and sustain multi-pronged strategies for church involvement in combatting poverty and promoting the kind of human development that Christ called "fullness of life" (John 10.10). Since many churches are rather dominated by a privileged minority the question is also how best to mobilise and equip the poor, through personal motivation and structural change, to be actively involved in the development process.

9 Next steps
By themselves books and documents change nothing. What actions of a feasible and practical nature do we think could be taken in the short and longer term future to promote church response to the Carnegie Inquiry? - the "we" in this instance being the members of the working group together with consultants and other members of the Carnegie conference taking part in this aspect of its work. The working group is due to have one more meeting, probably in late July. Constructive criticism of the material in this dossier and of the work done so far and concrete proposals for the future would strengthen the group's outreach to the churches. One possibility is a series of brief newsletters/fact sheets addressed to the local churches, which would give them "catch-on points" for study and action.
Notes of a presentation by a mother (Hester) and two young members (Ruth and Patrick) to the Carnegie working group on church, poverty and development, following the April 1984 workshop on urban community development in Lavender Hill resettlement township.

The situation
Lavender Hill is a sub-economic township of some 1,800 flats situated on the Cape Flats east of Prince George's Drive and some 20 kms south of central Cape Town. Formerly a squatter area (Paradise Valley) with a few shops the site was developed by the Cape Town City Council in the early 1970s. It accommodates people classified coloured who were relocated from the older residential areas of the Cape Peninsula, particularly District Six and Claremont, under the Group Areas Act. The rather unlikely name - there is no hill in sight - was taken from a popular part of the old District Six.

The move
Hester: In 1973 we were living in Harfield Village Claremont, crowded together in old houses. When the Group (Community Development officials) came and told us we could move to new houses we found the prospect quite exciting. So when the letters arrived telling us when and where we should go we went quietly without any fuss. We found ourselves in a sandy waste, going from an old double storey house at R5 per month to a new 3-roomed cottage at R21 per month, and our electricity bill shot up from R2 to R15-26 per month. Our old furniture looked shabby in the new house and the salesmen were at the door with tempting offers - "you'll only pay so much a week" -
so we soon also had hire purchase debts. When we think about our present situation we are conscious of damp houses, hungry children eating out of rubbish bins, gangs, robbery and murder. The first murder was a shock; now it happens regularly.

Visiting community workers
Then an organisation named CUPC ('cups' - Churches' Urban Planning Commission) assigned a couple of community workers to visit our area. They came knocking on doors, selling the Grassroots Community Newsletter and asking how things were. As we talked with them we became more aware of our difficulties but when they said, "Do you know you can do something about your standard of living?" we took little notice. They kept on coming, although less frequently, and when my husband became ill I really had to think. I realised the difference between being in the old place where everyone helped everyone else and here where each one looks after him or herself.

A few of my friends and I began to take the Grassroots newsletter to our neighbours and talk to them the way the community workers had done. At first we were very nervous but by the time we had visited all 48 units in our building (it's called Vredehof - Peace Court) we had learned that in the past few years two children had been strangled and that there was constant friction between people, for example over washing. The washing lines had been down for more than three years and complaints had been fruitless.

We kept asking people what they would like to do, we invited them to meetings and urged them to invite others. Finally we got 80% attendance and decided to petition the City Council to mend the washing lines. 47 out of 48 people signed the petition. The Council got such a shock the lines were repaired within two weeks!

Unity is strength
That showed us that unity is strength. We made the story
into a play then with outside help into a video. We showed this to people in other courts in Lavender Hill, to help them realise that we can work together on our problems. What are some of these problems? There is much overcrowding with more than one family to a flat, because of high rents and shortage of housing. This overcrowding has bad effects on health, particularly tuberculosis and gastroenteritis. There are hungry children begging and scavenging for food, and malnutrition because mothers are away all day at work.

We started on the children. I took in two or three of those I found scavenging in rubbish bins. I washed and fed them and tried to find out something about their families. Within no time I had fifty children to cope with, so we started a creche. It has had to move from one place to another but is still functioning, now in the NGSK hall in Lavender Hill. There is also a video of the creche. The CUPC workers are always helpful about putting us in touch with groups that can provide the sort of assistance we need, and the Early Learning Centre at Athlone has also helped us.

Problems

People are struggling with inadequate incomes caused by low wages, also by unemployment and robbery particularly on pay day. The gangs run things and there is no real unity among people whereas in Claremont there was a lot of love and community. There are damp walls, cracks in new houses, problems with transport...

What can we do about these problems? Within a year we had a survey and set up an organisation to represent the people. Yes, they wanted someone to speak up for them but they feared victimisation. We applied to the Council for registration, saying we were speaking for the people and wished to be recognised. The Council replied that if we have 100 paid-up members and supply the names and addresses of office bearers we can be recognised and use the community hall for 10c a session. But we still do
not have the recognition and have to pay R60 to use the hall for a meeting. People agree with our aims but are slow to participate. We have had some good meetings but our second AGM was rather disappointing.

The effect of uprooting
Ruth: The uprooting disturbed people emotionally and morally. They withdrew into their shells and did not try to get to know their new neighbours. The church could have helped to get people stabilised but for many years there were no churches in the township. When the Association started we were all rather scared. We kept going back to the people, concentrating on one court for a week, visiting and holding meetings. People started to talk and to identify problems, and a sense of community has grown. The Association has to deal with problems of individuals, such as eviction notices and non-payment of maintenance grants, but it also tackles the big issues. When rent increases were announced we organised a Day of Action. We have an education sub-committee and are thinking of starting an advice centre.

FW: From what you are saying it seems that the Group destroyed community spirit and left people scattered and dislocated.
Ruth: Yes. You can see that in the township. There are said to be 12 gangs in Lavender Hill, each court seems to have its own gang. When we moved in ten years ago there was just sand and blocks of flats, with one shop that was already there. No playground, no amenities. Now there are playing fields and a community centre but that building is monopolised by church groups. We have to pay R3 for two hours to run a youth programme.

The Churches?
(In reply to a question) The Churches could have been invaluable in putting people in touch with one another and building community but they were no there. People had to go out of Lavender Hill to attend church. For example we Moravians had a large and flourishing church in District Six: now we had to go to Grassy Park or to
the small settled church at Steenberg where we felt like intruders. The only time the churches came to us was to collect money. So we children dropped out of Sunday school and our parents dropped out of church.

Patrick: The move happened so swiftly the people were devastated and the churches were just left behind.

Ted: It sounds similar to Driefontein (a threatened black area in the south east Transvaal). The Anglican priest has to come all the way from Johannesburg. The local clergy in Piet Retief do not have much contact with the people: only the independent churches actually function there.

FW: It seems to me that uprooting means the destruction of community, so what happens to individuals? The law creates poverty, it robs the community of its wealth - the social fabric as much as the material assets. How best can this process of impoverishment through uprooting be exposed? What media and with what response in mind?

Hester: The township now has NGSK, Moravian, Anglican (Church of England in South Africa and Church of the Province), Catholic, Baptist and New Apostolic Churches. As a member of the latter I feel it is interested in getting us to church but is not interested in us as people. When we asked the church for permission to use the premises for a meeting we had to go to the very smart head office. We were told that the church did not wish to be involved in politics. We were told that the church did not wish to be involved in politics.

MN: If a particular church does not take an interest in people, what attracts them to it?

JS: Often it's pie-in-the-sky. People go out of fear not conviction, or they go to be buried.

Hester: Yes, when you join the church you become a member of the burial. They will bury you properly even if you are in arrears. That is very important to people.

FW: The churches need to face the fact that people are impoverished by forced removal. They must be asked, Are you alongside people who are under threat of removal, have you a strategy for being with
MONTAGU: TOWARDS A CHURCH OF THE POOR

Notes of a presentation by Ds Dirkie Marais to the Carnegie working group on Church, Poverty and Development, following the March 1983 workshop on rural community development.

Basic Principles
From a church base we have tried to implement certain principles or points of departure:

1. The Church is the Body of Christ, the new creation (2 Cor. 5.17). It is God's instrument of renewal in his re-creation of the world. The church is called not only to be holy but to be sent out into the world. The Word of God is our final guiding light. The church is called to unity so we have a strong ecumenical movement, for example sharing the Pinkster biddae (Pentecost prayer days) with the Anglicans.

2. The people are poor therefore the church is and must be a church of the poor. Our aim in life is not to be wealthy but to have enough to live a meaningful life. We need an ethic of meaningful sufficiency as opposed to the wealth ethic of the consumer society.

3. We need to analyse and interpret the reality of First World and Third World, and avoid transferring First World values into Third World situations. Theory and practice go hand in hand: they are the same thing seen from different sides. We cannot neglect analysis in the name of getting on with action.

4. We try to implement community development principles in our church situation as well as in the wider community. This involves consciousness development through all the various activities and becoming aware of resources.
5. We see good management as important. All people are in some sense managers. We teach our people basic management skills, using simple examples. We teach them to
- plan       think ahead
- organise implement the plan
- lead       help and escort one another
- control    check and evaluate what has been done.
We urge them to be alert that as managers they neither dominate nor create dependency through doing things for people instead of with them.

Motivation
Today we have a congregation of some 2 400 members with three clergy and a full-time secretary but six years ago there was apathy and lack of involvement. The question was how to motivate people to believe in themselves and in the possibility of change.
For the first two years we concentrated on the preaching ministry. We preached about the church in the terms mentioned above. Then we also discussed with the church council the matter of administration and together we decided to change the church basement into an administrative office with a secretary/treasurer. This eased the work load on the clergy. During the next two years we focussed on house churches. This involved careful planning, the training of leaders and instruction in group work. We now have eighty house churches that meet on Wednesday evenings for bible study, prayer and diakonia (care of one another) led by deacons. There are ten families in each house church and each week some 2 700 people participate. We see these house churches as gymnasia in which Christians are equipped as witnesses, and as places where they can plan and organise. A year ago a new township was developed by the municipality. We immediately divided the 252 houses into wards and started house churches. Within three months of the move the church was organising the community.
We teach people to think and speak for themselves. We use one sentence "chain prayers" to help them voice their concerns. There is a quarterly Bible study guide with a passage and two or three questions for each week.

The aim

The aim is conscientisation, the development of the consciousness that "I am a human being, a creation of God". One quarterly bible study was entirely devoted to the confession of faith and the rejection of apartheid as heresy. When the NGSK Synod in 1982 declared apartheid a status confessionis, a matter of faith, the congregation supported it fully to the extent of stating that if the white NGK is not willing to reject apartheid their money can no longer be accepted. The church council has now decided unanimously and officially to decline the R15-18 000 previously contributed by the white NGK. As a result one of the three clergy is to move from pastoral work into working full time with the Montagu and Ashton Community Services (MACS).

Service in the world

Diakonia includes service in the world. The local church has established the organisation mentioned above. It is a branch of the NGSK Diakonalekommissie but has representatives of other churches - Anglican, Roman Catholic and AME (the Apostolics are still hesitant). There are two nursery schools with 65 and 130 children respectively; two clubs for the aged with 35 and 60 members; an active teenage group; two experimental projects on farms with rugby, film shows, etc. We have 1 800 teachers in our ten NGSK schools and are busy training them to become more effective community workers. Four couples wanting a church wedding there is an obligatory marriage guidance course. This is conducted monthly, instruction being given by a team comprising pastor, community worker, social worker and health sister. We also have child and family care services including family planning; a 20-plot community garden and a second one being planned, with the help of World Vision and its adviser Mr Jan van der Velde. The
community garden not only produces food and flowers: it has also helped to rehabilitate knowledge. Before the Group Areas Act there was a flourishing Chrysanthemum Society which did not survive the break-up of the community. Now some people have asked if they can use their plots to grow chrysanthemums again for sale as cut flowers.

A ballet school and art school, begun three years ago and open to all members of the community, are now operating independently despite controversy, and there are courses in arts and crafts. In a crash programme four years ago we enrolled 600 adults and attempted to teach them the basics of reading and writing. Further plans include larger community gardens, a community centre in Cogman's Kloof (negotiations are already under way), some carpentry using waste wood from an Ashton factory, and a small Christmas card industry.

In the discussion following his talk, Ds Marais stressed that having a team of leaders is important as many community workers suffer loneliness. There are still many problems such as high unemployment and the absence of commuter workers who only come home at weekend or month-end.

It was felt by the group that the Montagu story needs to be shared and that possibly it could become a base for training rural community development workers. On the other hand too much publicity could make the place into a "tourist centre" and have adverse effects on the work. This is a problem to be grappled with in the process of trying to put the multiplier into effect.
POVERTY AND IMPOVERISHMENT CHALLENGE THE CHURCH

Draft of a chapter in a manual or resource book on Church, Poverty and Development in Southern Africa prepared as a working paper for the Carnegie group.

Summary of contents:
1. Reasons for church concern
2. The challenge of impoverishment
3. The Churches' lack of concern
4. Churches as a source of strength and initiative
5. Practical Questions.

1. Reasons for Church concern
Poverty and the plight of the poor are an issue for the South African Churches for the following reasons:
1.1 Most people in South Africa are poor with an alarming proportion of them being near destitute. Probably most members of most (but not all) churches are poor to very poor.
1.2 God wills life abundant for the people he created, even for those who inherit misfortune, for example are born blind, or become weak in relation to the rest of society, for example are forced into long term unemployment.
1.3 Christ showed compassion for the poor. He ministered to them and proclaimed good news to them - but woe to the heedless rich - and he calls his church to do the same.
1.4 In South Africa, a land of abundant resources and modern economy, largescale and serious poverty is neither necessary nor inevitable. It is the product of power relations in which a privileged minority have accumulated capital and taken over the means of production, and constructed a political economy that favours the few at the expense of the many.
1.5 Such a system is judged and condemned by the Word of God. Therefore God's people, drawing on his grace and power, must unite to dismantle it and replace it with a social order more in accord with God's will.

1.6 The alternative social order will have the following attributes:

1.6.1 It will be just, giving all members a fair chance to achieve their Godgiven potential;

1.6.2 It will be participatory, enabling all to share in the rights and duties according to their ability and in the fruits according to their need;

1.6.3 It will be sustainable, ensuring that resources are not squandered but are conserved and developed for the benefit of coming generations;

1.6.4 It will be self reliant, fostering autonomy, self help and mutual assistance at all levels.

2 The Challenge of Impoverishment

The issue is not only poverty as an actual condition that is endemic and crippling. The issue is also impoverishment as an active and continuing process. Although it assumes various guises the essential nature of this process is that 'haves' are taking more than their share at the expense of the 'have nots'. Because they control the means of production the haves can take for themselves most of the surplus wealth produced by the labour of others.

The process of impoverishment is not accidental: it is the result of choices and decisions made by those who have power. These choices and decisions are made personally and through structures, for example laws, wage scales and housing policies. It is also the result of the compliance or inadequate resistance of those who are being dominated and exploited. The people who dominate have, or believe they have, a vested interest in the continuance of this system. By contrast the dominated generally believe they
would be better off if the system were replaced by a just social order but they feel, and indeed are, shackled by the chains of the oppressive system. They do not see themselves as actually or even potentially able to break the chains of oppression. This is true even among church members who hear and cry "Amen!" to their preachers proclaiming the limitless power of Almighty God and urging them to let the *dunamis*, power of the Holy Spirit transform their lives.

These beliefs on the part of both dominant and dominated are a crucial element in the system of power relations and impoverishment, and offer a direct challenge to the church as a community of faith. The church has little or no power to change structures like health and education systems but it does have power to influence beliefs and attitudes, to educate conscience, and to motivate people to engage in structural change.

3 The Churches' Lack of Concern
In practice we cannot really say that poverty and impoverishment are a live and burning issue for the churches in Southern Africa. Whatever the churches preach about the duty of compassion towards the poor and however much they encourage their members to do the works of mercy, as institutions they tend to fit into the patterns of the apartheid society. As institutions or groups of institutions they reflect in large measure the same divisions of wealth and poverty that characterise the secular society. And many of the multi-racial churches exhibit the same pattern of power relations in which a privileged white minority exercise an unduly strong influence, with the majority black membership being disappointed and frustrated and the young people becoming alienated from the church. Consequently, despite the fine words they utter against apartheid the official structures of the mainstream churches offer little effective resistance against or alternative to racism as the system which enriches whites together with a few coopted
'non-whites' and impoverishes the black masses. And some whites-only churches even defend the prevailing system while admitting that it is in need of improvement or reform.

There are also the thousands of amabandla amAfrika, African independent churches ranging in size from a few households and literally churches of the poor to national bodies of major numerical, organisational and to some extent financial strength. These churches exist in ambiguous relationship to the secular society. Many offer their members a deep sense of personal worth, of belonging to a group and of having a hope of something better, denied them by the apartheid society. When they do this they help to conserve, restore and heal the depleted human resources of the oppressed; and since oppression leads to dehumanisation and drastic loss of self-esteem this is an important contribution. But often the independent churches, like the mainstream churches, make church building and extension almost an end in itself or even a means to enrich their leadership. When this happens these churches too, though composed mainly of poor people and using relatively poor facilities, are still part of the problem and not part of the solution.

4 Churches as a Source of Strength and Initiative

With all their weaknesses and shortcomings the churches represent a critical source of strength and initiative in the struggle for abundant life in place of poverty and under-development. Aspects of this strength include the following:

4.1 Christian identity and loyalty

The churches do not derive their identity from the society in which they exist and of which they are a part. They derive their identity from the Lord Jesus Christ and from the universal fellowship of his people. They are conditioned, shaped, distorted and divided by historical events and influences and by present-day situations. Yet because they owe their ultimate loyalty to God as creator, redeemer and sanctifier of humankind and all creation,
and in worship are exposed to the riches of the biblical tradition, they cannot help pointing beyond themselves to a wider fellowship and a more inclusive way of life that is love.

4.2 Their history.

Any present-day Christian community is like the tip of an iceberg. It has a history, an inheritance and therefore a relationship with the whole people of God even when it may have consciously severed itself from some other part of the Church Universal. Therefore it has strengths that exceed the resources of its actual membership. These strengths are both temporal and spiritual:

4.2.1 Temporal strengths exist in the form of organisation, local and regional; land, premises, equipment, capital funds and weekly revenue. In other words some of these resources are visible and material, others are invisible but no less real and valuable.

4.2.2 Spiritual strengths reside in the tradition and continued activity of coming together for worship, teaching and mutual care, and scattering for discipleship, witness and service. They also reside in the hidden faithfulness of individual members and families who are letting themselves become instruments of God's peace.

4.3 Their people

The greatest resource of any church is its believing people, however weak they may be in human terms. As individuals and groups the people of God are called and empowered to become "little Christs", exercising the same redemptive ministry of self giving in love to others. While they live within human structures - political and economic, cultural and social - they live by a vision, a power and a freedom that transcend these structures because they come from the source of all human existence and activity. History bears witness that
tyrants can and do physically disable or destroy their human opponents. But even the strongest tyrant cannot capture or destroy the spiritual influence and 'contamination' of those who are free not only to give of themselves but even to give themselves (John 12.24).

5 Practical Questions

Practical questions include the following:

5.1 How do we respond to the analysis given above? Is it a reasonably accurate statement of the issues? If not, with what parts do we disagree and why?

5.2 Do we believe that the South African Churches, including our own, are too conformed to the apartheid society and are being called by God to a new vision of what it means to be the Body of Christ in Southern Africa in the 1980s?

5.3 How are the strengths of our churches being mobilised and deployed in the service of human liberation and development in Southern Africa?

5.4 How can these strengths be more extensively and effectively mobilised and deployed?

5.5 What are the most important points of entry into the process of renewing the church's obedience -

5.5.1 from the bottom up
5.5.2 from the top down
5.5.3 within denominations or families of churches
5.5.4 across denominational barriers
5.5.5 through councils of churches
5.5.6 through informal and voluntary ecumenical groupings and activities?

6 Is it true that "people who have vision and commitment are the key, therefore the most important thing is to find, encourage, equip and multiply such people"? Can this be done regardless of existing structures or does it need to be done through them?

7 What are the obstacles that need to be cleared away and the
weak links that need to be strengthened in the struggle against poverty and for human development?

8. What stories can we tell about what is happening in Southern Africa and in other countries, especially in the Third World and Latin America, that will stimulate, encourage, inspire and challenge others to engage in the struggle?
The following lines of action to combat poverty and promote development lie within the power of any local church. They do not require resolutions from national church bodies nor do they depend on the provision of funds and other assistance from outside sources, though naturally both of these might be helpful. Since local situations differ each parish or congregation has to find its own way of following these lines of action and of relating to others in the process. These others include

- parishes and congregations in their own denomination
- local parishes and congregations of other denominations
- community organisations and their networks
- specialist agencies, religious and secular
- statutory bodies and provisions.

The five lines of action are:

1. Relate preaching and teaching to social reality
2. Do local fact-finding and analysis of needs and resources for meeting these needs
3. Encourage local self help and collective self reliance
4. Identify and oppose unjust social structures
5. Search for and promote just social structures.

These lines of action are set out more fully below.

1. Preaching and Teaching

Preaching and teaching constitute the main work of all organised Christian communities. The aim is to make known the good news of Jesus Christ and to draw people into his community of faith, love and obedience. But often what is stated in words is contradicted both by how churches live and by the witness of Scripture. That is why we need to begin with this basic and
central element in the local church.

1.1 Contextualise all preaching

For clergy and other preachers this means making sure that their Sunday sermons and other preaching are related in some way or other to the actual situations prevailing locally and in the wider society. For listeners, mainly lay people, it means questioning and even challenging 'disembodied' preaching and teaching that could be given anywhere and any time. Also being willing to take part in any dialogue aimed at discovering how the gospel relates to say their own work situations in commerce, industry, education, medicine, etc.

1.2 Use the Church's Year

The seasons of the church, such as Christmas, Easter and Pentecost, and particular occasions like Baptism and Confirmation, SACC Month of Compassion (August) and Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, as well as anniversaries of important events like the Women's March to Pretoria in 1956, are all important to this process of contextualising the gospel. In preparing for them those who preach and teach need to ask themselves how they can use these seasons and occasions authentically to present the biblical view of the poor and of the power of the Holy Spirit to transform people and social structures. Sample sermon outlines showing how others have approached this task are available. It is helpful to have a small resource group building up a data bank of materials (articles, pictures; biblical references) which can be drawn on during such preparation.

1.3 Normal educational work

Use the normal educational work of the church, namely Sunday school and confirmation courses, women's and youth groups, businessmen's breakfasts, house churches and weekday prayer meetings, to educate conscience and to develop informed and competent Christian commitment to the struggle against dehumanising poverty, locally and further afield. This means that in addition to Scripture and liturgy other inputs are used, such as
visits from people from relevant situations (squatter settlements, hunger relief projects...), tape and video recordings, newspaper and other media reports.

1.4 Develop resources

Individuals and groups in the local church can help to develop the educational materials and training programmes that will assist the kind of preaching and teaching mentioned above. In other words, the burden does not have to fall on the overworked clergyman. In fact, the more the work is shared the greater will be the growth in the Christian community.

1.5 Pilgrimage of pain

Seek or create special opportunities to expose the 'comfortable' to the harsh realities of poverty and suffering. (Think of Gandhi having to "discover India".)

There are so many drastic cut-offs in our society: between group areas; between urban and rural; between RSA and homelands/bantustans. Because of these built-in separations it is important not to follow the lines of least resistance/greatest convenience. We need to do a great deal of "experience exchange". This is true even for those who think they are aware and informed, let alone for those who are rather comfortable - in attitude as well as in material things. Ask church leaders to set an example, and

See, judge, act

We learn by experience and reflection on experience. While direct experience is usually the most powerful, for example spending a cold wet night in the open with squatters struggling for their rights, indirect or vicarious experience is also important, that is sharing the experience of others. But the reflection part is essential. Review the experience, look for underlying causes of what is contrary to justice and human well-being, relate the particular situation to the wider context. Then decide on some action arising from the learning. For more details on this process see pages 81-5 of Christians, make peace.
support them in the actions they take in this regard. (For practical advice on how to set about experience exchange and avoid "zoo trips" and other offensive intrusions consult ... . . . (to be supplied) ).

1.6 Encourage regional cooperation

The more you work on the above the more obvious it will become that to go it alone is burdensome and discouraging, whereas to share is to discover that sometimes 1+1+1=4 - that is what biologists call synergy. So look to your regional church structures for cooperation and where appropriate structures do not exist see whether you can plant an acorn, i.e. take modest steps towards helping them to come into existence. N.B. Bottom-up slow organic growth is more realistic and lasting, especially in situations of divide-and-rule.

1.7 Use this information tool

A publisher once said, "When you have produced a book all you have done is clutter up a shelf". He was referring to the fact that a book is a lifeless object, useless unless used by people. Also it does not sell itself and a very large part of the retail price of a book (up to 50% in ordinary shops) is taken by the retailer. The more that church people promote relevant publications through their own networks, the more cheaply and quickly these can be made available to the users for whom they have been produced.

2 Local Fact-finding and Analysis

2.1 Use a simple questionnaire and local volunteer helpers to develop a profile of needs, problems and resources in your area. For practical notes on community self survey see pages 47-9 of Christians, make peace; also (ref to be supplied).

A sample questionnaire is available from ... (""")

2.2 As the facts become known reflect on them in order to analyse what is happening and find out the reasons. Consider
the facts and causes in the light of the gospel; work out what action could and should be taken, then make a start on it.

3 Encourage Self Help and Collective Self Reliance

3.1 Call needy and unemployed people together to take part in community self-survey and/or to see how they can encourage and assist one another to achieve a greater measure of collective self-reliance. This becomes more possible as the feelings of loneliness, demoralisation and of being no use to society are eased by acceptance and affirmation in the group.

3.2 Organise credit unions and cooperatives for buying and for production; also mutual support groups, for example to help care for an elderly person or a disabled child so that a mother can obtain a job. Get the help of relevant agencies in setting up credit unions and cooperatives: there is no need to invent the wheel.

3.3 Encourage church members to share resources - their homes, time, possessions, skills and talents - and so to discover that it is not a case of some give and others receive. Rather that through reciprocity, giving and receiving, we can all grow as persons and fulfil our potential. See pages 18-27 of Christians, make peace.

3.4 Open a church-based advice office or cooperate in a community-based advice office, as a centre for information, counsel, education, and referral to other agencies. See pages 50-2 of Christians, make peace.

3.5 Make church premises and facilities available for self-help groups and adapt them as necessary; for example, provide cooking and cookery instruction facilities, tables and worktops, lock-up storage, reference library, advice office, study centre, counselling room, playground, etc. The process of doing this in response to felt needs will generate leadership and the helpers (volunteer and paid) who will be needed to supervise and maintain facilities as well as to run the activities.

3.6 When planning new or extended church premises design them in
consultation with members of congregation and with community leaders so that what is eventually built will be useful both for the ordinary worship and other needs of the congregation and for constructive community action. Note: township parishes that use their premises or allow them to be used for community needs, for example creches and self help groups, often find that they have fewer problems with vandalism because the people of the community protect "their" church. On the other hand they do sometimes have problems with the authorities who seek to define what is and is not legitimate church activity.

3.7 Adopt a policy of contact and cooperation with specialised community development agencies, religious and secular (see list). Where these do not exist locally see whether you can help to create them or can develop local extensions of existing agencies.

3.8 Keep reporting on and publicising your poverty-and-development activities so that members of the congregation can see and feel them to be part of the mainstream life of the local church. Do this by means of a "wall newspaper" at the back of the church, talks during church services, reports in church publications, etc.

3.9 Cooperate with or establish a local Inter Church Aid committee that can provide links with other development projects in your area or region and with the wider church-and-development network. Take an active part in the annual Month of Compassion.

This sounds like an overwhelming programme but actually it is just a catalogue of possibilities from which a local church can choose the items that seem useful and possible. It is better to work slowly, step by step, than enthusiastically take on too much and have everything fizzle out.

4 Identify and oppose unjust social structures

4.1 Begin with local bread-and-butter issues, things which people are complaining about. Organise around these; cooperate
with other local churches and community organisations. Good examples in the Cape are the 1980-1 Mitchells Plain Electricity Campaign (which eventually benefited all Cape Town's electricity consumers) and the Bonteheuvel Civic Association Bus Campaign. Both are described in *The Local State: Cape Town - a Case Study*. See also ... (e.g.s from other areas - to be supplied)

4.2 Use the newspapers to help people become aware of issues that are both local and more general, for example township rent increases and the shortage of housing. A bulletin board covered with cheap newsprint can be pasted with newspaper clippings plus koki pen comments and emphases. In cooperation with others find out about the policy of the authorities; assess the facts and issues involved; work out what you think would be a better policy, including ways in which people can help themselves; and campaign for the alternative. At each stage keep written notes (however short) of what you are talking about and deciding, and use your bulletin board for short reports so that it becomes your own wall newspaper. Also send reports - and pictures if possible - to local community newsletters, for example *Grassroots* in the Cape,

(other e.g.s needed)

4.3 Examine what happens when power is in the hands of a few who make decisions for the many, whether it be in a sports club, a neighbourhood or a whole country. Make up your own simple role plays, based on actual experience or using the example in *Christians, make peace*, page 16. Study what the Bible teaches about power and responsibility - ask your church leaders for help with this. Struggle for the right of all inhabitants to have an equal share in the powers, duties and benefits of citizenship in a reunited South Africa.

4.4 Expose injustice and by so doing push up the political cost of unjust actions and policies. No government is all-powerful. By making it use more money, people and effort to carry out its
decisions and by embarrassing it in the eyes of other countries with which it is trying to be friendly, we slow down its progress, shorten its life and hasten the day when it gives way to a democratic social order.

5 Search for and promote just social structures

5.1 Live the coming future now. Alternative structures and procedures for a society that is just, participatory, sustainable and self-reliant do not fall readymade from heaven, nor do the people and organisations that are able to create and use such structures. We can and must begin with ourselves at the grassroots.

5.2 Organise cooperatives (see 3.2) and sharing networks (3.3).

5.3 Introduce the cooperative principle into the organisation of church life where it is lacking. That is, move away from hierarchical and authoritarian structures in which a few people dominate and the majority submit, and strengthen structures in which people share responsibility and in which leaders are accountable to congregation or community.

5.4 Support movements in the wider community that have the same values as the above and are working to implement them.
"NOT THERE TO GROW CARROTS"

How regional church structures can assist local church & community action

This chapter contains the following:

1. Elements common to local church action
2. Outline of a local workshop on "Pentecost and Poverty" (including role of regional body)
3. Regional role: Stimulus and assistance

1. Elements common to local church action

Many of the programmes and projects outlined in the chapter on local church and community action have elements that are common to them, as well as elements that are unique to each local situation. For example in the section on preaching and teaching there is scope for a good deal of reading and thinking, studying and writing. This work could be shared. An example of how this could be done is set out in the next section outlining a workshop on Pentecost and Poverty. Much the same applies to the other sections on local fact-finding and analysis; the encouragement of self help and collective self reliance; opposition to unjust social structures and development of just social structures. In fact, the further local churches go along the way the more obvious the common factors will become, and the

"The Church in which the poor are credulous and passive is an instrument in the hands of the powerful for the control of the people. The Church in which the poor are imbued with an active faith is is an instrument for the liberation of the people."

(People's Technologies and People's Participation, p 13)
value of "inter-local"/regional structures of cooperation will be more appreciated. But as far as possible the movement from local to regional should be from bottom-up rather than from top down.

2. Outline of a workshop on Pentecost and Poverty

2.1 Suppose a group of local church people decide they want to relate the celebration of Pentecost (the coming of the Holy Spirit) to the struggle against poverty and for human development. They could either work by themselves or they could invite individuals informally or official representatives from other churches to join them in carrying out tasks such as the following:

2.1.1 Set out the relevant biblical texts and main doctrinal points concerning the first Pentecost.

2.1.2 Examine these texts and doctrinal points from the viewpoint of the poor who are seeking liberation and development. If necessary recruit people from that sector. Look for evidence as to how the infant church dealt with these issues. Do not neglect the Old Testament which was the Bible of the early church. Make a written summary of the findings.

2.1.3 Look for examples in church history and the present day of how the Christian community has been guided by the Holy Spirit into alternative ways of living. (There are resource lists to help this search if necessary.) Write stories and illustrate them with drawings, collages (collections of pictures from magazines arranged in imaginative ways) or photographs.

2.1.4 Consider the different media of communication that could be used to present some of these biblical and other stories. For example, could you make up and enact a short play based on Acts 2:43-77? Which traditional hymns are useful, and what about modern hymns and gospel songs? Could you write modern words to traditional hymn tunes or folk songs, or Christian words to pop tunes?

2.1.5 Also consider different age groups. How could the main points be conveyed to very young children, teenagers, young adults,
the old and the handicapped, workers in commerce and industry, people not actively involved in the church...? How can these various groups take part in communicating and reflecting on the message? What actions might ensue?

2.2 A workshop on this theme could begin with a teach-in on part 1 above, then split into interest groups dealing with one or other of the next four aspects, and come together for reports. They could then decide how best to follow up in the local church or in the separate local churches with possibly some joint celebration or activity.

2.3 With three representatives of or participants drawn from four to six local churches a workshop would find it had many talents right there or near at hand. The people concerned would be stretched and enriched, and through working together would form friendships that would bear fruit in the future.

2.4 The regional contribution to such a workshop would be threefold:

2.4.1 Before the workshop: it would vary from encouragement and advice to information and leadership training, especially on how to plan and run a workshop in which there is the best possible participation of all members. What the region must not do is take over and do for the local group what they can do or be enabled to do for themselves;

2.4.2 During the workshop: being there and sharing on the same basis as others in the activity strengthens relationships between local and regional and leads to the next stage;

2.4.3 After the workshop: the region can help to make the workshop story known to other local groups, also the findings of the workshop. For while the process remains enormously important workshop products, in the form of pamphlets, booklets, audio or video tapes, songs, etc., can become resources for other local groups. Such
locally produced resources, though modest by comparison with
glossy mass produced imported materials, are far more likely
to connect with people's actual experiences and needs.

3 Regional role: Stimulus and Assistance

3.1 As the above outline makes clear the limited resources
of a regional group or worker
are best used not in doing
local jobs which ought to be
tackled by local churches but
in stimulating and reinforcing
local action. Using the analogy
of the Department of Agriculture
(which could be explored in
terms of advisory and extension
services, research and develop­
ment, technical assistance, etc)
we see that a regional worker
with his/her committee has a
distinctive contribution to
make in providing resources and
reinforcement for local efforts.

3.2 Resources would probably include the following to a
greater or lesser extent as required:

3.2.1 a working library of written materials. These range
from books and magazines to pamphlets, press clippings, cata­
logues and "home products" (diagrams, maps, anthologies of
quotations, questionnaires, etc., of local relevance).

3.2.2 audio visual aids. These could include records, tapes
and cassettes; slidetapes and videotapes; collections of pictures,
diagrams, charts, maps, cartoons. Also elementary instructional
material on how to produce and use audio and visual aids and the
necessary equipment.

3.2.3 reference lists of specialists. These include agencies,
organisations and individuals with particular emphases and skills.

"An agriculture department
does not exist to grow
carrots, except in experi­
mental plots. It exists
to help the farmers to
grow the carrots that are
needed. It can have any
number of flourishing
carrot plots of its own
but if it is not enabling
more farmers to improve
and increase their yields
it is nothing more than a
farm by another name."

II
3.2.4 other educational aids. These include tools, models, games, toys, puppets, etc.

3.2.5 equipment. This could range from the most basic talk-and-chalk/newsprint and koki pen, crayons, paints, etc., to manual or electric typewriter, duplicator, photocopier, overhead and slide projectors, audio and video recorders, cameras, even microcomputer and word processor (see 4). A visit to a well equipped primary school or to a teachers' centre would indicate the range of possibilities - not only for those who have elastic budgets and too little sales resistance but also for those who have very limited budgets but plenty of imagination and willingness to improvise.

3.3. But whatever resources the regional body does or does not possess, putting them together in a well organised office multiplies their value many times over. And vice versa. A regional resource centre, however modest to start with, provides a basis for growth and development.

3.3.1 And after a while it will become obvious that sharing with other denominations and/or community organisations, and/or developing complementary and co-ordinated resources will give greater satisfaction all round.

3.3.2 It should also mean more faithful Christian stewardship of resources. Just because the earth is the Lord's does not mean that we can squander his gifts - or hug them to ourselves.

4 Note on Microelectronic Technology

4.1 Whether we like it or not a technological revolution is sweeping South Africa or at least the part of it that is urban and industrial and white agricultural. Therefore the question of video recorders, microcomputers and word processors cannot be avoided, no matter how much of a luxury they seem - and are in relation to the poverty of the masses.

4.2 We are likely to see an increasing gap between the First
World parishes that possess or have access to the most sophisticated aids and resources and the vast majority that virtually still rely on the spoken word.

4.3 One of the issues regional groups, particularly in metropolitan areas, will have to face is the harsh reality of this gap, and how to work at bridge building. This could include on the one hand challenging the privileged to beware of plunging headlong into the flood tide of microelectronic mania in order to "reach" the unevangelised affluent, and to find ways of making technology directly and indirectly more serviceable to the needs of the impoverished masses, so many of them in the remoter rural areas. Some examples of the latter are already available from other countries such as ...

(e.g.s to be supplied)
A CHURCH IN SOLIDARITY WITH THE POOR & THE OPRESSED *

These are the marks of a church that is in solidarity with the poor and the oppressed:

1. It keeps testing each aspect of its life by the question, "How does this express solidarity with the poor in their needs and aspirations?"

2. It breaks the Word not only in "ivory towers" (fine religious buildings or comfortable drawing rooms) but in the shacks of squatters, the shop floors of factories, gatherings of workers on strike and commuters boycotting buses. It breaks the Word in conflict-oriented bible study.

3. It does theology not so much in the seclusion of universities and seminaries as in the midst of the struggles for social justice - in the townships and squatter settlements, bus terminals and streets, wherever people are in pain and crying out, "Lord, how long?" or asking, "Is there a God who cares about us?"

4. It empowers the powerless by helping them to think and speak for themselves and to obtain the information they may need in planning and carrying out action; also by helping them to link up with others who are struggling elsewhere.

5. It engages with others, including those who do not share our faith in God, in the struggle against the forces of evil that destroy family life, corrupt morals and relationships, and undermine people's will to live lives of love and service to God and to one another.

6. It so organises its life as to be continuously forming and nurturing persons and groups that are sharing actively with one another, accepting responsibility, and developing gifts of leadership.

7. It locates its leadership training within not outside the ongoing/...
ongoing struggle to understand and reshape human society, so that Christian leaders become not so much recruiting agents for religious clubs as agents for change in the whole human community.

8 It provides networks of communication and cooperation for those who are actively engaged in liberation struggles.

9 It strips itself of whatever material structures, social organisation and financial securities retard or hinder it from sharing fully and freely in the struggles of those with whom Jesus identified when he described himself as having less than foxes and birds, as One who had "nowhere to lay his head" (Matthew 8.20).

(* adapted from J de Santa Ana Towards a Church of the Poor CCPD/WCC 1979 )
Just by being itself the church could provide the key to self help programmes that work.

Introduction

Botswana is a semi-desert country plagued by periodic drought. The people have sought the help of outside experts to help them become self reliant. Countless pilot projects have been started, many of them moderately successful, some doomed from the outset because they were too ambitious and required too many people with too many skills that a poor nation just does not have. For over a decade a progressive dedicated government has highlighted rural development. Yet somehow the dreams fade one by one and the schemes slowly wither. What has gone wrong? Can the problem be remedied?

Sales goes on to express the conviction that the church just by being itself could provide the key to programmes that work, that multiply and meet people's needs more comprehensively than seeds, heifers and agricultural innovation alone. He sets out the issues and possibilities by means of an imaginary radio interview with a churchman.

Interview

Interviewer: By the way, Reverend, what is your church doing for the development of our country?
Churchman: Well, my church participates in the Botswana Theological Training Programme.
Interviewer: Oh... what does that have to do with development, self sufficiency and economic growth which are what our country needs?
Churchman: I'm glad you asked that because it's true that such training does not seem relevant to economic development.

* adapted from an article by R W Sales in the "Christian Century", 2 May 1979
But when we study the wider picture its significance becomes apparent.

Interviewer: What wider picture?

Churchman: Consider the help we have had in the past few years from experts in tropical and semi-desert agriculture. When they leave their projects soon fold up. Why does that happen?

Interviewer: I'm not a farmer..

Churchman: Neither am I. But ask yourself this: What does a farmer do when he has been shown a way to treble his crop? He goes out and does it, under the detailed supervision of the expert. Right?

Interviewer (puzzled): Yes..

Churchman: Six months later he has for the first time in his life a really good crop, one that brings in cash in addition to providing for his family's needs. He is delighted. First he pays back an instalment on the loan he took for the equipment and fertiliser, but he still has some money left. So now he makes a payment on a motor car.

Interviewer: Is there anything wrong with that?

Churchman: Our farmer now has a new status. His relatives see him as a rich man. They send their kids to him to be educated. He is elected to the local development committee and he spends his time attending meetings. When the next planting season comes round he gets in some local people to work his crop.

Interviewer: I still don't see..

Churchman: The expert is still in the area. He pays a visit and finds that the farmer is not there and the local people doing the work haven't the faintest notion of the detailed techniques that brought about that first bountiful crop. So he tries to teach them. But they themselves are not likely to benefit from doing all those detailed wearisome jobs: scientifically spreading fertiliser and conscientiously watering. They are working for wages, so they skimp and the second crop is much smaller.

Now/...
Now the farmer has a problem. He cannot keep the car and pay the next instalment on his agricultural debt, so maybe he keeps the car and makes excuses to the expert. The third year the expert leaves and after that harvest the farmer goes under. Then all his neighbours say, "You see, God meant an acre to yield only ten bushels".

Interviewer: But what has all this got to do with the church? Churchman: If you see what went wrong you will know what the first step must be. The expert knew all about farming and did his work, yet the project failed. Why? Because our friend the farmer did not have deep within him some important religious understandings of who he was and what he was doing. It failed because he was not part of a community giving him crucial support as he launched out into a new way of life and providing him with the counsel he needed at critical times.

Interviewer: I thought we were talking about development. Churchman: Yes, we are. What I'm trying to explain is that to give a person a skill and a means of livelihood is only the first step towards successful development. If people are to profit and enable others to profit from that skill they also need to have more and theological convictions, to have a sense of responsibility and stewardship. They need to be part of a helping community so that making the adjustment to a new life can be meaningful. In short, our farmer needs a vision and that vision must be wide and constructive.

Interviewer: You say this has to do with theological education? Churchman: Very much so. For the first time people in rural areas can learn to understand the church in this deeper way I've been talking about. Our programme makes this possible. Among the people we train may be this farmer or his neighbour. Another may become his pastor. Because these people have gained this wider vision they can help the farmer to make sense of his skill and integrate it into a new and different life style.

Interviewer: Well, thank you pastor, for telling us some of the activities of your organisation. Next week we shall be speaking to Mr Smith of the Small Business Encouragement Unit. Until then, goodbye.
Sales concludes his article with acknowledging that many donor agencies themselves do not see the connection between development programmes and mainstream church work, let alone theological education. His own thoughts on these lines had been sparked by a report of work being done in villages of northern Ghana by a development team consisting of an agriculturist, a literacy expert, a nutritionist, a nurse and a clergyman. At first he had not seen how a clergyman would fit into such a team, but after a while began to sort things out along the lines indicated above.

Service to human society and propagation of the faith are not mutually exclusive. Rather, they belong together because true development concerns the whole person in the whole community.

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Note:
Clearly the theological education programme mentioned by Sales cannot be identified with the extension of just any kind of church teaching. It would be useful to examine that programme and other Theological Education by Extension programmes to see what kind of approach and content and used to equip people with vision and understanding of what it means to live Christianly in a developing and changing society. See Ministry by the People: Theological Education by Extension, edited by F Ross Kinsler (WCC Geneva 1983).
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