

sister' (Paul VI). As Anglicans and Roman Catholics refine the Uniate model and resolve doctrinal differences the possibility of mutual recognition of ministry is in sight.¹

But I wish to conclude on a note of urgency. Theologians and bishops can no longer afford the luxury of interminable considerations and hesitations. The human family, enmeshed in urbanized industrialization, is woefully divided. And nature itself has begun to lash back lethally at motor-car societies which have overreached themselves in ravishing their environment. The united witness of Christians is urgently needed to reconcile humanity with itself and with the earth. Anglicans and Roman Catholics must get on with resolving the question of Anglican orders so that God's people can go forth in unity to guard even heathen things. I close therefore with some sage words of a Lutheran brother: 'There is no divine privilege for theologians and officials to indefinitely extend their considerations and hesitations before the average Christian might be able to live according to his confession in one universal Church.'²

¹I have also argued this case elsewhere. Cf. Edward P. Echlin, 'Anglican Orders, a Case for Validity', *The Anglican Theological Review*, April 1970, pp. 67-76; and 'The Validity of Anglican Orders', *The Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, Spring, 1970, pp. 266-281.

²Wolfhart Pannenberg *et al.*, *Spirit, Faith and Church*, Philadelphia, 1970, p. 31.

South Africa: Dialogue or Disaster

by Edmund Hill, O.P.

Perhaps it would be as well to start with the reminder that it is impossible to analyse South African politics in terms of political Right and Left, and quite misleading to try. Neither the United Party nor even the Progressive Party are really to the left of the Nationalist Party in any meaningful way. A case of sorts could be made out for saying that in some respects it is well to the left of the opposition parties, and certainly its policies are far less shy of radical solutions. But as I say, these terms do not really apply in South Africa, where we are living in a different set of dimensions from Europe or America.

The two basic drives that power the Nationalist Party are intense Afrikaner nationalism and White colour prejudice. The two are distinct in principle, and there are Afrikaner nationalists of sensibility who take pride in the nationalism and genuinely abjure and deplore the prejudice. But they are few, and in the soul of the average nationalist the two drives are almost identical, or at least serve to boost and intensify each other. One might say, rather

academically, that the basic drives of the United Party used to be a kind of Smutsian imperialism and White colour prejudice, but that the imperialism has vanished with the course of events, and so only the colour prejudice is left. It is true, up to a point; U.P. candidates, some of them, have not hesitated to appeal to colour prejudice in their electorates, or in their attacks on some government actions. The Progressive Party bases itself more on reason and the more humane sentiments of the heart, which is why it lacks any potent appeal among the dominant racial group in this country.

Politically speaking, the motivations of the United and Progressive Parties will be of no importance until the motivations that keep the Nationalist Party in power begin to break down, and so it is these that we must examine more closely.

Hitherto the two basic drives mentioned above have been massively supported by three important factors; economic interest—White South Africans have never had it so good as under the strong nationalist government, which directly employs an astonishingly high percentage of the White population, and protects the rest with job reservation and an abundant supply of cheap Black labour in factory, farm and home; religious conscience, with the close relationship, almost identification between the Dutch Reformed Churches, the Afrikaner *volk* and the Nationalist Party; and thirdly a more elusive factor that we can label sport, which has something to do with the White South African's, and particularly the Afrikaner's image of himself as a tough, manly outdoor type, who excels at manly sports, and in particular at rugby. This is something that has, so to say, assured him that he is part of the White man's world, and a pretty pre-eminent part of it at that. In this kind of atmosphere sport with non-Whites or against them is just unthinkable, as unthinkable as it would have been to the ancient Greeks to allow barbarians or slaves to take part in the exercises of the gymnasias or in the ancient Olympic games.

But in the last year or two, and very noticeably since the last general election, these three factors have begun to work in the opposite direction; instead of strengthening the basic drives of the nationalist party, they are now tending more and more clearly to weaken them. To take economy first, South Africa is in the middle of quite a serious economic crisis. Being no economist I can throw no light on its nature, but one can best put it I think by saying that the society is showing signs of beginning to founder under the weight of its own incompetence. Efficiency seems never to have been a very important value for any South Africans, whatever the colour of their skins—one welcome sign, I sometimes feel, of a residual humanity in this peculiar society. But the happy-go-lucky life cannot go on for ever, and the truth is that the personal resources of the small White population, and the even smaller Afrikaner population are being stretched to breaking point. In the economy there is a critical

shortage of skilled labour, which may not be entirely due to job reservation, but is enormously aggravated by it. But the crisis extends far beyond the economy in any narrow sense of the word; it affects education, hospital services, public administration, the police. In all these spheres a great many White people are being employed in posts for which they lack the necessary intelligence or education or training, and where Black people are employed they are in no way encouraged, by their lower salaries or by the social system at large, to do better than the Whites. As for unskilled labour, scandalously underpaid, the policy of cheap labour means inevitably a policy of inefficient labour. And more and more people are becoming dimly aware that colour prejudice does not pay.

There are two points of interest here for foreign observers, and one is a point that has not been emphasized enough. For that body of conservative opinion in Europe and America which looks on South Africa as a bastion against the menace of communism in Africa and the Indian Ocean it needs to be pointed out that it may well not be anything like as strong or solid a bastion as they assume. What assurance do they really have that such an administratively incompetent society will long survive any serious onslaught from outside? Even prescindng from all moral considerations, Mr Heath and President Nixon should be asking themselves seriously whether apartheid South Africa is not more of a weak point than a bastion in their anti-communist defences, whether as an ally it would not prove an all too easily broken reed.

The second point is that the more liberal conservative body of opinion, both overseas and in South Africa, which has opposed putting pressures such as sports boycotts on South Africa on the grounds that economic realities will eventually force a change of policy, are being proved partly right—but only very partly. The economic factor is indeed undermining the credibility of apartheid as a workable policy; but only very slowly, and in the teeth of a tremendous will not to see. And if it were not for the other factors we have mentioned and are going on to discuss, it could well be that economic pressures would not bring about a change of outlook quickly enough to avert the violent explosion that nearly everyone is dreading.

This brings me to the second factor of religious conscience. The conscience that matters here, politically speaking, is the Afrikaner conscience. Other White Christians, Roman Catholics and members of the so-called 'English Churches', either already have socially sensitive consciences but for the most part find there is little but the odd act of charity they can do to assuage them, or else—and this is the majority—they are quite happy practising a comfortable Sunday religion that is not allowed to intrude into their daily lives or to criticize their accepted attitudes. But the Afrikaners, generally speaking, take their religion far more seriously. They have hitherto

required their religion positively to justify their attitudes and policies, and to give them an actual good conscience about it all. There have of course been stirrings among them for a good many years. I recently read a lecture delivered by a professor of theology at Stellenbosch as long ago as 1957, which condemned the whole policy of apartheid outright on ethical grounds, and Dutch Reformed members of the Christian Institute, founded by one of them, Ds Beyers Naudé in 1960, have been admirably testifying to their concern ever since. But so far the establishment of the Dutch Reformed Churches has managed to encapsulate these stirrings of conscience in small groups which they have successfully labelled as unorthodox and disloyal both to Church and *volk*. In my previous article I gave some of the evidence which suggests that this manoeuvre is not working very successfully any longer. The really weak point of the policy here is the migratory labour system—which of course the present government did not invent, but has enormously extended—and the destruction of African family life that it is causing.

The point that suggests itself here for outside consideration is how far such actions as the support given by the W.C.C. to what are here called 'terrorist' movements has either furthered or hindered these stirrings of Afrikaner conscience. I have no intention of discussing the moral propriety of the W.C.C. executive's decision in this matter. The hysterical reaction to it in South Africa, as far as I am concerned, is an *ad hominem* argument in its favour. The reaction certainly shows that it touched the South African conscience on a peculiarly tender spot. Many people who abhor apartheid, like the Archbishop of Canterbury, think the decision was wrong, and therefore *a fortiori* all supporters of the policy will judge it to be morally wrong—after all they label it 'aiding and abetting terrorists'. But our question is, has such an action simply confirmed them in their obstinate conviction of the rightness of the policy, or has it helped to make them wonder about its morality if abhorrence of it can have led the W.C.C. to such a 'wrong' decision. I am inclined to think the second answer is the true one; I think fewer and fewer Afrikaners are prepared to swallow Dr Vorster's line (the Prime Minister's brother, and moderator of the N.G.K.) that the W.C.C. is just a front for world communism. They are being made aware that that decision, right or wrong, does represent a censure of world Christianity passed upon the morality of their national policy, and it makes them very uncomfortable. The screw has been turned tighter on their consciences by the action of the world federation of Reformed Churches first at Lunteren in 1968 and then at Nairobi in 1970 in condemning racialism; it has been turned tighter by the Archbishop of Canterbury's visit in 1970, to judge by the persistent viciousness with which *Die Burger*, for example commented on anything he said; and the unkindest turn of the screw of all was given by Queen Juliana deciding to follow the W.C.C.'s example. It is, to conclude, of value

if world Christianity, and in particular if world Calvinism, keeps up the pressure of disapproval on the morality of separate development as practised in South Africa. One will only be led to doubt its value if one falls into the trap of treating 'the Afrikaner' as a stereotype. The common stereotype of a stubborn, self-righteous, singularly bloody-minded nationalist bent on maintaining the national identity at the cost of no matter what injustice to the Black man, is no doubt true of the government and the establishment behind it; no consciences are being visibly stirred in these circles. But these circles rely on some 2,000,000 or more Afrikaners to keep them in power, and it is unrealistic to apply the stereotype to all these, particularly to the younger generation of them. Keep turning the screws, then, and their genuine Calvinistic consciences will begin to cry out.

The same goes for the field of sport, only more so. Mr Hain assessed the situation with complete accuracy, and the policy of getting tours called off which he so successfully carried through last year has borne visible fruit already. Nothing has so shaken the South African sporting world, which means nearly all South Africans, as the really very modest protest of the cricketers at Newlands, Cape Town, just before Easter, followed by the booing of Mr Waring, minister of sport and tourism at the end of the S.A. tennis championships at Ellis Park, Johannesburg, shortly after. The policy is working, and if it is carried on in Australia this year it will go on working. Keep turning the screws, this is just the kind of psychological pressure that is needed.

Mr Hain's opponents in England object to his actions, not only on the fatuous grounds that politics should be kept out of sport, but because they say the important thing is not to isolate South Africa, but to keep contacts open and dialogue going, rather than resorting to violence. They are quite right, righter than perhaps they know. Change must come in this country, and it can come in two ways, by violence or by dialogue. If not dialogue, which means negotiation, then violence. But what these people do not seem to know is what dialogue really means. Nor do they realize how difficult it is to have any dialogue with people who do not want anything to change, and who think they hold all the cards. Dialogue with the South African government, or even with South African Whites at large does not mean polite conversation, and telling them you think apartheid is wrong, and being told in turn that you can't really understand their problems unless you live there. It means talking to people who don't want to listen, and trying to make them see truths they don't want to see. It means turning the screws, applying whatever psychological pressures are available. So far from being a breach of dialogue, Peter Hain's stop the tour campaign was the first exchange of really effective dialogue. It has made them listen for a bit. It has maybe done something to avert a violent and bloody change of regime in South Africa.

Change there must be in South Africa before very long, and it will come by violence, if it does not come by dialogue and negotiation. But a further question Peter Hain's critics never seem to ask, is who has to have dialogue with whom. Dialogue between enlightened British opinion and the South African government or South African White opinion is totally irrelevant to the situation here. What is needed, and what the establishment here are so totally averse to, and what White opinion here has scarcely ever given a thought to, is dialogue with local Black opinion, and its various interests. White South Africans love to feel that they are in close communication with their 'kith and kin' in Europe, considering themselves as they do an outpost of 'Western Christian civilization'. The more of such communication they have, in trade, industry, culture and sport, the less need they feel for communication with their Black neighbours, either inside the country or elsewhere on the continent. But this is what they have to be forced, by any pressure that can be brought to bear, to set up. So the whole value of sporting and other ostracism from the West is that it is an effective means of bringing about the only dialogue that matters.

So what I would like to see from the outside world is an ever colder shoulder from Britain, Europe, Australia, Canada and the United States, with at the same time ever more determined efforts from Black Africa, such as the recent moves from Ghana, to establish communications with South Africa. For dialogue with Black Africa can do much, I am convinced, to pave the way for dialogue with Black South Africa. That is why I think it is a mistake on the part of Presidents Kaunda and Nyerere to refuse to establish such communications. It is true they have made offers in the past that have been snubbed by Pretoria, notably in the Lusaka manifesto. But Pretoria is slowly changing its ground. Mr Vorster has reacted slightly more positively to Dr Busia's tentative overtures, and Dr Busia's foreign secretary has explicitly declared that he regards the Lusaka manifesto as a good basis, indeed a minimum basis for discussion.

If the existing establishment or administration were ever to enter into serious dialogue, as distinct from supercilious monologue, with its Black subjects in South Africa it would be something of a miracle. At the moment the authorities show no signs of having the slightest idea of what dialogue really means. Whenever it threatens to happen they immediately take evasive action; when the Coloured Labour Party won a large majority of the elected seats in the Coloured Representative Council, the government immediately packed it with a Federal Party majority, and appointed the Federal Party leader, Mr Tom Schwartz, who had been roundly defeated in the elections, as chairman of its executive committee, hoping to find in him an easy yes man. When even he and his party have joined the rest of the Council in unanimously demanding, for example, equal pay for equal jobs, they have merely been ignored—there has been no

dialogue. Chief Buthelezi has made some very clear demands on behalf of the Zulus; there has been no visible response from the government. Latest of all, Chief Matanzima dropped his bombshell at a congress of his party just after Easter, demanding certain definite enclaves of 'white' territory for the Transkei, and the transfer of far more administrative authority to his cabinet, and was treated to an angry and insufferably patronizing lecture from Mr Botha, minister of Bantu affairs, which showed that Mr Botha has not the slightest idea of what dialogue means.

But the establishment and the government are not the only important forces in South Africa. They still depend for their power on an electorate. And by a combination of pressures, economic and psychological, this electorate can, I still hope, be finally convinced that genuine dialogue with their Black neighbours is the only thing that will save them from violence. So please keep turning those religious and sporting screws.

Can we opponents of the system residing in South Africa do any effective screw turning of our own, especially of a religious sort? I wonder if the most effective thing Church leaders and the South African Council of Churches could do might not be to start a dialogue themselves with the Black leaders in this country. Whenever a journal like *Die Burger* runs out of arguments in defence of the policy, it challenges the critics of the policy to suggest a workable alternative, and then tears to shreds what it supposes to be the only suggestions they might make. The answer that needs to be made to this sort of ploy is that it is not for any one section of the population to suggest policies that might or might not be foisted on the others, but that a solution needs to be worked out, by genuine representatives of all the group interests involved, engaged in genuine and therefore inevitably hard and often doubtless bitter negotiation. Of course, this is something that nationalists have never even thought about; they have worked out a solution satisfactory to their own Afrikaner identity, they have cursorily projected the more obvious of their aspirations on to other groups, and gaily proceeded to satisfy them by presenting these other groups with separate freedoms of exclusively Afrikaner manufacture on exclusively Afrikaner terms.

This is what is breaking down now. No one group can decide what is in the best interests of the others. So what Church leaders might do, instead of saying, as Cardinal McCann rather unfortunately did, what they think the answer is (he agrees more or less with what has hitherto been the Progressive Party idea of a qualified franchise), is to encourage and even try and convene meetings in which Black opinion—or rather opinions—can be thoroughly canvassed. Much more too could be done to give proper weight to Black opinion in ecclesiastical councils.

Let us conclude with a little crystal-gazing. Political commentators here—in the English-language press, of course—are talking about the

serious possibility of a change of government for the first time in 23 years. It may be wishful thinking, but the wishes have been there all the time, and now they seem to see faint possibilities of their being realized. If and when the Nationalists are defeated at a general election, it will surely be the end of the Nationalist Party. For defeat will mean that most Afrikaners have ceased to feel that the Party is necessary in order to safeguard their national identity. If they are defeated, they will be replaced by a United Party government, and this too will spell the end of the United Party as it now stands. The only thing that unites it at the moment is dislike of the Nationalists. Once it finds itself in power the vast differences in point of view among its members will become apparent; it will have to decide whether it will be a conservative or a progressive party. The core of the party will probably choose to be conservative. But this means that many of its members will move over to the Progressive Party, as will many of those who are now called *verligte* Nationalists, while many of the *verkrampte* but not wholly inflexible Nationalists will align themselves with the conservative elements of the United Party. In other words, party politics will take on a new alignment, in which the hitherto dominant opposition between Afrikaner and English will be a thing of the past; it will at last become a politics of a Right and a Left, the whole many degrees to the right of the English political spectrum, of course, but still on the same kind of alignment. This being so, there will be much more likelihood of a genuine dialogue with Black South Africa than there is at the moment.

I do not think any of this will happen at the next general election, which the Nationalist Party will probably win with only a working majority, instead of the overwhelming majority it now enjoys. At the next election but one, however, any time between 1975 and 1979, a Nationalist defeat is a real possibility. We have, though, to reckon with yet another possibility. It is not in the least wizard-like of me to say that a Nationalist defeat will mean the end of the National Party. Its leading members, and the establishment, must know this quite as well as I do. And they are men who have become so used to the authoritarian exercise of power, that they may well decide that they cannot afford to be defeated. The real prospect of defeat could well drive them to stage a Chief Leabua Jonathan style *coup d'état*, and stay in power under a continuous state of emergency. It would be quite insane, but it is a real possibility. If it happens, then all hope of peaceful change in South Africa will be at an end. After that will come the deluge, and not very long after either.