

TOTALITARIAN CALVINISM
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Totalitarian Calvinism - The Reformed (Dopper) Community in

South Africa 1902-1919.

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CONTENTS

Synopsis, pp.4-5

Abbreviations, p.6.

Acknowledgements, pp.7-8.

PART ONE: The Nineteenth Century Dutch and South African Background and a Consideration of British Imperialism. p.9.

Chapter One: Dutch Calvinism and the Anti-Revolutionary Movement. pp.10-31.

Introduction; pp.10-11; The Revival of Calvinism; pp.11-16; The Anti-Revolutionary Ideology; pp.16-23; Abraham Kuyper's Neo-Calvinism; pp.23-31.

Chapter Two: Calvinists, Liberals and Evangelicals in Nineteenth Century Afrikaner Society; pp.32-51.

Calvinism and Afrikaner Nationalism; pp.32-34; A Re-examination of the Relationship Between Calvinism and Afrikaner Nationalism; pp.34-35; Calvinism and the Dutch Reformed Church; pp.37-42; The Reformed Church; pp.42-48; Reformed Theology; pp.48-51.

Chapter Three: The Development of National Consciousness and Afrikaner Identity Prior to 1899. pp.52-64.

The Origins of Afrikaans; p.52; Die Genootskap van Regte Afrikaners; pp.53-56; The Reformed Church and the Language Movement; pp.57-59; Christian Politics and the Birth of the Afrikaner Bond; pp.59-60; The Reformed Church and Afrikaner Nationalism; pp.60-64.

Chapter Four: British Imperialism - A Threat to Calvinism and Afrikaner Identity. pp.65-72.

The Ideology of Imperialism; pp.65-68; Milner's Imperialism in Practice; pp.68-70; Post-War Imperialism; pp.70-72.

PART TWO: The Reformed (Dopper) Church in South Africa. p.73.

Chapter Five: The Self-Understanding and Theology of the Reformed Community in South Africa. pp.74-80.

History and Identity; pp.74-80.

Chapter Six: The Ecclesiastical Organisation of the Reformed Church in South Africa, pp.81-101.

Church Structure; pp.81-82; The Offices and Assemblies of the Reformed Church; pp.82-85; Church Ceremonies and Discipline; pp.85-88; Church Affairs Generally; pp.88-90; Mission; pp.90-91; The Reformed Church and Symbols of Afrikaner Unity; pp.91-92; Church Communications; pp.92-94; Church Publications; pp.94-96; Links with other Calvinists; pp.96-98; Membership of the Reformed Church 1899;1919; pp.98-101.

Chapter Seven: The Practice of Faith, Social Conditions and some examples of Church Discipline. pp.102-123.

The Piety of the Reformed Community; pp.102-105;; The Reformed Attack Upon Methodism; pp.105-108; Various Social Attitudes of the Reformed Community; pp.108-109; Reformed Attitudes Towards Other Churches; pp.109-111; Some Insights into Social Conditions; pp.111-116; The Process of Censure; pp.116-123.

PART THREE: Christian-National Education: The School Struggle. pp.124-175.

Chapter Eight: Imperial Education and the Afrikaner Reaction. pp.125-143.

Education for British Citizenship; pp.125-128; The Christian-National Education Commission; pp.128-138; British Attitudes to the Christian-National Education Movement; pp.138-140; Christian-National Education Outside the Transvaal; pp.140-143.

Chapter Nine: The Reformed Theory of Christian Education. p.144-159.

Christian-National Education; pp.144-153; Christian Educational Theory; pp.153-159.

Chapter Ten: The Reformed Church and Christian-National Education 1907-1919. pp.160-175.

Christian-National Education Conferences; pp.160-163; The Reformed Church's Christian-National Schools; pp.163-165; The Christian-National School in Burgersdorp; pp.166-168; Christian-National Education in Steynsburg; pp.168-175.

PART FOUR: The Reformed Church and the Second Afrikaans Language Movement. pp.176-192.

Chapter Eleven: The Second Afrikaans Language Movement. pp.117-192.

English, Dutch or Afrikaans?; pp.177-185; The Reformed Church and the Second Language Movement; pp.185-192.

Chapter Twelve: Totius - Afrikaans Prophet and Interpreter of the Word of God pp.193-213.

J. D. du Toit - Totius; pp.193-194; The Vitality of the Word; pp.194-196; By Die Monument; pp.196-199; Potgieter's Trek; pp.199-203; Wilgerboomboogies; pp.203-204; Ragel; pp.204-207; Trekkerswee; pp.207-212; The Life and Work of S. J. du Toit; pp.212-213.

Chapter Thirteen: Dr. O'kulis and Afrikaans Literature. pp.214-228.

Willem Postma - Dr. O'kulis; pp.214-215; Eselskakebeen; pp.215-220; "Doppers"; pp.220-226; Die Boervrouw; pp.226-228.

PART FIVE: Religion and Politics: The Inextricable Involvement. pp.229-241.

Chapter Fourteen: The Reformed Religion and Politics. pp.230-241.

The Necessity of Politics; pp.230-232; Religion and Politics; pp.233-234; Christian Ministers and Politics; pp.235-236; Christian Politics - Some Practical Problems; pp.236-238; Christian Political Theory; pp.238-241.

Chapter Fifteen: Afrikaner Nationalism, Apartheid and the Birth of the National Party. pp.242-269.

The Origins of Apartheid; pp.242-246; Dingaan's Day and Afrikaner Nationalism; pp.246-250; Reformed Criticisms of Government Policies; pp.251-253; General Hertzog and the Reformed Community; pp.253-255; The Birth of the National Party; pp.255-258; The Decline of Reformed Influence in the National Party; pp.258-259; Local Politics in Potchefstroom; pp.260-269.

Chapter Sixteen: War, Rebellion and Social Issues. pp.270-282.

War; p.270; Rebellion; pp.270-271; The Reformed Community and the Rebellion; pp.271-272; The Reformed Judgement on the Rebellion; pp.272-273; The Aftermath of Rebellion; pp.273-274; Republicanism; p.274; Poor Whites and Industrialisation; pp.275-276; Capitalism and Socialism; pp.276-278; The Female Franchise - A Revolutionary Belief; pp.278-282.

POSTSCRIPT: Totalitarian Calvinism. pp.283-284

- Appendix 1. Sources; p.285.
- Appendix 2. Informants; p.285.
- Appendix 3. Translation and Afrikaans spelling; p.285.
- Appendix 4. The Term "Volk"; p.286.
- Appendix 5. The Reformed Community 1920-1975; p.286.
- Appendix 6. The Kuyperian Tradition Outside South Africa; p.287.
- Appendix 7. Brief Biographical Details of Leading Calvinists Mentioned in the Text; pp.288-290.
- Appendix 8. The Reformed Community in Microcosm - The Development of the Theological School and its Literary Department 1902-1919; pp.291-301.
- Appendix 9. Photographs; pp.302-309.
- Appendix 10. Map; p.310.
- BIBLIOGRAPHY. Unpublished sources; pp.311-314.
 Printed Sources; pp.314-321.
 Secondary Authorities; pp.321-328.

SYNOPSIS

Many articles have been written about the influence of Calvinism in South Africa but few scholarly studies of the subject have been made. Critics of apartheid attack Calvinism for the monster which it has created. Afrikaner Nationalists glory in their religious heritage. Both sides agree that it was the Dutch Reformed Church which maintained an orthodox form of Calvinism in South Africa which they believe can be traced back to sixteenth century Geneva through the faith of Jan van Riebeeck⁶ and his followers. Thus it is argued that on the southern tip of Africa an outdated and bigoted type of religion survived into the twentieth century when it had been abandoned by the rest of the civilized world. Afrikaners respond with the argument that they have preserved the true light of revealed religion while pagan darkness once more engulfs the West.

This work is an attempt to explore the relationship between Afrikaner Nationalism and Calvinism. It concentrates on the period between 1902 and 1919 during which modern Afrikaner Nationalism became an important social movement and the first Nationalist Party was formed. The period under consideration runs from the signing of the Peace of Vereeniging at the end of the Second Anglo-Boer War to the death of General Botha in 1919 when the first period of post-war politics came to an end.

The principal argument of the thesis is that the Reformed Church (Gereformeerde Kerk) and not the Dutch Reformed Church (Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk) was responsible for forging links between Calvinism and Nationalism in South Africa, and, indeed, to a considerable extent, for the creation of Afrikaner Nationalism

itself. In presenting this case it is also intended to show that the roots of the Calvinist influence in modern South Africa go back not to the sixteenth century but to a revival of Calvinism which took place in the Netherlands during the nineteenth century.

Once the nineteenth century Dutch and South African background has been established, four main areas of study are pursued: religion, education, language, and politics. Each section overlaps the others to some extent because the interaction of these factors provided the framework upon which Afrikaner Nationalism was built.

* * * * *

ABBREVIATIONS

<u>Almanak</u>	-	<u>Almanak van die Gereformeerde Kerk in Suid Africa.</u>
<u>AVC</u>	-	<u>Algemene Vergadering Cape; Cape/Colony/Province; (Provincial Synod Minutes)</u>
<u>AVO</u>	-	<u>Algemene Vergadering Orange Free State/River Colony.</u>
<u>AVT</u>	-	<u>Algemene Vergadering Transvaal.</u>
<u>BC</u>	-	<u>Burgersdorp Church Council Minutes.</u>
<u>BlC</u>	-	<u>Bloemfontein Church Council Minutes.</u>
<u>CED</u>	-	<u>Cape Education Department Annual Report.</u>
<u>CNOC</u>	-	<u>Commissie voor Christelijk Nationaal Onderwijs (Christian National Education Commission).</u>
<u>CVV</u>	-	<u>Gereformeerde Studentencorps "Veritas Vincet".</u>
<u>General Synod</u>	-	<u>Die Handeling van die Algemene Sinodale Vergadering van die Gereformeerde Gemeentes in Suid-Afrika (Report of the General Synod of the Reformed Church in South Africa).</u>
<u>HS</u>	-	<u>Het Studentenblad.</u>
<u>JC</u>	-	<u>Johannesburg Church Council Minutes.</u>
<u>Kerkenordening</u>	-	<u>Kerkenordening van de Gereformeerde Gemeenten in Zuid-Afrika. (Church Order of the Reformed Church in South Africa).</u>
<u>KTS</u>	-	<u>Kuratore van de Gereformeerde Theologische School (Curators of the Theological School).</u>
<u>MC</u>	-	<u>Middleburg Church Council.</u>
<u>OED</u>	-	<u>Orange Free State/River Colony Education Department Annual Report.</u>
<u>PC</u>	-	<u>Potchefstroom Church Council.</u>
<u>RC</u>	-	<u>Rustenburg Church Council.</u>
<u>SC</u>	-	<u>Steynsburg Church Council.</u>
<u>SLS</u>	-	<u>Studenten Letterkundige Vereeniging (Student Literary Society).</u>
<u>SS</u>	-	<u>Vergadering de Studenten (Student Society).</u>
<u>SSC</u>	-	<u>Steynsburg School Commissie (Steynsburg School Commission).</u>
<u>TED</u>	-	<u>Transvaal Education Department Annual Report.</u>
<u>UPM</u>	-	<u>Union of South Africa, Archives of the Secretary to the Department of the Prime Minister.</u>

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PART ONEThe Nineteenth Century Dutch and South African Background
and a Consideration of British Imperialism

This section fills in the details necessary for understanding the events following the Second Anglo-Boer War, which led to the formation of the National Party in 1914 and the development of what is now recognised as the characteristic features of Afrikaner Nationalism. It begins with an outline of the nineteenth century Dutch Calvinist revival and the effects of that revival upon society in the Netherlands. Unlike similar revivals in Britain and America the Dutch revival resulted in what became known as "Anti-Revolutionary" thinking which in turn played an important role in the creation of a Christian school system and political party. The religious situation in South Africa is then considered, and the importance of the Dutch Reformed Church as the source of the Calvinist ideals which led to the creation of Afrikaner Nationalism is questioned. The origins of the Reformed Church are then explained and the connection between the leaders of the Reformed Church and the Dutch Calvinist movement is described. Finally British Imperialism is discussed as a factor which brought together Calvinism and Nationalism in Afrikaner Society.

CHAPTER ONEDUTCH CALVINISM AND THE ANTI-REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENTIntroduction

For many years historians of Southern Africa have successfully isolated the study of white colonial history from that of the African societies which the whites disturbed. There were, of course, "kaffir wars" and a "native problem" but beyond these narrow boundaries historians rarely ventured and, when they did, it was to praise the "civilizing mission" of white society as compared with the "barbaric" nature of African society. Fortunately this ethno-centric attitude towards Southern African history is, in most quarters, a thing of the past.¹ Yet, if historians have escaped from a European tribalism, elements of an earlier nationalism remain. This is seen in the preoccupation of British and other Anglo-Saxon historians with the role of English speaking South Africans and, now, Africans in South African history, while Afrikaners and other Europeans not of Anglo-Saxon origin are relegated to the position reserved for the Africans only a few years ago.

In fact, Afrikaner history cannot be separated from Southern African history as a whole and when it is included it becomes necessary to consider European influences upon Southern Africa other than those represented by the British. This is particularly true when an attempt is made to understand the role of Calvinism in Afrikaner society. Afrikaner Calvinism takes many of its most important features from a distinct type of Calvinism which developed in the Netherlands during the nineteenth century. For this reason it is necessary to consider nineteenth

1. Wilson and Thompson, 1969, The Oxford History of South Africa, p.v-x.

century Dutch Calvinism before an attempt is made to understand Afrikaner Calvinism.

The Revival of Calvinism

In 1793 the Dutch Stadholder, William V, was overthrown in a successful revolution and fled to England. This revolution brought into being the modern Dutch State and was generally welcomed by the middle classes. Government was centralised, the Church was reorganised and education was freed from ecclesiastical control. But it had been effected with French aid and that brought with it French domination. This increased as the years went by. As a result the Dutch People experienced what they later came to see as the most humiliating time in their history. The French language was used in all official documents and the use of Dutch was discouraged. Economic life stagnated, as a result of severe laws passed to protect French trade and industry, and a general disillusionment with the revolution replaced the earlier enthusiasm.¹

Not unexpectedly, a Dutch nationalism developed from this situation. Literature flourished and a nostalgic longing for the "golden age" of the Dutch Republic gripped many people. Among the leaders of the nationalist movement were Calvinists whose religion had seemed doomed by the liberal reforms of the revolutionary era. Although the Stadholder returned in 1814 nothing was done to restore the fortunes of the Calvinist religion. Indeed the religious and educational changes made during the revolutionary period were retained and a secular spirit pervaded social life.²

As a result the nationalist reaction gave way to a religious movement which protested against the secular spirit of the times.³

1. Vlekke, 1945, Evolution of the Dutch Nation, pp.271-285.

2. Vlekke, 1945, pp.286-293.

Mackay, 1911, Religious Thought in the Netherlands During the Nineteenth Century, pp.15-20, pp.30-31.

3. Latourette, 1959, The Church in a Revolutionary Age, pp.239-241.

This Calvinist revival had two sources, one aristocratic centred on Amsterdam and Leiden, the other lower working-class and drawn from the rural northern areas. Each of these groups felt its lifestyle threatened by the new liberalism of the middle classes.¹ The aristocratic movement was led by the poet Willem Bilderdijk (1756-1831), who gathered around him a small group of disciples captivated by his insights and great intellect.² From Bilderdijk's original group two closely allied movements emerged united by their common Calvinist Faith. These were (1) a literary-cultural movement which sought to glorify God and communicate Calvinism in the Arts, and (2) a political movement. The best known member of the literary group was the converted Jew, Isaac da Costa, who in his poetry frequently referred to the Netherlands as "the Israel of the West". The leader of the political group was Groen van Prinsterer (1801-1876).³

The working class Calvinist movement was much more of an ecclesiastical movement. After various disputes within the State Church these Calvinists seceded from it to establish their own doctrinally orthodox Church in 1834. This secession, known as De Afscheiding (The Separation), brought into being the Christelike Afscheiden Gereformeerde Kerk (Separated Christian Reformed Church).⁴ It was this Church which sent Dirk Postma to South Africa in 1858 and which through him played an important role in the creation of the Reformed Church in South Africa.⁵

1. Vlekke, 1945, pp.282-285, 294, 308-317

2. Vlekke, 1945, p.239 f.; Meijer, 1971, Literature of the Low Countries, p.189-191.

3. Verkade, 1965, Democratic Parties in the Low Countries and Germany, p.41; Vlekke, 1945, p.309 f.

4. Rullmann, 1930, De Afscheiding.

5. See p. 43.

Although the Dutch Government of the day proclaimed religious toleration and was regarded as "liberal" by Calvinists, it found cause to discriminate against the Separated Christian Reformed Church and seems to have hoped that persecution would force its members back into the State Church. But persecution simply strengthened them in their resolve to maintain their pure form of Calvinism and convinced them of the evils of theological and political liberalism. Many of the seceders emigrated to the United States of America where they settled in Michigan but those who remained behind had to fight for their religious liberty, which was not granted until 1849.¹

The other orthodox Calvinists, who belonged to a higher social class, preferred to remain within the established Church where they organised Methodist-type house meetings for the study of the Bible and for mutual encouragement.² But although they did not join in the secession they were not complacent about the fate of those they considered to be fellow believers in the Separated Christian Reformed Church. Therefore they did all that they could to assist the secessionists and to get the restrictions upon them lifted.³

Groen van Prinsterer, who became the political theorist and spokesman of the Calvinists, had been a student in Leiden where he had attended lectures by Bilderdijk. Although not convinced by Bilderdijk's religious views van Prinsterer had been deeply impressed by his learning and by his interpretation of history. After leaving university van Prinsterer practised law for a time before becoming Referendary to the Cabinet of William I (VI)

1. Latourette, 1959, vol.2, p.241; Vlekke, 1945, p.293 f.

2. Mackay, 1911, p.27 f.

De Vries, 1968, The Bible and Theology in the Netherlands, p.26

3. Algra, 1966, Het Wonder van die Negentiende Eeuw, p.124-143.

in 1827. Two years later he was appointed Secretary to William's cabinet and held this post throughout the events surrounding the outbreak of the Belgian Revolution.¹ In 1833 he withdrew from public life, due to ill health, and accepted the position of official historian to the House of Orange and State Archivist.²

As an historian van Prinsterer edited and published the papers and correspondence of the House of Orange from 1552 to 1688. He also published a history of the Netherlands and in 1847 his most important work Ongeloof en Revolutie (Unbelief and Revolution), which was a philosophical interpretation of history based on Calvinist premises. Van Prinsterer made several attempts at journalism, publishing the journal, Nederlandsche Gedachten (Dutch Thoughts), from 1829 to 1832 and from 1869 until his death in 1876. He also published a daily newspaper from 1850 to 1855 but none of these was a great success. During the debates about the revision of the Constitution in 1840, from 1849 to 1856 and again from 1862 to 1865 he served as a member of the Dutch Parliament where he put what became known as the "Anti-Revolutionary" viewpoint.³

Educated in upper class liberal circles van Prinsterer was enthusiastic in his support for the views of Rousseau and at university became a close friend of Thornbecke who was later to become the great Liberal leader in the Dutch Parliament. These enlightened views were challenged in 1828 by his marriage to a pious and enthusiastic Calvinist whose views slowly began to influence him. The preaching of the Calvinist leader Merle d'Aubigne at the Court of William I (VI) and the events of the Belgian revolt also shook van Prinsterer's liberalism and in the

1. This broke out in 1830 see: Edmundson, 1922, History of Holland, p.389-410.

2. Zylstra, 1956, Who was Groen?, p.3-7; Vlekke, 1945, p.309

3. Zylstra, 1956, p.6-9.

years following he slowly came to accept a thorough-going Calvinism. Once converted he became a fanatic for his religion and attempted to apply Calvinist theories to all areas of life.¹

Despite van Prinsterer's great intellect and unbounded energy he made little real progress in Dutch society. To the masses he was an aloof intellectual while his social equals looked down upon his essentially simple faith in Calvinism.² But after his death his mantle fell upon the greatest of his disciples, Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920), who took over his views and applied them in such a way as to gain mass support. Originally an advocate of theological liberalism, Kuyper had been converted to the Calvinism of the Synod of Dort³ during his first pastorate by the simple faith of his congregation.⁴ In Kuyper the aristocratic and populist elements of the Dutch Calvinist revival merged and members of the Separated Christian Reformed Church became his strongest supporters although until 1886 he remained a member of the State Church.⁵

Kuyper was a man of action with a tremendous intellect. He took over van Prinsterer's policies and the small political grouping which had supported van Prinsterer's efforts in and out of Parliament and, with the aid of thousands of disenfranchised Calvinists, created a mass movement. This movement developed into the first modern political party in the Netherlands, the Anti-Revolutionary Party, which is still a force in Dutch politics.

1. *ibid*, p.3-4, 11-12.

2. *ibid*, p.10; Vlekke, 1945, p.309.

3. The Synod of Dort was convened at Dordrecht in the Netherlands and held 154 sessions during the period from 13 November 1618 to 28 May 1619. The Divines of Dort condemned the teachings of the followers of Jacob Arminius (1560-1609) and declared that while "true Christianity" made the individual's salvation depend entirely upon the sovereign will of God the Arminians made man the ultimate author of his own salvation thus minimising the glory of God. See: McNeil, 1967, p.263-266.

4. Vanden Berg, 1960, Abraham Kuyper, p.16-45.

5. *ibid*, p.90-100, 128-161, and 161-174.

As leader and theorist of his party Kuyper led it to victory and became Prime Minister of the Netherlands in 1901. He held this post until 1905 when he was defeated in the elections and retired from parliamentary life.¹

The State was forced to tolerate and then support Christian schools and a network of other Christian organisations emerged. The whole structure of Dutch society was changed by the creation of power blocks based not upon class but on religious divisions. Thus each ideological grouping gained the right to maintain its own newspapers, trade unions, political parties, schools and even universities. In this way Calvinist, Catholic and Secular social power structures were created which came to be referred to as the verzuiling, or pillars, of Dutch society.²

The Anti-Revolutionary Ideology

As the Dutch Calvinist movement gained momentum throughout the nineteenth century its leaders formulated what they referred to as "Anti-Revolutionary principles" upon which they claimed to base their social and political actions. The earliest systematic account of this Calvinist ideology was given by Groen van Prinsterer who provided the theoretical foundations upon which Abraham Kuyper later built.³ Kuyper developed and incorporated van Prinsterer's insights within his own theological and philosophical framework, providing the Calvinist movement with a general theory of social involvement by which to legitimate its activities.⁴

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1. *ibid*, pp.162-174 and 203-257. In fact in 1908 Kuyper returned to politics as a member of the Dutch Second Chamber which is similar to the British House of Lords.
 2. Edmundson, 1922, pp.405-428; Lijpart, 1968, The Politics of Accommodation, pp.16-23; Bagley, 1973, The Dutch Plural Society, pp.1-37; Fogarty, 1957, Christian Democracy in Western Europe, pp.172, 301-302, 317.
 3. Both Bilderdijk and da Costa had produced significant works in which elements of the Anti-Revolutionary position are to be found.
Algra, 1970, pp.52-61 and 83-94.
 4. Algra, 1970, pp.304-316.
Kuyper, 1891, Christianity and the Class Struggle, pp.14-16

In the mid-1830s, when van Prinsterer began his theorising, Dutch intellectuals tended to accept a nationalistic interpretation of the history of the Netherlands which, due to its emphasis on the "golden age" of the seventeenth century, had strong Calvinist overtones. Bilderdijk had developed this type of history in his own way, stressing what he considered to be the crucial role which Calvinism had played in creating the Dutch nation.¹ It was on this foundation that van Prinsterer erected his own theories.² In a similar way S. J. du Toit, in South Africa, produced his interpretation of Afrikaner history, following the general pattern of Dutch nationalist historiography, by glorifying a past golden age which was the fruit of Calvinism.³

When van Prinsterer constructed his own Calvinist interpretation of history he, unlike Bilderdijk, did not restrict himself to the history of his own People, the Dutch Nation, but offered his readers a general theory of the dynamics of history itself. As the official historian of the House of Orange van Prinsterer produced voluminous evidence which supported the claims of a narrowly Dutch Calvinist Nationalism. But as a philosopher of history he strove to produce a Calvinistic theory which went beyond the particularism of any given nation, to embrace the whole of mankind. This theory, it is true, grew out of Dutch nationalist historiography and no doubt gained much of its appeal from its ability to underpin such a limited interpretation of history. Yet, once created, van Prinsterer's universal theory of the dynamics of history gained an appeal of its own that went far beyond the earlier Calvinist accounts of the history of the Netherlands.⁴

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1. Kuyper, 1906, Bilderdijk in Zijne Nationale Beteekenis, pp.34-38.
 2. van Prinsterer, 1904, Ongeloof en Revolutie, p.32 and note p.389.
 3. du Toit, 1877, Die Geskiedenis van ons Land in die Taal van ons Volk; van Jaarsveld, 1961, The Awakening of Afrikaner Nationalism, pp.114-121
 4. van Prinsterer, 1904, pp.1-15.

What van Prinsterer did was to look beyond the simple statement that in the past Calvinism had produced the golden age of the Dutch People during the seventeenth century, and ask why that golden age had departed. This approach led him to ask questions about the significance of the French Revolution and recurrent revolutionary movements of his own day.¹ In this way his work resembles that of de Toqueville, Durkheim, Weber and Troeltsch, as a contribution to the debate about the sociological significance of revolutionary movements.²

Van Prinsterer's major theoretical work Unbelief and Revolution sums up in its title his central argument: unbelief leads inevitably to revolution. In making this claim the scope of van Prinsterer's work becomes clear. His is not simply a nationalist claim based upon the Dutch past but a generalised statement that whenever and wherever unbelief appears revolution and social disintegration will follow. On this basis van Prinsterer could claim to be offering a scientific interpretation of history, which was verifiable in the experience of his readers, and through an examination of the historical process, itself.³

But, if van Prinsterer's theory is summed up by the words "unbelief and revolution", it is not exhausted by them. For in his view, while ideas were the motive force behind the historical process they were not totally divorced from social conditions. Ideas in the form of religious beliefs and ultimate commitments, he argued, produced social conditions. Equally, however, the

1. *ibid*, pp.16-35

2. cf. Nisbet, 1967, The Sociological Tradition; & Aron, 1967, Main Currents in Sociological Thought. As far as I know no study has yet included van Prinsterer in such a comparison with other Conservative social thinkers.

3. van Prinsterer, 1860, The Anti-Revolutionary Principle, pp.2 and 37; van Prinsterer, 1904, pp.xvii-xxv. In a strange way van Prinsterer's use of history is similar to that of Marx; cf. Aron, 1967, pp.151-157

social environment in which men found themselves contributed to the formation of beliefs which they came to hold.¹

Many different philosophies are encountered by the historian in the course of his work and each needs to be considered in itself. Despite this van Prinsterer claimed that all belief systems can be reduced to two diametrically opposed basic commitments. On the one hand, he argued, there are those beliefs which are derived from Christian Revelation and on the other there are those which are grounded in the rejection of that Revelation. In his own day this opposition to the Gospel clothed itself in what van Prinsterer called "the Revolution". In doing so he alluded to the French Revolution of 1789 which he believed represented the greatest manifestation of the revolutionary spirit in history, but which did not exhaust the meaning of the Revolution, itself.²

In essence revolutionary thought removed God from human affairs and in doing so reduced all legal notions from absolute principles, dependent upon divine decrees, to the arbitrary enforcement of human opinion by the State. This removal of God from legal and constitutional affairs, van Prinsterer claimed, had led to the excesses of the ancien regime, by creating a climate of opinion which identified the interests of the nation with those of the monarch. In doing so it allowed the ruler to use his powers in such a way as to destroy the freedom and constitutional rights of his subjects.³

Revolutionary thought set up human Reason as the ultimate authority in life. This produced an idolatrous cult of Humanity which made Man, and in practice particular men, the judge of all

1. van Prinsterer, 1904, pp.332-369; 1860, pp.4 and 10-13

2. van Prinsterer, 1904, pp.230-262; 1860, pp.1-4

3. van Prinsterer, 1904, pp.197-229; 1860, pp.5-10

things. As a result the excesses of the ancien regime came to be seen as crimes against Humanity to be corrected in a bloodbath of revolutionary struggle guided by the dictates of Reason. Once underway this revolutionary reaction to the arbitrary power of the sovereign led to its replacement by the unlimited freedom of the people. This in turn brought such chaos that it led to the development of an equally unlimited and arbitrary power. This power was vested in the central government in an attempt to restore order after the confusion created by the exercise of unlimited freedom by the masses. Thus Revolutionary thought justified oppression by the despotic ruler and then led to his overthrow by the masses in the name of Reason and Freedom. Their excesses in turn led to the creation of a tyrannical government which in itself created the seeds of future revolutions in an essentially unstable social situation.¹

The key ideas of the Revolution: Equality, Fraternity and Liberty, were essentially good. But, van Prinsterer argued, within the system of revolutionary thought they led to a universal democracy that made just government impossible. Liberty, Equality and Fraternity in themselves expressed legitimate aspirations found in all men and in a sense could be described as the true fruits of the Gospel. But, just because they originated as fruits of Christianity, they must not be accepted as Christian virtues wherever and whenever they appeared. Christians must always test ideas to see if they retained the savour of the Gospel or whether they had been poisoned by the atheism of the Spirit of Revolution.²

Recognising no authority greater than God, a Christian could remain free to criticise the abuses of power by existing governments

1. van Prinsterer, 1904, pp.263-330; 1860, pp.7-13.

2. van Prinsterer, 1904, pp.129-154; 1860, p.5.

and desire greater freedom. But the freedom he desired must be freedom within the Law of God, not the unlimited freedom of the Revolution. By removing God from their system of thought the followers of revolutionary doctrines sought a freedom which inevitably became the source of a general scramble for power in which every man was a law unto himself. In this situation the only law left was the law of the strongest as brute force prevailed in human affairs.¹

On the basis of this analysis van Prinsterer urged Christians to unite in their common allegiance to the Gospel and thereby to resist the inroads which revolutionary thinking was making into the very heart of the Christian community. To do this Christians must see through the cleverly disguised revolutionary doctrines which appeared under the mask of Liberalism and which seemed to offer a middle road between the outright rejection of all the Revolution stood for and its more extreme manifestations. The acceptance of revolutionary ideas, van Prinsterer constantly reiterated, was not something which could be selective. In accepting the Revolution one accepted or rejected a whole system of thought, not individual doctrines. It was this truth which Liberalism hid by suggesting that those aspects of Revolutionary insights which were "valuable" could be separated from the destructive force of the Revolution itself. Yet Liberals, as the experience of the Separated Christian Reformed Church had shown, were "liberal" only when forced to be by their own lack of effective power. Once in complete control of a situation Liberals ceased to be tolerant of other viewpoints and imposed their own totalitarian system upon all men. This action

1. van Prinsterer, 1904, pp.16-58; 1860, pp.2-3 and 28-33;
 cf. Hobbes, 1966, Leviathan, pp.98-102;
 cf. Burke, 1910, Reflections on the Revolution in France, pp.89-95.

brought them into conflict with Christians who held doctrines which were incompatible with the basic tenets of Liberalism. Liberals, and others affected by revolutionary thought, believed in the equality of men and the essential unity of mankind. But, if the Gospel were to be believed, God favoured some men more than others, thus dividing humanity into two radically opposed groups, the saved and the lost. In this way Christians totally denied the position of the Liberals and thus earned their undying enmity.¹

van Prinsterer had no illusions about the enormity of the task facing the Christian community. To preserve their religion, he believed, Christians must be active in promoting the Gospel in all areas of life. They must develop their own political theories, versions of history and social movements. But above all they must be diligent in educating their children in a Christian manner.²

The greatest challenge to the Gospel lay in the realm of education. This was because education was the chosen means by which followers of revolutionary thought hoped to reform the world and create their "new man" freed from the fetters of religious dogma. At the baptism of their children Christian parents swore before the assembled members of the Christian community to raise their children in the love and nurture of their Lord. If this vow were to be fulfilled then the parents who took it must of necessity have a say in the education of their children and should be able to watch over their children's education to ensure that they in fact did receive a Christian education and were not subtly indoctrinated with anti-Christian views.³

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1. van Prinsterer, 1904, pp.174-229, and pp.370-391; van Prinsterer, 1860, pp.20-23 and 27-33; cf. Dewey, 1934, A Common Faith.
 2. van Prinsterer, 1904, pp.391-406; 1860, pp.34-37
 3. van Prinsterer, 1863, Vrijheid van Christelijk-Nationaal Onderwys, pp.X-X-XI, and XXXVIII-XLI.

Individual parents, however, could not expect to stand against the State in this struggle to protect their children from revolutionary influences. Therefore the Christian community as a whole must recognise its responsibility in this matter and assist parents to fulfil their baptismal vows by establishing Christian schools. Only if Christians stood together on this issue would they be able to resist the demands of the State which was promoting an education system based on revolutionary principles. In arguing this case, van Prinsterer coined his famous slogan, "In isolation is our strength", which was to become the rallying call of the Calvinist movement.¹

Abraham Kuyper's Neo-Calvinism

After the death of van Prinsterer in 1876 Abraham Kuyper assumed the leadership of the Dutch Calvinist movement. He strengthened the theological and philosophical base of the Anti-Revolutionary ideology and made it accessible to the masses in a popular form. Many simple believers had accepted the general thrust of van Prinsterer's arguments but were unable to apply them in either their devotional or practical lives. It was the genius of Kuyper that he was able to do this for them through a host of popular books and articles as well as in his frequent speeches and sermons.² In addition to popularising the Anti-Revolutionary position, Kuyper also produced weighty works of scholarship to buttress the movement and give it an intellectual respectability. In this way Kuyper established the movement and turned it into the social and political force which it became during the latter decades of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.³

1. Mackay, 1911, pp.20, 30-32.

2. Algra, 1966, pp.304-316. An example of Kuyper's popular writings is his book The Work of the Holy Spirit, 1900.

3. See pp.15-16; Kuyper's Principles of Sacred Theology, 1898a, is an example of his scholarly work.

The basis upon which Kuyper built his contribution to the Anti-Revolutionary ideology was the traditional Calvinist doctrine of the sovereignty of God. Here was a belief with which the simplest believer could immediately identify and which Kuyper was able to use to legitimate the Anti-Revolutionary movement's social and political actions among Calvinists. In doing so he turned what had previously been a soteriological belief about individual salvation into a redemptive fact that embraced the whole of creation, thus diverting the believer's attention from the state of his own soul to the condition of society.¹

The innovation which Kuyper made in Calvinist dogma can be seen by comparing his writings with those of his contemporary, the English Calvinist, Charles Spurgeon. For Spurgeon the doctrine of the sovereignty of God was important because it showed the believer that God, and God alone, could save the sinner through the redemptive work of His Holy Spirit. In this way Spurgeon placed the doctrine strictly within a framework of salvation and related it to the other Calvinist doctrines of total depravity and irresistible grace.² Kuyper, by contrast, placed God's sovereignty in a redemptive relationship with the theology of creation, allowing him to glory in the world which God had made. Spurgeon, however, failed to develop the doctrine of creation and in fact seems to have regarded the world as an essentially evil place in a semi-gnostic sense. Practically this meant that, while Spurgeon had real sympathy for the poor, his beliefs about the inherent evil in men and the supernatural nature of salvation prevented him

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1. Kuyper, 1898, Lectures on Calvinism, pp.99-142; Kuyper, 1900, pp.338-366.
 2. "total depravity" - the belief that fallen man is unable to do anything by his own efforts which will merit salvation or please God; "irresistible grace" - the belief that once elected to salvation and called by the Holy Spirit the sinner cannot resist the will of God making certain that all whom God elects to save are in fact saved. These are two of the five points of Calvinism agreed upon at the Synod of Dort: see pp.15 and 41; and Spurgeon, n.d., On Divine Sovereignty, 1960, Sermons on Psalms.

from taking any effective social or political action to alleviate their suffering. But Kuyper, because he had developed his doctrine of the sovereignty of God to embrace the doctrine of creation, was able to take effective action to combat the evils of his day.¹

This contrast between the soul-saving evangelism of Anglo-Saxon Calvinism and Kuyper's Dutch Calvinist view of life as a religious totality can be seen in the different uses which each tradition made of the slogan "Christ is Lord of All or not at all." To men like Spurgeon the message of the slogan was that Christians must "witness" for Christ at all times and in all places in the hope of saving lost souls. Kuyper and his followers understood the slogan in a completely different way. For them it expressed their belief that Christ must be Lord of every aspect of a man's life and not just a small area called his "spiritual" or "religious" life. Christ, Kuyper argued, was not interested simply in the salvation of souls but in the whole man. Therefore, the Christian must make the Lordship of Christ a reality, by applying Christian principles to every area of life and thus developing an integrated way of life.²

In answer to the question "Why should Christians develop their own way of life?", Kuyper argued that Christian theology teaches the existence of two types of people in the world - the saved and the lost. The "saved" are Christians who have accepted God's salvation and bowed before Him, submitting their will to His. The "lost" are those who reject the Gospel and live in wilful rebellion against God by ignoring His commandments. As a result Christians were not only to try to win their fellow men for Christ but also to struggle with them in all areas of life to see that God's commandments were

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1. Jellema, 1957, "Abraham Kuyper's Attack on Liberalism", Review of Politics, vol. 19, 1957.
Kuyper, 1891, Christianity and the Class Struggle; Sills, 1973, An Examination of the Social and Cultural Dimensions of the View of Life Preached by C. H. Spurgeon, pp.9-12 and 19-20.
 2. Kuyper, 1898, pp.99-142.

not wilfully disobeyed. As a corporate body, therefore, Christians had to serve God in all social institutions and not simply in the institutional Church.¹

When arguing his case Kuyper acknowledged that non-Christians often produced good works which were worthy of praise. He also recognised that Christians do evil which deserves condemnation. But these facts, he believed, must not make Christians accept an ungodly compromise in which everything not obviously opposed to the Gospel was accepted as good. Instead Christians must struggle continuously to bring all of their thoughts and actions under the scrutiny of God's Word and in this way examine every aspect of their lives in the light of the Gospel. From the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments they must draw principles by which to live and through which they could judge the work of non-believers. Thus principle must be set against principle, the Gospel against unbelief, lifestyle against lifestyle, in a life and death struggle for the control of God's creation. What Kuyper was calling for was not revival but the continued reformation of the whole of life.²

From this basis Kuyper approached the question of Christianity and politics. For him "Christian Politics" was not only possible but essential for the continued existence of the Christian community. Using the doctrine of creation as his basis Kuyper argued that Mankind was created in an organic unity and not in small groups or isolated individuals. In this way he argued against the laissez-faire liberalism which dominated Dutch political and economic life throughout the nineteenth century and which he considered un-Christian.

1. Kuyper, 1898a, pp.150-176.

2. Kuyper, 1898, pp.3-45. For a modern statement of this position see: Will All the King's Men ...?, 1972, ed., R. L. Carvill.

Instead Kuyper was prepared to argue for State intervention to protect the weak and maintain justice in society. At the same time, however, he rejected the socialist solution to social justice because he believed it led to the domination of economic life by the State and was just as likely to produce injustice as was Capitalism.¹

Kuyper's views about justice in society are complex and at times difficult to understand, although essentially they concern the limitation of power in an attempt to prevent any one group dominating all others. Man's political life, he believed, should have developed organically from the family unit. But this possibility had been thwarted by the Fall and the entrance of sin into the world. In this situation life on earth would have been hellish as each sought his own good to the detriment of his neighbour. Therefore, God in His mercy had allowed men to develop mechanical means of government which restrained the effects of sin in the world.²

The present situation was therefore a compromise between what God originally intended for man, and the chaos threatened by the effects of the Fall. As a result the State, and with it all assertions of power through the existence of kings, rulers, magistrates, armies and the police, were unnatural developments necessitated by an unnatural situation. The effect of these institutions upon the life of Man was that on the one hand the human spirit automatically rebelled against the limitations which they imposed upon Man's freedom, while on the other, corrupt men sought to use them to increase their own power over their fellows. Thus the battle between Liberty and Authority was deeply rooted in the very being of Man and his social environment, following His first rebellion against God.³

1. Kuyper, 1898, pp.98-101; 1891, pp.15-18 and 48-52.

2. Kuyper, 1898, pp.100-101.

3. Kuyper, 1898, pp.101-104.

The distinctions made by Kuyper in this argument may strike the reader as rather strange. On the one hand he admits the necessity of the State and its allied institutions while on the other he maintains that the very existence of these restraints upon the individual's freedom is going to be a source of continual friction in society. Yet there is an inner logic to his argument which allows him to justify the use of power by the State while at the same time limiting that power and allowing for the possibility that under certain circumstances rebellion may be justified. This attitude is in marked contrast to the position argued by British Christians in 1889 when the supposedly radical publication Lux Mundi justified the established order by appealing, in an uncritical and simplistic manner, to Paul's argument in Romans 13.¹

Kuyper's ideal constitution was that of a republic where office holders would be elected by popular choice. But he did not make this an objective in his political programme and was prepared to accept a monarchy as suitable for the Dutch People.² Contrary to the claim made by Davenport, however, Kuyper explicitly rejected the idea of a theocracy, arguing that "a theocracy was only found in Israel, because in Israel, God intervened immediately".³

In accepting the democratic form of government as the best choice possible Kuyper distinguished his view of democracy from democratic theories based on the doctrine of popular sovereignty. This justification for democracy he replaced with his own Calvinistic theory of "sphere sovereignty" which he established on the basis of his doctrine of the sovereignty of God. To bring theology into politics in this way may appear to be a convenient way of evading

1. Gore, 1889, Lux Mundi, pp.318-339, 1921 edition.

2. Kuyper, 1898, pp.105-107.

3. *ibid*, p.108

hard political thinking but in fact Kuyper was attempting to construct a basis for Christian political action firmly rooted in Christian principles.¹

For Kuyper the sovereignty of God had a direct bearing on human life, and as a result on politics, because it taught that God alone is the supreme ruler of men and therefore no man has a right to demand obedience from another man. The authority of men over men is thus a relative privilege granted by God as part of Man's duty to serve God and his fellow men. He believed that sin alone necessitates government, by contrast with doctrines like those of popular sovereignty which imply that government is natural and that men have a right to delegate to other men the power to rule over them. This act of delegation then gives rulers the right to demand obedience from their fellow men and to force those who would question their authority to obey them. Popular sovereignty thus creates a form of political life which is ultimately based upon sheer force, devoid of all principle and it is thus unacceptable to the Christian.²

Kuyper argued that the acknowledgement of God's sovereignty limited such power and made possible political actions based upon principle rather than force. He explained his theory by saying:

"In the Calvinist sense we understand hereby, that the family, business, science, art and so forth are all social spheres, which do not owe their existence to the State, and which do not derive the law of their life from the superiority of the State, but which obey a high authority within their own bosom; an authority which rules by the grace of God, just as the sovereignty of the State does.

This involves the antithesis between State and Society ... these different developments of social life have nothing above themselves but God, and ... the State cannot intrude here ..."³

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1. *ibid*, pp.103-4, and 108-112.
 2. Kuyper, 1898, pp.108-113.
 3. *ibid*, p.116.

By means of this theory Kuyper hoped to place a legitimate limitation upon the function of Government and thought that he had resolved the age old conflict between State and Church. In the past the Church had conflicted with the State but now Kuyper pointed out the potential within society for equally important conflicts between the State and various other social institutions. He also hoped to resolve these conflicts by giving each social institution its legitimate sphere of influence and restricting the function of the State to that of administering justice.¹ Having said this Kuyper did not expect a situation of perpetual peace to prevail. Rather, as a realistic politician, he recognised that political life is constantly changing and thus he built a potential for conflict into the heart of his theory. Explaining his expectation of conflict he wrote:

"It is here of the highest importance sharply to keep in mind the difference between the organic life of society and the mechanical character of government... From this arises all friction and clashing. For government is always inclined, with its mechanical authority, to invade social life ... on the other hand social life always endeavours to shake off the authority of government ..."²

This situation of continual friction in society was one which, Kuyper believed, men must come to terms because it is a part of life resulting from the Fall. His pluralism, therefore, was not an attempt to abolish social tensions but to make them bearable. Kuyper saw Man's greatest hope of liberty in social conflict and because of this was prepared to accept the problems which political life creates. For him the State and society existed to interact with each other in such a way that total corruption in the State or any social sphere became impossible. It was the

1. Kuyper's view of social justice was a positive one which involved State action to protect the weak - Kuyper, 1898, pp.116-127.
 2. *ibid*, pp.116 & 120.

hope of Kuyper that his theory of government and society would minimise the effects of conflict upon the members of society and so improve the lot of Man upon earth. He had no illusions about creating a perfect society but he was attempting to work towards a just one.¹

1. Kuyper, 1891, pp.55-64; 1898, pp.116-127.

CHAPTER TWO

Calvinists, Liberals and Evangelicals in Nineteenth Century Afrikaner Society

Calvinism and Afrikaner Nationalism

Most books dealing with Southern African issues mention at some point that the Calvinist religion of the Afrikaner¹ People has played an important role in the development of Afrikaner Nationalism. Writing on this subject in The Oxford History of South Africa Rene de Villiers says:

"There was another factor which, from the outset, played a continuing role in holding the Afrikaner people together and shaping their political philosophy, namely the Calvinism preached and practised by the Dutch Reformed Churches of which ninety per cent of Afrikaners are adherents."²

In her book The Last Trek Sheila Patterson develops this theme when she writes:

"To the Boers the Old Testament was like a mirror of their own lives. In it they found the deserts and fountains, the drought and plagues, the captivity and the exodus. Above all they found a Chosen People guided by a stern but partial Deity through the midst of the heathen to a promised land. And it was the Old Testament and the doctrines of Calvin that moulded the Boer into the Afrikaner of today ... The doctrines which the Boers took with them on their trek through the veld and the centuries were those of sixteenth century Calvinism ..."³

This theme, that a form of sixteenth century Calvinism, isolated from the enlightenment which engulfed European thought in the eighteenth century, developed the Afrikaner People into the Nation they are today, is repeated in scores of places and

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1. There is some debate about the date at which it becomes permissible to use the term "Afrikaner" of white South Africans of Dutch ancestry. For convenience the term is used throughout to refer to white Afrikaans speaking South Africans and their South African ancestors.
 2. Wilson & Thompson ed., 1971, The Oxford History of South Africa, vol. 1, p.370.
 3. Patterson, 1957, The Last Trek, p.177.

by its very repetition gains an authority of its own. In labelling it "sixteenth century" the critics of Afrikaner Nationalism hope to condemn the beliefs of the Nationalists as outdated bigotry. It is, however, important to realise that Afrikaner Nationalists are happy to accept this description of their religion and the development of their culture, because it supports their claims about the origins of the Afrikaner People. Of course they reject the charge of bigotry and argue that if their religion is true it can never be outdated, although it may well be unfashionable. Thus the Nationalist polemicist Piet Meyer wrote in his book Die Afrikaner (The Afrikaner), published in 1940, that:

"The Afrikaner People are in truth the only People who have been born and have developed out of a Calvinist way of life ..."¹

A clear and detailed account of this argument is also to be found in the seminal Afrikaans work Koers in die Krisis, (Direction in Times of Crisis), which was published in Stellenbosch in 1935. In this book, as in Meyer's work, not only is Afrikaner Nationalism traced back to the Calvinist past of the Afrikaner People but on the basis of the Calvinism of their forefathers a very detailed account is given of what the ideal Calvinist society of the future will look like. This blueprint embraces every aspect of life and includes both racial segregation and Christian-National Education.²

In addition to these theories about the origins of the Afrikaner People and the ideal Afrikaner society, there is ample evidence to show that many Afrikaner politicians today claim to justify their actions in terms of their Calvinist religion. Thus de Villiers quoted the leader of the National Party in Natal who said in 1966 in reference to the justification of Nationalist policy.

1. Meyer, 1940, Die Afrikaner, p.27.

2. Stoker, Potgieter & Vorster, 1935, Koers in die Krisis, pp.111-128 and 207-272. Meyers's book was published in the Tweede Trek (Second Trek) series which contained books on all aspects of Afrikaner life including one on national dress.

"we believe that the only road is that which fulfils the demands of our Calvinist creed."¹

And in White Laager William Henry Vatcher Jr., dwells at length on the influence of the Dutch Reformed Church in the formation of Nationalist policy. Arguing this case he says:

"The issue of the Afrikaans journal Woord en Daad for February 2, 1961, contained an article that brought out even more clearly the contrast between Afrikaner views and those of the English-speaking community. The writer, C. N. Venter, observed that the Calvinist lived first and last for the kingdom of God ... in contrast to the English conception of religion, that is, 'deism', the so-called natural, rational religion, in which God stands outside the world."²

He then goes on to conclude that "the DRC is the backbone and heart of Afrikanerdom".³ From these examples it would seem that there is a clear cut case to show that the Calvinism of the Dutch Reformed Church moulded the Afrikaner national character and brought Afrikaner Nationalism into existence along with the racial policies for which South Africa is so well known.

A Re-Examination of the Relationship Between Calvinism and Afrikaner Nationalism

The evidence upon which the above argument is based is clear. We know that the founders of the Cape settlement were men who lived in a Calvinist State. We also know that modern Afrikaner Nationalists claim to be upholding the Faith of their fathers and make frequent use of Calvinist jargon. Therefore there must indeed be a relationship between Calvinism and Afrikaner Nationalism and a continuity between the Synod of Dort and the Dutch Reformed Church today.

Other evidence also supports this conclusion. This consists of various statements by people who are considered to be representative of Afrikaner opinion and official statements by the Dutch

1. Wilson & Thompson, 1971, p.371.

2. Vatcher, 1965, White Laager, pp.111-112.

3. *ibid*, p.112.

Reformed Church prior to 1870. After 1870 the main source of evidence for a strong Calvinist influence among Afrikaners is to be found in the works of S. J. du Toit and his followers in the Afrikaner Bond and First Language Movement.

When this evidence is sifted it becomes clear that apart from statements made during the early days of settlement by people who obviously were Calvinists it is very difficult to prove any real Calvinist influence before 1870. This can be seen by examining the article "God and the Covenant in the South African Wilderness" by J. Alton Templin which appeared in Church History in 1968. In this work Templin tries to show a continuous Calvinist influence in Afrikaner society. But when his case is examined in detail his arguments begin to crumble. The "Calvinist influence" which he tries to show reduces to vague religious statements by various trekker leaders like Retief, Pretorius and Cilliers. Perhaps Cilliers was a Calvinist but there is little evidence that Retief was and Pretorius certainly was not. In fact all that Templin shows is that these people occasionally used vaguely providential language.¹

Susan Ritner in "The Dutch Reformed Church and Apartheid", an article that appeared in the Journal of Contemporary History in 1968, makes similar claims. The evidence which she uses comes from the Dutch Reformed Church's attitude to non-whites. In particular she argues that the decision of the Dutch Reformed Church Synod of 1857 to allow separate worship for congregations of different races is one of the sources of modern apartheid. But here again the evidence is unclear because as Ritner admits in a footnote the original motivation behind the creation of separate congregations was "evangelical rather than discriminatory".² Yet even if it had

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1. Templin, 1968, "God and the Covenant in the South African Wilderness", Church History, vol. 37, 1968.
 2. Ritner, 1968, "The Dutch Reformed Church and Apartheid", Journal of Contemporary History, vol. 3, 1968, p.18 note 3.

been discriminatory in intent this in itself does not prove that it was the result of the Church's Calvinist theology.

The argument so far can be summarised by saying that prior to 1870 it is very difficult, if not impossible, to prove a distinctively Calvinist influence upon Afrikaner society. A critic might reply that there is no need to prove such an influence when, after all, the Dutch Reformed Church is a living proof of it. This seems a valid point and draws attention to the fact that, in claiming to discover a Calvinist influence upon Afrikaner society, most writers assume that the Dutch Reformed Church is, was and always has been a Calvinist Church.

In a sense it is indisputable that the Dutch Reformed Church is a Calvinist Church. It originated in the Calvinist branch of the Reformation and has Calvinist statements of Faith as its official standards. But while this may be true it does not prove, as both Templin and Ritner assume, that the theology of the ministers and members of the Church at any given time could be said to be Calvinist theology. In order to claim that the theology of the Dutch Reformed Church was Calvinist it is necessary to show that the theology in question conforms to the standards laid down in 1618 by the Synod of Dort, which are recognised as the official standards of the Church. If this cannot be done then it cannot be claimed that the Church as a whole or the individual members concerned were true Calvinists and consequently the claim that the Dutch Reformed Church exercised a "Calvinist influence" upon Afrikaner society is thrown open to doubt.

Calvinism and the Dutch Reformed Church

An examination of the great South African Calvinist leader S. J. du Toit gives the lie to the assumption that the Dutch Reformed Church is and always has been a Calvinist Church in keeping with the teachings of Dort. Indeed it shows that the majority of ministers in the Dutch Reformed Church during the latter half of the nineteenth century were actively hostile to an orthodox form of Calvinism.¹ It is because of this that du Toit's views made so little headway in Cape Afrikaner society and he lost control of the Afrikaner Bond which quickly became a secular political party under the control of Hofmeyer and eventually Rhodes.²

As a result of his disillusionment with his fellow ministers du Toit published his Calvinist newspaper De Getuige (The Witness) from 1880 onwards, and when he finally realised that he was making no headway in the Dutch Reformed Church he led a secession from it to form his own independent and, as he understood it, truly Calvinist Church, De Gereformeerde Kerk onder het Kruis in Zuid-Afrika (Reformed Church Under the Cross in South Africa) in 1897.³ This Church gained only a small following, and because du Toit refused to abandon his rigid yet pure Calvinism, Davenport claims he was never able to gain a really large following among politically active Afrikaners.⁴

The history of the Dutch Reformed Church during the nineteenth century shows why the vast majority of its ministers and congregations rejected the views expressed by du Toit.⁵ During the first half of

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1. Davenport, 1966, The Afrikaner Bond, pp.38-40, n.b. footnote p.38, pp.322-323.
 2. *ibid*, pp.50-53, 62, 126, 139-140, and 322-323.
 3. Oberholster, 1956, Die Gereformeerde Kerk Onder die Kruis in Suid-Afrika.
 4. Davenport, 1966, pp.38 & 322f.
 5. For a short general history of the Dutch Reformed Church see: Scholtz, n.d., Die Geskiedenis van die Nederduits Hervormde of Gereformeerde Kerk.

the century two important and bitterly opposed theological movements, the one liberal¹ and the other conservative evangelical,² had entered the Church and changed its character. For a while it looked as though time were on the side of the liberals but, when matters eventually came to a head in the 1860s, it was the evangelicals who emerged as the stronger party.³

The issue which led to the clash between the liberal and evangelical groups was a question put to the Synod of 1863 as to whether the custom of preaching on a section of the Heidelberg Catechism each Sunday meant that the minister must defend the Catechism and its doctrine as being based upon God's Word, the Bible. When the Synod declared that this was so, the Reverend J. J. Kotze of Darling protested, proclaiming that the answer given in the Catechism to Question 60 that man is "continually inclined to evil" was "language which could not be fitted into the mouth of a heathen (unless he were a devil), far less in the mouth of a Christian".⁴ Consequently if he had to preach on this section he declared his intention to tell his congregation that the Catechism was in error on this point.⁵

Because of a liberal challenge to the validity of previous Synods through a Supreme Court ruling that only delegates who lived within the boundaries of the Cape were entitled to take part in the Synod, the case was adjourned until the following year when Kotze was called upon to defend his views. The result of this defence was that the Synod suspended him from his office as a minister of

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1. The influence of liberal ideas in Cape society is traced by Hanekom, 1952, in Die Liberale Rigting in Suid-Afrika.
 2. The best account of the evangelical movement is to be found in: du J. du Plessis, 1919, The Life of Andrew Murray.
 3. Hinchliff, 1968, The Church in South Africa, pp.80-84.
 4. J. du Plessis, 1919, p.215.
 5. *ibid*, p.216.

the Church. Kotze's local congregation, however, supported his actions and Kotze went to the civil courts claiming that the decree of the Synod should be set aside. A long legal battle followed and in August 1864 the Supreme Court overruled the decision of the Synod.¹

Another blow delivered to the orthodox party at this time was the case of another Cape minister T.F.Burgers,² of Hanover. In 1862 an elder from Colesburg had charged Burgers before the Synod with being "tainted with Rationalism" and having denied "the existence of a personal devil, the sinlessness of Christ's human nature, the resurrection of the dead, and the personal existence of the soul after death".³ But because of the adjournment of the 1862 Synod the case was not examined until 1863 and, again through the disruptions at that assembly, a conclusion was not reached until February 1864 when a Committee elected by the Synod suspended Burgers from the ministry.⁴ Like Kotse, Burgers was supported by his local congregation and he ignored the decision of the Synodical Committee. Burgers awaited the result of the Kotze case in the Supreme Court and then brought his own case before the bench. The court ruled in favour of Burgers and once again the liberal party had won its case at law.⁵ In 1866 the Synodical Committee took the case Burgers versus the Synodical Committee to the Privy Council but their appeal failed and the liberals remained defiant.⁶

Despite these successes in the secular courts, liberalism was losing ground during these years and the new theological school established at Stellenbosch in 1859 with a conservative faculty

1. J. du Plessis, 1919, pp.208-222.

2. He was to become President Burgers of the Transvaal.

3. J. du Plessis, 1919, p.223.

4. *ibid*, p.224.

5. J. du Plessis, 1919, p.228.

6. *ibid*, pp.228-229.

was producing evangelical ministers who would outvote the liberals in the Synod.¹ In addition, a Free Protestant Church formed in 1866 by the Reverend David Faure drew away from the Dutch Reformed Church a number of its more rationalist members into a unitarian type of religion.² These factors, plus the outbursts of evangelical enthusiasm which accompanied the revival meetings initiated by Andrew Murray in 1860³ and lasting well into the 1880s, turned the tide of opinion within the Church firmly in the conservative evangelical direction.⁴

The victory of the orthodox party and its designation as "conservative" can easily lead those unfamiliar with the niceties of theology to assume that Calvinism triumphed over liberalism in the Dutch Reformed Church during the 1860s and '70s.⁵ But this view is essentially mistaken. The members of the orthodox party were not traditional Calvinists but Evangelicals, deeply influenced by Methodist and Arminian theology. Calvinists and Evangelicals agreed about the nature of the Bible as the "inspired Word of God" and therefore saw it as the final authority in religious affairs. Calvinists and Evangelicals also agreed in accepting a number of other traditional Christian doctrines, such as those expressed in the Apostles' Creed, which were disputed by the advocates of liberal theology.⁶ As a result many writers have mistaken the

1. *ibid*, pp.174 & 231

2. *ibid*, p.231 f.

3. *ibid*, pp.182-207

4. *ibid*, pp.311-329

5. Even the Anglican theologian Peter Hinchliff can describe the theology of the orthodox group as "both Calvinist and fundamentalist".

6. It needs to be observed here that an agreement about Christian orthodoxy at this level would also include traditional Roman Catholics and many other groups and that in fact it shows very little. This point is brought out very clearly by the American Catholic writer Robert Campbell in his book Spectrum of Protestant Beliefs, 1968.

basic agreement on these doctrines for a complete agreement with each other that can be identified with Fundamentalism. Such an approach fails to recognise the many and bitter differences between the Evangelical and Calvinist groups and consequently misunderstands subsequent Church history in South Africa. As a result it also misunderstands various social and political events.¹

The differences between the Evangelicals and Calvinists found expression in their attitudes towards the practice of evangelism and their views on the nature of the Christian life. These differences in turn led to different social attitudes.² Behind the differences in religious practice lay opposed views on the role of God in salvation and on Man's response to the Gospel.³ At the heart of this controversy was the question of attitude towards, and interpretation of, the teachings of the Synod of Dort. For Evangelicals, like the Murrays, the acceptance of Dort required a complete reinterpretation of its traditional meaning to allow them to preach the "free offer" of the Gospel.⁴ As a result the Reverend J. J. Kotze, who had been charged with heresy by Murray in 1863, could in turn accuse Murray of departing from the doctrines of Dort in 1871. In this way Kotze hoped to show that his own reservations about the teachings of Dort were matched by equal though different reservations on the part of the supposed champion of traditional orthodoxy. Kotze lost his case because the Evangelical majority in the Synod agreed with

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1. e.g. Denoon in A Grand Illusion, 1973, confuses the Evangelical-Calvinist split with a liberal-fundamentalist split, p.9. For a discussion of Fundamentalism see: Furniss, 1954, The Fundamentalist Controversy; and Packer, 1958, Fundamentalism and the Word of God, pp.24-40.
 2. Carnell, 1961, The Case for Orthodox Theology, pp.113-125.
 3. Packer, 1961, Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God, pp.37-126; Owen, ed. Packer, 1959, The Death of Death in the Death of Christ, pp.4-25.
 4. In effect this was to call upon the sinner to repent thus implying that he has a part to play in his own salvation. By contrast Calvinists in the tradition of Dort claimed that the sinner was saved through the working of God's spirit and had no part in his own salvation, cf. Packer, 1961.

Murray's teachings.¹ But loyal Calvinists, like S. J. du Toit and members of Dirk Postma's small but orthodox Calvinist Church, the Reformed Church, agreed with Kotze in his attack upon Murray.²

The Reformed Church

In 1852 Dirk van der Hoff arrived from the Netherlands at Cape Town from where he intended to travel north to become a minister to the people living beyond the boundaries of the Cape. He refused to take an oath of allegiance to the British Queen and, against the advice of the Cape Church, travelled alone to Potchefstroom where he began to establish a Church. He refused to allow a representative of the Dutch Reformed Church to induct him into his new congregation.³ The Church van der Hoff created was thus the first breakaway Church from the Dutch Reformed Church and the first independent Church in Southern Africa. Its name, De Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk van die Transvaal,⁴ (the Dutch Reformed Church of the Transvaal), indicates the mood of political independence among the people to whom van der Hoff ministered. Essentially, however, this new Church was simply what its name suggests: the Dutch Reformed Church in the Transvaal, and it seems unlikely that there was any real intention on the part of van der Hoff to effect a complete separation from the Cape Church.⁵ The secession was a matter of political pride rather than doctrinal difference and in both its theology and practice the new Church reflected the situation in the Cape.⁶

1. J. du Plessis, 1919, pp.248-250.

2. Oberholster, 1956, pp.65-83; van der Vyver, 1958, Professor Dirk Postma, pp.285-291.

3. Hinchliff, 1968, p.61; J. du Plessis, 1919, pp.139-141; Walker, 1964, A History of Southern Africa, p.266.

4. Hervormde - literally Re-formed.

5. Hinchliff, 1968, p.62

6. J. du Plessis, 1919, p.144; Hinchliff, 1968, pp.62-63; the standard history of the Church, written by one of its members, is: Engelbrecht, 1953, Geskiedenis van die Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk van Afrika. The name Nederduits Hervormde Kerk van Afrika was adopted in 1882.

The situation which brought the Gereformeerde Kerk van Suid Afrika (Reformed Church), into existence in 1859 was entirely different. Its founder, the Reverend Dirk Postma was born in Dokkum, Friesland, in the Netherlands in 1818 and, after being apprenticed as a tinsmith, was trained by the Reverend T. F. de Hann to become a minister in the Afgescheiden Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk (Separated Christian Reformed Church). Because at that time the Church lacked a theological school of its own, Postma's training consisted of private study and practical instruction by de Hann.¹ In 1840 Postma was inducted as a minister to the Church's congregation in Minnertsga² and subsequently served the Church in Wildervank³ and Zwolle.⁴ During these years he also played an important role in the creation of a theological school for the training of ministers in Kampen⁵ and was generally interested in fostering Christian education.⁶

In 1857 J. J. Venter,⁷ a well known Free State politician, wrote to Elder J. van Andel of the Separated Christian Reformed Church in the Netherlands, complaining about the evangelical and liberal influences in South Africa and appealing for them to send a minister who would remain loyal to Dort in the tradition of the great Dutch divines, Coenraad Mel, Smytegelt and Brakel.⁸ The result of this appeal was that the Synod of the Separated Christian Reformed Church decided in 1857 to send one of its ministers to

1. van der Vyver, 1958, pp.44-49.

2. *ibid*, pp.50-53.

3. *ibid*, pp.66-68.

4. *ibid*, pp.72-75.

5. *ibid*, pp.99-104.

6. *ibid*, pp.77-84

7. The same Venter created problems for President Hoffman of the Orange Free State because of Hoffman's friendship with Moshweshwe, Walker, 1964, p.385; Speolstra, 1963, Die 'Doppers' in Suid-Afrika 1760-1899, p.151.

8. Postma, 1905, Geschiedenis der Gereformeerde Kerk, pp.3-49.
Cachet, 1909, Gedenkboek der Gereformeerde Kerk van Zuid Afrika, pp.26-32.

investigate the situation in South Africa; and it chose Dirk Postma for the task.¹

Postma arrived in Cape Town in 1858 and travelled from there to Durban and thence to the Transvaal. On his way there he received a message from the consistory in Rustenburg, inviting him to become their minister, and he also made contact with the conservative "Dopper"² element of the Afrikaner population.³ On the 11th January 1859 the Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church in the Transvaal made the singing of evangelical hymns, which the Calvinists considered to be doctrinally impure, compulsory in all its congregations, causing consternation among the Calvinists.⁴ This action led Paul Kruger and a group of like-minded members of the Rustenburg congregation to secede from the Transvaal Church on February 11th 1859 and to invite Postma to become their minister. In this way the Reformed Church was born and Postma began to establish congregations throughout South Africa.⁵

The people who joined Postma's new Church belonged to a group which had existed in South Africa as a distinct section of the Afrikaner community from the 1760s and which was known generally by its nickname of "Doppers".⁶ The exact meaning of the name Dopper is unclear. It could be a corruption of the Dutch dorper (town dweller) so indicating the type of life the majority lived on the

1. van der Vyver, 1958, pp.155-174.

2. For the meaning of "Dopper" see p.44-45

3. van der Vyver, 1958, pp.177-187 and 223-226

4. van der Vyver, 1958, pp.202-244; Cachet & du Toit, n.d., Waarom zingt de Gereformeerde Kerk alleen Psalmen. Because of their supposed doctrinal impurity evangelical hymns also became identified, by the Reformed, with liberal theology.

5. Church historians differ in their interpretation of these events but this seems substantially correct: see van der Vyver, 1958, pp.177-267; Engelbrecht, 1953, pp.141-166; Hinchliff, 1968, pp.63-64.

6. Spoelstra, 1963, pp.1-168.

borders of the Cape in small settlements such as Steynsburg and Burgersdorp.¹ Another suggestion is that it referred to the old fashioned hairstyle of the men which was said to be the result of placing a basin, in Dutch dop, over their heads and cutting the hair all round the rim.² Another suggestion, favoured by the Doppers themselves, was that it was a name symbolic of their conservatism derived from the Dutch word domper which is the device used to extinguish the light of a candle, as the Doppers believed they extinguished the new light of the Enlightenment and stuck to the old ways.³

Whatever the origin of their nickname the Doppers were a clearly definable group distinguished by their extreme conservatism. Commenting on this Mrs. Andrew Murray wrote in 1857:

"The only people I don't really like are the Doppers. They are really such a dirty obstinate race. They won't buy merino sheep because their forefathers did not have them nor build better houses ... If you remonstrate with them for marrying a second time so soon, they tell you Abraham only mourned forty days for Sarah. They are the strangest, most quaint of mortals, many of them very religious, but prejudiced and ignorant to a degree."⁴

With these judgements her husband agreed and although he was saddened by Postma's secessionist movement he wrote to his brother Andrew as follows:-

"We have never been able, even when willing, to reach the real stiff dopper mind. Our language was strange to it: these new ministrations, possessing their confidence, may reach hearts that appear to us quite closed against the Gospel."⁵

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1. John Murray, 1877, "Some Characteristics of our Fellow Colonists", Cape Monthly Magazine, December 1877, p.373.
 2. Spoelstra, 1963, Die "Doppers" in Suid-Afrika, p.16
 3. O'Kulis, 1918, "Doppers", p.11.
 4. Murray, ed., 1954, Young Mrs. Murray goes to Bloemfontein 1856-60, p.49.
 5. J. du Plessis, 1919, p.178.

And Andrew Murray writing in the Cape Monthly Magazine in December 1877 commented that:

"While the Dutch Church deplores the secession and regrets that the seceders have been confirmed in some of their prejudices, it must be granted that the clergyman in question has successfully combated other prejudices and given an impulse to the cause of education among a retrograde people."¹

As the leader of a secessionist group Postma had faced a formidable task. His followers were to be found in scattered groups throughout a vast area and his problem was to wield this community of worshippers into a viable and enduring Church.²

Within a year Postma had established seven congregations and enrolled some 2,253 members. By 1868 this figure had risen to sixteen congregations and 4,362 members and by the time of the outbreak of the Second Anglo-Boer War in 1899 there were forty-three congregations containing 10,678 members.³

The task before Postma in 1859 was clearly greater than any one man could be expected to fulfil and it is a measure of Postma's character that he quickly recognised this and appealed to the Separated Christian Reformed Church in the Netherlands for help.⁴ Despite promises of assistance only one other minister eventually joined him in South Africa. Faced with this situation Postma responded with a characteristic resourcefulness and began to train South African ministers in the same way that de Hann had trained him. In this way he trained a number of men, taking them with him on his travels and giving them personal tuition whenever he could. One of these men was a young Dutch school teacher, Jan Lion Cachet.⁵

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1. J. Murray, 1877, p.378 f.
 2. Spoelstra, 1963, pp.169-193.
 3. Almanak 1868, and 1899.
 4. van der Vyver, 1958, pp.371-372.
 5. *ibid*, pp.372-381.

Cachet was born in Amsterdam in 1838 of Jewish parentage. ; His father came under the influence of the Dutch religious movement known as the Reveil and was baptised into the Reformed Church in 1849. He had his children educated in the home of the Jewish-Christian poet Isaac da Costa and later at the seminary of the Free Church of Scotland in Amsterdam.¹ After working as a teacher in Amsterdam, J. L. Cachet emigrated to South Africa in 1861. He worked for a while in Cape Town where he found the religious atmosphere oppressive and then in Ladysmith in Natal where he became a lay preacher and catechist in the Dutch Reformed Church. He joined Postma in Rustenburg in 1865 and entered the ministry of the Reformed Church.²

From his first contact with Postma, Cachet had assisted him in teaching the other theological students Hebrew and other preparatory subjects. In 1869 he assisted Postma in establishing a permanent theological school and literary department to prepare men for the Church's ministry in Burgersdorp. He served several congregations as their minister as well as lecturing in Burgersdorp until 1894 when he became the Church's first and only full-time professor of theology, and acting rector of the literary department.³ In 1873 he founded and became the first editor of the Church's monthly magazine De Maandbode, which changed its name to Het Kerkblad in 1896, and he did all in his power to promote education among the members of the Afrikaner community.⁴ He was also a strong supporter and active member of the First Language Movement⁵ and in turn, of the Afrikaner Nationalist movement as it emerged in the 1870s and 1880s.⁶

1. Nienaber, 1940, Jan Lion Cachet met sy Sewe Duiwels, pp.9-10.

2. *ibid*, pp.10-11.

3. Nienaber, 1940, pp.11-14, and 18-19.

4. *ibid*, pp.24-25.

5. *ibid*, pp.28-30.

6. *ibid*, pp.20-23.

Postma demanded a high standard for entry into his Church's ministry and required the B.A. of the University of the Cape of Good Hope as an entry qualification to the Theological School. As the university was an examining body only, it was possible for Postma and Cachet to train men for the examinations at their own institution and in this way the Church became involved in higher education from 1869 onwards.¹ In addition, because of the general lack of education in outlying areas the Church also embarked on an extensive programme of primary education and a more limited programme of secondary teaching throughout its local congregations. By the time of the outbreak of war in 1899 the Reformed Church was involved with some 142 schools which educated over 3,000 children.²

Reformed Theology

The theology of the Reformed Church was based upon the three Ecumenical Creeds - the Apostles', the Nicene and the Athanasian, and upon the Calvinist doctrinal statements - the Belgic confession, the Heidelberg Catechism and the Canons of Dort. These were accepted because they were believed to contain systematic expositions of Biblical truth, thus enabling Christians to express their Faith in a coherent manner and to readily distinguish between truth and error.³

The most popular exposition of the Reformed Faith during this period among members of the Reformed Church in South Africa was Dirk Postma's Kort Begrip der Kristelike Religie (A Short Account of the Christian Religion) which first appeared in 1888 and went through many subsequent editions. In this work Postma expounded the Apostles' Creed, the Ten Commandments and Calvinist teaching on the Sacraments. His purpose was to provide a simple, concise, account of the fundamentals of Christianity as understood by those Reformed Churches which

1. van der Vyver, 1958, pp.426-428.

2. *ibid*, pp.419-426; Almanak, 1899.

3. cf. Calvin, tr. McNeil, 1961, Institutes of the Christian Religion, pp.3-5.

remained faithful to the teaching of Calvin. In this he succeeded admirably and provided catechists and ministers with an excellent means by which to instruct candidates for confirmation.

Another popular exposition of the Reformed Faith during this period was W. J. Snijman's De Gereformeerde Richting (The Reformed Faith)¹ which first appeared in *Het Kerkblad* as a series of articles in the 1890s and was finally published as a book in 1904. Despite these popular expositions of Calvinism the Reformed Community in South Africa did not produce any major works of scholarship during the period under consideration with the one exception of J. D. du Toit's doctoral thesis Het Methodism (Methodism), which was published in 1903 and widely distributed among church members. Apart from this they preferred to rely upon the work of Dutch theologians for their basic theology and concentrated their own efforts on the application of their Faith to the living situation in which the Church found itself in South African society.²

Systematic accounts of the Faith which the Reformed held during this time are to be found in the works of the Dutch theologians Herman Bavinck (1854-1921) and Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920). The most important of their writings to have been translated into English are Bavinck's The Doctrine of God and Our Reasonable Faith both of which are abridged from his major Dutch work Gereformeerde Dogmatiek (Reformed Dogmatics), which appeared during the years 1895 to 1901. The major of Kuyper's doctrinal works to have been translated into English is his treatise The Work of the Holy Spirit which appeared

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1. De Gereformeerde Richting - literally The Reformed Direction.
 2. J. A. du Plessis, Op Die Spore van die Calvinisme, 1917, pp.17-19. When J. D. du Toit lectured to theology students at the Reformed Church Theological School in Potchefstroom during this period his lectures were virtually dictated from the works of Kuyper and Bavinck. I am grateful to Jan-At Kruger for this information and for showing me copies of du Toit's lectures in theology made during the period under discussion.

in 1900 and which, despite its title, covers almost every aspect of Reformed Theology. These writings and other works by these men, available only in Dutch, were popular in South Africa and provide a sound basis for an understanding of theology of the Reformed Church.¹

Reformed theology started from the doctrine of God Who has revealed Himself in the Bible as the Sovereign Creator and Preserver of the Universe. Through the Biblical account of Creation, found in the Book of Genesis, man's original role as God's vice-regent on earth is explained and his subsequent rebellion against God, known as the Fall, which brought sin into the world, is described. Although created in God's Image, man is now estranged from his Maker because of an original act of disobedience. This means that men are born into a world in revolt against its Maker. The result of this is that unless the natural inclinations of men are dramatically changed they will continue to live their entire lives in wilful disobedience of God and disregard for His plan for the world. In this fallen condition men, as sinners, cannot please God and are incapable of discovering anything which will lead to their salvation by their own unguided efforts. It is for this reason that Calvinists believe that man's salvation rests entirely in the sovereign will of God. Unless God chooses to reveal Himself to men they cannot know Him and unless He pardons them they cannot receive forgiveness for their rebellion against Him. The Gospel, for Calvinists, is therefore the message that God has chosen to save sinners and that Christ died to make forgiveness possible. But God does not save all men and has chosen to reveal Himself to those alone whom He would save. These chosen few are the "elect" whose salvation depends upon

1. I have supplied information about translated works because of the general unfamiliarity of English readers with both Calvinism and the Dutch language. Fortunately these were the most popular works of the theologians concerned.

their election in the providence of God. This is why members of the Reformed Church could never accept the evangelistic theology of the Dutch Reformed Church or the preaching of men like Andrew Murray who called upon men to repent and make their peace with God, and it is the basis of their fear of Methodism. Salvation was the work of God alone but the Methodists made it a responsibility of man. Methodism was a false gospel which gave an easy assurance of salvation and therefore struck at the heart of true Christianity.¹

¹ cf. Kuyper, 1900; and due Toit, 1903, Het Methodism; also see p. 105-108.

CHAPTER THREE

The Development of National Consciousness and Afrikaner Identity Prior to 1899

The Origins of Afrikaans

The Afrikaans language developed gradually from the time of the first Dutch settlement at the Cape in 1652. Various factors contributed to the formation of this new language in Southern Africa. The original settlers were isolated in a strange environment where they developed a way of life of their own very different from that of the Europe which they had left behind. The influx of settlers of non-Dutch descent, contact with the Portuguese, Malay slaves, and the indigenous peoples, all played their part in the creation of Afrikaans. Linguists argue over the precise origins of Afrikaans but whatever its derivation it remained a spoken language only until the second half of the nineteenth century and Dutch was the written language of those South Africans who preferred not to write in English.¹

The first attempt to write for public consumption in the colloquial speech of the Cape Dutch appears to have been made by Louis Henri Meurant in 1860 when he wrote two short articles for the Cradock News. These dealt with the contemporary political situation and were intended to gain support for Meurant's political views.² Several other minor works appeared following this pioneer effort but the development of the embryo language did not begin in earnest until 1875 when the Genootskap van Regte Afrikaners (Fellowship of True Afrikaners) was founded.³

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1. Patterson, 1957, The Last Trek, pp.42-45;
 2. Valkoff, 1972, New Light on Afrikaans and Malayo-Portuguese.
 2. Pienaar, 1943, Die Triomf van Afrikaans, pp.73-74.
 3. *ibid*, pp.81-82.

Die Genootskap van Regte Afrikaners

Although not one of its founder members, there can be no doubt that the moving spirit behind the Fellowship was a young Dutch school-teacher, Arnoldus Pannevis (1838-1884). Born in Oudenberg in the Netherlands, Pannevis emigrated to South Africa in 1866 due to ill health.¹ In South Africa he became a close friend of W. A. van Lingen (1804-1869) who offered Pannevis a post at his school, the Paarl Gymnasium, which he had established as a Dutch-medium Christian school in 1859.² With van Lingen Pannevis shared a love of the Dutch Calvinist tradition³ and a belief in the necessity for "Christian Education."⁴

Living in South Africa Pannevis, who was a skilled linguist, quickly realised that the language of the people was not Dutch but a new language, Afrikaans,⁵ which he argued was not to be dismissed as merely a dialect of Dutch.⁶ He also recognised the powerful attraction of English culture and predicted that if Afrikaans did not become a written language then eventually the English would obliterate all traces of the Dutch tradition in South Africa.⁷

Pannevis did all he could to encourage young Afrikaners to take a pride in their language and traditions⁸ and in 1874 wrote to the British and Foreign Bible Society appealing for them to translate the Bible into Afrikaans. The argument he used was that if the Bible

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1. Nienaber, 1968, Dr. Arnoldus Pannevis Vader van die Afrikaanse Taal, p.5.
 2. van Lingen was a Dutch Reformed minister deeply influenced by Dutch Calvinism. Conradie, 1948, Hollandse Skrywers uit Suid-Afrika, vol. 11, pp.36-37; Cilliers, 1953, Die Stryd van die Afrikaanssprekende in Kaapland om sy eie Skool, pp.86-87.
 3. Conradie, 1949, pp.42-45, Nienaber, 1968, p.5.
 4. See p.22-23.
 5. du Toit, 1961, Versamelde Werk van J. D. du Toit, vol.1, p.101.
 6. Nienaber, 1968, p.53 f. reprint of letter to De Zuid-Afrikaan, 4/11/1874.
 7. Nienaber, 1968, pp.54-56, reprint of letters to Het Volksblad, 30/4/1870½ and Di Patriot, 25/6/1880.
 8. J. D. du Toit Papers, letter 7/9/1914, Oom Daan to J. D. du Toit. "Oom Daan" was probably his uncle D. F. du Toit.

remained only in English and Dutch then for many years a large section of the population, including most of the Coloureds, would never be able to read it. But if it were to be translated into Afrikaans then it would be a simple matter to teach the masses to read the scriptures and so draw them once again into the Christian community which was in danger of losing them through their ignorance.¹ This argument led to a meeting of Dutch Reformed ministers in Paarl in July 1875 and out of this group a second meeting was organised which brought into being the Fellowship of True Afrikaners on the 11th of August 1875.²

Surprisingly Pannevis was not at the first meeting of the Fellowship and joined it only at its third meeting. The founder members were the Reverend S. J. du Toit, who became its central figure and driving force, C. P. Hoogenout and D. F. du Toit, the brother of S. J. du Toit, all of whom were school teachers, August Ahrbeck and S. G. du Toit, who were students, and three wine farmers, Gideon Malherbe, P. J. Malherbe and D. F. du Toit. The ages of the group were 27, 32, 29, 24, 20, 42, 22, and 25 respectively.³

The aims of the Fellowship were stated as follows:

- (1) the creation and popularisation of an Afrikaans national song which would give people a focus of identity and thus draw attention to the Fellowship;
- (2) the creation of a translation committee to translate the Bible into Afrikaans;
- (3) the creation and popularisation of an Afrikaans literature; and
- (4) the production of an Afrikaans dictionary.⁴

1. Pienaar, 1943, pp.107-109.

2. *ibid*, pp.110-112.

3. *ibid*, pp.113-114.

4. Pienaar, 1943, p.114.

The aims of the Fellowship were summarised at its second meeting as being "to stand for our Language, our Nation and our Land."¹ The national song which they so shrewdly desired soon appeared as a composite work at the hands of the du Toit brothers, Pannevis and Hoogenhout. A rousing call for Afrikaners to unite in their Afrikaner national identity, it begins:

"Every nation has its Land,
Dwell we on Afrikaner sand,
There is for us no better ground,
Not all the world around,
Proud we are, our name to take,
Children of South Africa."²

The poem goes on to point out, in separate verses, that every nation has its own language, Law, Government and Time,³ leading up to its final verse which runs:

"For all nations there's but one God,
He determines every People's lot;
Every People its speech He gives,
Its Land, Government and Time determines,
They who look on in contempt,
Shall His chastisement feel.
O God, Protect South Africa."⁴

The first five hundred copies of this were quickly sold out and other editions quickly followed. A manifesto was issued which contained the new famous call:

"There are Afrikaners with English hearts and Afrikaners with Dutch hearts. There are also Afrikaners with Afrikaans hearts. These last we call TRUE AFRIKANERS and call out to them to come and stand with us."⁵

More important than these items of propaganda, efficient though they were, was the publication of Di Afrikaanse Patriot, a monthly magazine, in January 1876.⁶ The first edition began: "An Afrikaans Newspaper!"

1. *ibid*, p.117.

2. *ibid*, p.121.

3. The translation "Every nation has its Time" sounds strange in English. The thought here is "times and seasons". Thus the meaning is that every nation has its place in history and its time of greatness.

4. Pienaar, 1943, p.122.

5. *ibid*, p.126.

6. Davenport, 1966, pp.33-34.

Who would have imagined it?" and went on to outline the programme and principles of the new movement.¹

On February 26th 1876 S. J. du Toit took the important step of publishing a small book entitled Eerste Beginsels van die Afrikaanse taal! (The First Principles of the Afrikaans Language). In this work he attempted to introduce a uniform grammar and standardised spelling for the writing of Afrikaans.¹ The first Afrikaans history book followed in 1877, again from the pen of S. J. du Toit. This was his famous Di geskiedenis van ons land in di taal van ons volk (The History of Our Land in the Language of Our People). To call this book a "history" is perhaps misleading, because in fact it was a collection of folk stories and myths written in a vivid style to appeal to the emotions rather than to the reason of Afrikaners, in the hope of making them aware of their heritage and distinctive national identity.²

In the following years various books appeared in Afrikaans, the most important being the Afrikaanse Almanak which eventually attained a regular annual subscription of 5,000 copies.³ The first Language Congress was held in Paarl in January 1896⁴ and as a result of its discussions a new literary magazine Ons Klyntji (Our Little One), was published. Within a year its circulation had risen to over 2,700 subscribers.⁵ A second Language Congress was held in January 1897, but little else occurred as the political situation in Southern Africa deteriorated, and the First Language Movement died in the turmoil and devastation of the Second Anglo-Boer War.

1. Pienaar, 1943, p.154.

2. van Jaarsveld, 1961, The Awakening of Afrikaner Nationalism, pp.118-121; Davenport, 1966, p.32.

3. Pienaar, 1943, p.154.

4. *ibid*, pp.190-191.

5. *ibid*, pp.194-195.

The Reformed Church and the Language Movement

G. R. von Wielligh,¹ an active member of the Second Language Movement,² wrote of the First Language Movement in Die Huisgenoot (The Family Paper), in July 1937 that

"if we call Paarl the Mecca of Afrikanerdom then surely we must speak of Albert (Burgersdorp) as its Medina."³

This quotation draws attention to the role of the Reformed Church in both language movements because Burgersdorp was the stronghold of the Reformed.⁴

Until the 1880s the attitude of Reformed leaders was against the use of Afrikaans as a written language on the grounds that such a development was unnecessary. In the Netherlands, it was pointed out, the spoken language was different from the written one. Further, the Dutch language had a rich literature which Afrikaners ought to accept as part of their heritage and not to risk losing through producing their own written language. Finally the creation of a written language would be difficult and expensive and therefore it would be far more sensible to stick to Dutch.⁵

But while Dirk Postma and other Reformed leaders wanted to revive Dutch⁶ their trusted colleague, Jan Lion Cachet, was playing an important role in the Afrikaans Language Movement.⁷ In addition to a regular political column, Zwart Pilletjies (Small Black Pills), which he contributed to Di Patriot during the 1880s⁸, Cachet also

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1. Schoonees, 1927, Die Prosa van de Tweede Afrikaanse Beweging, pp.75-88.
 2. See p. 177-185.
 3. Die Huisgenoot, 2/7/1937.
 4. "The Reformed" will be used to refer to members of the Reformed Church; Conradie, 1949, pp.100-135.
 5. De Maanbode, 1/12/1879, 1/3/1879, 1/4/1879, 1/5/1879.
 6. *ibid*, 1/12/1879.
 7. Conradie, 1949, vol.11. pp.124-133
 8. Nienarber, 1940, pp.20-23.

wrote a series of short stories between 1882 and 1899 which were reprinted in 1907 as Sewê Duiwels en Wat Hulle Geodoen Het (The Seven Devils and What They Did), a book which is said to mark the beginnings of realism in Afrikaans literature,¹ as well as numerous poems.² Cachet's politics were those of a fiery nationalism and can be summed up in his comment on the sending of the Reverend John Mackenzie as the Resident British Commissioner to Bechuuanaland in 1884 that "What Mackenzie wants is the marriage of Boers and Kaffirs."³ This nationalism found expression in many of his poems, the most famous one with a political message being "De Vierkleur" (The Transvaal Flag), which he published in Di Patriot on the 8th of July 1881 after the Battle of Majuba, and which was subsequently set to music. It goes:

"Raise high the Vierkleur,
the flag of our land!
Stand by the standard,
a rifle in your hand.
Raise high the Vierkleur,
Once more to fly free,
let no man enslave her now,
as at her side you stand."⁴

At the outbreak of the Second Anglo-Boer War Cachet revived these sentiments by writing De Vierkleur in Gevaar (The Transvaal Flag in Danger):

"'The Vierkleur is in danger!'
Stand up you faithful men.
Stand up throughout the land,
Your weapon in your hand.
Our land again calls forth your best,
Again your blood demands,
As once more the thunder sounds;
'The Vierkleur is in danger.'"⁵

Cachet's most popular poem was a cultural one, which although written in 1869 was not published until 1896. This was Di Afrikaanse Taal (The Afrikaans Language). It is an allegorical poem and begins:

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1. *ibid*, pp.45-51.
 2. *ibid*, pp.33-42.
 3. Di Patriot, 14/3/1884.
 4. Nienaber, 1940, p.39.
 5. *ibid*, p.40.

"I'm but a poor farmgirl,
 By many I'm despised,
 Yet I am of noble blood,
 And highest ancestry.
 From Holland came my father,
 To sunny Africa;
 From France, where abounds the vine,
 Came my dearest Mama."

It goes on to describe the time when "true hearts" and brave free men will make her "The Queen of all South Africa."¹ In addition to these South African poems Cachet drew deeply upon his Dutch Calvinist education and popularised Dutch Calvinist leaders in his works. Thus in addition to occasional references to them he wrote an entire poem on the death of Groen van Prinsterer,² another about the poet da Costa³ and one on the Reveil.⁴

Christian Politics and the Birth of the Afrikaner Bond

When the Fellowship of True Afrikaners was founded its members intended it to be a cultural movement without realising its political implications.⁵ Within a few years the political thinking implied by the creation of the Fellowship led S. J. du Toit to found his Afrikaner Bond.⁶ Behind his actions was a deep conviction of the need to create a Christian Political Party in South Africa on the model of Abraham Kuyper's Anti-Revolutionary Party in the Netherlands. The debt which du Toit's thought owes to that of Kuyper can be seen in his Program van Beginsels (Programme of Principles) which he published in 1882.⁷ In these du Toit gives a comprehensive commentary on his own political aspirations based on Kuyper's political standard published in 1879 in the Netherlands "Ons Program" (Our Programme).⁸ At its foundation

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1. Ons Klyntji, April 1896.
 2. Nienaber, 1940, p.38.
 3. *ibid*, p.38.
 4. *ibid*, p.38.
 5. J. D. du Toit Papers, letter 15/7/1914, Oom Daan to J. D. du Toit.
 6. Davenport, 1966, pp.34-36.
 7. *ibid*, pp.38 & 51 f.
 8. Kuyper, 1879, "Ons Program".

the Afrikaner Bond had a strong Christian motivation and in du Toit's eyes was to be based upon a fully fledged Calvinist political philosophy.¹ Political events in South Africa prevented the Bond developing in the direction du Toit hoped and it passed under the influence first of Jan Hofmyer² and then of Cecil Rhodes³ to become South Africa's first political party. But the idea of creating a Christian party based on Christian political ideas did not die when du Toit lost effective control of the Bond and was kept alive in the Reformed Church until 1914 when the ideas surrounding the concept of Christian politics entered the ideology of Hertzog's National Party.⁴

The Reformed Church and Afrikaner Nationalism

Just as the Reformed did not immediately take to the use of Afrikaans so too they were not immediately involved with Christian politics and as late as 1874 an article appeared in De Maandbode which argued for a separation of religion from politics:

"It is extremely difficult to serve God and Caesar ... all the Christian Church can do is to bring itself close to God's Word, letting the State govern through its own laws ... the politics of the Christian are the fear of God and the payment of honour to His Majesty ... all other unBiblical standpoints are dangerous."⁵

The first indication of a change in this outlook came in the following year when De Maandbode attacked the Government's policy of non-sectarian education. The schools of the Cape Colony, it was argued, were and always had been Church schools and this was how things ought to remain. To retain their own schools the Reformed were prepared to fight if necessary.⁶

1. Davenport, 1966, pp.52-53.

2. *ibid*, pp.60-71.

3. *ibid*, pp.127-134, and 139-145.

4. see p.

5. De Maandbode, 1/3/1874.

6. *ibid*, 1/11/1875.

Two years later in 1877 the first indication of a growing anti-English feeling among Afrikaners appeared. This came in an article on Roman Catholicism which accused the English, through the Anglican Church, of fostering Catholic notions and so presenting a threat to the Protestant Religion in South Africa. The Reformed wanted to secure the future of Afrikaner children by protecting their religion and education.¹ In a second article, in the same edition of De Maandbode, it was argued that South African schools needed to teach the History of the Fatherland in such a way as to combine both Dutch and English history and thus to show the children that the history of the Eastern Province of the Cape was not the preserve of one national group. Such a history, the article argued, must not be anti-English nor must it be anti-Dutch but it must be based upon a realisation that each group needed the other. Despite these arguments the impression gained from the article is that what was being objected to was a pro-English bias in history syllabuses and British domination of the Cape school system.²

The turning point in the attitude of the Reformed towards the British came with the success of the First Anglo-Boer War as a struggle to free the Transvaal from British rule. Once independence was gained De Maandbode began to take an aggressively pro-Transvaal line.³ It is also from this time that we find a growing interest in the political activities of Dutch Calvinists.⁴

At first the interest in the Transvaal seems to have been limited to a local pride and a narrow Transvaal Nationalism. But within a

1. *ibid*, 1/4/1877.

2. De Maandbode, 1/4/1877.

3. *ibid*, 1/1/1881, 1/3/1881, 1/3/1881, 1/6/1881, 1/9/1881, 1/12/1881.

4. *ibid*, 1/4/1881, 1/6/1881, 1/5/1884, 1/4/1886.

short time this pride in the achievements of the Transvaal had developed into an Afrikaner Nationalism which cut across existing political boundaries.¹ One of the factors in awakening an interest in Afrikanerdom as a whole seems to have been the success of the visit of the Transvaal delegation to the Netherlands in 1884 and the response of the Dutch Churches and People to the delegation.²

Prior to 1887 there had been references to the "Transvaal People"³ but none to the "Afrikaner People", a title which came into use in November 1887 and which quickly gained popularity. The article in which this name was first used was a political one in which were noted the dangers to the Reformed community from increased European immigration, and the end of geographical isolation through the introduction of modern transport and the telegraph. "What place," the writer asked, "is there left for the Afrikaner People?" In answer to his own question he directed Afrikaners to their traditions and said that they must take courage from the Transvaal Republic and the vow⁴ taken at Paardenkraal in 1880.⁵

Following this article the frequency of cultural-national articles increased. Paul Kruger was hailed as a great "Christian Statesman"⁶ and the Voortrekkers became the symbol of the Afrikaners' struggle for national survival.⁷ These nationalist feelings were greatly strengthened by the Jameson Raid⁸ in 1896. An editorial in Het Kerkblad summed up popular feeling by declaring

1. *ibid*, 1/10/1884, 1/11/1887.

2. *ibid*, 1/5/1884, 1/6/1884, 1/8/1884, 1/10/1884.

3. De Maandbode, 1/9/1881

4. This was a reference to the vow taken by those Afrikaners who rebelled against British rule in 1880 thus inaugurating the First Anglo-Boer War. van Jaarveld, 1961, pp.152, 171.

5. De Maandbode, 1/11/1887

6. *ibid*, 1/6/1893.

7. *ibid*, 1/7/1893.

8. This was an abortive attempt to seize control of the gold fields by Rhodes. Walker, 1964, pp.449-453.

"the events in the Z. A. Republic have shown among other things that the light has dawned and Afrikaners are of one heart in South Africa. Blood is thicker than water".¹

At the Burgersdorp Congress of the Afrikaner Bond in March 1896 the Reformed leader, the Reverend L. P. Vorster, who had been invited to preach an opening sermon, also reacted to the Raid by taking for his text Genesis 12 verse 2a: "And I will make of you a great nation".² These words, he argued, were given by God to Abraham and continue to be a promise to God's People. They were not to be restricted to Abraham and his descendants alone, but should be applied to all the "children of the promise",³ that is, to all of God's children. On this basis he could tell the delegates:

"who is there to say that the same promise as it was made to Abraham was not also given to our forefathers and through them to the Afrikaner People? ... God will make us a great People".⁴

He then went on to compare the Afrikaner People with the Children of Israel. Both groups had received their religion from God and in their isolation from European culture the Afrikaners had become a separate nation like Israel of old. They had been given their own land, language and nationality just like the Jews. On this basis Vorster deduced that the future of the Afrikaner People was secure if they would only trust in God and remember that

"the love of our religion, the love of our land and our love for our people are the means by which we shall become a great People".⁵

This growing nationalism among the members of the Reformed Church was fanned by the fact that alone among the Afrikaans Churches the Reformed Church was a united Church whose membership spanned the

1. Het Kerkblad, 2/3/1896.

2. Vorster, 1896, Gods Belofte aan het Afrikaansche Volk.

3. Galatians 3.29.

4. Vorster, 1896, p.34.

5. *ibid*, p.39.

various political boundaries which divided Southern Africa into separate States. Thus its own boundaries defied the political boundaries of the time, creating a bond of religious and national feeling among a group of people who were ruled by three different Governments - a point which the Reformed did not miss when they discussed their role in the Nationalist movement.¹ But before going on to discuss the ways in which the Reformed Church developed following the Second Anglo-Boer War, and the role played by the Reformed in the post-war social and political movements, we must briefly consider British Imperialism against which Afrikaner Calvinists reacted so strongly.

1. Het Kerkblad, 1/9/96, cf. du Toit, n.d. Het Calvinisme en ons Volk, p.13. This pan-Afrikaner outlook contrasts strongly with the isolationism of Kruger's government and is part of the Nationalist myth of a unified Afrikaner past, a golden age, which was destroyed by the British.

CHAPTER FOUR

British Imperialism - A Threat to Calvinism and Afrikaner Identity

The reaction of the Reformed Community in South Africa to British rule before and after the Second Anglo-Boer War and the subsequent development of their activities can be fully understood only when seen in the context of Imperial policies as formulated by Lord Milner and carried on by his successors after he left South Africa in 1905.¹ Lord Milner is a good example of a British colonial administrator imbued with a belief in Imperialism. Because of this he was in many ways the worst possible choice for the Governorship of South Africa where his policies would be opposed by an indigenous Nationalism.²

Milner was a man of high principle who showed a marked lack of the pragmatism which characterises so many British statesmen. He always acted in terms of long term goals and despised lesser politicians for their reaction to the momentary crises which bedevil political life. It is difficult to locate the origins of his particular approach to politics but it was probably a combination of factors involving his early life in Germany and education at Oxford.³

Milner was a strange figure on the British political scene where he seems to have been driven by a great sense of personal insecurity. In psychological terms it is perhaps this insecurity which is the key to his personal and political development. Living in near poverty and the fear of poverty as a young man Milner felt

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1. As Denoon, 1973, argues there was a failure of imperial policy in South Africa. Nevertheless, there is a real sense in which Milner's successors, including Smuts, carried on his policies especially in things like education. See: Shingler, 1973, Education and Political Order in South Africa, 1902-1961, pp.98-110.
 2. Denoon, 1973, pp.236-238.
 3. Gollin, 1964, Proconsul in Politics, pp.3-18; Halperin, 1950, Lord Milner and the Empire, pp.40-41.

compelled to secure his future by succeeding in all he undertook. At Oxford he carried off the Hertford, Craven, Eldon and Derby scholarships as well as obtaining a Balliol scholarship. He drove himself hard to win top academic awards and the acclaim of both his contemporaries and his tutors, but at the expense of the development of his personality.¹

But if poverty was one source of Milner's insecurity his German birth was surely another. However British Milner might aspire to be he was in a very real sense a German and throughout his life was subject to attack for being a "foreigner". It is this marginal status, casting doubt on his personal identity, which perhaps made him so fervent an apostle of British Imperialism. Milner believed himself to be British and had to prove his Britishness throughout his life. In psycho-social terms it may be argued that one of the main sources of Milner's Imperialism was this double sense of insecurity which drove him to affirm his identity by working so strongly for the Imperial cause.²

The theories behind Milner's Imperialism can be traced to the Oxford society of his college days. Among the personalities and ideas which influenced him were those of Jowett, Arnold Toynbee, T. H. Green and George Prakin.³ From these Milner imbibed a strong sense of spiritual values which found expression in a self-righteous morality and devotion to duty. In orthodox Christian terms Milner was not religious, indeed he was unable to accept even the idealistic rational religion of Toynbee, but he was convinced of the primacy of the

1. Gollin, 1964, pp.7-11; Halperin, 1950, pp.42-44.

2. Gollin, 1964, pp.131, 320, and 601.

3. Gollin, 1964, pp.8 & 12; Halperin, 1950, pp.43-46.

"spiritual", a belief clearly originating in idealist philosophy and Romanticism.¹ In company with these men he also developed a view of socialism and his better known Imperialism.

To speak of Milner as a "socialist" may sound strange when in later life his political allies were so often arch-conservatives. But his conservative image seems to have been acquired more through the chance alignments of political groupings than by deliberate choice. In his own words he was "a political Ishmaelite" who had "found hospitality in the Unionist camp".² But his adoption by the Unionists does not prove that Milner was a Unionist at heart and it may be argued that he attempted to introduce his own brand of socialism into Unionist policy.³

From his own writings Milner's views appear to be those of a socialist who is convinced of the evolutionary necessity of Imperialism. Milner outlined his socialism in a series of lectures delivered at Toynbee Hall in 1882 and there is no reason to believe that he ever rejected the views expressed there. On the contrary his later views admirably develop his socialism. In his Toynbee Hall lectures not surprisingly he makes no mention of "Empire" but he does speak of the importance of an international community to sustain a socialist State.⁴ Later he developed the idea that the Empire provided a sufficiently large community to allow social reforms to be carried out in Britain - a point of view in line with his Toynbee Hall thinking. This substitution of the Empire for an international socialist community can be seen as a step towards the ideal socialist

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1. Milner, 1895, Arnold Toynbee: A Reminiscence, pp.14 & 20; Cf. also Jowett's comments in his introduction to the Politics of Aristotle, 1885, on the ideal ruler, pp.LXIX, LXIII, XXVII.
 2. Milner, 1913, The Nation and the Empire, p.153.
 3. *ibid*, p.214.
 4. Milner, 1882, "A View of Socialism", The National Review, 1931, p.773.

community by means of a civilizing mission which was preparing the world for socialism through moral development.¹

Apart from this vision of Imperialism as a necessary step in world development Milner's views are in keeping with a form of socialism, for he had great faith in the ability of administrators to control the destinies of their peoples through the manipulation of society by means of education and economic policies. By these means the State provided for its citizens and thus enabled them to serve it to the fullest extent of their abilities.² Holding these views Milner was committed to a position totally opposed to and rejected by the leaders of the Reformed Community in South Africa, making a clash with them almost inevitable.

Milner's Imperialism in Practice.

In addition to the ideological differences between Milner and his opponents in South Africa Milner came to hold the Boers in the utmost contempt as ignorant, uneducated and backward people. He considered the Transvaal Republic to be a corrupt and undemocratic State which was persecuting British citizens. In view of his moral self-righteousness it is not surprising that the Government of the Transvaal revolted against Milner's sensibilities and that his revulsion drove him to war. Kruger must have epitomised Boer ignorance and corruption. To Milner he was perhaps the incarnation of evil and representative of all that Milner hated. On his side, Milner claimed, human progress and world destiny,

1. Milner, 1913, pp.xxxix-xlvi, pp.138-140.

The idea that imperialism might foster socialism is not of course contradictory and given an evolutionary view of history might be seen as essential. See: Plamenatz, Man and Society, 1963, vol. 2, p.395; also Lichheim, 1974, Imperialism, pp.118-130.

2. Milner, 1882, pp.39, 771; 1913, pp.xl-xlv, 232, and 287. The Times, 27/7/1925. Milner's views are very close to those of the Fabians even though his policies in South Africa divided Fabian opinion. Cf. Shaw ed., 1889, Fabian Essays, and the views of Beatrice Webb in Our Partnership, 1948, pp.190-191, 312, 351-352. Even today when it is received wisdom that left-wing socialists and communists oppose the European Economic Community, a small group of communists can state their support for British entry on grounds similar to the civilizing mission of Milner's Imperialism - The Times, 22/4/1975.

while in Kruger he saw an obstinate old man threatening to disrupt that progress and endanger the whole Imperial scheme.¹ To understand this reaction Beatrice Webb's comment on Milner is helpful

"a God and a wife would have made Milner, with his faithfulness, persistency, courage, capacity and charm, into a great man. Without either he has been a tragic combination of success and failure".²

At the beginning of his mission to South Africa, Milner had decided that the fate of the British Empire was at stake. He also believed that he had been entrusted with the task of preserving Imperial unity.³ Although at first he sought to win over Kruger and Afrikaners generally to his views he was prepared for war should diplomacy fail.⁴ To him the Transvaal remained an "irritating and oppressive" country "in a terrible mess, social, political and financial".⁵ It was as though he believed South Africa was waiting for him to save it from itself.

In his opinion the only way to deal with Kruger and the Transvaal was by a threat of force. In dealing with Afrikaners generally he did not seem to think that he was meeting with reasonable men but insisted on treating them as his inferiors. This terrible assumption of superiority soured his relations with them and created the conditions necessary for war.⁶ He was convinced that South Africa was the "weakest link in the Imperial chain" and that he must strengthen that link at all costs.⁷ On this issue, in his thinking, hung not only the future of the Empire, but ultimately the future of the United Kingdom itself.⁸ Given these

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1. Headlam, 1931, *The Milner Papers*, vol.1, p.64, Milner to Chamberlain 25/5/1897; p.253, Milner to Chamberlain 18/5/1898.
 2. Webb, 1948, *Our Partnership*, p.352; the comment was made on 4/9/1906.
 3. Headlam, 1931, vol.1., p.42, Milner to Sir George Parkin, 28/4/1897.
 4. *ibid*, vol.1., pp.64-65, Milner to Chamberlain, 25/5/1897; pp.72-73, Milner to Chamberlain, 2/8/1897; p.221, Milner to Chamberlain, 23/2/1898.
 5. *ibid*, p.73, Milner to Chamberlain, 2/8/1897.
 6. Headlam, vol.1., 1931, p.52, Milner to Chamberlain, 12/5/1897.
 7. *ibid*, p.42, Milner to Sir George Parkin, 28/4/1897.
 8. Milner, 1913, p.xxxvi.

beliefs his actions in South Africa were predictable and whatever else was involved in the outbreak of war ideological factors must be seen as very important.¹

Post-War Imperialism

Following the outbreak of the Second Anglo-Boer War Lord Milner was under great political pressure to end the war and restore peace and security as soon as possible.² That peace came with the Treaty of Vereeniging but Milner's ability to consolidate the Empire's gains and secure the new colonies had still to be tested.³ Milner's plan to create a British South Africa had three prongs. Firstly, he saw it as of the utmost importance that the English-speaking population in South Africa be increased so that it outnumbered the Afrikaner population. Secondly, he hoped to neutralise the Afrikaner population by effecting a degree of Anglicisation. Finally, Milner hoped to unite both sections of the population behind the colonial government by the creation of economic prosperity.⁴

Education, therefore, played an essential role in Milner's reconstruction policies. In a now famous and oft repeated statement he declared his intentions when he said

"next to the composition of the population, the thing which matters most is education ... In the new Colonies the case will be easier to deal with, provided we make English the language of all higher education. Dutch should only be used to teach English, and English to teach everything else. Language is important, but the tone and spirit of the teaching conveyed in it is even more important. Not half enough attention has been paid to school reading books. To get these right would be the greatest political achievement conceivable. I attach especial importance to history books. ... Everything that makes South African children look outside South Africa and realise the world makes for peace. Everything that cramps and confines their views to South Africa ... makes for Afrikanerdom and further discord",⁵ (*italics Milner's*)

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1. Wilson & Thompson, ed., 1971, pp.313-324.
 2. Denoon, 1973, pp.22, 32.
 3. cf. Denoon, 1973.
 4. Headlam, 1931, vol. 2., pp.242-244, Milner to Major Hanbury-Williams, 27/12/1900.
 5. Headlam, 1931, vol.2., p.243, Milner to Major Hanbury-Williams, 27/12/1900.

It was, therefore, part of Milner's pacification policy to promote the use of the English language. The Peace of Vereeniging clearly stated in article five that

"the Dutch language will be taught in public schools in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony where the parents of the children desire it, and will be allowed in courts of law when necessary for the better and more effectual administration of justice".¹ (*italics mine*)

The Afrikaner negotiators thought that this clause allowed the use of Dutch as the language of instruction.² But for Milner the operative words in this article were "where" and "when". He had assumed from the beginning of the war that given time the English language would prevail over South African Dutch.³ Writing to Chamberlain in 1902, Milner had told him:

"it should be clearly understood that ... we do not promise equality of the two languages. English must be the official language and the principle medium of instruction".⁴

Milner did not want to destroy South African Dutch; he simply wanted to eradicate the nationalism which its continued use tended to promote. In keeping with his autocratic character Milner did not see himself as harming, or even interfering with the life of individual Afrikaners, rather he believed that he was protecting them from their misguided politicians. It was a thing called "Afrikanerdom" on which he vented his fury

"as for the Boer himself, ... , I should be for leaving him the greatest amount of individual freedom. First beaten, then fairly treated, not too much worried on his own 'plaats' in his conservative habits, I think he will be peaceful enough".⁵

After such a strange comment, so lacking in human feeling, it is no surprise to read

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1. Clause 5, Cd. 1096, (1902).
 2. Kestell & van Velden, 1912, The Peace Negotiations, pp.134-135.
 3. Headlam, 1931, vol.2, p.35, Milner to Percy Fitzpatrick, 28/11/1899.
 4. *ibid*, pp.334-335, Milner to Chamberlain, 14/4/1902.
 5. Headlam, 1931, vol.2, pp.35-36, Milner to Sir Percy Fitzpatrick, 28/11/1899.

"to teach a Dutch child English is to teach him something of the greatest possible value to him, and which he would have to learn in any case if he wanted to get on in life ... My policy would be to make English indispensable in the future, and to prepare the rising generation for that state of affairs by practically compelling them to learn it, but to admit Dutch until the Anglicizing process is consummated ..."1

With such opinions it is no wonder that Milner failed to understand Kruger and to see why his policies provoked so strong a reaction among the defeated Boers. What this reaction was and the role which the Reformed Community played in it are subjects to which attention must be given. It must be remembered that the direction taken by the Reformed Community following the Second Anglo-Boer war was to a great extent shaped by the Community's earlier experience of Milner's Imperialism.

1. *ibid*, pp.42-43, Milner to Sir W. Hely-Hutchinson.

PART TWOTHE REFORMED (DOPPER) CHURCH IN SOUTH AFRICA

This section examines the way in which the Reformed Church in South Africa gave expression to the religious views of the Reformed Community. The community's understanding of the "Church" is explained and its self-identification in terms of Church history outlined. Its theology and organisation is discussed and particular emphases examined. Finally an attempt is made to throw light upon general social conditions within Afrikaner society from the evidence of Church sources.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Self-Understanding and Theology of the Reformed Community in South Africa

History and Identity

When the leaders of the African Israel Church Nineveh approached F. B. Welbourn to write a history of their Churches they were expressing a desire to confirm the truth of their beliefs by placing them within the historic tradition of Christianity. In doing this they sought to relate their respective communities to the Christian Community as a whole.¹ In Welbourn's phrase they were seeking "a place to feel at home"² which would shelter them from the social disruptions and confusion of the twentieth century.³ But that is not all. As Berger and Luckmann point out in their book The Social Construction of Reality, every individual, just like every society, continually faces the threat of chaos and death.⁴ Within society the individual finds a refuge from the terror of meaninglessness through a shared reality that authenticates his existence.⁵

The individual's identity, and as a result his sanity, is preserved within society by meaningful communication with significant others who confirm his identity through the creation of an inter-personal objectivity. Ultimately, however, the reality of this identity is legitimated by placing it within the context of a socially accepted symbolic universe. When this is done the threat of chaos and death is averted

1. Information obtained in conversation with F. B. Welbourn.

2. Welbourn, 1961, East African Rebels, p.201.

3. Welbourn, 1961, pp.201-205;

Welbourn and Ogot, 1966, A Place to Feel at Home, pp.132-145.

4. Berger and Luckmann, 1967, The Social Construction of Reality, p.121.

5. Berger and Luckmann, 1967, pp.118-120.

and the individual can live at peace. The symbolic universe is able to achieve this result because it

"locates all collective events in a cohesive unity that includes past, present and future. With regard to the past, it establishes a 'memory' that is shared by all the individuals socialized within the collectivity ... Thus the symbolic universe links men with their predecessors and their successors in a meaningful totality, serving to transcend the finitude of individual existence and bestowing meaning upon the individual's death",¹

In this way history, or rather the received history of a group, functions to maintain the continuity and identity of that group and in doing so provides the individual within the group with significance and meaning.²

The Reformed Community in South Africa can be identified through membership of the Reformed Church. The Church is the ecclesiastical expression of the community and the central focus within its symbolic universe.³ This universe is based on that of traditional Calvinism and is the one into which members of the community are initiated as part of their primary socialisation.⁴

The very name "Reformed Church" is an attempt by members of the community to identify themselves with a particular tradition within European history. In doing so they trace their immediate origins to the Genevan Reformation led by John Calvin and sharply distinguish themselves from other Protestant Christian groups. The distant origins of the community are, however, traced back to the early Church as the first Christian community. This is possible because of their belief

1. Berger and Luckmann, 1967, p.120 f.

2. *ibid*, pp.115-122.

3. Berger, 1973, The Social Reality of Religion, pp.128-129 & 138.

4. Berger and Luckmann, 1967, pp.149-157.

that the Reformation simply restored the essence of Christianity which existed in the early Church.¹

The Reformed held the view that God revealed Himself to mankind in the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. The Old Testament was a record of His dealings with the Jewish Nation in preparation for the coming of Christ. The New Testament was the completion of the Old in the life and work of Christ and the founding of His Church. All true Churches must, therefore, base themselves upon this revelation and continue faithfully in the tradition established by the early Church as recorded in the Bible.²

Their appeal to the Bible as the sole source of authority for a Church is important in understanding their rejection of the claim of other Churches to represent true Christianity. In their view the original purity of the Christian message was lost in the centuries following the establishment of the Church through a mingling of Christian with Pagan beliefs and practices. This mingling led to the formation of the Roman Catholic Church which not only tolerated Pagan elements within its body but actively persecuted true Christians who sought to return to the purity of the New Testament.³

For over a thousand years the Roman Church was successful in its suppression of true religion. But in 1517 Martin Luther (1483-1546) led a protest movement against the abuses of the Roman Church which succeeded in breaking its monopoly of religious life in Western Europe. Luther, however, only partially escaped from the snares of Roman dogma and it remained for John Calvin (1509-1564) to complete the task of

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1. du Toit, Hammersma, Los, De Hervorming, 1917, pp.15-19;
 2. Kerkenordening, 1913, pp.XI-XIII; Kruger, 1956, Waarom is u Lid van die Gereformeerde Kerk, p.9 f.
 3. du Toit, Hammersma, Los, 1917, pp.4-7; Kerkenordening, 1913, pp.XI-XII.
 3. du Toit, Hammersma, Los, 1917, pp.16-30, & 32-34.

creating a truly Reformed Christianity. The fruits of Calvin's labours were recorded in his monumental work The Institutes of the Christian Religion¹ and found expression in the Reformed Churches that were established all over Europe. It was from this movement that the Reformed Church in South Africa grew and to which it looked as the inspiration for its activities.²

The Roman Catholic Church was at first surprised by the speed with which the Reformation spread throughout Europe but it quickly recovered from the shock which Reformed Christianity delivered to the Catholic system and countered with terrible persecution. In France over 20,000 Protestants died for their Faith in the massacre of St. Bartholemew while thousands more died in defending the Netherlands from the ravages of Catholic Spain.³

In 1652 shortly after the Reformed Church was securely established in the Netherlands Jan van Riebeeck (1618-1677), a servant of the Dutch East India Company, established a refreshment station on the Cape of Good Hope. Out of this grew the Dutch settlement at the Cape and the future white colonisation of Southern Africa. In 1666 the first Church was established in the Cape on Reformed principles as a branch of the Dutch Reformed Church. This Church grew with the expansion of white settlement and remained a truly Calvinist Church until the late eighteenth century. Because of the Church's close relationship with the Dutch State it felt the effects of the French Revolution much more immediately than if it had been free from links with the State. This was because the establishment of the new "liberal" Dutch State, the Batavian Republic, in 1795 led to a liberal reform of the Church in the Netherlands and South Africa. These reforms were carried out in the Cape by the

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1. The most readable translation is by John T. McNeil, S.C.M. Press, 1960, London.
 2. Hammersma and du Toit, 1909, Johannes Calvyn, pp.1-76.
 3. du Toit, 1961, vol.VII, pp.295-303.

Batavian Commissioner-General de Mist (1749-1823)¹ who abolished the old Church Order derived from the Synod of Dort and instituted a new one based on the thinking of the Enlightenment.²

When the British took over the administration of the Cape in 1806 they upheld the "reforms" of de Mist and began to use the Church as an instrument to further the policy of Anglicising the Afrikaner population. To fulfil this policy Lord Charles Somerset introduced Scottish ministers into the Church who would appear as true Calvinists to their congregations but who would also be loyal British subjects serving the ends of the colonial rules. As a result when the Great Trek occurred in 1834 this liberal Church with its pro-British clergy opposed the trekkers and supported the Government. From this evidence, and from the facts of the heresy trials of the 1860s, the Reformed argued that the Dutch Reformed Church had departed from its Calvinist origins and had ceased to be a truly Reformed Church.³

But not all South Africans were equally affected by the liberalising effects of the Enlightenment and although the Dutch Reformed Church as an organisation moved away from the historic tenets of Calvinism not all of its members did so. In the more isolated areas of the Eastern Cape and beyond the Orange River were small groups of people known to their neighbours as "Doppers". These folk rejected the new ways and clung tenaciously to the Faith of their fathers. The men who ministered to them may have been outright liberals or the newer yet equally dangerous evangelicals. But the Doppers were not misled and tested all things by Calvinist dogma which they had kept alive through mutual encouragement and the reading of the trusted eighteenth century Dutch divines Brakel,

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1. de Mist ruled the Cape from 1/4/1802 to 25/9/1804 and in this short time initiated reforms which had far reaching consequences for all aspects of South African life.
 2. du Toit, 1961, vol.VII, pp.245-328; Hanekom, 1951, Die Liberale Rigting in Suid-Afrika, pp.79-122; Walker, 1964, pp.133-138; Hinchliff, 1968, pp.16-18.
 3. ~~du Toit~~ 1961, vol.VII, pp.328-347, pp.357-363; Hanekom, 1951, pp.123-190; Hinchliff, 1968, pp.13-28, 36-42; Walker, 1964, pp. 143-144, 204-205.

Smytergeld, and Comrie as well as the old Dutch Bible with its numerous annotations and helpful references.¹

In 1853 the hopes of the Doppers were raised by the arrival from the Netherlands of a new minister Dirk van der Hoff (1814-1881) who established a new Church in the Transvaal De Nederduits Herformde Kerk.² But their enthusiasm for van der Hoff did not last long because they soon discovered his liking for evangelical hymns and liberal theology.³ Another minister, Dirk Postma (1818-1890), arrived from the Netherlands in 1858 and helped the Doppers early in 1859 to establish their own Calvinist Church, the Reformed Church in South Africa, which was faithful to the standards of the Synod of Dort, thus restoring Calvinism to its rightful place among Afrikaners.⁴

The tenor of this understanding of history is clear. The Reformed saw themselves as the upholders of true Calvinism and consequently pure Christianity in a world which had departed from what they believed to be the historic Christian Faith. Their identity stretched back through history from the present to van Riebeeck, from van Riebeeck to the divines of the Synod of Dort, from the Synod of Dort to Calvin and from Calvin to Christ. This was an identity found not in an apostolic succession or continuous historical link but in a shared Faith. The maintenance of true doctrine based upon the Bible and transmitted through a faithful exposition of the Bible was the key to this identity which created a community of Faith linked directly to God and devoid of any human mediator. In such a situation the maintenance of doctrinal purity is of the utmost

1. Spoelstra, 1963, pp.1-62; Postma, 1918, pp.11-43.

2. See p. 42.

3. du Toit, 1961, vol.VII, pp.364-367; Spoelstra, 1963, pp.112-141; Walker, 1964, pp.298-299; Hinchliff, 1968, pp.56-64; See p.

4. Spoelstra, 1963, pp.169-193; See p. 43.

importance because it is this which secures salvation and not the membership of an organisation or administration of the sacraments. The greatest threat to the community was therefore anything which would affect the doctrinal purity of its message because this would destroy their claim to salvation and thus the basis of their corporate identity.¹

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1. Kuyper, 1898, pp.5-45; Weber, 1971, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, pp.108-114; Troeltsch, 1931, The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches, vol.11, pp.576-581, 610, & 652-655.

CHAPTER SIXThe Ecclesiastical Organisation of the
Reformed Church in South AfricaChurch Structure

Accepting the Bible as their only source of Faith and Practice the Reformed believed that their Church must be organised in such a way that it would reflect the form of Church government found in the New Testament. Practically this meant that they took the Church Order devised by the Synod of Dort as the basis of their organisation because they believed Dort most faithfully reflected scriptural teaching on the structure of the Church. It is characteristic of this order that the Church finds its principle of government not in an ecclesiastical hierarchical organisation, like the Roman Catholics, nor in a national Church like the Lutherans, but in the life of local congregations. Despite its Calvinist inheritance of Presbyterianism the Reformed Church had a strongly Congregational tone that led very naturally to the growth of an independent and democratic spirit.¹

The principles upon which the Church claimed to base its organisation are as follows:

1. The only head of the Church is Jesus Christ.
2. Jesus Christ rules His Church through His Word in the Bible.
3. God has given His Holy Spirit to the Church to guide her into all truth and to this end makes use of men who as office bearers exercise spiritual authority in the Church.

1. Kerkenordening, 1913, pp.XI-XII; du Toit, 1961, vol.VI, pp.391-399; Bavinck, 1956, pp.514-543; Hill, 1966, Century of Revolution, pp.78-86. The emphasis of the Reformed Church on the importance of the local congregation may seem inconsistent with the enthusiasm of the Reformed Community for Afrikaner Nationalism. The congregational aspect of their Church organisation was balanced by their loyalty to the teachings of Dort which created a strong bond with fellow Calvinists and a Community of Faith that transcended local boundaries.

4. To preserve Christian unity and the true Faith local congregations unite in major assemblies which take decisions on matters affecting the Church as a whole.¹

This system of government is representative in that office bearers are elected by the local congregation and exercise a delegated authority for the congregation, which is vested with the authority which God has placed in His Church. As a result the day to day running of the Church rests with its officers and not directly with the members.² A careful balance also existed between the local congregation and the denomination as a whole. Although in a real sense ultimate power resided with each local congregation, these did not regard themselves as independent but rather as a united whole in the one Church. Yet in forming this union the Reformed were not investing the governing bodies of their Church with the power to create permanent organisational and bureaucratic structures to control their ecclesiastical life. Rather they were erecting symbols of unity with an acknowledged but limited authority in the formulation of Church policy and the maintenance of its life and doctrine.³

The Reformed Church's Church Order had eighty-nine articles dealing with the following subjects:

Church Offices:	articles 2-28.
Church Assemblies:	articles 29-52.
Church Ceremonies:	articles 53-70.
Church Discipline:	articles 71-86.

The Offices and Assemblies of the Reformed Church

The Church recognised four offices in its Church Order: Ministers of the Word,⁴ Professors of Theology,⁵ Elders,⁶ and Deacons.⁷ The task of the ministers and professors of the Church was to study and expound the Bible as the Word of God. They were to instruct in true doctrine and warn the

1. Geertsems, 1969, The Reformed Church in South Africa, p.24 f.
 2. Kerkenordening, 1913, art. II-XXVIII; du Toit, 1961, vol.VI, pp.400-427
 3. Kerkenordening, 1913, art. 29-52.
 4. ibid, art. 3-17.
 5. ibid, art. 18-21.
 6. ibid, art. 22-24.
 7. ibid, art. 25-28.

people under their charge, be they students at the Theological School or members of their congregations, against error. In this way they were believed to fulfil the prophetic function of the Christian ministry. Professors at the Theological School were always chosen from among practising ministers so that their teaching would be geared to training men for work in congregations and not simply be based on theoretical abstractions.¹

The task of the elders was in many ways the key to the whole structure of the Church. They were charged with the supervision of the other office bearers by the local congregation over whom they also exercised special powers. Together with the minister the elders formed the local "session" or Church Council in which the governing powers over the local congregation resided. Elders were appointed to their position by the congregation with the approval of existing members of the Church Council. In the course of their duties elders were required to carry out regular visits to the homes of Church members in districts allotted to their charge. On such visits they were expected to inquire into the spiritual state of the family concerned and admonish, comfort or encourage according to their discretion. These visits were carried out as often as possible and always prior to the celebration of Communion which was held every quarter.²

Deacons fulfilled the important function of administering the welfare programme of the Church. They were required to collect and distribute aid to the needy. In their charge were widows, orphans, the poor and sick. The whole social ministry of the Church rested upon its deacons who were in effect voluntary lay social workers. Through their efforts a bond was created between the members of the local congregation

1. Kerkenordening, 1913, art. 18-21.

2. ibid, art. 22-24; du Toit, 1916, (original 1906), vol.VI, pp.427-454.

which gave the Church's communal life a reality by providing care for those unable to help themselves. In this way the Church performed a role which is now assumed to be the duty of the Government.¹

Local congregations were lined^k together by a system of recognised authorities which were consulted on matters of doctrine and questions of practice. These bodies also organised those matters requiring the co-operation of several congregations or the attention of the entire Church. Such things as general collections to aid the needy, the support of missionaries and poor congregations, as well as the establishment and running of the Theological School, came under their jurisdiction. Above the local congregation was the Classis or regional gathering of Churches. The Algemeene Vergadering or Provincial Synod stood over the Classis and above these bodies was the General Synod of the Church. Classis met fairly regularly, Provincial Synods every year and the General Synod every three years.²

The principles upon which these bodies were organised according to the Church Order were as follows:

"Art. 30. In the assemblies ecclesiastical matters only shall be transacted and these in an ecclesiastical manner. Major assemblies will deal only with such matters as cannot be decided by minor assemblies, or such things as pertain to the congregations making up the major assemblies in common."

"Art. 31. Whatever may be agreed upon by a majority vote shall be considered settled and binding, unless it be proved to conflict with the Word of God or with the articles of the Church Order."³

On these grounds the Synods selected matters for discussion and so limited their work to issues requiring consideration in a wider context

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1. Kerkenordening, 1913, art. 25-27; du Toit, 1961, Vol.VI, pp.454-468.
 2. Kerkenordening, 1913, art. 29-52; du Toit, 1961, (original 1911), Vol.VII, pp.108-113.
 3. Kerkenordening, 1913, art. 30 & 31.

that that provided by the local congregation or by a lower body than itself. The articles also show the democratic element in the government of the Reformed Church, because its appeal to the Bible as a final authority, allowed individual members to question the decisions of even the highest council of the Church.¹

Church Ceremonies and Discipline

The ceremonies of the Reformed Church centred on the worship service which was normally held every Sunday. At this service the preaching of God's Word was the most important element. The whole service was therefore built around the exposition of the Bible. Actual services varied from congregation to congregation throughout this period but generally they contained the following elements very often in the order outlined:

An opening reading of scripture to set the tone of the worship.
 The singing of a metrical psalm which was normally one associated with praise.
 Recital of the Apostles' Creed by the minister.
 Reading of the Ten Commandments by the minister.
 A second psalm to follow the Commandments.
 A longer reading of scripture.
 General prayers by the minister.
 A third psalm.
 The Sermon.
 A prayer of thanksgiving.
 The closing psalm.
 The blessing.

In his sermon the minister would lay his whole emphasis upon the message of the Bible itself, avoiding amusing anecdotes or other stories to entertain the congregation. He would try to do nothing which might detract attention from the Bible, believing that the preacher's duty was to proclaim the Word of God, not to entertain church members.²

The two sacraments recognised by the Church were those of the Lord's Supper, or Communion, and Baptism. In addition to these sacraments

1. Hill, 1966, pp.78-86; J. A. du Plessis, 1917, pp.8, 10-15, 20-29.

2. du Toit, 1961, (original 1906-1911), Vol.VII, pp.69-108.

the Reformed Church held special services for the solemnization of marriages and the confirmation of children who had reached the age of discretion and wished to take upon themselves the vows made on their behalf at their baptisms. Baptism usually took place during the regular worship service but Communion was part of a special service.¹

As a Calvinist Church the Reformed Church justified its practice of infant Baptism by reference to God's covenant. At the baptismal service parents accepted the obligation of raising their children in the fear and knowledge of God. In later years, when they were deemed to have reached the age of discretion, usually in their early teens, children were expected to confirm their parent's faith by taking upon themselves the promises made on their behalf at their baptism. The confirmation service was preceded by a period of instruction in the Reformed Faith and an examination by the minister to test the reality of the candidate's faith. Once the minister was satisfied on this issue the candidate would be confirmed and admitted to Communion. The Communion service itself followed the usual pattern for the worship service but had the administration of the sacrament as its central element.¹

Church discipline, known as "censure", was based on the right of the minister, through his Church Council, to exclude members from the communion service. The intention behind this practice was that the Church should retain its character as an uncorrupted body and that the Lord's Table should not be defiled by known sinners who were making a mockery of true religion. It was also held that by practising severe discipline the Church upheld God's Law and in doing so was better able to preach His grace. Thus through discipline it was believed possible to convict the sinner of his sin and so lead him to seek reconciliation with God and his neighbour.²

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1. Kerkenordening, 1913, art. 55-64; Bavinck, 1956, p.541; du Toit, 1961. (original 1908), Vol.VII, pp.99-108, (original 1933-1935), pp.232-268.
 2. Bavinck, 1956, p.542; du Toit, 1961, Vol.VI, pp.445-454.

When an elder became aware of a flagrant sin he would approach the erring member and seek to point out his error. If this were a minor offence it could be confessed and repented of and there the matter would rest. But for a more serious offence or one involving more than one person then reconciliation had to be achieved between the involved parties in the presence of two or three elders.¹

When the offender refused to remedy his ways then the matter was taken before the Church Council and the guilty party placed under the first step of discipline. This involved public prayer for the sinner in the congregation although at this stage his name would be known only to members of the Church Council and others directly involved with the case. A second step followed which involved the naming of the offender and a public confession. Finally, the third step of censure could be invoked if repentance was not forthcoming, the guilty party being publicly condemned and excluded from Communion.²

In practice censure meant that the Church Council exercised considerable control over the congregation as a whole and through the congregation the local community.³ The Elders of the Church Council preserved the unity of the congregation in this way and strengthened its self-identity against outsiders who might present a threat to its existence.⁴ So great was this power that only on rare occasions did members allow matters to proceed to the stage of final excommunication and expulsion. In fact in the seven representative congregations studied in detail only two cases occurred during the entire period of seventeen years and both of these involved a close association on the part of the

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1. Kerkenordening, 1913, art. 74-79; Middleburg Church Council Minutes (MC), 3/1/'03 art. 3; 3/4/'03 art. 4; Rustenburg Church Council Minutes (RC), Jan. '03, art. 22; 2nd Oct. 1903, art. 3.
 2. Kerkenordening, 1913, art. 74-79; MC, 29/9/'05, art. 16 & 18; 5/1/'06 art. 11; Burgersdorp Church Council Minutes (BC), 14/10/'08 art. 8; 5/3/'09 art. 3; 16/4/'09 art. 5.
 3. The Friend, correspondence on the influence of the Reformed Church in Reddisburg, 4/9/1916 - 27/11/1916.
 4. Berger and Luckmann, 1967, pp.177-182; Berger, 1973, p.56.

erring member with a non-white.¹

Church Affairs Generally

During the whole of the period 1902-1919 the ministers' status was held in very high regard. In many cases he was the most educated member of the community and looked up to as its natural leader.² Once ordained, a minister was given a free house and a good salary.³ In 1902 the minister in Potchefstroom received £250 per annum⁴ and ministers in other congregations received similar amounts.⁵ In 1919 the Provincial Synod of the Reformed Church in the Transvaal was recommending a minimum salary of £325 and a maximum salary of £550 plus a free house for its clergy.⁶ In addition to these payments it was usual for congregations to keep their minister's larder well stocked and to cover most of his expenses.⁷

Each congregation made its own arrangements with its minister and was responsible for finding him his house and salary.⁸ Poorer congregations, however, were aided by a fund set up for the purpose of the Algemene Vergaderinge (Provincial Synods).⁹ Congregations were also expected to raise money to assist the poor and needy,¹⁰ contribute to general Church funds,¹¹ support the Theological School¹² and

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1. Cf. Cronje, ed., 1958, Kerk en Huisgesin; Bloemfontein Church Council Minutes (Bl.C), 7/1/1910-10/10/1910.
 2. Schreiner, ed., Krige, 1968, Olive Schreiner: A Selection, essay on predikants.
 3. MC 19/8/1912, art. 10.
 4. Potchefstroom Church Council Minutes, (PC), 2/7/1902 art. 33.
 5. No exact details are available for all congregations.
 6. Algemeene Vergadering Transvaal (AVT), 1920, Bylae 1.
 7. Information gained in conversation with elderly members of the Church.
 8. MC, 27/2/1904.
 9. AVT, 1904, art. 1- Algemene Vergadering Cape (AVC), 1902, art. 29; Algemene Vergadering Orange Free State (AVO), 1904, art. 75.
 10. MC, 10/11/1910 art. 16.
 11. MC, 17/11/1916, art. 7.
 12. MC, 21/2/1919, art. 10.

its Literary Department,¹ aid Christian schools² and any other worthy causes which might arise.³ Monies for all of these activities were raised by congregational collections,⁴ the hiring of Church pews,⁵ sales⁶ and special appeals.⁷ To encourage members to support such fund raising activities elders visited members in their homes to discuss with them their ability to support the Church.⁸ Those members who refused to give their fair share were then censured by the Church Council.⁹ In times of economic depression payment in kind was accepted instead of cash. A fixed scale was laid down by which cattle and other gifts could be valued.¹⁰

In addition to supporting the minister the congregation paid a small sum to its organist,¹¹ lead singer¹² and verger.¹³ Catechists were paid a set fee by the parents of the children they prepared for confirmation.¹⁴ In the case of very poor children the congregation would pay the catechist.¹⁵

Each congregation laid down a day on which marriages would be conducted and the time at which they could be held. In Middleburg the day was Monday and the time 9.00 a.m. in summer and 11.00 a.m. in winter.¹⁶

1. AVT, 1919, art. 15.

2. MC, 15/11/1907 art. 4 & 9; 14/9/15 art.2.

3. e.g. the Helpme/kaar; MC, 10/8/1917, art. 5.

4. MC, 17/5/1907, art.8; Bl.C., 3/7/1908 art. 15.

5. MC 27/11/1903 art.7; at that time the fee was four shillings a month. In April 1913 the poor were exempt from pew fees; MC, 18/4/1913 art.5.

6. MC, 11/5/1906 art.11.

7. PC, 13/5/1905 art.13.

8. MC, July 1903 art. 31.

9. MC, 11/11/1910 art.3.

10. MC, 15/1/10, art.8.

11. MC, 16/5/1918 art.13; when the amount paid was £50 per annum

12. MC July, 1902 art.9, when the amount paid was ten shillings a month.

13. MC, 12/5/1905, art.7, £5 per month was paid.

14. BC, 8/4/1910 art.6, children paid 5/- or 2/- per month depending on their means. The total amount a catechist received £1 per month.

15. MC, 6/11/1908 art.10.

16. MC, 30/6/1911 art.4.

The marriage service was a simple one in which there were no bridesmaids nor bestman.¹ Other innovations like the playing of the organ or singing of the psalm when the woman removed her gloves were also rejected.²

Most congregations objected to anything but the most simple and traditional form of service.³ Even an attempt to modernise psalm tunes in 1919 met with strong opposition.⁴ The Dutch Reformed Church's practice of special "prayer hours" was strongly rejected⁵ although the Reformed Church did call for days of prayer in times of great need.⁶ Such times included days of prayer for rain during severe drought,⁷ for peace in Europe during the 1914-18 War,⁸ and in South Africa after the 1914 Rebellion,⁹ as well as for deliverance during the great influenza epidemic which swept South Africa in 1918 and in which many Church members died.¹⁰ In addition days of prayer were called for repentance because of the "evils" in the land¹¹ and to give thanks to God when a drought broke.¹²

Mission

Because of its very limited financial resources and the large amounts of money which it devoted to capital intensive projects like the establishment of Potchefstroom University College,¹³ the Reformed Church had little money to spare for missionary activities. This, however, must not be taken as an indication that the Church rejected the evangelisation of non-Christians. In fact it did support a small number of missionaries to both the African¹⁴ and Coloured¹⁵ communities.

1. MC, 3/4/1908 art. 17.

2. MC, 16/8/1912 art. 17.

3. MC, 5/1/1912 art. 21;
16/5/1913 art. 5.

4. MC, 17/1/1919 art. 14.

5. General Synod, 1907, forward.

6. General Synod, 1904, art. 220.

7. AVT, 1905 art. 32; 1914 art. 56, 15. AVC, 1919, art. 36.

8. RC, 5/6/1918, they also prayed for peace between Bulgaria and Turkey in 1913, RC 21/2/1913 art. 14.

9. MC, 5/11/1915 art. 5; 28/8/14 art. 8.

10. MC, 22/11/1918 art. 6; AVT, 1919 art.13.

11. MC, 13/2/1914 art. 14.

12. MC, 12/11/1915, art. 9; 7/1/16 art. 11.

13. See p.

14. Algemeene Vergadering Cape (AVC) 1905 art. 34.

But in the overall strategy of the Church, missionary projects did not play as large a role as in the evangelical Dutch Reformed Church. This fact was seized upon by Dutch Reformed leaders who used it to attack the Reformed Church and to claim that it was opposed to mission work.¹

The Reformed Church and Symbols of Afrikaner Unity

One of the most powerful symbols of Afrikaner unity and hence of Afrikaner Nationalism has been the celebration of Dingaan's Day in remembrance of the victory of the Voortrekkers over the Zulus at Blood River.² Following the Second Anglo-Boer War the Transvaal Legislative Council quickly approved the celebration of Dingaan's Day as a national holiday to celebrate the triumph of civilization over barbarism. This gesture was undoubtedly part of an attempt to accommodate Afrikaners to the realities of British rule by making them feel that their traditions were respected.³

The Reformed Church was enthusiastic about the celebration of Dingaan's Day as a national day but unhappy about the tendency to regard it as a holiday.⁴ For the Reformed, Dingaan's Day was meaningful only if it was celebrated as a Sabbath in remembrance of the victory God had given His people, the Voortrekkers, over savages.⁵ Therefore, they argued that the day must be kept sacred and its principal activities centred around Church services.⁶ In maintaining this rigid attitude the Church was simply applying the same criteria to the celebration of Dingaan's Day as it did to the keeping of Christmas and Easter. These days, the Reformed argued, were religious festivals and must be celebrated

1. Het Kerkblad, 1/6/1912.

2. Moodie, 1975, The Rise of Afrikanerdom, pp.6-7 & 20-21.

3. Transvaal Legislative Council, Hansard, 9/6/1903.

4. AVT, 1909, art. 25; AVC, 1911, art. 28.

5. Potchefstroom Herald, 18/12/1908.

6. AVT, 1909, art. 25; Johannesburg Church Council Minutes (JC), 20/11/1903, art. 31.

as such and not as secular holidays with pagan overtones.¹

As a group the Reformed community strongly identified with ex-President Steyn's project to erect a monument to the victims of the British concentration camps. But as a Church their relationship to the project posed problems. The Transvaal Provincial Synod decided to send a delegation to meet Steyn to discuss the project and to urge local congregations to support it.² The Cape Provincial Synod was also in sympathy with the project but believed that the Church as a Church could not take part in the venture. This decision was reached on the basis of Article 30 of the Dort Church Order. The Synod was, however, prepared to inform local congregations about the President's plans and to assure him that as individuals Church members would support his actions.³

Church Communications

The close family ties between members of different congregations provided the Church with its primary basis of unity and means of communication.⁴ A similar informal network existed between the ministers of various congregations all of whom had received the same basic training and as a result forged strong personal bonds while preparing for the ministry. In addition to these informal contacts ministers met together with other local ministers and attended the various organisational meetings of the Church. In these ways a basic verbal communication network existed which kept Church members, especially their leaders, aware of developments in other congregations throughout South Africa.⁵

At the local level announcements made during Church Services and information disseminated by visiting elders played an important part in

1. MC, 7/1/1910 art. 7; The Friend, 11/11/1916, 20/11/1916.

2. AVT, 1907, art. 53.

3. AVC, 1907, art. 9.

4. J. Murray, 1877, pp.373-375; van Rooy & Holsters, n.d., Nie in die Handel Nie.

5. Information obtained in conversation with Professors J. Chr. Coetzee, S. du Toit, P. J. Jooste and Mrs. J. C. van Rooy.

keeping people informed about events around them.¹ Preaching, however, was not used directly to comment on contemporary events although at times such comment may have been implied by the sermon topic. This would be especially true of sermons preached on the trials of the Children of Israel which were often linked with the fate of the Afrikaner People.²

It is often implied that the preaching of the Dutch Reformed Churches as a whole moulded the character of the Afrikaner People by an undue emphasis on the Old Testament.³ In view of the triumph of evangelicalism in the Dutch Reformed Church at the end of the nineteenth century such a charge seems unlikely during the period under consideration.⁴ Certainly an examination of Andrew Murray's sermons show no such emphasis.⁵

The available evidence also indicates that ministers of the Reformed Church attempted to preach a balanced Gospel. They based their sermons on the catechism and creeds without allowing the Old Testament or a preoccupation with sin to dominate their work.⁶ It is, of course, difficult to know exactly what was said in a sermon and whether or not preachers added topical comments on political and social issues to their sermons. But in the printed material available and in surviving preaching notes such comments seem absent.⁷ The evidence, therefore, indicates that Reformed preachers restricted their comments from the pulpit to matters of Faith and that in doing so preached an orthodox form of Calvinism.⁸

1. PC, 1/10/1915, art. 4; 12/8/1916, art. 5.

2. D. Postma, 1904, Tweede pertigtal Leerredenen, n.b., sermon number 19.

3. Patterson, 1957, pp.18, 22, 177; van Rensburg, 1962, Guilty Land, pp.57-59.

4. See p. ; Moodie, 1975, pp.57-68.

5. Murray, 1898, The Two Covenants; n.d., Sermons on Hebrews.

6. Cf. "A Region of Shadow," Laurens van der Post, The Listener, 5/8/1971.

7. The printed evidence is discussed below. Various sermon notes are preserved in the Church archives in Potchefstroom, the most extensive collection being that belonging to J. D. du Toit.

8. Cf. du Toit, 1961, (1912-1919), vol. 2, pp.339-478; vol. 3, pp.11-167.

Three books of sermons were published by the Church during the period 1902 to 1919, appearing in 1904,¹ 1908² and 1912.³ The first contained fifty percent of Old Testament material, but in the second twenty-four out of a total of twenty-nine sermons were based on New Testament texts. In the third book seventeen out of the total of twenty-four sermons were based on the New Testament. Each year a daily reading was printed in the Almanak and this too, like the sermons, reflected a balance in favour of the New Testament.

One sermon by Dirk Postma (Jr.) published in 1904 made an explicit identification between the Children of Israel and the Afrikaner People but all the others stuck to strictly theological issues.⁴ An exception to this policy of restricting theological material to theology was the publication of an Afrikaner calendar in the 1914 Almanak which gave an event in Afrikaner history as the daily thought instead of a Biblical text. On other occasions, outside the worship service, Reformed leaders did, however, make explicit identifications between Israel and the Afrikaner People.⁵

Church Publications

Every month the Reformed Church issued its own Church magazine. Until 1894 this was called De Maandbode, (The Monthly Messenger) , but in October 1894 it changed its name to Het Kerkblad, (The Church Paper). The magazine carried items of interest for the whole Church. It published Church news, sermons, articles on theological topics and controversial issues as well as occasional comments on national events and social questions. Although most of the articles were written by members of the Reformed Church in South Africa there were always a number of articles each year written by Reformed writers in the

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1. D. Postma, 1904, Tweede Dertigtal Leerredenen.
 2. Vorster, ed., 1908, Erfenis en Nalatenschap.
 3. P. Postma, ed., 1912, Keurstoffen - 24 Preken.
 4. Postma, 1904, sermon number 19 on Jeremiah 2.2- cf. p.93.
 5. AVT, 1903, art. 1; 1912, art. 1; Almanak, 1905, forward.

Netherlands, America and occasionally Britain.¹

The other regular Church publication was the annual Almanak which followed a set format. In addition to giving Church statistics and details about individual congregations it carried a number of topical and devotional articles. It also had an introductory editorial in which comments were often made on the general state of society and the progress made by the Church over the previous year. Through the Almanak one gets a good impression of how the Reformed saw themselves, and their reactions to events around them. It also shows the sort of religious and devotional topics which appealed to them and gives one the atmosphere of the Reformed Church's Calvinism in South Africa. More noticeable than in Het Kerkblad are the number of articles which originated among Calvinists outside South Africa.

These official Church publications were supplemented by magazines produced by the students at the Theological School and distributed fairly widely in local congregations.² Unlike the other publications these issued by the students dealt primarily with educational, topical and theoretical issues. Articles were contributed by Church leaders and by the students themselves, with occasional offerings from overseas.

Reformed thinking on a variety of topics is also to be found in a host of booklets and books produced by the Church. These deal with such things as predestination,³ the holiness movement,⁴ Methodism,⁵ social norms,⁶ political and other issues.⁷ The Church also published several historical and biographical works⁸ as well as regular

1. Het Kerkblad, 1/7/1903, 15/6/1904, 15/10/1904.

2. BC, 12/6/1908, art. 15.

3. Kruger, n.d., Die Predestinasie.

4. du Toit, 1905, De Streversvereniging.

5. du Toit, 1903, Het Methodism.

6. Eloff, 1919, Vraagt Naar De Oude Paden.

7. Hammersma, 1913, ed., Burgersdorp Gedenkboek

8. e.g., D. Postma, 1905, Geschiedenis der Gereformeerde Kerk; Cachet, 1909. Gedenkboek van het 50-jarig bestaan der Gereformeerde Kerk van Zuid Afrika; du Toit & Hammersma, 1909, Johannes Calvijn.

commemorative volumes to celebrate the anniversary of a particular congregation. These books contained sermons, historical and biographical material and occasional comments on current social issues.¹

By all these means the Reformed Church kept its members informed about contemporary events, theological issues and what it considered to be the Calvinist world-and-life view.² Church Council minute books and other records show that the official views of the Church as found in its publications were shared to a remarkable degree by rank and file members of congregations. As a result it seems reasonable to speak of a "Reformed outlook" which was shared by the members of the Church and to assume that there was general agreement on most issues throughout the period.³

Links with other Calvinists

As indicated in the discussion of Church publications the Reformed Church in South Africa was conscious of the existence of a Calvinist community outside South Africa. During the whole of this period close links were maintained with fellow Calvinists in the Netherlands and America.⁴ Following the devastation of the Second Anglo-Boer War Calvinists in these countries sent letters of encouragement and aid to their fellow believers in South Africa.⁵ Money was received to help the poor⁶ and promote Christian education.⁷ In 1919 this much needed aid was remembered when the Church appealed to its members to assist the Calvinist Free University of Amsterdam which was in need of funds, and congregations throughout South Africa collected money to send to the Netherlands.⁸

1. These were known as Gedenkboeke.

2. Weltanschauung - cf. Orr, The Christian View of God and the World, pp.1-16

3. The exception to this were congregations which joined the Reformed Church from S. J. du Toit's Reformed Church under the Cross, such as Clanwilliam.

4. General Synod, 1904, art. 17, 106, 133, 134, 213, etc.; 1920 Bylaag P; See note; p.

5. AVT, 1904, art. 51 & 34.

6. AVC, 1903, art. 31.

7. AVC, 1902, art. 36.

8. MC, 16/5/1919, art. 11; Steynsburg Church Council Minutes (SC), 5/7/1919, art. 19.

The similarity in outlook between the three Calvinist communities in South Africa, the Netherlands and America is reflected in their educational activities. In each country they established their own system of Christian schools and began work on the development of a Christian University.¹ The first "Christian University" to be established by Calvinists in modern times was the Free University of Amsterdam.² The Calvinist community in America followed with their own liberal arts college, Calvin College, which although one of the better liberal arts colleges in America has never become a university.³ In South Africa the Literary Department of the Theological School was slow to separate itself from the Theological School although the Reformed long cherished the idea of setting up their own university. Potchefstroom University College came into being in 1919 and in 1951 it gained full university status as Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education.⁴

The Reformed Church sent its most promising students to the Netherlands for further training at the Free University of Amsterdam⁵ and the Reformed Theological College in Kampen.⁶ It called a number of ministers into its ministry from the Netherlands⁷ and at one point attempted unsuccessfully to call ministers from America.⁸ One of its ministers, Dr. S. O. Los, who was originally called from the Netherlands, gaught for a while in the Theological School in Potchefstroom. He returned to the Netherlands in 1919.⁹ In addition to these contacts the leaders of the Reformed Church received Kuyper's newspapers,

1. Cf. Algra, 1966, pp.179-219.

2. Rullmann, 1930, De Vrije Universiteit.

3. Semi-Centennial Committee, 1926, Semi-Centennial Volume-Theological School and Calvin College.

4. van der Vyver, 1969, My Erfenis Is Vir My Mooi.

5. AVT, 1902, art. 53.

6. SC, 14/11/1919, art. 5.

7. AVT, 1905, art. 41.

8. AVC, 1905, art. 39.

9. van der Vyver, 1969, p.129.

various magazines and books from the Netherlands and America.¹

Ministers were sent on deputation work to the Netherlands² and America³ and Dutch Calvinists came on deputation to South Africa.⁴ Finally, members of the Reformed Church corresponded with Calvinists in both America and the Netherlands on topics of mutual interest.

Membership of the Reformed Church 1899-1919

The following table gives details about the growth of the Reformed Church in South Africa between the years 1899 and 1919. It is taken from the Church Almanak and lists the congregations as they are found in the Almanak. For convenience six sample years have been chosen to indicate the direction of growth and the overall growth or decline of each congregation is indicated by + or - signs after the name of the congregation.

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1. These were advertised in the Church's publications and are to be found in the Church archives.
 2. Bl.C., 14/10/11, art. 8.
 3. JC, 9/9/1914, art. 22.
 4. AVT, 1913, art. 10; AVC, 1911, art. 81; JC, 2/5/1902, art. 9.

<u>Congregation</u>	<u>1899</u>	<u>1904</u> ¹	<u>1905</u>	<u>1910</u>	<u>1915</u>	<u>1919</u>
<u>TRANSVAAL</u>						
Rustenburg -	1180	996	996	1456	721	797
Pretoria +-	992	1002	1263	744	776	837
Potchefstroom +	326	800	532	648	853	861
Waterberg +	278	350	369	478	530	525
Lijdenburg + -	275	329	360	172	216	184
Piet Retief +	142	132	164	164	215	-
Pietersburg +	177	170	176	255	270	265
Heidelberg + -	274	300	407	370	430	395
Middleburg, +	142	137	407	179	258	294
Bethal +	100	182	90	148	241	241
Volksrust -	-	-	-	-	93	86
Lichtenburg +	161	167	187	263	289	286
Johannesburg +	450	743	700	680	893	1209
Krugersdorp +	130	252	332	431	407	436
Vrijheid -	87	55	60	33	42	35
Paulpietersburg -	-	98	86	71	77	66
Wolmaransstad +	-	104	101	130	173	159
Zeerust +	-	87	117	453	151	212
Erasmus -	-	74	-	521	506	450
Standerton -	-	-	-	73	73	64
Germiston +	-	-	-	145	240	450
Roos Senekal -	-	-	-	115	174	182
Belfast -	-	-	-	80	93	95
Schweizer Reneke +	-	-	-	71	86	-
Krokodilriver +	-	-	-	-	251	291
Christiana +	-	74	79	-	41	63
Breyten -	-	-	-	-	110	80
Zwartruggens +	-	-	-	-	330	370
Koster -	-	-	-	-	723	704
Ermelo +	-	-	-	-	-	61
Matiabes +	-	-	-	-	-	99
<u>ORANGE FREE STATE</u>						
Reddersburg -	750	599	492	763	600	577
Bethulie +	331	436	500	475	450	480
Ventersburg +	179	182	160	262	340	192
Fauresmith +	168	96	122	168	200	200
Boshof +	111	90	105	134	110	116
Ladybrand +	126	150	203	223	212	223
Vredefort +	96	109	141	204	266	221
Philippolis +	66	53	75	147	149	122
Petrusburg -	303	239	232	325	261	276
Wepener -	69	57	64	37	20	19
Thaba Nchu -	71	65	55	50	25	37
Bloemfontein +	-	131	222	313	347	487

1. This is the first post-war year for which statistics are available.

<u>Congregation</u>	<u>1899</u>	<u>1904</u>	<u>1905</u>	<u>1910</u>	<u>1915</u>	<u>1919</u>
Lindley +	-	-	-	-	164	175
Frankfort +	-	-	-	-	118	139
Hoopstad -	-	-	-	-	39	36
Zastron -	-	-	-	-	-	50
Theunissen +	-	-	-	-	-	108

CAPE PROVINCE

Burgersdorp -	859	782	712	751	640	689
Middleburg -	559	637	600	571	571	452
Colesburg +	178	147	160	203	239	235
Philipstown +	352	359	359	406	432	430
Aliwal Noord +	128	172	157	241	254	260
Dordrecht +	78	59	61	115	162	185
Darkly Oost -	297	215	222	283	288	266
Steynsburg -	485	526	526	614	620	586
Venterstad + -	225	230	231	256	259	254
Postmaburg +	304	316	280	347	476	458
Sterkstroom -	197	89	56	75	85	72
Vrijburg - + -	92	34	40	66	114	95
Jamestown + -	-	124	125	206	176	181
Elliot -	-	79	79	83	99	74
Moltene +	-	135	138	141	167	165
Clanwilliam +	-	-	-	-	34	54
Stijdenburg +	-	-	-	-	50	62
Hofmeyer +	-	-	-	-	52	62
Delpportshoop +	-	-	-	-	50	84

In addition to these congregations the Reformed Church had congregations at Humpata in Angola and Eldoret in Kenya. The statistics indicate a gradual drift away from the old established areas towards newer areas. Generally this coincides with a population movement towards Johannesburg.¹ The migration of members of the Reformed Church towards the Johannesburg-Vaal Triangle area is greatest between 1899 and 1904 and 1915-1919. In view of the general conditions in South Africa at this time the movement is not as great as might have been expected. What is clear from the statistics is that old centres of population were slowly being deserted in the northern areas of the Cape and the Transvaal while those in the central Transvaal grew. However, changes are not uniform and show that substantial groups of Reformed Church members went to places where the Reformed Church

1. Cf. Wilson & Thompson, 1971, pp.172-176 & 202-205.

was well established, like Potchefstroom, instead of simply to Johannesburg. This is explained by the existence of poverty among Church members and the knowledge that the Reformed Community would take care of them.¹

1. Cf. Coetzee, 1953.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Practice of Faith, Social Conditions and some examples of Church Discipline

The Piety of the Reformed Community

The Calvinism of the Reformed Community found expression in the daily lives of its members in a thousand ways. In addition to their membership of the Reformed Church, membership of the Reformed community was recognisable by a whole social ethos.¹ Each family practised regular family devotions which involved the reading of the Bible and singing of a psalm after meals, particularly the evening meal.² The Bible was taken as the standard by which their whole lives should be conducted and there was a great fear of being influenced by un-Scriptural ideas.³ If a man held the right beliefs and lived an honest upright life then he was considered a good Christian.⁴

The evangelical emphasis upon personal devotion and a conversion experience was looked upon with scepticism and seen as being tainted with an anti-Calvinistic mysticism.⁵ In essence mystical theology, of which evangelical theology was regarded as one branch, was rejected because of its supposed Roman Catholic origins and assumed opposition to the teachings of the Reformed.⁶ True piety for the Reformed consisted in orthodox beliefs and high ethical standards which resulted in an exemplary life. For them religious experiences were not part of the normal Christian life. Sanctification, in Reformed theology,

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1. Murray, 1877, pp.374-378; Murray, 1954, ed., Young Mrs. Murray goes to Bloemfontein 1856-1860, pp.49-59.
 2. Information from conversations with older Church members.
 3. Cf. Postma, 1918; and information gained in conversation.
 4. He had, of course, to be a good Church member and while he was considered a "good Christian" Reformed theology did not say that he in fact was, but in practice this seems to have been assumed.
 5. Warfield, 1956, Biblical and Theological Studies, pp.445-462
 6. Het Kerkblad, 1/7/1903, ; this may also stem from the opposition of the Groeningen theologians to Calvinism in the Netherlands and their preference for mystical theology, Mackay, 1911, pp.56-57.

came about not through a sudden experience of spiritual power nor by hard work on the part of the believer, but by the work of God in the believer which in turn produced good works in him. Because of this the believer must trust in the promises of God that he would be sanctified and needed to understand correctly the Biblical teaching on the nature of sanctification. This emphasis on belief rather than experience underlines the rational element in Calvinist theology, observed by Weber,¹ and is echoed in Kuyper's insistence on the primacy of principle in social and political affairs.²

For this reason the Reformed theologian, J. D. du Toit, voiced his Church's opinion by attacking the Dutch Reformed Church's support for the Christelijk Strevers Vereeniging (Christian Holiness Movement) which aimed at encouraging personal devotions and a heightened Christian experience. Du Toit's attack centred on the question of whether members of the movement were also members of a Church or not. If they were members of a Church then he asked why they should feel the need to join such a society. And if they were not Church members then he maintained that they ought to join a Church and not a holiness movement. Societies like the Christian Holiness Movement duplicated some aspects of the Church and neglected others. As a result the movement attracted mainly young people with loose Church connections and diverted their energies from service to the community by catering for their own selfish emotional needs.³

Developing this attack du Toit argued that the Christian Holiness Movement, and all similar movements, were destructive of Church life because they ignored some fundamental Christian doctrines and held a false view of sanctification. At the heart of this attack was the

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1. Weber, 1971, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, p.104
 2. Kuyper, 1898, p.4.
 3. du Toit, 1905, De Streversvereniging bevoordeeld van Gereformeerde Standpunt; du Toit, 1906, De Christelijk Strevers Vereeniging - Antwoord.

question of the nature of the Church. Du Toit believed that the Church should be a united body which served the religious needs of its members through faithfully upholding the Christian religion in its entirety. As a result it did not, by definition, require the assistance of an additional movement to sanctify its members. Sanctification was the work of God in the believer within the Christian community of the Church. If a particular Church failed to proclaim the Biblical message and taught a false religion thus betraying its calling then the task of true believers was either to leave that Church and form a pure one or to reform it. They were not to form a separate society within the false Church.¹

Another fault which du Toit found with such movements was that they ignored the Bible's teaching about God's promises and the Covenant. As a result they aimed at leading people, especially the children of believers, to Christ through the means of a "conversion experience", instead of trusting God to honour His promises and call His people to Himself. Following the Methodists these evangelical groups placed their faith not in the power and promises of God but in their own ability to effect conversions. This theology was thoroughly Arminian and opposed to the very essence of Calvinism. Theology and history were ignored by holiness movements which placed their entire emphasis on present experiences at the expense of the lessons God had taught the Christian community throughout its history. Sound teachings were therefore laid aside in favour of techniques which produced psychological experiences and led people to join a movement rather than placing their trust in God and His Word.¹

This lack of orthodox theology led inevitably to a lax Christian life and an undermining of the authority of ministers and elders to

1. du Toit, 1905, and 1906.

enforce Church discipline. As a result the whole Church was severely weakened by this type of movement. A wrong view of the Christian life also led to a false idea about the role of the Christian in society. By emphasising holiness rather than practical living, the "spiritual" rather than the natural, the world was split into two realms. The effect of this was that believers divorced their daily routine from their spiritual life and placed an emphasis upon "winning souls" and a vague mystical "holiness" rather than applying their Christianity to every area of life.¹

The Reformed Attack Upon Methodism

Behind du Toit's opposition to holiness movements lay a deep hatred and profound fear of Methodism. In rejecting and attacking Methodism the Reformed were not simply opposing a rival theological system but were resisting a threat to their whole way of life.² Methodism was the religion of the English. As such it brought with it the ever present threat of Anglicisation.³ Where Methodism took root English culture soon followed. Methodism led to English attitudes about religion and life as well as the use of the English language in Church services and daily conversation. As a result the Dutch Reformed Church was undermining Afrikaner unity and threatening the very existence of the Afrikaner People by its enthusiasm for Methodist methods and English evangelical religion.⁴ At this point it seems clear that the Reformed had begun to identify Calvinism with Afrikaner nationality and that the one had become as important as the other to them even though they recognised that not all Afrikaners were Calvinists. The identification which they were making points therefore to an inconsistency in their thinking and an inability to separate Nationalism from religion.

1. du Toit, 1905 & 1906.

2. AVT, 1906, art. 54.

3. Almanak, 1904, pp. 24 & 25.

4. De Maandbode, 15/9/1897

Because of its "spiritual" emphasis Methodism, like the holiness movements to which it gave birth, was said to split the world into two realms^m - the "spiritual" and the "natural", the sacred and the profane. As a result Methodists thought that Christians ought to concentrate their energies on "spiritual things" like the conversion of sinners and the perfection of believers. Everything outside of these narrow limits was considered less than Christian and therefore to be avoided as much as possible. This meant that Methodists made a complete separation between every-day life and religious life. Politics, education and work were of this world and thus of secondary importance. For this reasons Methodists had no time for Christian politics or Christian education. Instead they were content to accept the "neutral" school as a necessary evil.¹

But for the Reformed the neutral school meant a school without religion, tradition or national consciousness. In such a school the distinctive identity of the Afrikaner People would be lost as they forgot their history, traditions and religion. Instead of continuing to exist as the proud and independent nation God had intended, the Afrikaner People would be reduced to a bastard race, neither black nor white, English nor Dutch. And all of this would result from following the pernicious teachings of Methodism.²

The destruction of the Afrikaner cultural identity was however only one aspect of the dangers ever present in Methodism. By confusing the doctrines of sanctification and justification, it was alleged, Methodism created moral confusion. This resulted from the tendency of the Methodists to see conversion as the sole end of the Christian

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1. Het Kerkblad, 1/7/1903, 15/6/1904; Almanak, 1904, p.24; 1905, pp.17-19; 1911, pp.18-20, 99-100; 1912, pp.17-26.
 2. Almanak, 1905.

life and thus to legitimate any method whatsoever which would bring about the salvation of the sinner, or at least a profession of faith. In this way Methodism prepared the way for Imperialism because in Imperialism Methodist preachers saw a quick way of spreading the Gospel. The injustices which might result from Imperialist policies were of no concern to a Methodist because of his willingness to justify them in terms of the increased opportunities which such policies created for evangelism. Thus under the influence of Methodist thinking the progress of the Kingdom of God on earth became identified with the expansion of the British Empire.¹

Worse still Methodist theology supported an unrealistic racial policy in South Africa. Instead of accepting a long period of gradual improvement during which the Christian religion would erase the evils of African society, missionaries under the influence of Methodism thought that all that was required to make a native equal with a European was his conversion. This view totally ignored the effects of tribal society and the inbred superstitions which resulted from generations of "natives" living in ignorance of the Gospel. It also overlooked the fact that many blacks, even those who professed to be true Christians, retained a deep and undying hatred of the white man. At heart their secret desire was to rise up and attack the whites to drive them out of South Africa. Therefore, contrary to its claims, Methodism, through its over optimistic assessment of the effect of the Gospel upon blacks was not alleviating the racial situation but simply avoiding the harsh realities facing whites in South Africa. In this,

1. This argument is hinted at in Reformed writings and is certainly implied by their view of Methodism but it finds its clearest expression in Kuyper's book published in 1900, The South African Crisis, pp.72-75.

as in its other failures, Methodism posed a threat to the very existence of the Afrikaner People.¹

Various Social Attitudes of the Reformed Community

Members of the Reformed community prided themselves on their conservatism and ability to retain the traditions of their fathers.² At various times they objected to circuses,³ boxing,⁴ the cinema,⁵ "clubs",⁶ dancing,⁷ young men and women bathing together in municipal dams,⁸ and the theatre.⁹ On all of these issues there was a certain amount of debate although such things as dancing were fairly generally rejected. The question of whether the theatre was evil in itself or on account of the use to which it was put was more open. Some Church members, like F. C. Eloff, were totally opposed to the theatre and regarded it as an invention of the devil.¹⁰ But others were prepared

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1. Kuyper, 1900 a., pp.20-27. A factor which may have influenced Reformed attitudes on this issue would be the close relationship which has existed between African political movements and Methodism. This is particularly true during this period when "Ethiopianism", often seen as a Methodist offshoot, was generally considered to be a "problem". See: Saunders 1970, "Tile and the Thembu Church," Journal of African History, XI, 4, 1970, pp.553-570; AVC, 1910, art. 49.
 2. Postma, 1918, pp.11-19, and 44-53.
 3. BC, 1/2/1917, art. 20.
 4. AVC, 1911, art. 46.
 5. BC, 2/12/1913, art. 14; Members varied in their attitude to the cinema. Some members were very strongly opposed to it while others had no real objection. J. Chr. Coetzee recalled that when he was a student in Potchefstroom around 1914 the students went to the local cinema but many older people disapproved. This information was confirmed in conversation with other informants.
 6. MC, 14/8/1914, art. 9.
 7. Although dancing was generally disapproved of and this is often seen as a characteristic of the Reformed Church, Mrs. J. C. van Rooy told me that her father Jan Lion Cachet had held favourable views on dancing if carried out properly and had in fact accommodated himself to the opinions of rank and file Church members on this issue. Eloff, 1919, pp.30-36.
 8. PC, 29/3/1918, art. 4.
 9. Eloff, n.d. Het Tonell; this was published in or prior to 1911 because a reply to it by H. Oost, Voor Het Toneel, appeared in May 1911.
 10. Eloff, n.d., Het Toneel.

to take a more charitable view¹ and the students at the Theological School's Literary Department in Potchefstroom were generally agreed that theatrical performances could be used to the glory of God.² Strangely enough while holding strict views on so many social issues which involve the use of leisure³ the Reformed Community never objected to smoking nor the imbibing of alcoholic beverages. Nothing which God had created was evil in itself. Therefore if He had given men these things for their enjoyment they ought to be used.⁴

Reformed Attitudes Towards Other Churches

The Reformed community maintained an official attitude of friendship towards all other Christian groups even though they might be bitterly opposed to them theologically.⁵ Whenever possible they extended practical help and co-operated on non-doctrinal issues.⁶ These areas of co-operation included the education of Afrikaner children following the war,⁷ social work,⁸ and the sharing of facilities for the celebration of Dingaan's Day⁹ and events like the anniversary of the Reformation.¹⁰ But in recognising the responsibility of Christians working together for the unity of the Church of Christ on earth they were not prepared to sacrifice what they considered to be

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1. Oost, 1911; AVT, 1911, Bylae 5.
 2. Information from Mrs. J. C. van Rooy.
 3. It is noticable that social problems were always identified with leisure time activities and rarely with questions of social justice, housing conditions, etc., Cf. The Shaftesbury Project Newsletter, March/April 1975 for a discussion of Christian ethical attitudes in this vein. The writings of the contemporary English Calvinist Bishop J. C. Ryle show a similar preoccupation Cf. Ryle, 1959, Practical Religion.
 4. Information from informants.
 5. AVC, 1910, art. 36.
 6. AVC, 1904, art. 46; MC, 10/11/1911.
 7. AVT, 1905, art. 26.
 8. AVT, 1904, art. 8.
 9. Bl.C., Dec. 1909, art. 16.
 10. MC, 28/9/1917, art. 10.

matters of principle.¹ This dedication to principle led the ministers of the Reformed Church to warn their congregations about the activities and false doctrines of other Churches² and to censure members who were foolish enough to associate with these Churches.³ Actions worthy of censure included attendance at Dutch Reformed communion services,⁴ having one's children baptised by a minister other than the Reformed Church minister,⁵ sending one's children to the Dutch Reformed Sunday School,⁶ and even having "Baptist" friends.⁷

This antagonism to the beliefs of other Christian groups, especially the Dutch Reformed Church, came to a head in 1912 when the Reverend Hermanus Bosman, moderator of the Dutch Reformed Church in the Transvaal, attacked the Reformed Church in his opening address to the Transvaal Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church. In this attack he accused the Reformed Church of betraying the principles of Calvinism and adopting beliefs and attitudes derived from Roman Catholicism. Instead of preaching the Gospel as Christ had commissioned it, the Reformed Church, under Kuyper's influence, had been led astray into an anti-scriptural preoccupation with political and other worldly activities.⁸

1. AVT, 1904, art. 46.

2. AVC, 1906, art. 54.

3. MC, 19/6/1910, art. 23.

4. MC, 19/6/1910, art. 7.

5. MC, 11/5/1905, art. 5; 5/1/1906, art. 11; 2/1/1914, art. 18.

6. MC, 19/6/1910, art. 23.

7. MC, 23/3/1911. The objection to "Baptist friends" was probably a way of objecting to English South African friends. Very few Afrikaners are Baptists. In Reformed writings there were a number of attacks on the Baptist theology but these were never developed. Baptists seem, however, to have been identified with Evangelicals and Methodists.

8. Het Kerkblad, 15/6/1912, pp.1-13.

The leaders of the Reformed Church replied to this attack by saying that Bosman did not understand Kuyper or Calvinism and that it was his theology which lacked Biblical justification, not theirs.¹ Despite the polemics the two Churches appeared to make little impression on each other at the time and the dispute continues into the present.²

Some Insights into Social Conditions

In addition to giving information about theological and other distinctively religious issues the Church Council and Synodal Minute Books kept by the Reformed Church throw light on general social conditions in South Africa. After the Second Anglo-Boer War the situation facing the Reformed Church, and the Afrikaner community as a whole, was a depressing one. From every side the Church received reports of poverty and destruction. Only in parts of the Cape did it seem that the Church had survived without great suffering.³ Nevertheless, in spite of the gloomy atmosphere around them and the psychological trauma which defeat had produced on the Afrikaner population, the leaders of the Reformed community were united in their belief that however bad things might seem God had not deserted them.⁴

When *Het Kerkblad* was republished after the war, with the aid of funds from the Netherlands, it took up the theme of its last pre-war editorial. This had been an article based on Psalm 97 verse 1: "The Lord Reigns". At the beginning of the war, the editor declared, they had placed their trust in God. Now that the war was over they must continue to affirm that trust. Defeat was bitter and had brought with it much suffering but this should not be an occasion for uncontrollable grief:

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1. *Het Kerkblad*, 15/6/1912, pp.13-21; *Die Jong Calvinist*, 12/6/1912.
 2. In fact it flared up at the Synod of the Reformed Church in 1972. Moodie, 1975, pp.52-72, argues that in time the Reformed viewpoint gained ground in the Dutch Reformed Church.
 3. *AVT*, 1903, art. 6, 29, 37, 39, 49; *AVO*, 1903, art. 26, 41, 53; *AVC*, 1903, art. 17, 19, 23, 24, 41.
 4. *AVT*, 1903, art. 1; *AVO*, 1903, art. 1; *AVC*, art. 1.

"We must ask ourselves do we really believe that God reigns? Is He truly almighty? Can He still save?"¹

If the answer to these questions was "Yes", as it must be for true Christians, then they could not afford to wallow in their misery but must face the future with hope, trusting in God to deliver them.¹

The editorial reflects the response to the war found in the local congregations of the Reformed Church. Typical of this response was that of the Church Council in Middleburg, Cape, at its first post-war meeting. Psalms 27 and 103.1 were read, thanks were offered to God for delivering them from destruction during the dark days of war, and prayers were said asking Him to guide and protect them in the future.² But not all Afrikaners reacted to defeat in this way and many were tempted to despair.³ In these circumstances the leaders of the Reformed Church proclaimed that Christians ought to use the opportunity to draw their fellow countrymen back to God. To do this they gave an interpretation of events which explained why God had allowed the defeat of the Boer armies. God had refined the Afrikaner People by fire and because of this experience they would be better able to serve Him in the future. Behind this interpretation lay an identification between Afrikaner history and the history of Israel. Like the Israelites of old Afrikaners had suffered for their faith and through this experience would learn how better to glorify God in the world. Thus by reflecting on their history they were better able to understand the ways of God with men and to see their role in His plan for mankind.⁴

Affirmations of faith such as these were made against a background of great destruction and loss. From all areas reports of the

1. Het Kerkblad, 1/4/1903.

2. MC, July 1902, art. 1.

3. AVC, 1902, art. 17; AVT, 1904, art.1.

4. AVT, 1903, art. 1; 1904, art. 1; AVC, 1902, art. 1; MC, July 1902, art.1; Almanak, 1904, p.21.

devastation and disruptions which accompanied the war came in to Church Council and Synodal meetings. The minister of the Burgersdorp congregation, and a number of others, had been imprisoned during the war and some were still imprisoned or at least restricted in their movements.¹ Many Church buildings had been destroyed.² Even those places where property was not destroyed had not come through the war unscathed. Very often both Church and manse had been commandeered by the military authorities along with any horses and means of transport that were available. Such conditions made the resumption of the work of the Reformed Church difficult, yet in a very short time the Church was assuming a major role in Afrikaner society.³

The loss incurred by the Reformed Church as an organisation in terms of Church buildings, etc., was small compared with the suffering caused by the war to the Reformed community as a whole. Many members were left homeless, others had lost all their cattle, and many were left without any means of livelihood.⁴ Everywhere there were broken families to be cared for, widows and orphans to be housed and fed.⁵ In Bloemfontein homeless families camped on Church land⁶ and in many other places the poor needed sustained help over a period of time.⁷ Local congregations cared for orphans as best they could.⁸ An orphanage was founded in Bethulie in 1903⁹ and another in Rustenburg in 1905.¹⁰

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1. AVC, 1902, art. 19, 24; MC, Aug. 1902, art. 16.
 2. AVT, 1903, art. 1; AVC, 1902, art. 24, 31, 41; MC, Aug. 1902, art. 3.
 3. AVO, 1903, 1903, art. 53; MC, 14/8/1903, art. 15; SC, 16/1/1903, art. 8.
 4. Bl.C, 18/9/1903, art. 8; SC, 24/11/1900, art. 13; 4/9/1903, art. 9.
 5. SC, 4/9/1903, art. 9; AVO, 1903, art. 58, 78, 53; AVC, 1902, art. 39, 23; AVC, 1903, art. 31; AVT, 1903, art. 29.
 6. Bl.C, 18/9/1903, art. 8.
 7. SC, 4/9/1903, art. 9; MC, Oct. 1902, art. 10; MC, 22/6/1906, art. 42; BC, 6/10/1905, art. 16; AVO, 1905, art. 22; 1906, art. 42.
 8. JC, 31/10/1902, art. 7.
 9. Het Kerkblad, 15/8/1903.
 10. AVO, 1903, art. 8 & 41; RC, 30/6/1905.

To perform the tasks before it the Reformed Church systematically gathered information to discover the extent of poverty among its members and the needs of widows and orphans.¹ It also began to organise collections in local congregations,² and appealed for help to fellow Calvinists in the Netherlands and America.³ No exact figures survive of the overall effects of the war and the extent of the poverty it created. But the Church did publish figures showing the number of casualties it suffered during the war. In 1899 the total membership of the Church had been 12,950. During the war 180 men died on the battlefield and 431 women died in the concentration camps. Thus 611 adults died as a result of hostilities, or, to put it more dramatically, the Church lost approximately one out of every twenty-one adult members. In addition, 1,428 children of Church members died in the camps, leaving a lasting impression of oppression upon the minds of the survivors.⁴

Not all Afrikaners shared with the leaders of the Reformed Faith their trust in God. Many like the poet Louis Leipoldt (1880-1947),⁵ were overwhelmed by the disaster which had struck them. Many lost faith and stopped attending Church.⁶ From Church Council minutes a picture of moral decline and despair emerges against which the Church worked with all its might. The commandos had taken many husbands away from their wives for long periods of time and inevitably accusations of unfaithfulness were made. These charges of adultery were often

1. AVT, 1903, art. 29

2. MC, 4/6/1903, art. 23.

3. AVT, 1904, art. 51. The Internationalism of the Reformed Church is to an extent inconsistent with its Nationalism. But it is worth remembering that their allies outside South Africa shared a common Dutch tradition and therefore were perhaps part of a wider Dutch Nationalism.

4. de Klerk, 1906, De Gesneuvelden en Gestorvenen van de Gereformeerde Kerken Zuid-Africa Gedurende den Oorlog 1899-1902. The effect of the camps upon Afrikaner thinking is seen very clearly in the poetry of Totius. See p.

5. Grove & Harvey, ed., Afrikaans Poems with English Translations, pp.33-63, 1962. Dekker, 1958, Afrikaanse Literatuur-Geskiedenis, pp.84-97.

6. AVT, 1909, art. 11; 1908, art. 32.

supported by the appearance of unexplained children.¹

What the war had begun the following years did not relieve. Poverty continued to increase and despite great efforts the morale of many people remained low. So bad was this situation that in 1908 the Provincial Synod of the Orange River Colony was warned that unless the moral decline of the people was arrested many Afrikaners would sink below the level of the "natives".² The danger of "going native" was no imaginary bogey but an ever present reality in post-war years. Existing evidence shows a remarkable degree of inter-racial contact brought about through depressed social conditions.³

Not only were some Afrikaners tempted to associate with non-whites but an increasing number were drawn towards English society. The danger of Anglicisation was a great threat to Afrikaners throughout this period.⁴ Church Councils did all that they could to discourage contact with the English. Baptisms and marriages in the "English Church" were subject to censure⁵ and everything possible was done to maintain a consciousness of the distinctive Afrikaner identity of Church members.⁶ To prevent defections from Afrikaner society and a gradual erosion of the self-identity of the Afrikaner People the Reformed Church stressed the need for "Christian-National" schools. In these schools the history and traditions of Afrikaners would be taught and their religion preserved.⁷ Therefore parents who sent their children to State or other non-Reformed schools when a local Christian-National school existed were censured.⁸

1. MC, 17/10/1902, art. 5; BC, 7/2/1903.

2. AVO, 1908, art. 70.

3. MC, 29/9/1905, art. 18; RC, 23/12/1910, art. 7; RC, 16/4/1915, art. 6. See also discussion on censure p.

4. Het Kerkblad, 15/6/1904; 1/8/1909; Almanak, 1911, pp.99-100.

5. Bl.C., 5/4/1907, art. 6; MC, 5/1/1906, art. 11; BC, June, 1905, art. 3.

6. MC, 1/8/1902, art. 6; AVO, 1903, art. 57.

7. See p.144-153; AVT, 1903, art. 28.

8. PC, 23/1/1904, art. 18; 20/12/1912, art. 4; RC, 27/1/1905.

The Church also produced a constant stream of propaganda for Christian education and attempted to convince Afrikaners of the truth of its theological views generally.¹ Complete recovery from the effects of the war was possible, the Reformed believed, only through faith in God; and to this end the Church strove to recall the Afrikaner People to the faith of their fathers.² To fulfil this commission young men were encouraged to enter the ministry of the Church and every effort was made to assist them in training. But prior to 1910 few candidates came forward and a generally materialist spirit was felt to grip the people.³

Gradually, however, with the economic recovery that began around 1908 social conditions improved and the effects of the Church's unremitting stream of propaganda began to be felt. However, the social disruption caused by the Rebellion in 1914 and the heavy fines imposed upon the protesters caused further hardship, but by 1919 the situation had again improved and a new spirit of confidence was evident among members of the Reformed community.⁴

The Process of Censure

The Reformed Church prided itself on its theological orthodoxy and the application of strict Church discipline to its members. To understand what this meant to a local congregation and to gain additional insight into social conditions the following examples are given. They are derived from a study of the censure reports recorded in the Church Council minutes of seven representative congregations.⁵ Although the general conclusions are clear the exact figures given must be treated with caution. This is because names were often omitted in discussion of censure cases. It is not always clear, therefore, whether a particular

1. See p. 144-153.

2. AVT, 1903, art. 55; 1904, art. 1.

3. AVT, 1909, art. 11; 1908, art. 32; AVC, 1911, art. 32.

4. Almanak, 1919, pp.28-30; 1920, pp.60-67.

5. These were Bloemfontein, Burgersdorp, Johannesburg, Middleburg, Potchefstroom, Rustenburg, and Steynsburg.

report refers to an old or a new case of censure. To conclude this section a comparison is made between censure reports from the Johannesburg and Burgersdorp congregations in the years 1902, 1905, 1910, 1915 and 1919. In this way the contrast between city life and that of a more traditional Afrikaner community is brought out.

The fact that most of the work of censure was carried out by the elders throws interesting light on the power of ministers. Contrary to popular belief a minister of the Reformed Church was not a protestant pope. In practice his powers were severely limited by the Church Council.¹ The following illustration will make this clear.

In 1908, a Church member of the Burgersdorp congregation was accused of turning a native girl into a prostitute and running a brothel. The man was reprimanded and summoned before the Church Council. At a number of hearings he was alternately abusive and evasive. When confronted with the evidence against him he claimed that although he must have done the deed he had no remembrance of it and therefore believed he had been in a "sin-sleep" as a result of the work of the devil. He appears to have repented and then continued in his former way of life.²

At one stage in these proceedings the minister visited the man who became extremely angry with him and resigned from the Church. The Church Council then appointed a commission of elders to investigate this incident to see if perhaps the man's anger was justified. Had the man truly repented? And if so was the minister trying to humiliate him by making unrealistic demands of him?³ In the event the elders vindicated the minister and the man remained under censure until they were satisfied that he had truly repented.⁴

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1. From the correspondence in local newspapers Reformed ministers were clearly thought to have more power than in fact they had: cf. The Friend, correspondence 7/11/1916 - 27/11/1916; Potchefstroom Herald, 2/10/1914, 6/7/1915.
 2. BC, 14/10/1908.
 3. BC, 8/4/1910, art. 4.
 4. BC, 8/4/1910.

It is clear from this incident that a very delicate democratic process went on within the Reformed Church, based upon the power of the elders. Not only did they investigate the minister's action in this instance but on other occasions elders questioned the actions of ministers who were thought to have exceeded their rightful authority.¹ Another lesson to be learnt from the Burgersdorp case is the concern of the elders to effect a real change in the man's life. They were not interested in simply condemning him but sought to reform his actions. Because of this they were willing to attempt to understand his problems and to help him overcome them.²

The practicality of Church Councils when dealing with offenders is also seen in a report recorded in the minutes of the Middleburg congregation. Their problem was what action to take in the case of a man who had married his late uncle's wife at a civil ceremony. On the basis of the Biblical evidence in Leviticus 18 and 20 they believed that the marriage was unlawful. After a long discussion it was decided that to ask the couple to get a divorce would simply compound their guilt and would alienate them from the Church. On this basis it was decided not to censure them but to ask them to repent their deed. In this way the Church avoided giving its approval to the union but showed its concern for the people involved.³

Cases involving inter-racial unions were dealt with more harshly. In 1906 a woman in Middleburg was censured for living with an Indian. A similar case occurred in Steynsburg in 1913, and in 1918 the case of a woman who had married a Coloured was discussed at the General Synod. In each case the woman concerned appears to have been placed under censure and,

1. e.g. PC, 12/8/1916, art. 5; BC, 7/7/1911, art. 10; BC, 7/5/1915, art. 3.
 2. BC, 8/4/1910.
 3. MC, 5/10/1908, art. 8.

because they refused to leave their lovers they were excommunicated.¹

The action of Church Councils in taking this approach was based upon the decisions of the General Synod in 1891, 1907 and 1918. In 1891 the question had been raised whether a Church member could marry an African. The question at the 1907 Synod had concerned marriage to an Indian, and that in 1918 dealt with marriage to a Coloured. In each case such unions were deemed "unseemly" and thought to be socially disruptive.² But, surprisingly, they were not condemned as being sinful in themselves.³

By rejecting mixed marriages it would seem that the Reformed Church was attempting to uphold what it believed were the basic standards of the Afrikaner community. The question did not simply concern marriage but rather the complex problem of levels of civilisation and moral standards. This is brought out very clearly in other censure reports which dealt with what was described as a "belief in magic".

During the years 1905-1915 there were a spate of cases dealing with people who were accused of being involved in the practice of magic.⁴ Inevitably these cases also involved a non-white and the great fear seems to have been that they would lead on to the acceptance of an alien way of life. This fear was to some extent justified. The woman reprimanded for living with an Indian in Middleburg in 1906 had originally associated with him because of his "magical" powers⁵ and a man in Bloemfontein who went to a traditional African healer in 1910 questioned the Church Council's interpretation of the Bible and the meaning of the Creeds.⁶

1. MC, 15/10/1906, art. 8; AVC, 1907, art. 70; RC, 16/4/1915, art. 6; SC, 11/7/13, art. 20.
2. General Synod, 1891, art. 110; 1907, art. 144; 1918, art. 133; cf. 1920, Bylaag J.
3. van d. Vyver, ed., Die Gereformeerde Kerk in Suid-Africa 1859-1959, 1959, pp.270-271.
4. So bad was this problem that it was discussed at the Orange Free State Provincial Synods in 1910 and 1911.
5. MC, 29/9/1905, art. 16, 18; 5/10/1906, art. 8.
6. BIC, 7/1/1910, art. 11 & 20; 8/4/1910, art. 4; 7/10/1910, art. 5.

What was meant by a "belief in magic" seems to have been a willingness to go to traditional African and Indian healers and to accept beliefs associated with them.¹ The man who defied the Church Council in Bloemfontein admitted that he believed certain people had "special powers"; and others were clearly influenced by this way of thinking.² In this way immorality - as of the woman who lived with an Indian - and irrationality - as with belief in the powers of an African healer - were associated with inter-racial contacts. They therefore presented a threat to the very basis of Afrikaner society and identity. European civilization with its rational beliefs and morality was seen to be in danger from irrational immoral ways of life.³

Immediately following the Second Anglo-Boer War the great threat to the survival of Afrikanerdom was, however, from the British and not from non-whites. This is reflected in the stern attitude showed by Church Councils to "joiners", presumably National Scouts,⁴ and others with a tendency to associate with the British.⁵ In Rustenburg twenty-one "joiners" had to be censured³ while in Middleburg the war occasioned a dispute over a man who lied about his war record.⁶

Another post-war problem was immorality. In Johannesburg there were three cases of adultery in 1902, four illegitimate births, one case of separation of a man from his wife, two couples living together unmarried, five disputes in the congregation, a child whose parents had it baptised in the Roman Catholic Church, and a man who was disciplined

1. RC, 23/12/1910, art. 15.

2. BLC, 8/4/1910, art. 8.

3. Cf. Marwick, ed., 1970, Witchcraft and Sorcery, p. 45-64.

4. The National Scouts were Afrikaners who fought for the British in the second Anglo-Boer War.

5. RC, January 1903, art. 22, October 1903, art. 3.

6. MC, 3/1/1903, art. 3.

for non-attendance at Church. In Burgersdorp during the same year there was one illegitimate birth, a case of drunkenness, one case of separation and a child whose parents had not bothered to get it confirmed.¹

During 1905 the Johannesburg congregation reported three cases of adultery, one child who was born shortly after its parents' marriage, three illegitimate children, two arguments in the congregation, one case of heresy (although what it involved was not stated), one man who lacked respect for the minister, another who lived an "un-Christian life", and three unspecified cases. At the same time in Burgersdorp there were four cases of adultery, five cases of bankruptcy, and one instance of debt. Another interesting censure case in the same year was that of the man in Middleburg who was charged with having slept in the same room as two young women.

In 1910 in Johannesburg there were four cases of adultery, two illegitimate children, one case of unchastity, two couples (one of which had a child) who were living together unmarried, one marriage row, two unbaptised children and two more whose parents had not had them catechised, four cases of drunkenness, two of running an illegal drinkshop, a man who lived an un-Christian life, one serious quarrel, six religious disputes and one case of witchcraft. But in Burgersdorp there were only three arguments in the congregation, one drunkard and two cases of people who went dancing.

There were twelve cases of adultery in Johannesburg in 1915, two women who had left their husbands, one divorce, three unbaptised children and one unconfirmed child, one child who was baptised in another Church, and one person who received communion in another Church. Three cases of drunkenness and one of running an illegal drinkshop were also discussed, along with a person who was in gaol. There were two cases of enmity

1. These figures are drawn from the Church Council Minutes of the Johannesburg and Burgersdorp congregations. For this purpose it was not thought necessary to give exact references.

between members of the congregation, one person who had to appear in Court, another who had not paid his Church dues and a few who were reprimanded for non-attendance at Church. In Burgersdorp one child was born soon after its parents' marriage, two were illegitimate, and two cases of adultery were reported. One person was reprimanded for working on a Sunday, one for attending another Church and another for being separated from his wife. Three cases of immorality, one of drunkenness, another of letting his Church membership lapse, and one for his role in the rebellion,¹ were all recorded.

The situation had improved in 1919 when there were only two cases of adultery in Johannesburg, one case of separation, four of drunkenness, one un-Christian life, one argument, three cases of Sabbath breaking and four other unspecified cases. In Burgersdorp one couple were living together and there were three other cases of immorality. Three people were accused of working on Sundays, two of going dancing and two of attending another Church.

From these figures it is clear why Afrikaners looked upon Johannesburg as a city of sin. Whether it was the social conditions in Johannesburg which created problems, as was generally believed,² or whether people with problems fled to Johannesburg is not clear. What stands out is that throughout the period 1902-1919 there were on average four times as many cases of censure in the Johannesburg congregation as in any other congregation of an equivalent size.

Another point indicated by the evidence and supported by evidence from other congregations is that over the years the Reformed Church was slowly winning its battle to impose its own high moral standards on those

1. Exactly what was involved here is not stated.

2. Fac et Spera, 15/5/1910.

members of the Afrikaner community associated with it.¹ From this it may be assumed that the power of the Church to discipline its members acted as a strong social deterrent against breaking its moral standards.² All of this ties in with the general optimism that Reformed leaders felt in 1919 and is a remarkable testimony to the effectiveness of the Church within the Afrikaner community.³

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1. An objection to this claim could be made on the basis of the high number of adultery cases in Johannesburg in 1915. But when other congregations are compared and this is seen in perspective it appears that 1915 was an exceptional year - possibly reflecting the social unrest following the Rebellion and outbreak of war.
 2. In addition to evidence from censure reports various informants testified to the power of censure within the Reformed community during this time. Whatever its basis, social ostracism or spiritual, it would seem that even hardened sinners would often repent after initially defying the Church.
 3. See p. 116.

PART THREEChristian-National Education: The School Struggle

This section examines the origins of the Christian-National Education Movement following the Second Anglo-Boer War and the reasons for its collapse in 1907. It goes on to show that the post-war Christian-National Education Movement was in part a political manoeuvre opposed to British policies. But it also had an element in it which was committed to the ideal of Christian Education on the Dutch model. The role of the Reformed Church in providing the impetus for the post-war movement and in continuing to fight for Christian Education after the granting of Responsible Government in the Transvaal is then discussed.

CHAPTER EIGHTImperial Education and the Afrikaner ReactionEducation for British Citizenship

To carry out his plans for the Anglicization of Afrikaner children Lord Milner in November 1900 appointed E. B. Sargent as the acting Director of Education for the territories of the former Boer republics, the Transvaal and Orange Free State. Sargent began by organising schools in the concentration camps set up by the military authorities. After the signing of the Peace of Vereëiging, in May 1902, he began to establish schools in towns and rural areas to cater for the needs of people returning to their homes. To carry out this programme he imported over 600 young teachers from Britain and the Empire, who were imbued with the ideals of British Imperialism.¹

In 1901 Sargent was appointed Director of Education for the new colonies and W. A. Russell, in the Orange River Colony, and Fabian Ware, in the Transvaal, were appointed to assist him as Assistant Directors of Education. As a result of disagreements with his subordinates, especially Ware, Sargent resigned his post in May 1903. He was then given the new position of Educational Advisor to the Governor, a post he held until it was abolished early in 1905.²

While in office as Director of Education Sargent devoted his efforts to the reconstruction of the educational systems of the former republics and the furtherance of the Imperial cause. Unfortunately his Imperial zeal combined with quarrels with his staff undid much of the valuable educational work he carried out. Sargent made no secret of his desire to Anglicize Afrikaner children, indeed he believed that he was thereby bestowing upon them the greatest possible privilege, and his statements

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1. Malherbe, 1925, Education in South Africa (1652-1922), pp.298-302; Bot, 1936, A Century of Education in the Transvaal, 1836-1936, pp.61-66.
 2. Malherbe, 1925, pp.300, 305; Denoon, 1973, pp.200-201.

on the matter were widely reported in the English Press. They also appeared in his own reports published by the Transvaal Education Department.¹ It is no wonder that Afrikaner leaders reacted strongly to what they saw as British policy and used official British statements about that policy to support their own political campaign for an organised boycott of State schools.^{2 4}

A few examples of Sargent's indiscretions will show why his plans met with a hostile reaction from Afrikaners. Speaking about the teachers he had recruited Sargent described them as "the forerunners of peace"³ who were to "teach the children of the burgers our language and ideals."⁴ History was to be used to make them see and respect "the greatness of the English Imperial idea"^{5 7} which would free them from local prejudice and petty fears.^{6 8}

Teachers were encouraged to adapt themselves to the South African way of life so that they could win the hearts of their pupils. Above all they were to teach the "value of unity" and educate their children into this belief. The children were to be taught how they were governed and why this was the best form of government for their circumstances.^{7 1} In this way the school was to be a political tool used to cement the bonds of Empire. In a letter to the staffs of Orange River Colony schools in 1904 Sargent clarified his, and Milner's, education policies by saying

"you ought to have a political aim in all your school work, and that aim should be to make political parties unnecessary. You ought to have a religious aim, and that should be to diminish religious dissensions".^{8 10}

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1. e.g. The Star, 26/5/1903 (which supported Sargent); The Transvaal Leader, 17/1/1907 (which reported and criticised Imperial aims in education); Transvaal Education Department Director's Report (TED), 1900-1904, pub. 1905.
 2. See p. 144.
 3. TED, 1905, p.13.
 4. TED, 1905, p.87.
 5. TED, 1905, p.88.
 6. TED, 1905, pp.51, & 98-100.
 7. TED, 1905, pp.97-99.
 8. TED, 1905, pp.205-206.

Incredible as such blatant propaganda may seem, propaganda which in effect said, "teach Afrikaners to leave politics to their British masters," Sargent seems to have seen it as essential for the success of his cause. Not only was he prepared to manipulate education for political ends, he was also willing to use religion in the service of Imperial policies

"do not think that the province of the school teacher is one and the province of the minister of religion is another. It is in the co-operation for the benefit of the children of the State that the true union of the many Churches with the one State must begin",¹

Perhaps even more important in creating Afrikaner opposition to British rule than these statements, were the attempts made by Sargent and his successors to centralise provincial education and introduce a uniform system throughout the colonies. The old Dutch principle of parental choice and local control was abandoned and Provincial administration introduced. Eventually Sargent's measures were modified but nothing like the extent of local control which had existed before the war was reintroduced. Even worse and much more obvious to Afrikaner teachers and parents was the fact that in modernising the education system, not a Dutch name remained on the list of inspectors and officials who managed the schools. An English bureaucracy was installed which, when seen alongside definite statements of intent by leading British officials, completed the impression that the British were bent on removing all traces of their Dutch heritage from the Afrikaner People and turning them into second-class Englishmen.²

The Reformed Community felt the horror of these British policies far more than most Afrikaners. Not only were the British attempting to

1. TED, 1905, p.206.

2. TED, 1905, pp.1 f. and 29; Bot, 1936, pp.28-68, & 73-87; Melherbe, 1925, pp.300-334; Denoon, 1973, pp.77-79.

de-nationalise the Afrikaner People but they were prepared to use religion for this end. The threat of Anglicization was therefore a threat to Calvinism. Further, the use of religion by the British in the service of the State was directly against the principle of sphere-sovereignty as expounded by Kuyper. Consequently the Reformed Church and its members took the lead in opposing State education and preserving a distinctive Afrikaner identity.

The Christian-National Education Commission

To resist British Anglicisation policies in the Transvaal the Reformed Community joined with fellow Afrikaners, particularly the bittereinder¹ generals, in the creation of the Christian-National Education Movement. Most of the organisation for this movement was provided by the Generals while the theoretical justification, as opposed to pragmatic justifications in terms of anti-British propaganda, came from Reformed leaders.²

The actual Christian-National Education Movement grew up in the following way. Prior to the Second Anglo-Boer War a number of teachers had been recruited by the Transvaal Republic from the Netherlands. When the war broke out some returned home while others continued teaching in South Africa. At the height of the war the Transvaal Government had to cut the salaries of its officials due to its growing debts. This action meant that many teachers found themselves in severe financial difficulties. A group of them from the Netherlands and some of their Afrikaner friends met in Pretoria in June 1901 and formed the Vriendekring, (Circle of friends) committee to raise funds to help needy teachers, and appealed to friends in the Netherlands for help.³ Their contact

1. The Afrikaners who continued the war after September 1900.

2. Denoon, 1973, pp.87-92; Leo Marquard in his book The Peoples and Policies of South Africa, 1969, p.196, points out that in the 1940s the Reformed Church again played an important role in reviving an interest in Christian-National Education.

3. Bot, 1936, pp.38, 50, 71. Basson, 1956, Die Britse Invloed in die Transvaalse Onderwys, 1836-1907, p.196 f.

in the Netherlands was H. J. Emous (1848-1933), the headmaster of a high school in The Hague who had had a lifelong interest in the Transvaal. Emous did all in his power to raise money for the Boers and in addition to helping education, was head of a fund to aid the victims of the British concentration camps.¹

At Emous' suggestion the Committee of the Circle of Friends decided to extend its range of activities and to increase its membership by asking recognised Afrikaner leaders to join it. At the same time they made plans for the formation of the Christian-National Education Movement and the Committee took the new name of De Commissie voor Christelijk-Nationaal Onderwijs (the Christian-National Education Commission) on October 22nd, 1902. Emous had promised funds from the Netherlands for the purpose of setting up Christian-National schools and on the strength of his promises they decided to go ahead with the creation of their own alternative school system.² There was no great difficulty in finding staff for such schools because Sargent's rigorous methods in selecting staff for the State schools had left unemployed a number of South African and Dutch teachers whose loyalty to the new regime was doubtful. It was therefore a simple matter to recruit these people for Christian schools and in fact many simply continued teaching the children they had taught before the war so that in effect the Christian schools were not so much new schools as a continuation of the pre-war system.³

In October 1902 the Christian-National Education Commission met again to place their movement on a firmer footing and draw up a constitution. Those present at this meeting included the Reverend P. Postma, of the Reformed Church,⁴ who became the secretary to the Commission,

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1. Wypkema Collection, Emous Section, unsorted, obituary 1/12/1933 from unidentifiable newspaper.
 2. Commissie voor Christelijk-Nationaal Onderwijs Notulen (CNOC), 22/10/1902.
 3. Bot, 1936, pp.69-73.
 4. Denoon, 1973, p.90, & index, speaks of Dirk Postma but he seems to be wrong here.

H. S. Bosman, of the Dutch Reformed Church, who was its chairman, H. Visscher, a former schools inspector in the Transvaal Republic, who was to become the permanent secretary and general administrator of the Christian-National School Movement, and General Smuts.¹

At this meeting it was decided to adopt a constitution which took as its first article the basic principle of the Dutch Christian-Education Movement that it was the responsibility of parents to care for their children's education. The second article of the constitution stressed the necessity of educating children in a "Protestant-Christian Spirit". The remaining articles dealt with practical issues involving the establishment of schools, payment, school hours, holidays, staffing and the use of English and Dutch in teaching. The Commission placed great emphasis upon the teaching of English and went as far as to rule that should parents object to instruction in English then the school's funds would be withdrawn. The aim of the Commission on this subject was to ensure that English and Dutch were given an equal footing in their schools, thus undermining the criticism that they were narrowly Afrikaner in intention. In this way the Christian-National Schools could claim with some justification to be the true upholders of the Peace of Vereeniging while the Government schools had departed from the spirit of the Peace. Their attitude in this matter contrasts very favourably with Sargent's doctrinaire imperialism.²

From its inception the Christian-National Education Commission attempted to foster a high academic standard in its schools. Only fully certificated teachers were allowed to be headteachers and all other members of staff were encouraged to improve their academic standing through a series of examinations organised by the Commission. The Commission was prepared to support schools with at least fifteen pupils over the

1. CNOC, 30/10/1902.

2. CNOC, 30/10/1902.

age of six and asked the Government to certify its teaching standards. But this request was rejected, along with one for a State subsidy. The Commission made it clear that its aim was not the separation of the white races but simply a rejection of Government policies based upon their religious, national, and educational principles. Their sincerity in making this claim is seen in the fact that they were prepared to give financial assistance to the English medium school in Pretoria which also sought independence from the State education system.¹

When negotiating with the Government, members of the Christian-National Education Commission were prepared to moderate their demands and make compromises. They asked the Government to remain above party political disputes and to give parents a real role in the education of their children through the establishment of local school committees with effective powers. They welcomed Government-approved teaching standards, wanted Government inspection of their schools, and argued that all approved teachers ought to be proficient in both the official languages.² The Director of Education in the Transvaal, Fabian Ware, who succeeded Sargent in July 1903, recognised the reasonableness of the Commission's position and was prepared to come to terms with it. This greatly encouraged the Commission's members and they felt certain a compromise acceptable to both parties could be reached. But Lord Milner viewed any mediation between the Government and its opponents as a betrayal of trust and denial of all he had fought for. Therefore he vetoed Ware's scheme and the two sides remained apart until 1907.³

In 1903 the Commission estimated that it needed £25,000 to keep its schools going.⁴ During 1903 it attempted to raise one third of its requirements through charging schools fees, another third by appeals to supporters of Christian-National Education in South Africa and the

1. *ibid*, 22/10/1902; 30/10/1902; & 27/11/1902.

2. *CNOC*, 25/12/1903.

3. *Dènoen*, 1973, p.200 f.

4. *CNOC*, 19/11/1903

remaining third from supporters in the Netherlands.¹ An attempt was also made to raise money for the schools in the United States of America but this never proved very successful.² However, in spite of all their efforts the Commission found that it was dependent upon Dutch backers for £1,000 per month to keep its schools going.³ Failure to reach an agreement with the Government and thus obtain a financial subsidy prevented the Christian-National schools from loosening their dependence upon Dutch sources and the hold which the Dutch had over them.⁴

Originally the Christian-National School Commission gave a grant of £25 to any group which wished to found a new school on Christian-National lines. Once founded they continued to support the school with regular subsidies to supplement the fees paid by the pupils. These subsidies were issued according to a fixed scale that took into account the size of the school in question. The lowest subsidy was £15 per month for schools with forty children and under. It rose to £35 per month for schools with between one hundred and fifty and two hundred pupils.⁵ The whole programme of the Commission in aiding schools was organised by H. Visscher who was then given the post of permanent secretary for the Commission in December 1902 at a salary of £20 per month.⁶ Teachers in Christian-National schools received a monthly salary of £8 if single and £12 10s 0d when married.⁷ At first this compared very favourably with the salaries of teachers in State schools who were receiving between £6 5s 0d and £9 5s 0d per month in 1903.⁸ But as time passed the salaries of teachers employed by the State rose while those of teachers in the Christian-National schools did not.⁹

1. *ibid*, 12/11/1903.

2. *ibid*, 11/9/1903, art. 5.

3. *ibid*, 12/5/1903, art. 3.

4. *CNOC*, 8/10/1903; 8/11/1903.

5. *ibid*, 11/4/1903.

6. *ibid*, 22/13/1902.

7. Hagen, ed., Gedenkboek Uitgegeven door de Vereniging van Onderwijzers en Onderwijzeressen in Zuid-Afrika, p.148.

8. *TED*, 1905, p.16.

9. *Bot*, 1936, p.153.

Drawing upon a number of sources Dr. J. J. Pienaar gives the following estimate of the number of Christian-National schools in the Transvaal for the years 1902 to 1908:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number of schools</u>	<u>Number of pupils</u>
1902	*	*
1903	151	6,099
1904	172	6,958
1905	288	9,335
1906	250	6,000
1907	115	4,754
1908	*	1,000

From this it can be seen that the Christian-National schools reached a peak in 1905 and then quickly declined.¹

One of the main reasons, if not the only reason, for the decline of the Christian-National movement was lack of adequate financial support. Throughout 1903 the financial problems of the Commission increased and in November it had to abandon the practice of helping new schools to establish themselves although it continued to accept them for subsidies. At this time the Commission also reduced the level of its subsidies to town schools² and made various new attempts to raise extra funds in South Africa.³ But although it had some success in fund-raising this was not sufficient and the movement staggered on from crisis to crisis in the following years.⁴

Despite its financial problems the Commission managed to conceal the true situation from British officials. Therefore it was able to negotiate with them as though from a position of strength.⁵ Increasingly,

* No statistics available.

1. Pienaar, 1966, n Histories-Kritiese Onderzoek na die Arnddeel van die Nederduitse Hervormde of Gereformeerde Kerk in die Opvoeding en Onderwys van Blankes in Transvaal gedurende die Tydperk 1902-1910, p.307
2. CNOC, 18/11/1903.
3. *ibid*, 19/11/1903.
4. *ibid*, 9/10/1906.
5. *ibid*, 19/11/1903.

however, local schools were asked to find their own means of support, and subsidies were reduced or withdrawn, allowing the general fund to be used only in cases of real need. At the same time the three Afrikaans Reformed Churches agreed to hold special collections four times a year to aid Christian-National schools.¹

At the height of the movement's success in April 1905, the Commission received a letter from Mr. Emous telling it that its Dutch supporters had decided to send their own school inspector to South Africa. The letter informing the Commission of this plan was received with great indignation and a sense of shock. The idea that they were being spied upon by the Dutch suggested itself to General Botha. The Reverend Marthinus Postma expressed the general feeling when he said that they could never accept the principle of appointments being made in the Netherlands. Smuts agreed and said he considered the whole affair humiliating. But the Reverend Andreas Wolmarans pointed out to his colleagues that however they might feel there was little they could do but protest as long as they were dependent upon Dutch aid. Consequently they replied to Emous that while they agreed with the idea of having a school inspector they would like to choose their own.²

But by the time this protest reached the Netherlands the Commission was informed that the Dutch inspector, a Mr. te Boekhorst, had already arrived in Cape Town. On receiving this news Smuts said that while the action of the Dutch might hurt their pride there was nothing they could do but accept the appointment. Wolmarans agreed and urged the Commission to investigate the nature of te Boekhorst's relationship to the Committee in the Netherlands which had sent him.³

1. CNOC, 19/11/1903.

2. ibid, 14/4/1905.

3. ibid, 26/5/1905.

When he eventually arrived in Pretoria te Boekhorst was quizzed by members of the Commission. In reply to their questions he assured them that he was at their service and had not come to South Africa as a representative of the Dutch. His appointment was then approved, on condition that his salary should be paid by the Commission in South Africa and not directly from the Netherlands. It was also agreed that in all his decisions he would be answerable to the South Africans and not to the Dutch.¹ This arrangement seems to have worked well and te Boekhorst appears to have given the Christian-National schools good service until their closure in 1907.²

Shortly after these events another blow descended upon the Commission when it received a letter from Emous in June 1905 telling them that its Dutch supporters were prepared to send another £1,200 followed by £1,000 but after that it could expect no more money from the Netherlands. In response to this letter they wrote an urgent reply to Emous begging for continued aid.³ This state of severe crisis continued through the rest of 1905 and 1906 with limited amounts of money still coming from the Netherlands but the perpetual threat of the Dutch aid cessation hanging over them. From this point onwards the Commission got increasingly into debt and the movement steadily declined.⁴

The final blow to the Christian-National schools in the Transvaal came in 1907 when Het Volk⁵ modified its education policy to pacify British voters and abandoned Christian-Nationalism. Smuts explained the position to a disappointed and disillusioned Commission in April 1907. He said that the new education policy was his creation but that he expected his colleagues in Het Volk to accept it. It was, he believed, acceptable

1. CNOC, 31/5/1905.

2. Hagen, 1918, p.157

3. CNOC, 13/6/1905.

4. ibid, 8/9/1905; 14/9/1905; 9/10/1906.

5. Het Volk was the Afrikaner political party organised by Botha and Smuts in 1904 which came to power in the Transvaal Legislative Council in 1907, see Garson, 1966, 'Het Volk', The Historical Journal, ix, i, 1966.

to the Commission because it introduced a limited degree of local control and gave the Dutch language an important role in the curriculum. Religious education, however, was to be of a general sort acceptable to all Christians and not based on the doctrinal formulations of any particular Church.¹

The Commission expressed its doubts about Smuts' plans and asked him to reconsider his views on religious education as well as the possibility of subsidising the Christian-National schools. But Smuts replied that he was proposing a school law in keeping with his own Christian-National principles and that he hoped they would give it careful consideration at the coming Congress on Christian-National Education. Smuts was in fact delivering an ultimatum to the Commission. The members might have been able to fool British officials about the strength of their movement and its financial position but Smuts knew just how deeply in debt they were and that they were in no position to bargain with him.²

Reporting on the Congress, Inspector te Boekhorst, in his annual report for 1907, said that it had been a great success for the supporters of Christian-National Education. But, he added, the enthusiasm of the delegates was not matched by popular support. Therefore the Congress could not hope to influence Government opinion. He believed that the Christian-National Schools Commission was no longer representative of Afrikaner opinion generally and that due to the social and economic conditions in the country it was impossible to continue with a viable Christian-National school system.³

In making this assessment te Boekhorst admitted that the situation in the State school system was not very satisfactory and that many Christian-National teachers were unfairly treated when they entered the

1. CNOC, 9/4/1907.

2. CNOC, 9/4/1907.

3. CNOC, Annual Report of Inspector te Boekhorst for 1907.

State system. Nevertheless he advised them to do so and to make the best of what was available. In giving this advice te Boekhorst also advised local school committees that they ought to accept the Government's offer and allow their schools to be absorbed by the State. This action, he admitted, was taken without the approval of the Commission and went against the express wishes of the Commission. But he justified his action by saying that he considered the takeover of the Christian-National schools by the State inevitable and therefore was attempting to make the process as painless as possible.¹ Despite te Boekhorst's decision to close down Christian-National schools a number of them continued to refuse to join the State system. These struggled on as a witness to fellow Afrikaners of their Christian principles.²

The action of Het Volk in abandoning Christian-National schools once it had gained power underlines the division which had existed in the Christian-National movement from its very beginning.³ On the one hand there were Afrikaners like Botha and Smuts who sought to use the movement as a political tool with which to oppose the British authorities without creating a direct conflict.⁴ On the other hand there was a small but dedicated group of men, led from the Reformed community, who believed passionately in Christian education and saw in the post-war situation an opportunity to promote their views among Afrikaners generally.⁵ From the available evidence in the Christian-National Schools Commission Minutes it would seem that the first group deliberately misled the second in order to secure their co-operation.⁶ All that Botha and Smuts wanted

1. CNOC, 1907 Report.

2. See pp. 163-165.

3. CNOC, 22/12/1903.

4. *ibid*, 19/11/1903; 25/12/1903, art. 6.

5. *ibid*, 25/12/1903, art. 7.

6. Cf. Botha's speech to the opening session of the Reformed Church's Transvaal Synod in 1904 and his statements to the Commission throughout 1903 and 1904.

were bargaining counters to use against the British. But to gain them they were willing to commit themselves to principles which their subsequent actions clearly showed they did not accept. The pragmatism and religious cynicism of the Botha group is remarkable, as is the speed with which they could abandon Christian-National principles when it suited their purposes, one of which was a desire to win support among the English-speaking population of the Transvaal.¹ Prior to 1907 Botha and Smuts represented the nightmare of "Krugerism" in the English language Press. Once in power they were transformed with an undignified speed into angels of light, to the dismay of many Afrikaners.² Under these circumstances it is little wonder that their former allies in the Reformed Church felt betrayed and resolved to oppose their policies with all the means at their disposal while continuing to fight for Christian education.³

British Attitudes to the Christian-National Movement

The rise of an opposition school system irritated the British Authorities in the Transvaal even though they described it as "an almost necessary reaction."⁴ By treating the movement in this way they avoided the necessity of understanding what the true supporters of Christian-National education really believed.⁵ Because of the political use made of the movement by Botha and Smuts the authorities could, with some justification, view it in almost entirely political terms as a device created by Afrikaner leaders to embarrass them.⁶

To the extent that they considered the Christian element at all this was done by placing it in the context of British history. In England,

1. Denoon, 1973, pp.89-92.

2. Potchefstroom Herald, cf. 31/3/1906 and 16/3/1907.

3. Nienaber, ed., 1973, Dr. O'Kulis en sy Oogdrupples, pp.13-15, and 35-46.

4. TED, 1905, p.52.

5. This is clear from comments in the Transvaal Education Department Reports for 1905, 1906 and 1907. In each case there are misunderstandings and an attempt to place the Christian-National movement in a British mould. These misunderstandings are seen even more clearly in the published evidence of the 1911 Cape Education Department's Education Commission, n.b. sections 14155-14240.

6. Denoon, 1973, p.89.

Sargent pointed out, there had been a long struggle between the Church and State for the control of the schools. As in South Africa the Church schools had described themselves as "national" schools. The eventual result of this conflict had been an uneasy compromise which created a very unsatisfactory education system. The war in South Africa, Sargent went on to argue, had destroyed the old education system and created an opportunity for the authorities to construct a new one from nothing. Under these conditions it would be foolish to encourage the growth of troublesome Church schools. On these grounds Sargent rejected the claims of the Christian-National schools.¹

This argument about English schools ignored the fact that the Christian-National schools were controlled by parents and were not Church schools as such. However, arguments for parental control were also quickly dealt with. Sargent proceeded to compare the Canadian school system, where there was considerable local control, with the centralised Australian system. The Australian system, he acknowledged, had its defects; but it was, he argued, far superior to the Canadian one because it was less burden on the taxpayer.²

All objections to the obvious "wisdom" of British educational planning were seen either as being based upon a "misunderstanding"³ or as an attempt by narrow-minded people to incite racial unrest and political disorder.⁴ The British authorities were convinced that their system was a fair one which gave due consideration to the use of the Dutch language and the religious needs of the children. As for increased parental control, this was dismissed as a retrograde and foolish step. Modern civilization required the State and not parents to control the education system

1. TED, 1905, p.53.

2. TED, 1905, p.54.

3. TED, 1907, p.3.

4. TED, 1906, p.5.

"the teacher is, and should remain, the servant of the public and not of the parents of the scholars under him, because his work is a national work which the State must assume".¹

Opposition to this statement was seen as evidence of an attempt to divide and disrupt the peoples of Southern Africa.¹ Further proof of the wisdom of British views was produced by the argument that to give parents a say in educational policy would be to produce a host of small uneconomic schools that would destroy the unity of the system resulting in a lowering of standards and a wastage of manpower.²

The Smuts Education Act of 1907 was warmly welcomed by the British as a continuation of their policies and the right course for the future development of South African Education. Its apparent success in absorbing Christian-National schools into the State system was seen by the British as further evidence of their claim that the whole movement had been both a reaction and a misunderstanding which, once the shock of defeat was over and the intentions of the British were seen to be good, could be cleared up. Any further objections to the application of the Smuts Act were again interpreted in the old way and dismissed as the work of malcontents unworthy of serious consideration. As far as the British were concerned the Christian-National Education movement died a natural death in 1907 and they refused to recognise any evidence to the contrary.³

Christian-National Education Outside the Transvaal

The situation in the Orange River Colony and Cape Province was different from that which existed in the Transvaal following the war. In these areas the Christian-National schools movement did not expand to the same extent as it did in the Transvaal. This lack of growth was due to several factors. In the Transvaal the political organisation of the bittereinder generals was a unifying force which gave the Christian-National schools the backing they needed.⁴ But no similar organisation

1. TED, 1906, p.5.

2. TED, 1910, p.13.

3. TED, 1907, p.3; see p.

4. Denoon, 1973, p.87. The bittereinders were those Boers who took to guerilla activity after the fall of Pretoria in 1900. They continued as the leaders of resistance to British rule after the Peace of Vereeniging.

existed outside the Transvaal. Further, the Reformed Church was particularly strong in the Transvaal whereas the Dutch Reformed Church dominated the scene in the Orange River Colony.¹ Most important of all, the Dutch supporters of the Christian-National movement specifically stated that the funds they were sending to South Africa were for use in the Transvaal. This restriction on the use of funds can be explained by the close ties between the Netherlands and the Transvaal republic where many Dutch teachers had been employed before the war.²

The situation was also affected by the agreement reached in the Orange River Colony between the leaders of the Dutch Reformed Church and the Director of Education, Hugh Gunn. This avoided most of the tensions which plagued the Transvaal and, although the Reformed Church was not party to it, relative lack of strength of the Reformed Community in the Colony made their opposition irrelevant.³ As a result the majority of Christian-National schools in the Orange River Colony were absorbed into the State system without encountering any great difficulties in 1905.⁴

From a Christian-National viewpoint educational provision in the Free State was further improved in 1908 with the passing of the Hertzog Education Act. This Act gave equal status to the Dutch and English languages⁵ and allowed for the teaching of religious education from a doctrinal position when and where parents desired it.⁶ The Act also increased the power of local school boards and therefore of parents by giving them far greater say in the running of local schools.⁷ In addition it allowed for the provision of grants-in-aid to private schools under certain circumstances.⁸

1. See pp. 99-100.

2. CNOC, 22/10/1902; 30/10/1902; Hagen, 1918, pp.1-33; Bot, 1936, pp.50-71.

3. Orange River Colony/Free State, Education Department's Report (OED) 1904, p.5; 1905, pp.115-171; 1907, p.7.

4. OED, 1906, pp.12-13.

5. OED, 1908, p.9 f.

6. ibid, p.12.

7. ibid, pp.20-40.

8. ibid, pp.17-19.

The appeal of the Act to supporters of Christian-National education is clear. Equally obvious is the way in which it appalled the English speaking community throughout South Africa. To the English, Hertzog became the epitome of "Krugerism" and his Act was attacked for its "racialism". Even more significant is the charge that Hertzog was introducing "Dopper" education into the State system.¹ This attack reflects the influence which the Reformed leaders had on Hertzog and the way in which Hertzog was sensitive to the views of the Reformed community.²

A very different situation existed in the Cape Province where the school system had remained unchanged by the effects of the war. Over the previous century a very diverse education system had grown up on an ad-hoc basis as a result of what amounted to an attitude of complete laissez-faire on the part of the authorities. There were Church schools, parentally controlled Christian schools, private secular schools, English language schools, Dutch language schools and schools which were bilingual. In 1892 Thomas Muir, a very able administrator, had been appointed to the post of Superintendent General of Education. He devoted himself to the task of unifying the province's school system in a way very similar to that later adopted by Sargent in the north.³

Muir introduced many innovations to improve education in the Cape. He started a system of annual inspection, attempted to improve the curriculum, organised the provision of text-books, established a central library in Cape Town and encouraged local schools to build up their own libraries. The complete separation of white and non-white education was accelerated under his guidance, and in 1905 he introduced the possibility of compulsory education for white children, the acceptance of which was to be decided locally.⁴ Unfortunately Muir was rather autocratic and antagoined the

1. Davenport, 1966, p.261.

2. Nienaber, 1950, Dr. O'Kulis met sy Esselskakebeen, pp.81-87. I was refused permission to see the Hertzog Papers and was therefore unable to check first hand materials on this issue.

3. Malherbe, 1925, pp.115-118, and 171-177.

4. Malherbe, 1925, pp.115-177.

Reformed community in the Cape by his plans to centralise the education system. As a result they felt that the Education Department was discriminating against them and blamed this on British Imperialism.¹

Prior to the Second Anglo-Boer War the Reformed community had established a number of parent-controlled Christian schools in the Cape.² Like many schools, especially small farm schools,³ they were particularly unstable and many of them only lasted for a few years. Although the war disrupted these schools they managed to continue and a number were in existence in 1904. The most important Reformed Christian schools in the Cape were the larger secondary schools in Burgersdorp and Steynsburg. The organisers of these schools felt an affinity with the Christian-National school movement in the Transvaal although they were not supported by it. Throughout the period 1902 to 1919 the supporters of these schools attempted to obtain Government support and in this they were partially successful although their full demands for educational freedom were rejected.⁴ To a large extent, however, these schools acted as models upon which advocates of Christian-National education based their thinking, and their survival acted as an impetus to keeping the movement alive after the collapse of the Christian-National Schools Commission in the Transvaal in 1907.⁴

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1. Steynsburg School Correspondence, unsorted, letter F. Postma to nephew, 15/8/1913.
 2. Almanak, 1899.
 3. *ibid*, 1904.
 4. See pp. 166-175; where this subject is discussed in greater detail.

CHAPTER NINEThe Reformed Theory of Christian EducationChristian-National Education

Botha and Smuts used the Christian-National Education Movement for their own political ends. That they were able to do so indicates the importance of the idea of Christian education among Afrikaners. The opposition schools in the Transvaal could easily have been given some name other than 'Christian-National' had it not been for the fact that among a section of the population, which included the Reformed community, the theory of Christian education was widely accepted. Earlier in this thesis it was shown that this notion originated in the Netherlands where it had played an important part in the dispute between certain Christian groups and the Dutch Government.¹

Following the Second Anglo-Boer War the main thrust of Afrikaner propaganda for Christian-National Education took the form of warnings against Anglicization and a stress upon the sense of national identity of Afrikaners. The need for Christian-National Education was frequently stressed at Synodal gatherings of the Reformed Church and in its various publications. A number of articles appeared in Het Kerkblad advocating Christian-National Education and arguing that God had called Church members to remember their baptismal promises by supporting the Christian-National Education Movement thus upholding the feeling of nationhood of Afrikaners.²

The early articles on Christian-National Education simply stated the necessity for it, and did little to develop the meaning of the concept. But in 1905, Jan Kamp, who was studying at the Theological School in Potchefstroom, produced a series of articles outlining the theory of Christian Education under the title "The Struggle for the School".

1. See pp. 15-16, 22-23.

2. Almanak, 1904.

AVT, 1903, art. 28; 1904, art. 34; Het Kerkblad, 1/4/1903; 1/8/1903; 1/9/1903; 15/5/1904; 15/6/1904; 15/10/1904.

The series ran from April to December in Het Kerkblad, and was followed by a series on "The Free School" by the Reverend P. C. Snyman of the Steynsburg congregation. These appeared from August 1905 to September 1907. In his articles Snyman concentrated on the question of the control of education. He argued that the parents, not the State, should be responsible for the education of their children and that the role of both the Church and State was to help them fulfil this calling.¹

Kamp's arguments for Christian-National Education were developed in a booklet published in December 1905 to coincide with a Congress on Christian-National Education held in Pretoria. The title of his work was De Vrije School met Gouvernements Subsidie (The Free School with Government Aid). He drew upon memories of the recent war and warned Afrikaners of the threat presented to their religion and sense of nationality by State schools under British domination. Free Schools, he argued, were a means of saving the Afrikaner People from becoming bastardised Englishmen. They fulfilled a God-given task by preserving the religion, traditions and nationality of their pupils. In this way they were redemptive and served the Christian community by upholding its ideals and values.²

By contrast politically motivated State schools, he declared debased education. They sought to unify all races and creeds for the greater glory of the State and in doing so destroyed true religion. They placed themselves between the children's parents and the duty of those parents to serve God, and thus presented a threat to both the religion and sense of nationality of Afrikaner pupils.²

Supporters of State education often argued that, as it was the State financed education the State ought to have the say in how its money was spent. But this argument, Kamp replied, was a travesty of the truth. The State financed education through the redistribution of money collected in

1. Het Kerkblad, August 1905-September 1907.

2. Kamp, 1905, De Vrije School met Gouvernements Subsidie.

taxes. It was the taxpayer who paid for State education, therefore it was the parents who financed the schools.

Reformed parents were only claiming their rights when they asked for their own schools. President Burgers, had in the 1870s used the Transvaal State schools to spread liberal ideas, destructive of true Christianity, and this proved the dangers inherent in State education. Burgers had been opposed by the parents of his day and in their own day a similar struggle was taking place between parents and the State. In South African schools Roman Catholics, Jews and Methodists were teaching children from Reformed families. Englishmen and National Scouts teaching in the State schools were also destroying the national pride of Afrikaner children. The language of the People was being neglected and the English language encouraged. State education was creating a modern Babel with the Government in the place of God attempting to unify the Peoples of Southern Africa and ignoring the way in which God had led Afrikaners to recognise their distinct national identity.

Kamp urged that in the face of these threats to their religion and sense of nationality Afrikaner parents must unite and remember their baptismal promises. They must follow the example of the nation of Israel in the Bible and see that they controlled the education of their own children. The school must be recognised as a sphere distinct from both Church and State which should be organised by the parents though financed by the Government. Only if this was done could false religious and false educational beliefs and practices be rejected and the language, religion, traditions, and history - in short the national identity of the Afrikaner People - be upheld.¹

1. Kamp, 1905.

In 1907 Jan Lion-Cachet replied to the publication of the Smuts' Education Act with a pamphlet Niet om te Twisten, maar ... om des Gewetens wil (A Matter of Conscience). In this he reiterated the arguments used by Kamp to explain why the Reformed could not accept Smuts' views and his plan for education in the Transvaal. Only free education, he argued, would protect the rights of parents. Smuts' Act presented three great dangers. It threatened the language of Afrikaner children, it endangered their religion and it made no provision for parents to object effectively to abuses in State schools which worried them.¹

Examining these dangers in detail he explained why he believed Smuts' language provisions favoured the English language and threatened the continued use of Dutch. This in itself, he argued, was a threat to the historical continuity of Afrikaner religion. But even worse Smuts had legislated for religious instruction freed from dogmatic interpretations. Cachet did not think this possible. The Bible either was God's Word or it was not and that in itself was a dogmatic question. Finally, he showed that the provisions for local participation in the organisation and running of schools were inadequate and left all real power in the hands of the central administration.¹

J. D. du Toit followed up Cachet's argument the following year with a longer booklet Christelike Onderwys: Met of Sonder Dogma (Christian Education: With or Without Dogma?). He discussed the meaning of "dogma" and quoted with approval Kuyper's views on the subject. Dogma was an authoritative decision on matters of belief by the Church and was not the opinion of any individual. He examined the claim that State schools could teach religious education free of the restraints of sectarian dogma. At

1. Cachet, 1907, Niet om te Twisten, maar ... om des Gewetens wil.

first sight it looked as though all Christians would agree on the Apostles' Creed but when examined in detail he showed that this was not true. If one examined the Creed, section by section, it would soon become clear that Roman Catholics and Calvinists could never agree in their interpretation of its meaning for the salvation of the individual.¹

Having shown this du Toit went on to demonstrate that it was no less impossible to teach Biblical history free of religious dogma. What was the significance of Israel? Who was Jesus Christ? Both questions demanded dogmatic answers. If one taught Biblical history then of necessity a certain amount of dogma must be taught to make the history meaningful. Christ was the key to an understanding of the Bible and to teach about Christ was to teach doctrine as well as history. In the Bible there was a unity between history and dogma.

To illustrate this point he chose as an example the story of Jacob and his brother Esau. In terms of the story the hero was quite clearly Esau while Jacob was the villain. Yet the Bible taught that Jacob was the true hero. This could not be understood without a knowledge of the Biblical doctrine of the Covenants. Only by teaching a certain amount of theology could the subsequent development of Biblical history be understood. This argument was followed up by one about the nature of the Bible itself and the Bible's own statements about its authority.

Du Toit then compared the development of education in the Netherlands during the nineteenth century with that of education in South Africa. Behind the question of Christian schools, he claimed, lay other questions about the nature of education itself and the view of man. Although he alluded to the existence of a Christian educational theory as distinct from the practice of Christian-National Education, he never developed the

1. du Toit, 1908, Christelike Onderwys: Met Of Sonder Dogma.

issue. His book was, however, a powerful argument for Christian-National schools and appears to have had a great appeal among members of the Reformed community.¹

Another important issue, in addition to language and religion, was the teaching of history in schools, because it was believed that an understanding of history enabled a person to see himself in relation to the rest of the world. Ferdinand Postma took up this theme in the 1908 edition of the Church Almanak, in an article entitled "South African History in our Schools". In it he drew attention to the close relationship between the Afrikaans language and the history of the Afrikaner People. Unfortunately, he lamented, young people learned little of the history of their Fatherland in the schools. They were taught some "Cape history" and learned a great deal about the deeds of "Williams and Richards and Edwards and all the kings and queens of England". But if one asked them "Who was the first president of the Transvaal?" they would not know.²

Whose fault was this lack of knowledge? Postma laid the blame squarely on the shoulders of the parents. Unless parents took a pride in their nationality and upheld the rights of their language, they could not expect their children to value those things. Children would always follow the example of their parents. He recognised that many parents would object that they lacked the time to teach their children, adding that in any case it was the duty of the schoolmaster to teach the children history. Fortunately there were some more responsible parents who would fulfil their obligation to teach their children what they should know.²

Behind all of these reactions was a deeper question. Neither the examinations set by the University of the Cape of Good Hope, nor the education system as a whole was geared to the teaching of the history of

1. du Toit, 1908.

2. Almanak, 1908

the Fatherland. Schools rarely taught the subject because it was thought to be unimportant. And even when South African history was taught, it was not taught in the language which the children understood as the language of South Africa. No one would expect Dutch children to learn their nation's history through the medium of the French or German languages. Yet in South Africa a foreign language was used to teach South African history.¹

Worse still, when the textbooks used in State schools were examined, they were found to contain much that was false. In support of this assertion, Postma compared the text of the Reverend J. Whiteside's A New School History of South Africa with that of Leyds and other like-minded writers. He examined in detail the different interpretations of the annexation of the Cape, Slachter's Nek, the Great Trek and attitudes towards English missionary activities, the annexation of the diamond fields and the occupation of Natal. In each case he showed, to his own satisfaction and presumably that of his readers', that a strong bias against Afrikaners in favour of the English and Black Africans existed in Whiteside's book.¹ 106

He also alluded to other examples, such as the Sand River Convention, views about the city of Johannesburg, and the recent war. Again he claimed that a false picture was given and the basis of national pride in Afrikaner children undermined. This proved the need for Afrikaner children to have Afrikaner teachers who understood their history, traditions and language, and who would strengthen their national feelings. Textbooks which would reflect a national outlook were also essential. In short they needed Christian-National Education.²

In 1909 Willem Postma produced his Eselskakebeen (Slingshot), which combined the features of an Afrikaans novel, a prophetic condemnation of Anglicization, and an argument for Christian-National education. But because it is best known as a piece of early Afrikaans literature it will

1. Almanak, 1908

2. Almanak, 1908; cf. du Toit, 1961 (1908), vol VI, pp.251-269.

be discussed further in a later section, while this chapter will concentrate on writings specifically composed for the purpose of advancing the cause of Christian-National education. With this in mind the next significant Reformed publication on Christian-National education was Jan Kamp's booklet De School Behoort aan de Ouders (The School Belongs to Parents). This was published in 1912 in conjunction with the Christian-National Education Conference held that year.

In this work Kamp reminded his readers of the apparent lack of success which the Dutch Christian-National Education movement met with in its early years. It struggled for the establishment of Christian-National schools for over thirty years before it began to make real progress. Here was an example to encourage even the most downhearted Afrikaner. In the rest of the pamphlet Kamp reiterated the main points of Christian-National Education propaganda with a number of new arguments to reinforce his case. In doing so he drew heavily upon the writings of the Dutch scholar Professor J. Woltjer of the Free University in Amsterdam, in a book Wat is Het Doel van het Christelyk Nationaal Schoolonderwys? (What Is Christian-National Education?). In his booklet Kamp developed two arguments which had been hinted at before, but which he now greatly clarified, concerning Government subsidies to Christian-National schools and God's providence in creating an Afrikaner national consciousness.¹

Critics had attacked the Christian-National Education movement because it advocated state aid for private schools. On this basis it was argued the Government would be obliged to support Roman Catholic schools should they apply for subsidisation and would thus be furthering Catholicism in South Africa. Kamp's reply was to suggest that his critics did not really understand the Christian-National Education principle that the duty of educating children rested with their parents. The fair application of

1. Kamp, 1912, De School Behoort aan de Ouders.

this principle did not imply that the State would be supporting the work of the Roman Catholic Church because the State was not being asked to aid Church schools. Christian-National schools were neither State nor Church schools but parental schools. If, therefore, a group of Roman Catholic parents wanted to form their own school, then of course the State must assist them just as it must also help Jewish parents in the same situation. This did not imply support for any particular Church.¹

In justification of the national element in Christian-National Education Kamp argued that God in His providence had formed the Afrikaner People just as He had created the English and given them their own history and traditions. This being so men must respect what God had done and not attempt to undo His work. Separate nations, as the Bible showed, owed their existence to God and by maintaining their identity they honoured Him. For this reason national education was Christian in character because it saw God's hand in the life of the People and in their history.¹

In support of all of these arguments Kamp appealed to the Bible. On the general issue of the role of parents in controlling the schools he quoted Exodus 12, 13; Deuteronomy 4 and 10; and II Samuel 1. To support his argument about providence he cited the book of Deuteronomy singling out chapter four as being of special significance.¹

In 1913 the Burgersdorp Congregation published a memorial book to celebrate the opening of a new Church building, and a number of chapters in it were devoted to contemporary issues. One by the Reverend I. D. Kruger dealt with Christian Education. This was entitled "The Calling of the Reformed Church in Schools". It gave a historical review of the Christian-National Education movement in the Netherlands and South Africa and restated the main arguments for Christian-National education,

1. Kamp, 1912.

but in fact added little that was new.⁶ It was however the last major publication on Christian-National Education before 1920. Following its publication various articles appeared in Het Kerkblad,¹ the Almanak² and elsewhere,³ but no other publications specifically devoted to Christian-National Education were produced.

Christian Educational Theory

In arguing the case for Christian-National Education Reformed writers stressed the content of the syllabus used in schools and the "direction" of the education given, but they only hinted at what they thought the basis of a distinctively "Christian" education should be. They rejected "neutral" education and attacked the attempt of the British to anglicise Afrikaner Children, giving the impression that while the national element in their thinking was strong, the Christian one was an appendage to elicit support from believers. Yet it is clear from the way in which they argued against Church schools that they were not simply seeking a political advantage.⁴ It is also apparent that the Christian element in their thinking was important to them from the fact that historically they had opposed "neutral" schools and argued for Christian education before Afrikaner nationalism became an important factor in Reformed thinking.⁵

It must be asked why the Reformed did not produce more literature, explaining the particular advantages of Christian education and the way in which it differed from education in State schools apart from the obvious point of the content of the syllabus. The answer is that they had no need to produce their own educational theory because one with which they

1. Het Kerkblad, 15/9/1915.

2. Almanak, 1914.

3. Die Brandwag, 1/12/1917.

4. Report of the Cape Education Department's Education Commission, 1911, Sections, 14155-14240.

5. Almanak, 1873; see p. 48.

6. Hammersma, ed., 1913, Gedenkstukken in Verband met de Nieuwe Gereformeerde Kerk, Burgersdorp.

agreed had already been produced in the Netherlands. All that their situation demanded was propaganda for Christian-National Education. For specific information about what this would involve they could refer their supporters to a number of Dutch books which explained the theory in detail. And this is what they did. Het Kerkblad and other publications carried regular advertisements for Dutch works on education. They particularly favoured the works of Kuyper and Bavinck and their own booklets were saturated with references to Dutch sources.¹

To understand fully the thinking of Reformed leaders on the subject of Christian-National Education it is necessary to appreciate the educational theories which were being produced by Calvinists in the Netherlands at the time.² These theories grew out of, and were rooted in, the Anti-Revolutionary ideology. Once created they powerfully reinforced that ideology by pointing out the dangers to Calvinism in "modern educational theories" and offering an alternative view of education based upon Calvinist principles.²

The Anti-Revolutionary Ideology opposed "the Revolution" and attacked the Enlightenment as a modern manifestation of the Revolution in an intellectual form. The thinkers of the Enlightenment were characterised as revolutionary thinkers who were opposed to true religion. In tracing the roots of the Enlightenment the English philosopher John Locke was singled out as being of particular importance. Locke was accused of propounding the theory that man is born into a state of innocence with his mind tabula rasa, and it was claimed that he hoped to manipulate people through education to produce the type of gentleman he thought desirable. In his theory, it was claimed, environmental factors and conditioning were essential for the development of the personality.³

1. du Toit, 1961 (1908), vol.VI, pp.255-272; Kamp 1905 and 1912; and Cachet 1907.

2. The rest of this section is based upon the works of various Dutch Calvinist writers. See note 3.

3. It is questionable how true this understanding of Locke is. For details of Calvinist educational theories see: Bavinck, 1904, Peedagogische Beginnselen; van der Kooy, 1925, The Distinctive Features of the Christian School. Rushdoony 1961, Intellectual Schizophrenia; De Graaff, The Educational Ministry of the Church, 1968. A similar position is found in the work of the Anglican writer Harry Blamires, 1950, Repair the Ruins.

From a Calvinist viewpoint Locke's theories were said to be wrong because they completely overlooked human depravity and rested on an assumed freedom from the effects of sin in young children. Children, Bavinck argued, were made in the image of God and had to be respected as individual persons. But they were also born into a world in rebellion against its Creator and through the effects of the Fall were born as sinners. They were conceived in sin and predisposed to evil. Life must therefore be viewed as a battle against sin. Changing social conditions would not change the child; only God could do that through the working of His Spirit in conjunction with the preaching of the Gospel. One aim in all education which considered itself to be Christian must therefore be to present the child with a true knowledge of God and of its relationship to God.¹

For Afrikaner Calvinists the attacks of Anti-Revolutionary thinkers upon Locke had an added significance. Locke was characterised as a deist who sought to change men through manipulating education. By their actions British leaders in South Africa had proved themselves to be under his anti-Christian influence. Their efforts to use education to further Imperial goals simply confirmed the deistic direction of British education. This in turn reinforced the resolve of the Reformed to keep their children out of State schools because they seemed so obviously designed to destroy both the nationalist feelings and the religious beliefs of the child.²

Locke's theory was seen by Anti-Revolutionary writers as the basis for the development of the views of Rousseau, Pestalozzi, and other "Enlightenment" thinkers. In accepting his empiricist view that the child was born with a "clean mind" they were said to have declared war on the past - on culture, history and tradition - in the name of education.

1. See footnote p.154 no.3.

2. Cf. Almanak, 1908; Kamp, 1905 and 1912; Cachet, 1907; where scattered references to all of these issues are to be found.

Through education these men had hoped to free mankind from the snares of the past and the demands of religion. They believed that in their new world a universal brotherhood of man would be created. Ancient authorities would be overthrown and the new authority of human Reason enthroned. History was to be wiped out by revolutionary action and a new society born from the ruins of the past.¹

These ideas, Anti-Revolutionary propagandists declared, were strongly supported by the theory of evolution. At a popular level evolution attacked religion, the family and all traditional authority as remnants from the primitive past which modern man was able to live without.² This being so, evolution and the idea of progress was a tool used to justify sweeping social changes inimical to Christianity.³ Yet State schools not only taught the theory of evolution but based many of their educational ideas and courses upon it. In this way they undermined the confidence of the child in his parents and home background by setting up the teacher, and ultimately the scientist, as the arbiter of truth who initiated the pupil into a new reality.⁴

By contrast Calvinist educational theorists said that the Christian teacher acknowledged God as the Sovereign Creator in whose image men were created. Therefore Christian teachers must see the hand of God in all they did and taught. Whether in the teaching of history or of the physical sciences God must be given a central place in the syllabus. The educator must recognise the authority of God and learn from His revelation, as found in the Bible. Children must be taught that there are two kinds of science, one which was undertaken in the service of God and the other which was based on a rebellion against God's will. They must see that notions like "objectivity"

1. See footnote no.2 page 155.

2. e.g. Cf. Letourneau, 1911, The Evolution of Marriage.

3. Such a charge could easily be levelled against both Milner and Smuts.

4. Postma, 1909, pp.32-63.

and "neutrality" were falsehoods which hid the truth and that men sought to suppress God's revelation. In education as in every other area of life men were either for or against God and their commitment in this direction was reflected in their teaching and in the nature of their schools.¹

Christian Schools were to place themselves under the authority of God. But this was not to be an excuse for the teachers to become little dictators. The teacher and the pupils were equally responsible for their actions before God. The teacher must remember this, and also that all men were equal before God. Every child was to be regarded as a unique creation, made in God's image, for whom Christ had died. For this reason the teacher had a unique responsibility in that his calling was to encourage the child to learn for himself and to develop a true love of God's revelation in His Word, the Bible, and in the book of Nature. Consequently the Christian teacher could be neither authoritarian nor libertarian. He must be ever conscious of his great responsibilities before God and prepared to admit his errors and to learn from them.¹

The subject matter for a Christian curriculum was to be selected neither on the basis of preparing the child for future employment, nor of learning for learning's sake, but to enable him to serve God. In selecting his teaching method the Christian teacher was called upon to be constantly aware of the child as bearing God's image. While discipline was considered both just and necessary it was to be administered fairly and used as little as possible. The school was to be a cheerful place where the child felt at home and where the teacher could be seen to be his friend and not an enemy, as so often happened. Encouragement rather than criticism was to be the principle guiding the teacher's approach, thus giving expression to a spirit of Christian love. Above all the education of children was to be conducted with deep prayer and reliance upon God.²

1. Kuyper, 1900, pp.150-192; Kuyper, 1898, pp.3-4; cf. Blamiers, In Defence of Dogmatism, 1965; van Til, 1963, The Defence of the Faith; Berkouwer, 1955, General Revelation; Bavinck, 1956, Our Reasonable Faith.

2. See note p. 154, no. 3.

Although it is difficult to see how these ideas differed in practice from the best secular educational theories of the day, they are in marked contrast to many reports of what actually occurred in South African State schools. For example, a British schools' inspector complained about the way in which many teachers approached the teaching of Dutch,¹ and another commented that in many schools

"the child very seldom asks his teacher a question: in some cases it would not be safe".²

Thus it is not surprising that Calvinist students in the October 1905 edition of their magazine Fac et Spera commented that in English schools the teacher was regarded as the natural enemy of the child.

Christian-National Education theory found its clearest practical exposition in South Africa in the Minority Report of the 1916 Orange Free State Education Commission which enquired into elementary education. This report which was chaired by Willem Postma and included J. D. Kestell among its members, argued against current practices, declaring that:

"education must aim not only at teaching, but more especially at the moral and national training of the child. This moral and national training must be adapted to the home environment and education of the child ... Primary Education is too much a preparation for Secondary Education ... the result is that the great majority of the children leave school without the necessary knowledge for after life".³

In putting forward this position they argued for a type of education which would be in keeping with the total environment of the child and urged greater use of practical subjects. Thus matriculation, which would benefit very few children, was criticised while subjects like agricultural and industrial training for boys and cookery and needlework for girls were advocated. If the service of God was to be the aim of education these

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1. TED, 1909, p.26, and pp.99-100; Cape Education Department Report (CED), 1917, p.14.
 2. TED, 1913, p.76.
 3. Orange Free State Education Commission on Elementary Education, 1916, pp.4-5.

Christian-National theorists believed it was the duty of schools to equip children to live a full life and not simply to find a job. Work was considered important but it was never seen as an end in itself. Rather a preparation for life within the community and the ability to serve one's fellow men became the true aim of education.¹

Under all of this lies the foundation of a covenantal theology which saw the elect as a chosen people. Religion and nationalism merge in an educational theory which prides itself on its devotion to tradition and desires to preserve the unity between the child and its cultural environment. Modern theories, which see education as an enlightening experience capable of loosening the bonds of tradition and opening the individual to new experiences, are rejected, and a powerful instrument for the creation and communication of nationalist feelings is created. The individual is identified in relation to his religion and social situation, while the task of education is seen as that of strengthening this identity. No room is left for doubt, for the agonising questioning of the secular student or even of disturbed Christians like Kierkegaard. God's providence is reified in the creation of nations which give the individual an identity transcending the barrier of death and removing from his sight the threat of chaos and anomie. Thus Weber's agonising Calvinist conscience is replaced by a process of initiation which unfolds the relationship of the individual to his past and his People investing it with a cosmic significance in the promise of God's Covenant.²

1. *ibid*, pp.4-11

2. Berger and Luckmann, 1967, pp.110-146.

CHAPTER TENThe Reformed Church and Christian-National Education from
1907 to 1919Christian-National Education Conferences

With the implications of the Smuts Education Act and the collapse of most Christian-National Schools in 1907 in mind, a small group of dedicated believers in the ideal of Christian-National Education met in Potchefstroom on July 6th, 1907. As a result of this meeting the Society for Christian-National Education was formed. Led by Jan Lion-Cachet and J. D. du Toit, the Society set up a Commission which drew up its constitution and decided its aims and policies. Branches were established in a number of towns including Potchefstroom, Wolmaransstad, Krugersdorp, Reddersburg, Burgersdorp and Steynsburg, and a subscription of five shillings a year was collected from members. It was decided to continue to spread propaganda for Christian-National Education and to petition the Government to give State aid to Christian-National Schools.¹

The Society organised a Congress on Christian-National Education in Pretoria which was held on 15th July, 1909. At this meeting it was proposed that the Society should continue to press for State subsidies to "Free Christian Schools" but a strong group was present which argued that instead of setting up their own schools they ought to be attempting to introduce Christian-National principles into State schools. Reflecting this outlook the Congress passed resolutions calling for increased parental involvement in State schools as well as greater use of the mother tongue in the instruction of the children. It also made a call for State subsidies and dedicated itself once more to propagating Christian-National principles in education. A new committee which included J. D. du Toit, L. P. Vorster

1. Het Kerkblad, 1/9/1907

and General Beyers was formed, and an attempt was made to meet with General Botha to discuss their policies. But Botha was not prepared to entertain the idea of Christian-National Education and refused to consider their proposals. After this the Society seems to have ceased to function.¹

In July 1911 the Reverend D. Postma, Reformed minister in Burgersdorp, organised another conference on Christian-National Education which was held in Steynsburg, with the aims of propagating Christian-National principles, of drawing up a syllabus for use in schools, and of discussing the language issue and problems such as the organisation and inspection of Christian schools. As a result a new society for Christian-National Education was formed and an attempt made to obtain subsidies from the Government. A petition was launched which was to be sent to the Cape Education Department, and 6,000 copies of a report of the conference were printed to be sent out as propaganda. As a result nineteen branches of the new society were formed and 500 members enrolled.²

This society held a second conference in Potchefstroom in June 1912. In addition to the usual moves to propagate their cause an attempt was made to raise money for Christian-National schools and organise an examining body. The lack of Christian school text-books was noted and a decision was taken to attempt to produce them. An organisation for teachers in State schools was proposed and various other plans were discussed.³

The management committee of the society met again in Bloemfontein in October 1912 to discuss future plans and decided to offer a prize of £10 for the best Christian text-book. They also decided to introduce an annual examination for teachers which would include papers in Christian Education, the History of Education, Biblical History, Biblical Theology,

1. Het Kerkblad, 1/8/1909; 1/6/1910; 1/7/1900.

2. Het Kerkblad, 1/8/1911; 1/4/1912; Arnold, 1954, Die Christelik-Nasionale Onderwysbeweging in Suid-Afrika, pp.63-65.

3. Het Kerkblad, 1/8/1912.

Psychology and Ethics.¹ The publication of Jan Kamp's De School Behoort aan de Ouders (The School Belongs to Parents) was approved.²

Despite these developments the organisation was steadily declining through lack of funds, and the plans do not seem to have been implemented. The last Congress was held in October 1913 in Bethulie, when it was decided to issue an English language edition of Kamp's booklet and to encourage Christians to question parliamentary and provincial government candidates on their attitude to State subsidies for Christian-National schools. But the translation of Kamp's booklet was never carried out and the movement ceased to exist. The final blow came as a result of the unsettled political situation of 1914, the outbreak of war and the Rebellion.³

The Christian-National Education Movement was revived again in the Orange Free State in 1916 when a three day conference was held for teachers in State schools. At the conference Professor Kamp read a paper Family, school and ... a third way. In this he elaborated his earlier work by discussing the notion of "group schools". The point he was making was that schools must grow out of the society in which they exist and so they will reflect the character of that society. This modified his position on the role of parents although it was essentially compatible with it.⁴ 143

The Dutch Reformed Church in the Orange Free State was the next to take the initiative by organising a conference in Bloemfontein in 1917. This was supported by all three Afrikaans Reformed Churches in the Free State and was attended by the Provincial Administrator. At the conference general disquiet was expressed about the existing state of primary and secondary education in South Africa and about the growing problem of the poor white. J. D. Kestell of the Dutch Reformed Church argued strongly for separate Christian-National Schools, free from the control of both Church and State, but D. F. Malan seems to have favoured the reform of Government schools. Malan agreed in principle with the free school ideal but said he did not think it "practical" in the existing circumstances. Representing the Reformed Church, J. D. du Toit, gave an Anti-Revolutionary analysis

1. Het Kerkblad, 15/10/1912; 15/11/1912. 3. Het Kerkblad, 15/10/1913;
2. Arnold, 1954, p.67. Arnold, 1954, p.70.

4. Het Kerkblad, 15/4/1912

of their situation and argued for free Christian-National schools. Other speakers criticised various aspects of the existing system and raised questions about the possibility of training teachers along Christian-National lines.¹

The conference was attacked in The Friend as an attempt by the Churches to regain support through "interfering" in politics. But this, the editor argued, was futile because the more they associated with the Nationalist movement the more they would lose the support of the average Afrikaner.² In some ways this prediction seems to have been fulfilled in the immediate future because although another Christian-National Education conference was held in Pretoria in 1918³ the movement seems to have subsequently lost its momentum and entered a period of relative decline until it was revived again in 1927 by the Reformed Church. In 1919, however, it is clear that the Education, Language and political movements had merged and a new phase of Afrikaner Nationalism had begun.⁴

The Reformed Church's Christian-National Schools

Information about the activities of the Reformed Church in the field of education is to be found in numerous Church publications, the Church Archives and other sources such as the Archives of Provincial Education Departments. The Reformed Church asked local congregations to include in their annual reports to the Almanak, details of educational activities in their area, and so were able to publish education statistics each year. Unfortunately not all congregations sent in the required details on a regular basis and even when they did, it was not always clear whether the children referred to were from Reformed families or simply children who lived in the area. Neither did they always distinguish between schools

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1. The Friend, 5/6/1917.
 2. ibid, 6/6/1917.
 3. Arnold, 1954, pp.106-114.
 4. Moodie, 1975, pp.105-107.

run on Christian-National lines and those which were State schools. However, many congregations did specify the type of school in their area and the origins of the children attending the various schools. Despite many omissions, which makes it difficult to interpret the statistics with any accuracy, the following information gives a general picture of the state of education in Reformed areas during the period under consideration.

In 1899 the Church Almanak listed over 142 schools catering for about 3,000 children. The majority of the children seem to have been from Reformed backgrounds and the schools were small ones based on Christian-National principles.¹ The first statistics available after the war are for 1903 and list 120 schools but fail to note the number of children involved.² In 1905 one hundred and thirty one schools are mentioned all of which seem to have been regarded as "Christian-National" in outlook.³ By 1910 the number had declined and only fifty four schools were said to be under strong Christian influence.⁴ A number of these were State schools employing Reformed teachers while others were small private farm schools which continued to uphold the principles of Christian-National Education. Fifteen "free" schools, which were presumably Christian-National schools, were mentioned in 1915 which was the year in which the Church ceased to publish education statistics.⁵ The lack of information after 1915 would seem to imply that after that time all Christian-National schools were absorbed into the State system. This conclusion which is also supported by evidence from a number of schools which are known to have joined the State system in 1915.⁶

1. Almanak, 1899.

2. ibid, 1904.

3. ibid, 1905.

4. ibid, 1910.

5. Almanak, 1915

6. TED, 1916 (Report for 1915), p.128; Superintendent General of Education (SGE) 1/1423, letters Spurway to Muir, 20/2/1915, Spurway to Murray, 22/11/1915.

Although the decline in the number of Christian-National schools increased as the years went by, the economic burden of supporting them grew, the statistics indicate an interest in Christian-National education among Church members which continued long after the supposed absorption into the State school system of these schools in 1907. They also indicate a certain infiltration of the State system by Reformed teachers and a willingness on the part of Reformed parents to accept State education out of economic necessity without rejecting the Christian-National ideal.¹

Apart from the service which Christian-National Schools rendered to the Reformed community in the education of its children, they also provided living examples of the application of Christian-Nationalism which reinforced the arguments used in the various pieces of propaganda produced by supporters of the Christian-National Education movement. The majority of these "free" schools were described as farm schools. They had only very few children in them, and most existed for only a few years. But most of the children who attended them would probably have otherwise received no formal education at all. For the more able they provided an introduction to education and a path to its higher reaches.²

In view of the short life of farm schools and their general instability the Reformed Church established three main secondary type schools which took children from the farm schools and took them as far as matriculation if they were capable of reaching that level of academic achievement. The three high schools maintained by members of the Reformed Church after 1907 and run on Christian-National Education principles were situated in Potchefstroom, Burgersdorp and Steynsburg. The one in Potchefstroom was closely associated with the Literary Department of the Theological School and will be dealt with in the chapters dealing with that institution. The history of the other schools is considered below.

1. Almanak, 1910, cf. report from Zeerust's congregation.

2. CED, 1908, p.2; 1911, pp.3 and 5.

The Christian-National School in Burgersdorp

A "Free" Christian-National School was first established in Burgersdorp in 1869 but due to lack of support it collapsed in 1870. The school was reopened in 1886 and struggled along until 1892 when it was absorbed into the Cape Education Department school system.¹ Following the Second Anglo-Boer War great bitterness existed between the English and Dutch speaking communities in Burgersdorp and several small Christian-National schools were founded which were considered by the English to increase the divisions within the society.² There was a lot of enthusiasm for a Christian high school³ but because of the economic conditions of the time and the refusal of the local Dutch Reformed Church to co-operate, members of the Reformed community were unable to continue to maintain a Christian school by their own efforts.⁴ As a result a Christian high school founded in 1906 collapsed the following year. An inspector working for the Cape Education Department commented, however, that while in existence it did "creditable work".⁵

The minister of the Reformed congregation in Burgersdorp, Dirk Postma,⁶ announced from the pulpit on September 6th, 1908 that he and his Church Council had decided to open a new Free Christian School.⁷ The local education inspector, E. J. Spurway,⁸ reported this to Dr. Muir and said that he had been informed that Postma's congregation "received the proposal very coldly, and that it met with little or no support." Spurway went on to explain that the local population were very dissatisfied with the head

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1. Aucamp, 1949, Blanke Onderwys in Burgersdorp 1846-1910, pp.124-144
 2. SGE, 1/325, letter 20/3/1902, Mr. M. Henry to Dr. Muir. 1/416, letter 15/7/1904, Inspector McLeod to Muir; Albert Times and Molteno News, 16/12/1904; Almanak, 1905.
 3. Burgersdorp School Commission (BSC), 9/2, letter from chairman of school commission to Reformed Church's Council, 3/3/1906.
 4. Arnold, 1954, pp.39-40.
 5. SGE, 2/194, Inspectors Report 1907, 6/12/1907.
 6. Grandson of Dirk Postma founder of the Reformed Church.
 7. SGE, 1/178, letter Spurway to Muir, 14/9/1908.
 8. See p.169.

of the local high school and that this was perhaps a contributory cause of Postma's action. He suggested that another possible reason might be that Postma was jealous of the success of the minister of the Dutch Reformed Church who had founded a poor school for children unable to pay State school fees. As this school was independent, Spurway urged that the Education Department should take it over and so remove the ground for Postma's action.¹ This was done and a deputation from the Burgersdorp School Board approached Postma to ask him to abandon his plans for a Christian School. But Postma refused, and declared that his decision was based upon a belief in Christian Education and had been urged on him by his Church Council.²

Spurway's reaction to Postma's plans followed the general pattern of British misunderstanding of Christian-National Education. It was typical in the way he tried to discredit Postma by implying unworthy motives as well as by suggesting that his congregation did not really support his actions.³ Yet the support which the new school received from parents, as shown by the Education Department's own statistics, leaves no doubt of its great popularity among local people.⁴ And the records of the Reformed Church itself show that Postma was as he claimed under constant pressure from his Church Council and members of the congregation to establish a Free Christian School.⁵ But without outside assistance the congregation in Burgersdorp was unable to support the school, and, when it was unable to get a subsidy from the State and after the Synods of the Reformed Church repeatedly decided only to help the congregations in Steynsburg and Potchefstroom in their efforts to provide post-elementary education, the

1. See p.166, footnote no.7.

2. SGE, 1/178, letter J. Jacobshon to Muir, 23/12/1908.

3. Denoon, 1973, p.89.

4. SGE, Inspector's Report, 22/4/1909, 2/242.

5. BC, 5/9/1908 art. 14; Burgersdorp Schools Commission (BSC), letter 3/3/1906; 10/7/1906.

congregation in Burgersdorp found itself without the additional funds which its school required.¹ Financial considerations therefore led to the amalgamation of the school with the local State high school in 1913.²

Christian-National Education in Steynsburg

In 1904 Mrs. van Rooy, a widow and member of the Reformed congregation in Steynsburg, gave the Church Council a boarding house, which they estimated to be worth £1,000, to be used to establish a Free Christian school.³ The school opened in 1905 with sixty children in attendance, its numbers rose to over 100 in 1908, 170 by 1911, and 228 in 1917.⁴ It was understood by the Church Council when they accepted the house that they would hold it in trust for the parents of the children using the school and that, once begun, the school would be a Christian-National school under parental control.⁵

The Synod of the Reformed Church decided at its 1907 meeting that for Christian-National Education to be successful Christian teachers should be trained in the theory and practice of Christian-National Education. They agreed, therefore, on the need to establish a Christian-National teacher training institution and thought it best to develop it from the existing Christian-National School in Steynsburg. As a result of the Synod's decision Christian students started teacher training in Steynsburg during 1909.⁶ The scheme seems to have been a popular one in Reformed congregations and an average of 30 students were in training at any one time from the founding of the Training School until 1919.⁷

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1. BC, 25/9/1908, art. 4; 29/9/1911, art. 5; 19/7/1912, art. 20.
 2. BC, 19/7/1912, art. 20; SGE, Inspectors Report, 21/1/1913, 2/341.
 3. Steynsburg School Commission (SSC), Note on history of school dated 1927.
 4. SSC, undated memorandum; SGE, 2/466, Inspector's Report, 10/11/1917.
 5. SSC, note on history of school dated 1927.
 6. General Synod, 1907, art. 62 and 68; van der Vyver, 1958, Die Christelike-Nasionale Onderwys-beweging op Steynsburg, pp.96-99.
 7. SSC, undated memorandum.

The vast majority of students were members of the Reformed Church but occasionally others trained there, including some whose home language was English.¹

From its foundation relations between the Christian School in Steynsburg and the Cape Education Department were strained and considerable animosity existed between local people who supported the Christian School and those who sent their children to the State school.² Matters were not improved by the local schools inspector, E. J. Spurway, who had arrived from England in 1905 and made his headquarters in Steynsburg.³ Spurway was deeply committed to the cause of British imperialism and the policies of the Cape Education Authorities and believed that all education ought to be under the control of the State. Thus he was very unwilling to do anything which might encourage the growth of a rival Christian school system independent or semi-independent of the State.⁴

Spurway worked hard for the amalgamation of local Christian Schools with the State schools and was successful in this aim everywhere but in Steynsburg itself. Despite the fact that the congregation in Steynsburg found the support of their school a crippling burden and that although they received some support from other Reformed congregations this was never enough they continued to devise ways of keeping the school going.⁵ One of these ways was to apply to the Cape Education Department for financial aid. This was first tried in 1909 and met with a negative response but in 1915 they were told that they would receive a small subsidy in 1916 which appears to have been given as part of a plan to amalgamate the Christian School with the local State School.⁶

1. SGE, 2/440, Inspector's Report, 9/3/1916.

2. SGE, 1/1423, letter, Spurway to Muir, 20/2/1915.

3. SGE, 1/508, letters, Spurway to Muir, 27/1/1905; 4/3/1905; 25/2/1905.

4. SGE, 1/1423, letter Spurway to Muir, 22/11/1915.

5. SSC, Minute Book, 13/11/1907; 2/4/1908; 4/10/1912.

6. SSC, Minute Book, 4/8/1909; 24/5/1912 and 16/11/1915.

Negotiations to bring about an amalgamation between the two schools had been going on for some time and towards the close of 1915, Inspector Spurway felt confident of success. But he was disappointed and reported to the Director of Education that although the Christian School's Management Committee had reached agreement with him over the details of the merger the plan had been blocked by the intervention of the Church Council.¹ Once his plan to bring about the amalgamation of the two schools had failed Spurway decided that the amalgamation would be achieved only if the Christian school could be deprived of funds. In his view the Education Department should "freeze them into amalgamation" because he realised that they were unable to carry on without help from public funds. Thanks to a sympathetic local council and the strong Nationalist movement in the area the Christian School was able to get aid from a variety of sources. One of these was the payment of surplus rates into the School's fund. Spurway tried to get the authorities in Cape Town to prevent this but was later informed that the Provincial Legal Advisor had examined the matter and decided that it could not be prevented.²

Having failed to take over the Christian School, Spurway insisted on his right to inspect it. In fact regular inspections on an informal basis seem to have been carried out from 1907.³ At first these were probably welcomed in the hope that they would lead to State aid, but when Spurway's attitude towards the school became well known some antagonism towards his visits developed. This did not deter him and he expressed his intention of continuing his inspections whether they liked it or not on the grounds that they received some aid from the State.⁴

The inspection reports filed by Spurway give an interesting insight into the conditions at the Christian School. In 1913 he made an informal

1. SGE, 1/1511, letter Spurway to Murray, 24/1/1916.

2. SGE, 1/1511, Spurway to Murray, 22/3/1916; SGE, 1/1511, Murray to Spurway, 18/12/1916.

3. SGE, 2/258, Inspector's Report, 28/11/1907.

4. SGE, 1/1511, Spurway to Murray, 25/10/1916.

visit, on the basis of which he sent Dr. Muir a "confidential" report about the school. The report made the following points: 1. In terms of education planning he doubted if Steynsburg warranted a teacher training institution because it was too small a town. 2. The buildings and equipment of the Christian School were poor and it had insufficient lighting. Regarding the furniture and equipment he commented that they were "distinctly inferior to the public A.2. school". He also thought that the School's Library was "indifferent in range and quality, certainly quite inadequate for pupil-teachers in training,". Many rooms, he felt, were untidy and could have been better ordered. In fact it was far from a model practising school. 3. One teacher in the practise school was said to have "low" qualifications but the others were approved and the Principal of the pupil-training department was said to be "a man of considerable intelligence and force; whose work gave evidence of care and thought." Overall though, Spurway was not impressed by the standards of the school.¹

On the first official inspection in November 1916, which was made possible because some of the trainee teachers were receiving Government aid, Spurway made many similar comments, although he did say of the staff:

"tho' they have worked under difficult conditions, the Principal and every member of his Staff have shown undoubted earnestness. The somewhat high percentage of failure was due partly to defective classification, and partly to the fact that the teachers have too much to do".²

On an earlier visit that year he had also reported that he found an "earnest spirit" and "good tone" among the students.³

When putting their case for state aid the Christian School's Management Committee claimed that they were providing a valuable

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1. SGE, 2/362 Confidential Report 20/12/1913
 2. SGE, 2/440, Inspector's Report, 25/11/1916.
 3. SGE, 2/440, Inspector's Report, 10/10/1916.

educational service for a section of the community which would not otherwise allow its children to attend high school.¹ They also argued that they were saving the State money by financing the school and that it would be cheaper to support them rather than setting up a State school capable of taking over their educational role.² Spurway countered by saying that their claims were not entirely true and that in fact many of the children whom they counted among those they were educating came from "other districts", an argument which seems peculiarly weak.³

Another issue which irritated the Management Committee of the Christian School was the refusal of the Provincial Administration to give financial assistance to them for their trainee teachers. It was the usual practice of the various Provincial Administrations to give support to any student training to be a teacher on condition that he then taught for two years in that Province. But Dr. Muir and the Cape Authorities refused to support Reformed students who wanted to attend the Steynsburg Training School but who came from the Transvaal and Orange Free State.⁴

Replying to this criticism of his policies Dr. Muir said that the Cape Education Department had originally agreed to support nine student teachers in Steynsburg. But the Christian School had enrolled twenty-three trainee teachers, all of whom were receiving aid from the Education Department. It was therefore "out of the question" to consider further help to enable students from the Transvaal and Free State to train in Steynsburg. Muir had an even more serious criticism when he accused the Management Committee of the Christian School of a breach of faith. The Education Department had given the School a grant to train teachers but some of this money had been used to support the lower school and this could not be tolerated.⁵

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1. SSC, letter from Steynsburg Church Council to Provincial Administrator, 25/5/1912.
 2. SGE, letter Administrator to Acting Superintendent General of Education, 11/11/1915.
 3. SGE, 1/1423, Spurway to Murray, 22/11/1915.
 4. SSC, letter 27/4/1914, School Management Committee to Mr. van Rooy.
 5. SGE, 1/663, Memo copy of letter Dr. Muir to Mr. van Rooy, 15/6/1914.

One point of agreement between the Administration and the Reformed was the importance of the Nationalist movement to the Christian School. Spurway complained in 1915 that the school was a "Nationalist hotbed" and that it was the local Nationalist politicians who were helping the Management Committee to avoid an inevitable amalgamation with the State school in the town. They did this, Spurway claimed, by dominating the Local Council and School Board which enabled them to divert funds to the school whenever possible.¹ This allegation was probably correct because the School's supporters placed their hope in the ability of the National Party to use its organisation and political influence to help them obtain aid. In particular they hoped that the National Party could obtain a State subsidy for them.² Under these conditions they did all they could to further the Nationalist cause, and it would be surprising if their students had not been strong Nationalists.³

Reviewing the history of the Christian Schools and their disputes with the Cape Education Department it seems that people who genuinely believed in Christian Education were unfairly treated. Their beliefs were held up to scorn and dismissed as rationalizations covering other ulterior motives.⁴ It was constantly assumed by the Cape Education Authorities that the majority of Afrikaners did not support their leaders on the question of Christian Education.⁵ Spurway and Murray pried into the affairs of the Christian School and the Reformed Church to an extent that almost amounted to spying. Any discontent within the congregation or among parents was hailed as further proof of the unpopularity of Christian Education and evidence of the wisdom of the Education Department.⁶ Any ideas connected with Christian-National

1. SGE, letter Spurway to Murray, 1/1423, 22/11/1915.

2. SSC, letter Postma to van der Walt, 21/6/1915.

3. SSC, letter van Wyk to van der Walt, 17/8/1915; letter Postma to van der Walt, 15/10/1915; letter de Wet to van der Walt, 27/10/1915.

4. SGE, letter Spurway to Muir, 1/178, 14/9/1908.

5. SGE, 1/1511, letter Spurway to Murray 24/1/1916.

6. SGE, letter Spurway to Muir, 1/178, 14/9/1908; 1/1511, letter Spurway to Murray, 25/10/1916.

Education seem to have been rejected without really being considered.¹ The fact remains, however, that over the years the Cape Education Department changed its position on a number of issues and in each case moved nearer to the practice of the Christian National Schools. An example of this is the important question of the language of instruction. Because the Christian-National Education Movement gave greater attention to Dutch and urged separate language medium schools to facilitate instruction it was attacked for its racialism.² Yet in 1917 the Department admitted the advantages of separating children according to their home language, at least in the early stages of education and recommended to its schools the use of parallel classes.³

Another important point of criticism of the Steynsburg Christian School was its inadequate buildings and equipment which, it was claimed, diminished its value as a Teacher Training School. The geographic isolation of Steynsburg and the opinion of Spurway that it was "too much a poor white dorp" also prejudiced the Education Department against it.⁴ But this entirely overlooked the difficulties which isolated areas had in attracting teaching staff. Most teachers who took a teaching post in these areas stayed only a short time and left at the first possible opportunity.⁵ Once this was realised the "disadvantages" of the Training School came to be seen as positive advantages. Spurway's successor actually praised the Christian School and its Training Department because it introduced students to conditions which they would meet once they completed their training. They were not

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1. Cf. SGE, 1/1423, letter Spurway to Muir, 22/2/1915; Inspectors Radford and Boesma Informal Inspection Report 15-17/9/1919.
 2. Albert Times and Molteno News, 16/12/1904.
 3. SGE, 2/424, Inspector's Report, 12/11/1917.
 4. SGE, 1/1423, Spurway to Muir, 27/2/1915.
 5. SGE, 1/1142, letter to Superintendent General of Education from Burgersdorp School Board, 25/2/1913.

separated from their home backgrounds and were much more likely to remain in the area once they qualified as teachers.¹ The judgement of later inspectors and even of local people who had originally opposed the Christian School seems to have been positive, thus the actions of the members of the Christian-National School Movement seem to some extent at least to have been justified.²

1. SGE, 2/518, Inspector's Report, 17/9/1919.

2. SSC, Copy of speech delivered by Dr. Lomax at Steynsburg Christian School in the first quarter of 1919.

PART FOURThe Reformed Community and the Second Language Movement

In this section the struggle for the recognition of Afrikaans as a literary language in the face of competition from the established Dutch and English literary traditions is outlined. The part played by the Reformed Community in what became known as the "Second Language Movement" is discussed and the work of two important Reformed members of the Language Movement examined.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

The Second Afrikaans Language Movement

English, Dutch or Afrikaans?

The Second Afrikaans Language Movement differed from the First Language Movement¹ by being directly involved with politics from its inception.² Like the earlier movement it was not in itself a political movement. It was, however, a direct response to a particular political situation. The Second Language Movement arose out of the defeat of the Boer republics and the attempt by the British authorities to anglicise Afrikaners. It was part of a general defensive reaction aimed at preserving Afrikaner values and traditions from destruction by a conquering power. Lord Milner had hoped to secure the future of the British and their culture in South Africa by weakening that of the Afrikaners. But his actions simply created a cultural and political reaction which in time would threaten to destroy all he had worked for.³ The Reformed Church leader Willem Postma saw this very clearly and wrote, early in 1906

"one thing I know: Chamberlain, Milner, Jameson and the lot have done more for Afrikaners than all the liberals put together ... Milner has made us a Nation",⁴

The events which brought that nation into being were part of a long drawn out political struggle with cultural roots and which involved the attempt by Afrikaners to preserve their language.⁵

Immediately following the Second Anglo-Boer War the future of the various language groups in South Africa was unclear. Milner and

1. See pp 52-56.

2. J. D. du Toit - versameling (J. D. du Toit Papers), letter dated 15/7/1914 from D. F. du Toit.

3. Davenport, 1966, pp.252-253.

4. Nienaber, 1973, pp.29-30.

5. Shingler, 1973, Education and Political Order in South Africa, 1902-1961, pp.116-129.

his Imperial agents hoped to make English the main language of South Africans and used their political power to this end. The actions which they took produced a complex series of reactions on the part of Dutch speaking South Africans.¹ On the one hand the majority of Cape intellectuals hoped to preserve their Dutch traditions and language even if it meant that they would have to write Dutch in a simplified form. They were supported in this desire by a smaller number of Afrikaners in the northern provinces and the powerful Dutch Reformed Church.²

The main source of opposition to their views came not from the British but a growing number of Afrikaners who saw no future for the Dutch language in South Africa and therefore wanted to preserve their heritage by creating a literary language out of the everyday speech of the people.³ Working against both groups the masses were strongly tempted to capitulate to the supremacy of the British and abandon all forms of Dutch in an attempt to increase their economic potential.⁴

Afrikaner writers often assume that the British persisted in a systematic attempt to eradicate Dutch from South African life.⁵ But even Lord Milner was content to allow Dutch a place in South African society provided English was the main language.⁶ Other South Africans of British descent were usually much more sympathetic to the cause of Dutch, at least in the immediate post-war years. The English language newspaper The Potchefstroom Herald frequently argued for a greater use of Dutch.⁷

"the nation is dual in race ... The language of the land is dual, where no first or second should be known".⁸

It roundly condemned Englishmen who despised those fellow South Africans

1. *ibid*, pp.96-132.

2. Davenport, 1966, pp.264-266.

3. *ibid*, p.265; Nienaber, 1973, pp.19-28.

4. *TED*, 1909, p.25; *CED*, 1917, p.16.

5. van der Schyf, 1969, Die Gereformeerde Beginsel in die Onderwys tot 1963 pp.167-168.

6. Headlam, 1931, vol.2, p.515.

7. Potchefstroom Herald, 21/2/1902; 7/3/1902; 22/11/1905.

8. *ibid*, 13/6/1905.

who did not speak English very well and warned against the danger of Afrikaners losing or feeling ashamed of their Dutch heritage.¹

Not all Englishmen were either as opposed to Dutch as Lord Milner or as sympathetic as the Potchefstroom Herald. Many were simply confused by the situation facing them in South Africa. This confusion can be seen in the evidence collected by the Cape Education Department Select Committee on the Dutch Language in 1906. The British authorities and particularly those concerned with education were not faced with a simple choice between Dutch and English. The problem before them, leaving aside questions about African languages and other European ones like German,² was which form of Dutch to choose.³ In South Africa three separate yet similar languages were competing with each other under the general name of Dutch. There was literary Dutch as it could be found in the Netherlands, a simplified form of classical Dutch, and the newer attempt to reduce the spoken language - or was it a dialect? - of the South African Dutch speaking population to a new written language.⁴

The problem was a difficult one and is reflected in the Provincial Education departmental reports. Following the war there was a short lived but determined effort to foster the use of English in the belief that this was in the best interest of the children because it increased their ability to earn a living.⁵ This soon gave way, in official circles, to a real respect for Dutch and a realisation of the importance of instruction in the home language during the early years of education.⁶ But respecting a language and giving it the place it should have had in schools are two very different things. For one thing many teachers found it difficult to put into practice because they did not speak very good

1. Potchefstroom Herald, 23/8/1902.

2. Report of the Cape Parliament's Select Committee on the Dutch Language, A24-'06, 1906, p.95.

3. ibid, pp.17 and 11.

4. ibid, p.17.

5. TED, 1905, pp. 87 and 92.

6. TED, 1909, pp.23-26.

Dutch themselves,¹ and even those who did found that they were teaching children who understood less Dutch than they did English. This was because their home language was not Dutch but the "taal" or common speech out of which Afrikaans evolved.² And many parents actually objected to their children learning Dutch. Their argument was that their children needed to be proficient in English if they were to find suitable employment when they left school, while they could easily pick up Dutch at home.³

Under these circumstances it is easy to see why the advocates of Afrikaans, like the journalist Gustav Preller, believed that if any trace of their Dutch origins were to be preserved in South Africa it would be through the creation of a new written language which gave respectability to the everyday speech of the people.⁴ They opposed the views of the Taalbond (Language Union) which had been formed in 1890 and revived in 1903 to promote a simplified form of Dutch, by pointing out the weakness of the Union's case. Dutch might be a literary language with a rich cultural heritage but it was as foreign to the average Afrikaner as English, if not more so. Given a choice between Dutch and English most Afrikaners, or so the proponents of Afrikaans believed, would choose English.⁴

In March 1905 Jan Hofmeyer, one of the leading figures in the Taalbond and a prominent Cape politician, addressed the Stellenbosch Literary Society in a speech entitled Is't Ons Ernst? (Are We Serious?).⁵ This was a passionate appeal for Afrikaners to remember their Dutch heritage and language and was subsequently distributed as a pamphlet.⁵ Preller, who was the editor of the Pretoria daily Die Volkstem (The People's Voice)⁴ replied in a series of editorials which carefully

1. TED, 1909, p.99; CED, 1917, p.16

2. TED, 1909, p.77; 1917, p.126; 1918, p.137.

3. TED, 1915, p.39; CED, 1917, p.16.

4. Die Volkstem, April 19th - June 14th, 1905.

5. Hofmeyer, 1905, Is't Ons Ernst?

marshalled the arguments in favour of Afrikaans and against Dutch. Yet

he did not completely turn his back on Dutch. Instead he said

"until Afrikaans becomes the generally written language
we are taking it as our rule of action: to write and
speak Afrikaans, to learn Dutch and to read both",¹

In advocating Afrikaans Preller forcefully argued that following Hofmeyer's advice would quickly lead to the complete supremacy of English. This argument can be summarised by the following extract from a satirical letter composed by Preller and supposedly written by an Afrikaner struggling to master simplified Dutch

"as my Dutch is not sufficiently good - Pardon me for
writing in English, but I can hardly rely on my dear
taal - Hope you won't mind, old chap, but my Dutch
grammar is too rusty to work, please translate".²

Replying to the argument that while Dutch had a rich and diverse literary tradition Afrikaans had none Preller published the following poem

"Is Afrikaans your mother-tongue?
then where is your literature?
This treasure in all its majesty,
comes from the Netherlands.

My mother tongue is Afrikaans!
I'll make her literature;
writing and composing with my pen,
despite your sour look".³

Poetic arguments have an appeal of their own and when coupled with native wit can be devastating, as Preller proved when he turned on English

"Begin with a box,
the plural is boxes,
But the plural of ox,
is oxen not oxes!

If I speak of a foot,
and you show me your feet,
Why do we have two boots,
and not a beet?"

1. Davenport, 1966, p.265.

2. Pienaar, 1943, Die Triomf van Afrikaans, p.254.

3. De Volkstem, 19/8/1905.

So successful was this campaign that even Dutchmen were won over by the argument and one Dutch writer even argued for the simplification of the language in the Netherlands on the basis of what had been achieved by the Afrikaans movement in South Africa.¹ Dutch residents in South Africa were equally enthusiastic about the new language as the following extract from a letter to Die Volkstem shows

"a People make a language ... The language of the Afrikaner People is Afrikaans, as such it has a great future. In my heart I support the use of Dutch but my head tells me: in Africa Afrikaans".²

This enthusiasm for Afrikaans by native born Dutchmen who were in the Netherlands and South Africa did not go unnoticed by the English speaking population and an editorial in December 1907 in the Potchefstroom Herald summed up their reaction to it by saying

"these things can be settled amicably on the spot without interference from Holland. To the Transvaalers' cost there has been enough of that in the past",³

This feeling of irritation with the Taalbond is also part of a general hardening of the attitude of English speaking South Africans towards Afrikaner aspirations. Only a few years before the Potchefstroom Herald had been defending the use of Dutch but now it began to complain

"too much time is spent in school teaching English children Dutch. The necessities of the Taal should be taught only".⁴

For a few years more the attitude expressed in the paper towards Dutch and Afrikaans was ambivalent. An editorial in October 1909 still affirmed that both white races must know and respect each other's language.⁵ But with the rise of Hertzog as a political leader championing the Dutch-Afrikaans cause, the opinion of the paper hardened against the Afrikaner position.⁶ The dangers of "Hertzogism" and the

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1. R. A. Kollwijn writing in De Amsterdammer reported in De Volkstem 4/11/1905.
 2. De Volkstem 12/7/1905.
 3. Potchefstroom Herald, 11/12/1907.
 4. ibid, 15/4/1908.
 5. ibid, 1/8/1909.
 6. ibid, 24/12/1909; 8/7/1910.

"extreme Dutch" became an increasing obsession, and although editorial policy continued to affirm bi-lingualism other articles and reports clearly reflect a growing anti-Dutch feeling which reached a climax during 1915.¹

Following the success of his propaganda offensive Preller suggested the formation of Afrikaans language societies throughout South Africa.² These he thought should be formed locally and united in a national organisation. The idea met with an enthusiastic response and small societies were quickly formed in many towns.³ To link these together Preller organised the Afrikaanse Taalgenootskap, (Fellowship of the Afrikaans Language) in Pretoria in December 1905. A similar organisation was formed for the Cape in Cape Town in July 1906 called the Afrikaanse Taalvereniging, (Afrikaans Language Society). One of the leading figures in this new society was J. H. H. de Waal, the editor of De Goede Hoop, (The Good Hope) a magazine produced by the Taalbond to popularise its version of simplified Dutch. De Waal's change of heart on this issue was brought about by his experience as an editor and shocked his friends in the Taalbond causing some bitterness between the two sides.⁴

Not all Afrikaners saw a necessary conflict between the use of Dutch and Afrikaans, and in November 1906 General Hertzog was advocating the eventual use of Afrikaans with the provision that until a literature was developed and a generation grew up with Afrikaans as a written language, Dutch should continue to be taught as well.⁵ This position was agreed upon by the leaders of both movements at a conference in Paarl in December 1907 when they decided to form a common front against English.⁶

1. Cf. Potchefstroom Herald, 26/8/1910; 18/10/1912; 19/5/1914; 16/3/1915.

2. Het Westen, 22/12/1905.

3. ibid.

4. Davenport, 1966, pp.264-266.

5. Het Westen, 7/12/1906.

6. Dekker, 1961, Afrikaanse Literatuur-Geskiedenis, p.41.

More important than these developments for the securing of the future of Afrikaans was the flowering of the literary movement which began in 1908 with the publication of two important collections of war poetry by Jan Celliers and J. D. du Toit, who wrote under the pen-name of Totius.¹ Drawing attention to the great significance of these works Moodie observes

"such poetry objectifying the pain of suffering individuals made it more bearable. It also enabled those Afrikaners who had not been directly affected to partake in the national grief. By articulating and universalizing the Afrikaner fate, this new Afrikaans literature helped to formulate a clear consciousness of national identity".²

The truth of this assessment can be felt in the poignant poem of Celliers entitled Dis Al (That's All)³ which sums up in a vivid starkness the harsh beauty of South Africa and the numbed grief of the prisoner of war who returns to find his family dead and his home in ruins

"Golden,
Blue,
the veld,
the sky,
a lonely bird in flight,
that's all.

A prisoner returns,
from over the sea.
A grave in the grass,
a falling tear -
that's all."³

On the basis of poems like this the future of Afrikaans was secured and the institutionalisation of the Language Movement went from strength to strength. The Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie Vir Wetenskap en Kuns (The South African Academy for Language, Literature and the Arts) was established in 1909⁴ and in May 1910 the important popular magazine Die Brandwag (The Watchman)⁵ began publication.

1. Dekker, 1958, pp.62-84.

2. Moodie, 1975, pp.42-43.

3. Dis al, my translation cf. Grove and Harvey, ed., Afrikaans Poems with English Translations, 1962, pp.12-13.

4. Dekker, 1958, p.42; Pienaar, 1943, p.316 f.

Afrikaans was recognised as a language which could be used in State schools in 1914 although a number of years were to pass before this decision could be fully implemented. The Dutch Reformed Church recognised the use of Afrikaans in 1916, to be followed by the Reformed Church in 1917.¹ The first edition of the authoritative Afrikaans Woordelys en Speelreels (Afrikaans Wordlist and Spelling Rules) was produced in 1918² and in 1919 the third Afrikaans Reformed Church, the Nederduits Hervormde Kerk (the Re-formed Church)³ followed the example of her sister Churches by recognising Afrikaans.³ Finally on May 8th 1925, fifty years after the formation of the Genootskap van Regte Afrikaners, their language Afrikaans was declared one of the official languages of the Union of South Africa.⁴ But it was not until May 1933 that the Genootskap's objective - the publication of an Afrikaans Bible - was achieved.⁵

The Reformed Church and the Second Language Movement

Although the Reformed Church did not officially recognise the use of Afrikaans in worship services until 1917 this does not mean that the Church was reluctant to use Afrikaans. The Dutch Reformed Church approved the use of Afrikaans earlier than the Reformed Church but, unlike those of the Reformed Church, its ministers were divided on the value of Afrikaans and at the early stages of the language struggle many actively opposed the development of Afrikaans.⁶ Members of the Reformed Church, however, were consistent in their strong support for the Second Language Movement throughout this period and many of the Church's leaders played important roles in the Language Movement.⁷

1. Dekker, 1958, p.43; Pienaar, 1943, p.350 f.

2. Pienaar, 1943, p.319.

3. Dekker, 1958, p.43.

4. Pienaar, 1943, p.368.

5. Nienaber, 1970, Die Opkoms van Afrikaans as Kultuur-taal, p.70.

6. Potchefstroom Herald, 24/11/1908.

7. J. D. du Toit as a poet, Willem Postma as a prose writer and Jan Kamp as a linguist; see pp. 190-228.

The necessity of developing Afrikaans was seen by the Reformed Community as part of the struggle to maintain a distinct Afrikaner identity and was closely linked, as has already been shown, with their educational and religious beliefs. A writer in Het Kerkblad summed up these relationships by saying

"we struggle for the preservation of Afrikanerdom, our Nationality, our Religion, and our Language".²

This struggle was not seen only as a conflict with the English and against the English language but as a battle against the Dutch and Dutch culture as well.³ Afrikaners were called upon to be themselves by realising that their outlook on life and aspirations differed from those of both the English and the Dutch. Only if they did this would they realise the distinctive contribution which their language made to their lifestyle and acknowledge its true importance.⁴ The maintenance of their language was essential for the preservation of their national identity

"If our language is lost then our People are lost ..."⁵

The future depended upon which language would predominate in South Africa and which culture would triumph by holding its People together in a unity of life.⁵

The Reformed Community rejected a simplified form of Dutch because it did not meet their requirements and in their view was not fitted to the South African environment because it was an artificially manufactured language and not one which had grown out of the South African society.⁶ Stellenbosch students backed Jan Hofmeyer in his call for the use of simplified Dutch and were attacked by Reformed students in Potchefstroom for doing so. The Stellenbosch students argued that there was no real

1. See p. 105-106.

2. Het Kerkblad, 1/4/1905.

3. Het Studenteblad, 14/10/1903.

4. ibid, 21/9/1904.

5. ibid, 9/3/1904.

6. ibid, 21/9/1904.

1077
problem in the fact that people spoke and thought in Afrikaans while they wrote in Dutch because even the Dutch in the Netherlands wrote in literary Dutch rather than the Dutch which they spoke. To this the Potchefstroom students replied that originally the language of the Netherlands had been a unified language which was written as it was spoken and that the development of separate literary and spoken languages in the Netherlands was itself a retrograde step. Therefore they did not think the argument of the Stellenbosch students was a very sound one; rather, it showed a lack of thought about the situation which existed in the Netherlands. The attempt to adapt Dutch to South African society was seen by the Reformed students as the cause of the lack of a literary tradition native to South Africa. People would write well only if they wrote in the language in which they thought. This was the reason why South Africa had as yet (1904) produced no great poets. The ultimate argument against Dutch was simple

"the language you learn on your mother's knee is Afrikaans not Dutch".¹

With this background it is easy to see why the leaders of the Reformed Community were enthusiastic in their acclaim of Preller's call for Afrikaners to develop Afrikaans.² It was Afrikaans that gave them their unique identity, and this was an idea with far reaching consequences. Not only did Afrikaans distinguish Afrikaners from the English and the Dutch but it made them a separate race, a peculiar People

"as one body we will work in the noble direction, which is to make a start with the language that makes our Nation a separate Nation".³

In this statement the religious, political and linguistic strands of the Second Language Movement merge. Behind it there is surely the

1. Het Studenteblad, 19/10/1904.

2. Fac et Spera, 1/7/1905; Het Westen, 12/1/1906; 30/11/1906.

3. Fac et Spera, 1/7/1905.

Calvinist doctrine of Providence which sees in the history of the language the workings of God and the creation of a new nation. But that is not all because the statement is also pregnant with the future doctrine of "apartheid". The word used for "separate" is very significantly the word "apart" the passage could easily be translated ... "the language which makes our Nation an 'apart' Nation".

The main difference between the Reformed Communities' support for Afrikaans and the position of other members of the Language Movement was their explicit identification of the Dutch heritage of Afrikaners with their religion. Because of this a heightened awareness of national identity as a religious responsibility is evident in their works. They respected the Dutch language because

"the noble Dutch language is the language of strong Calvinists".¹ They realised that Dutch was doomed in South Africa and with it the Calvinism of the Dutch tradition, unless they could bring about the recognition of Afrikaans which, while distinct from Dutch, embodied the Calvinist heritage of the Netherlands. The maintenance of Afrikaans was, therefore, not merely a national duty but a religious one as well

"the soul of our private religious lives is our language".²

Dutch could be used by Afrikaners to build up their own culture because it grew out of a Calvinist environment. But English must be avoided because it represented the threat of a rival religious system that had rejected and overcome Calvinism in British society. The key to the preservation of their language was therefore religious

"take away our language and we will become Englishmen and accept their religion".²

To many Afrikaners the threat of Anglicisation did not seem very great and certainly not a religious issue. Unlike most of the "natives"

1. Fac et Spera, 1/10/1905.

2. Nienaber, 1973, p.24; originally published by W. Postma in De Vriend des Volks, 28/10/1910.

the English were Christians and that was enough. But the Reformed knew better. The threat of Anglicisation meant the destruction of their religion. It had been present from before the Second Anglo-Boer War when they had been able to look with pride to the northern republics. Now all that they had left was their language as a symbol of national identity. They shared with Professor W. J. Viljoen of Stellenbosch the view that

"the Republics have fallen and with them their independence but our autonomy as a South African nation has been retained. Our autonomy is retained in two things: our Church and our Language ... Our language is an exact replica of our autonomy as a People and a true portrait of our People's character".¹

In dying the republics had achieved something they failed to achieve while alive: the unification of Afrikanerdom. As independent states the very existence of separate governments with often conflicting interests had helped divide Afrikaner loyalties. But their brutal destruction at the hand of British Imperialism began to unite Afrikaners through a folk mythology which appealed to the golden age of the lost republics. Now that their political reality was no more the republics became an ideal which inspired young Afrikaners, constantly challenging them to be true patriots. The logic of this new republicanism is discussed by Dunbar Moodie who says

"the republics, like Christ, had come and yet were to come. Even as Christ's resurrection was the promised first-fruits of the final resurrection, so the Orange Free State and the South African Republic were the first-fruits of a republican second coming".²

To this perceptive analysis it could be added that in the interregnum, while the return of the republics was awaited, their language became the Holy Spirit of the republican movement. Afrikaans was their comforter; a symbol and seal of the promised fulfilment.

Phenomenologically the situation existing after the war can be seen as one in which a holy trinity of Church, School and Language worked

1. Monument Komite: 1908; Monument Onthuling-Burgersdorp, pp.26-27.
2. Moodie, 1975, p.14.

together in preserving the republican ideal, and in so doing become living symbols of a lost independence which alone fully guaranteed the sanctity of Afrikaner identity. In turn republican symbolism sustained the struggle for the Church, School and Language, thus creating a self-perpetuating circle of interests. The symbol created the faith and their faith gave the symbolism a reality independent of its embodiment. At stake was not a matter of ecclesiastical structure, dogma, educational policy or language, although all of these were involved. What was important was a question of identity. In fighting for their right to be Afrikaners the Reformed were defending their right to be People, to be Human.¹

To appreciate the above point it is necessary to examine in some detail the explicit contribution of Reformed writers to the Language Movement. But before their literary contribution is examined it is worth considering the role of Jan Kamp as a theorist of Afrikaans. Kamp was born in Enschede in the Netherlands in 1862 and emigrated to South Africa in 1897 owing to poor health. But before leaving the Netherlands he was active as a member of the Anti-Revolutionary Political Party and an editor on Kuyper's daily newspaper De Staandaard. In South Africa he worked for a while as a school teacher and then studied theology at the Reformed Church Theological College. While doing this his great talents as an educator were recognised and he was given the responsibility for literary instruction in the College's Literary Department. It was in this capacity that Kamp undertook his work for the Afrikaans Language Movement and as a theorist of Christian National Education.²

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1. Apter, 1965, The Politics of Modernization; Welbourn and Ogot, 1966, A Place to feel at home, pp.132-145.
 2. van der Vyver, 1969, p.131.

Kamp played an important role in the establishment of the recognised examinations to test the proficiency of Afrikaans writers, thus increasing its acceptability as a written language. He also helped to draw up the Taalbond examination syllabuses and wrote introductory notes for the guidance of students taking the examination. In addition he wrote two important theoretical works on Dutch literature and a number of articles about Afrikaans writers.¹

In his works on language the strong polemics of his educational writings were replaced by a scholarly style and an attempt to establish a literary tradition in which Afrikaans writers would feel at home. The effect was probably far greater than his highly emotional educational arguments because it assumed the acceptance of Afrikaans and in this way added a note of confidence to the struggling Language Movement. The brazen Nationalism of the other Reformed writers during this period was missing from Kamp's scholarly work, which due to its lack of polemic, was in many ways a greater challenge to produce good Afrikaans literature than if he had made a strong appeal for Afrikaners to develop their own tradition.

His important study Proeve Inleiding tot de Nederlandse Letterkunde (An Introduction to Dutch Literature)² was first published in 1909 and was a minor classic. It led the reader to identify with the rich heritage of the Dutch literary tradition and gave Afrikaners cause for pride when challenged by the rival claims of the English language. In this work Kamp drew special attention to the works of Bilderdijk and da Costa. They worked as Christian writers in a Christian-National tradition that grew out of the Calvinistic origins of the Dutch Republic.

1. Kamp, 1910, Taalbond Studie 1910; 1909, Proeve Inleiding tot de Nederlandse Letterkunde; 1912. De Nieuwe Richting in de Nederlandse Letterkunde; Die Brandwag, 15/11/1913, August and September, 1916, 25/3/1919.

2. Kamp, 1909, pp.16-25, 34-37, 64-65 and 138-143.

After a careful discussion of various trends in Dutch literature Kamp turned his attention, in the concluding section, to the rise of Afrikaans. This he saw as a natural development from Dutch, given South African conditions.¹

Kamp's second work of literary criticism, De Nieuwe Richting in de Nederlandse Letterkunde (New Directions in Dutch Literature), was a study of contemporary literary movements in the Netherlands. Through this he was able to develop an argument for a distinctive Christian-National literature which he hoped would be born in South Africa. The impact of this book, like the earlier one, lay in its ability to show the reader Dutch literature in such a way that it caused him to reflect on his own situation in South Africa and feel the need to create an indigenous literary tradition out of the religious experience of the Afrikaner People.²

In his writings Kamp expressed an Anti-Revolutionary and Romantic belief that the essential element in understanding a situation is its intellectual articulation. Thus he saw the growth of Dutch literature as a produce of the National spirit of the Dutch People which grew out of their Calvinistic religion. Similarly he tried to predict the growth of Afrikaans literature on the basis of the strong National feelings which he discovered in the community. For him the religious roots of literature gave it a dynamic which functioned to express the deepest human emotions. It is in the individual's relationship to the community with its contemporary life and traditions that Kamp found the source of culture and in doing so underlined the importance of identity in the literary movement.³

1. See p.191 footnote number 2.

2. Kamp 1912. pp.32-39.

Totius - Afrikaans Prophet and Interpreter of the Word of GodJ. D. du Toit - Totius

Born in Paarl, Cape Colony, in 1877, J. D. du Toit was the son of the Reverend S. J. du Toit, the leader of the First Language Movement. He received his early education from German missionaries in Rustenburg, in the Transvaal, and attended high school in Paarl after his father returned to the Cape. He then went to the Theological School of the Reformed Church in Burgersdorp. After serving for a short time in a Boer commando he went to the Netherlands in 1900. He received his doctorate from the Free University of Amsterdam in 1903 for a thesis on Methodism. Returning to South Africa he became a minister in the Reformed Church and was called to the Potchefstroom congregation. In 1911 he became Professor of Theology at the Church Theological School in Potchefstroom^o and was for many years the editor of Het Kerkblad (The Church Paper). Between 1916 and 1933 he played a leading role in translating the Bible into Afrikaans and during the 1930s worked hard to reconcile divergent groups within the Afrikaans Nationalist movement.¹ A prolific writer he produced many popular works on theology and church history in addition to a major biography of his father. But above all he is remembered for his moving poetry written under the pseudonym Totius.²

From 1908 to 1948 Totius produced nine major collections of poetry. His first work By Die Monument (By the Monument) appeared in 1908 and was quickly followed by Potgieter's Trek, (Potgieter's Trek) in 1909. His next work, Wilgerboom boogies (In Praise of Weeping Willows),

1. Moodie, 1975, pp.194 and 224-225.

2. Dekker, 1958, pp.70-71.

appeared in 1912 to be followed by Ragel (Rachel) in 1913 and Trekkers wee (The Trekker's Grief) in 1915. Kinder verse (Children's Poems) appeared in 1920, Passie bloome (Passion Flowers) in 1934 and Uit Donker Afrika (Out of Darkest Africa) in 1936. His last published collection of poems Skemering (Twilight) appeared in 1948. He died in 1953.

The Vitality of the Word

In an article "The Vitality of the Word of God in the Old Testament"¹ P. R. Ackroyd has argued that apparent repetitions of the same basic statement in the Old Testament are not the products of a poor imagination or lack of creative ability but an expression of belief in the power of the Word. The principle behind this usage of Biblical material was, he says

"the living application of the recognised word of God ... to the ever new needs of a community sensitive to the vitality of that word",²

As an example of what he means he cites the prophetic pronouncement made by Ahijah to the wife of Jeroboam

"anyone belonging to Jeroboam who dies
in the city the dogs shall eat; and
anyone who dies in the open country
the birds of the air shall eat; for
the Lord has spoken it".³

This verse appears in I Kings 14.11 and is repeated in I Kings 16.4 and I Kings 21.24, on these two occasions by different prophets to different people. The reason for this, Ackroyd argues, is the applicability of the "word" in each case. It was a vital message of judgement proclaimed by the prophet deemed applicable in each situation. He explains:

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1. Ackroyd, "The Vitality of the Word of God in the Old Testament", Annual of the Swedish Theological Institute, 1962, pp.7-23.
 2. ibid, p.7.
 3. I Kings, 14.11.

"in each case the divine oracle has its message, and the application of one word to three different situations proves not the versatility of the transmitter, certainly not his threadbare imagination, but rather his sense of its vitality and meaning as comment on the pattern of history".¹

A similar interpretation is possible of many New Testament passages where prophecies from the Old Testament are apparently taken out of context and applied to situations where they seem to fit though certainly not in terms of their original usage. Typical of this method of interpretation is the use of Jeremiah 31.15 in Matthew 2.18. The original prophecy reads

"Thus says the Lord:
'A voice is heard in Ramah,
lamentation and bitter weeping.
Rachel is weeping for her children;
she refuses to be comforted for
her children,
because they are not'.²

The original use of this passage was to comment on the tragedy of the people of Jerusalem being led away to exile in Babylon. On their way the dispirited column marched past Ramah, a small village where Rachel the wife of Jacob and mother of the Israelites lay buried.³ Rachel had died in childbirth but she had not died in vain.⁴ Neither would the Exile be a futile experience but one which would enrich God's chosen people in their understanding of His ways.⁵ Jeremiah pictures Rachel weeping in her tomb for the fate of her people, her children. In a similar way the author of Matthew's Gospel takes the verse from its context in Jeremiah and applies it to the Massacre of the Innocents. Out of suffering would come the triumph of God's purposes.⁶

With this Biblical background in mind it is possible to approach

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1. Ackroyd, 1962, p.10.
 2. Jeremiah, 31.15.
 3. I Samuel, 10.2; Genesis, 36.19-20.
 4. Genesis, 35.16-20.
 5. Jeremiah, 31.16-17.
 6. Matthew 2.18 cf. Tasker, 1961, The Gospel According to St. Matthew, pp.43-44; Hill, 1972, The Gospel of Matthew, p.86.

and appreciate the poetry of Totius. As a Calvinist theologian he was steeped in the Bible and it is this fact which moulds and gives power to his poetry. For him the Bible was the living Word of God, absolutely trustworthy and an essential textbook for the whole of life.¹ It was the Christian's duty to meditate on God's Word and to allow his thoughts to be moulded by the Bible thus bringing him into conformity with God's will.²

By Die Monument

As a result of the internment policy of the British military authorities during the Second Anglo-Boer War over 20,000 women and children, representing a ratio of about one person in twelve, died in the concentration camps. The deaths horrified Lord Milner and other British leaders yet for a variety of reasons they were allowed to occur. The problem was one of mismanagement rather than a deliberate policy of genocide, although many Afrikaners were later to believe that the British had deliberately killed their women and children.³

The great grief caused by the internment policy prompted ex-president Steyn to propose the building of a memorial by which the sacrifice of the women and children in the cause of the Afrikaner People could be remembered. A fund was set up in 1907 to raise money for this monument. It was built just outside Bloemfontein and in 1913 it was finally unveiled. A simple dignified structure it stands as a grim reminder of the agony of war, the suffering of a People and their determination not to forget their departed loved ones.⁴

To help raise money for the monument Totius donated the proceeds from his first collection of poems to the monument fund. These poems

1. du Toit, 1961, Vol V, pp.75-97.

2. du Toit, 1961, Vol V, pp.86-97.

3. Walker, 1964, pp.498-499.

4. van der Merve, n.d., The National Women's Monument.

were entitled appropriately By Die Monument (By the Monument) and were dedicated to those women and children who had died. Writing a forward to the volume ex-president Steyn said

"the first-fruits of our literature are as delightful to me as the sound of the first drops of rain after a long drought",¹

Steyn also said that the poet was able to see in his mind's eye the completed monument and through his poetry gave the reader a glimpse of what Afrikaners hoped to achieve by erecting a monument.¹

The whole collection of poems contained three sections each of which viewed the tragic events of the internment camps from a different perspective.²

The first section Die Kind (The Child) begins with the terror of the children who see the British troops arriving to take them and their mother to the internment camp. Comment is made on the irony of the situation with a moving poem in which the faithful ox-wagon which had enabled the trekkers to settle their land becomes a symbol of oppression, because it is the same wagon which takes the family to prison. Then comes a series of verses that include a dialogue between the mother and her children who plead for the food she is unable to give them. Finally they are laid to rest in graves on the veld. The pathos of the poems is brought home in the following verse which concludes a long section where the child begs for food

"Her child slept with this sweet thought:
When I awake help will arrive from the Lord.
The mother received with eager hand
her rations at last - but the child was dead",³

The second section Die Vrou (The Mother) continues with the agony of the mother in the camp giving her reaction to the tragedy

1. du Toit, 1961, Vol. VIII, p.160.

2. du Toit, 1961, Vol. VIII, pp.163-184; Dekker, 1958, pp.73-74.

3. du Toit, 1961, Vol. VIII, p.165.

that has befallen her. This section contains what is perhaps Totius' most famous poem Vergewe en Vergeet (Forgive and Forget). It begins with a quotation from the book of Deuteronomy

"only take heed, and keep your soul diligently, lest you forget the things which your eyes have seen",¹

The poet then tells the story of a young thorn tree growing beside a road. One day a large wagon came along and one of its wheels ran over the small tree bending it low and causing severe damage. The tree was not uprooted and in time it began to grow again. As it did so, the scar caused by the wagon remained and, with the passing of time, although the wound healed the scar grew.

The message is clear. The thorn tree represents the Afrikaner People and the wagon the British Empire. After all that they had experienced at the hand of the British Afrikaners could never "forgive and forget". They bore the marks of the conflict in the body of the People. As Christians they could forgive but as Afrikaners, called by God to form a new People in South Africa, they could not forget and to do so would be to forsake their calling.

The poem was thus more than a moving work of art. It was a profound statement of national identity and political intent based upon a faith in the future and God's providential leading of His People. Appearing, as it did, in 1908 it was also a telling criticism of the policies of Het Volk² and Afrikaner leaders like General Botha who wanted conciliation with the English. It was a clarion call to resistance and encouraged Afrikaners who were prepared to continue their struggle for national self-determination.

The final section of By Die Monument; Die Man (The Father) was written from the perspective of the father returning to his farm to find

1. Deuteronomy 4.9.

2. See p. 135.

it in ruins and his family dead. Typical of the feelings evoked is the following verse

"The kraal wall is rebuilt
the old hand helps again,
but oh! the pain within
the grief old, yet ever new.
'My shepherd', he sighed, 'has returned,
my cattle also;
only my wife and child stay away,
and they will come no more".¹

But instead of ending on this note of despair Totius directs his readers thoughts to the hardy and resilient Besembos, a desert weed, which becomes the symbol of the Afrikaner People. This bush flourishes in places where other less strong plants die. So too the Afrikaner People are able to live through adversity surviving where other Peoples would capitulate before overwhelming odds.

Like the Old Testament prophet Totius gives an interpretation of his People's trials which reinterprets their suffering in terms of God's Providence and sees in sorrow hope for the future. Through the poems his readers can experience a catharsis which releases them from the burden of the past by giving them the certainty that their families did not die in vain.²

Potgieter's Trek

Published the following year, in 1909, Potgieter's Trek³ is an epic monument to the Voortrekkers. Many Doppers regarded Potgieter as a trekker leader who shared their religious convictions and so they identified with his trek.⁴ The Potgieter trek was seen as a religious pilgrimage in search of freedom from the oppression of British rule. In this, his second collection of poems, Totius drew on the memory of an earlier period in Afrikaner history to create an image of the Afrikaner

1. du Toit, 1961, Vol. VIII, p.183.

2. van den Heever, 1932, Die Digter Totius, pp.51-75; Nienaber, ed., 1948, Totius Digter en Profeet, pp.123-133.

3. du Toit, 1961, Vol. VIII, pp.187-201; Dekker, 1958, p.75.

4. Postma, 1918, pp.42-43.

People which supplemented the one created in his poem By Die Monument.¹

Totius points to the strengths of the Afrikaner People; their resilience, their faith in the future, their faith in God, their ability to endure hardship and to persevere. All of these attributes had enabled them to undertake the Trek and endure the war. He shows how God moulded them through their history, developing their national character and awareness of a distinct identity. Through suffering they had been born as a People and in suffering they had been reborn, gaining a depth of spirit and an awareness of the mystery of God's Providence which would equip them to face the future with certainty.

There are twelve sections to Potgieter's Trek which tells the story of the trials and achievements of the Voortrekkers. Setting the scene against the backdrop of history the poem begins

"Darkest Africa! Centuries old,
a wild world! I see your gloomy picture,
your endlessly vast savage coasts;
surrounded by storms; seething; inhospitable!

. . .
But wait! Who comes? Spreading light?
On your southern borders: Light is moving! Commanding -
the trekker with his rifle, his wagon and Book,
In your interior he seeks his freedom".²

The theme that it is the trekker who tamed the wilderness and brought civilization to Africa, unfolds. With him and the light he brings, derived from his knowledge of God's Word, lies the future of the continent. Leaving the protection of the Cape Colony the trekker fulfils God's call, just as Abraham left Ur of the Chaldees in response to God's command.³ This identification between Afrikaner movements and the characters of the Old Testament underlies the imagery of the whole poem and is made explicit in the concluding section which is headed: Potgieter -

1. Buson, 1951, Die Spanningsverhouding Tussen Mens en God soos dit in die poesie van Eugene Marais, Totius en Toon van der Heever tot uitdrukking kom.

2. du Toit, 1961, Vol.VIII, p.187.

3. Genesis 12.

"But see! the world becomes wilder;
 the fierce vermin worsen,
 stark naked black hordes,
 following tyrants.
 How the handful of trekkers suffer,
 the freedom seekers, creators of a People.
 Just like another Israel,
 by enemies surrounded, lost in the veld,
 but for another Canaan elected,
 led forward by God's plan".¹

They went forward into a good land but not all that was in it was good and before it was theirs they had to face the "black hordes". Totius commemorates the victory at Battle Hill where a small group of trekkers repulsed an overwhelming number of Ndebele warriors. Civilization is a hard won prize and Totius sounds a warning that it may not even prove a permanent part of the African scene if the trekkers and their children are not vigilant. The viewpoint of their greatest enemy, the African, is summarised in a poem about the Ndebele chief Mzilikazi in which he voices the black man's sentiment by saying

"We were here from the beginning,
 the white man will not win;
 one day he will be vanquished;
 one day we will drive him away!
 Yes! the land we'll sweep clean,
 and kaffir justice will reappear".²

In another poem Kafferlied (The Kaffir's Song), Totius again shows an understanding of the African's feeling of injustice and at the same time uses it to convey to his readers the precariousness of their own position

"The kaffir, he came first, the white man
 came later.

...

The kaffir dies, white men
 die later,
 White men live now, kaffirs
 live later.
 White men laugh now, kaffirs
 laugh later".³

1. du Toit, 1961, Vol. VIII, p.199.

2. *ibid*, p.198.

3. *ibid*, pp.193-194.

Whatever sympathy there may be for the fate of the African in these poems, and there is some, it is muted by a realisation that the African presents a continuing threat to the existence of the Afrikaner People. Africans represent the forces of chaos poised to destroy order and plunge Africa back into its long centuries of darkness. Yet like the prophet who has warned Israel, Totius does not close his message on a note of gloom. God has performed a mighty work and it is his firm conviction that God's will will triumph

"Shine African sun, shine brilliantly!
Sing veld wind, sing!
Let the shrubs frolic and dance,
the hills jump on high!
Bow low your interior!
A new age is born!
The storm is over,
the time of darkness past!
No longer shall your ground be trod
by strange and savage feet!"¹

Apart from the prophetic-interpretive element in the poem, which sees the lot of the Afrikaner People in relation to God's plan, there is another religious element which emerges briefly. This comes in a section entitled Trekkerslied (The Trekker's Song).² In this the reader gains a unique insight into the mentality of the trekker.³ His is a life of pilgrimage. The horizon beckons him on and he finds no rest but in his God. Taking up the Biblical theme that life on earth is a pilgrimage with no abiding resting place⁴ Totius sees the trekker's lot as one modelled on the Biblical ideal

1. du Toit, 1961. Vol. VIII, p.199.

2. *ibid*, p.195.

3. cf. Postma, 1897, Einige schetsen voor eene geschiedenis van de trekboeren ... There is a certain restlessness among many Afrikaners causing them always to be moving on. This may involve changing farms or houses but move they will. A striking example is a man I met in 1972 who was moving to a farm in Tete Province of Mozambique because the Transvaal was "too dull"!

4. Hebrews, 11.13.

"The duration of our life
on earth is a trek
of wagons over plains
ever struggling forward.

"Trek further!" is the cry
early in the morning,
and late in the evening:
"it's still not far enough!"¹

With this theme a religious longing for the peace of God mirrored in the temporal life of the trekker is developed to direct the reader's thoughts to God. At the same time the general theme of God's Providence in Afrikaner history is strengthened by bringing the Afrikaner reader into contact with a situation that, like the remarkable events of Afrikaner history, will cause him to reflect on his own relationship to his past and the significance of his life. In this way a feeling of awe is created that will draw the Afrikaner reader closer both to his traditions and to God.²

Wilgerboomboogies (In Praise of Weeping Willows)

The next series of poems Totius produced were a series of meditations on life and death which he wrote after his father, brother and sister all died within a short time of each other. These poems appeared in 1912 and are intensely personal. They are often considered to be his best literary works because of their structure, style and content. Unlike his earlier works the Afrikaner nationalist element is missing. These poems are purely religious and deal with the deepest emotions of men.³

They are also highly allegorical, reflecting the creativity which produced Vergewe en Vergeet (Forgive and Forget) and finding in Nature⁴ the reflection of God's glory. Whether it was the beautiful willow trees which ring Potchefstroom producing an oasis of green in the brownness of the veld, or a journey by train, Totius takes the experience and casts it in a Christian mould. In nature and in man's technical achievements he finds

1. *ibid*, p.195.

2. Otto, The Idea of the Holy, 1928, pp.13-24; van den Heever, 1932, pp.76-101

3. van den Heever, 1932, pp.102-119.

4. cf. The Belgic Confession, art. 2, and Kuyper, 1898, p.158.

grounds for reflection upon life and death which brings him once again to an awareness of the finitude of man and the infinity of God. They are earthy poems yet they lack the pantheism of a Wordsworth or the pagan vitality of a Hardy, remaining true to the Christian motivation of the devout Calvinist who wrote them. In these poems the faith of the author is applied to the interpretation of contemporary experiences just as in his other poems it reflects upon the history and experience of the Afrikaner People. Because of this there is a lasting quality divorced from the post-war circumstances and the pressure of contemporary events which is to be found in his other poetry of this period. No doubt if taken seriously these poems too would recall the children of Afrikaners to the faith of their fathers but they would do so in a far more subtle way than his other poems with their explicit reference to historical events and immediate significance in the life of the reader.

Ragel (Rachel)

The next collection of poems Ragel appeared in 1913 and returns with a vengeance to the theme of Afrikaner identity. Once more Totius is the prophet of his People. Timed to be published shortly before the unveiling of the monument to the women and children these poems are, like By Die Monument, devoted to the memory of the suffering of Afrikaner families and are a fitting supplement to By Die Monument. Like it too Ragel appeared with a forward by ex-president Steyn, who, speaking of the significance of Totius' latest collection of poems, said

"tribute, a threefold tribute to Afrikaner women. The mother who is not ashamed or frightened by her destiny, who is always ready to offer herself and her children for their People and Fatherland".¹

The poems take the Biblical character of Rachel, the mother of Joseph, as their inspiration and through a reflection on the significance of Rachel for Israel the role of the Afrikaner mother is highlighted.

1. du Toit, 1961, Vol. VIII, p.229.

Rachel, the mother of her People Israel, becomes the archetypal mother and particularly the mother of the new Israel of the Afrikaner People. Thus the Word of God is seen to have a vitality in which the lessons of Israel become lessons of history enacted for the benefit of Afrikaners. The poem often leaves the identification between Israel and Afrikanerdom inexplicit. It is a reality for the reader to uncover as he reflects upon the poetry, the Bible, and the history of the Afrikaner People. But in the following passage Totius makes his message clear

"Thus I think, Rachel,
 of your lot and will
 recall your suffering,
 - your greatest grief,
 cruelly taken by surprise,
 as long as the world remains.

Thus I think of
 the Rachels of my land,
 who without home or house
 were cruelly surprised - burnt
 out of their homes,
 pushed out into the veld".¹

Quite clearly the reference to Afrikaner women being "burnt out of their homes" is to the scorched earth policy of the British forces which led to the internment camps in an attempt to deprive the Boer commandoes of their food supply. There is also the hint of a previous time of suffering when African hordes burnt Afrikaner wagons and threatened to destroy the Afrikaner Nation even before it had been born. In this way the threat of chaos, which is never far from the Afrikaner soul, is laid bare, so that the story of Rachel and of the triumph of Israel becomes a promise of hope and source of comfort to Afrikaners distressed by the apparent meaninglessness of much of their own recent history.

The prophetic genius of Totius comes home in the following verses where the refrain, "they are no more", first used in By Die Monument, is taken up and placed in its Biblical context to great effect

1. du Toit, 1961, Vol.VIII, p.240.

"A voice is heard in Rama,
wailing and loud lamentation,
Rachel, the mother of Israel, over
her children - they are no more!"

"So groaned Rachel's ghost ...
But see, today's Rachels,
living Rachels, who weep
at endless children's graves.

A Voice is heard all over,
weeping and wailing bitterly;
Rachel, suffering Mother, weeps over¹
her children - they are no more".¹

This passage is rich in symbolism and archetypal representations. The Old Testament prophecy relating to the Babylonian exile is applied to the suffering of the Afrikaner People, and, because it was used in the New Testament of the massacre of the innocents, it brings with it an added significance. The suffering of Israel is compounded by the suffering of Christ implicit in the New Testament's use of the passage. So too Israel, the suffering servant of the Old Testament, is linked with Christ who becomes God's suffering servant in the New Testament. By implication the Afrikaner People are seen as servants of God suffering for their testimony at the hands of ungodly men. Thus the phrase in Potgieter's Trek, "Just like another Israel", takes on an added significance. This is not simply an historical comparison between similar historical events but a soteriological insight - a redemptive fact. Like Israel, and following the example of Christ Himself, the salvation of the Afrikaner People comes about through suffering. Totius' poem is therefore a type of psalm to national deliverance. It brings with it an interpretation of history that makes the past bearable. The irrational pattern of past events is fitted into a divine scheme which removes their arbitrary appearance by giving them an eternal legitimation.

1. du Toit, 1961, Vol VIII, pp.268-269.

This ability to place Afrikaner suffering in the context of redemptive history brings with it a requirement that forces itself upon all true Afrikaners. They must remember the things God has done.¹ The acceptance of God's covenant and its promises brings with it the responsibility to obey His commands. Therefore if their history makes sense only in the light of divine revelation Afrikaners are under an obligation to God and future generations

"Shall we forget a tearful past?
Foolish, faithless People,
Let the hills bear witness:
beware! - the faithful reply:²
Never! No! 'We shall remember!'"²

This theme of remembrance, is taken up in the next collection of Totius' poems, thus completing a cycle of poetry which interprets the Afrikaner experience through Biblical themes, in terms of the Calvinist doctrines of Providence and Election.³

Trekkerswee (The Trekker's Grief)

The sense of timing displayed by Totius in the publication of his poetry is remarkable. By Die Monument appeared at a time when emotions ran high about the need to erect a monument to the women and children who suffered during the war and many Afrikaners despaired of their lot.⁴ The publication of Ragel catches the spirit of a later period when expectations were rising as the unveiling ceremony for the Women's and Children's Monument grew near. His last work during this period Trekkerswee continues the theme of the previous poems and develops his gift of expounding the significance of Afrikaner history. It is a ballad type poem which tells the heart-rending tale of an old trekker who can remember the Transvaal Republic before the coming of the English and who lived through a series

1. cf. Deuteronomy 29-20; Joshua 4.

2. du Toit, 1961, Vol.VIII, p.279.

3. van den Heever, 1932, pp.120-149; Nienaber, 1948, pp.188-198.

4. AVT, 1908, art. 4 and 23.

of critical events from the discovery of gold to the Act of Union. In them he sees the destruction of Afrikaner ideals and identity. Worst of all they are tragic because so many Afrikaners rejoiced at these events, failing to see their true implications.

The poem is a sorrowful one which evokes a strong nationalist reaction and a desire to protect one's own against the threat of destruction. It removes the facade of gaiety from the past events and discloses the truth behind the political myths so cleverly woven to disguise reality from the masses. In the poem Totius makes what are perhaps his strongest political comments, forcing the reader to reconsider the past and to choose between Anglicisation or identification with the cause of Afrikaner Nationalism. It is a work of art which can be fully appreciated only in the context of the historical situation out of which it grew. At the same time it is a superb political tract that damns the policies of General Botha and cries out for action which will strengthen the National Party.

- The poem begins with the settlement of the Transvaal and the image is created of an idyllic Boer republic, where

"oom Gert's farm is his Eden,
wherever his feet tread".¹

In these surroundings he tells his children of the trekkers who "sought a Fatherland" and at great cost fled northward from the tyrannical rule of the British

"We left to the kaffirs and the British
the most beautiful parts of Africa
which run along the coast.
We chose to find peace
for our feet in the wilderness
and ever bleaker interior".²

1. du Toit, 1961, Vol VIII, p.293; "oom" = uncle.
2. ibid, Vol. VIII, p.298.

It was in this situation that their God had chosen to save them from the wrath of Dingaan and the oppression of the British. Because of His faithfulness to them as a People they could now serve Him with pure hearts in the way He required of them according to His Word

"Here on the Transvaal's high altar
we lifted up our hearts
to Almighty God, our Father.

You know how God saved us.
Think of Laingsnek, Ingogo and
Majuba's high cliffs.
Woe to us if we forget God
as Israel did in Sinai
with wild idolatrous dancing".¹

The sentiments expressed in these passages reinforces earlier themes and the sense that the Afrikaner People are the elect of God. They also bring with them the dire warning that apostasy will be followed by judgement. To forget one's God or to throw off a God-given identity is interpreted as idolatry and used to create a nationalist feeling by recalling Afrikaners to their traditions and religion.

The poem makes explicit a belief in Afrikaner unity and the existence of an Afrikaner Nation during the pre-war period. This vision of a united Afrikanerdom is created through the story of a marriage between the trekker's daughter and a young Afrikaner recently arrived from the Cape. Placed against the background of the Rebellion and the sharp divisions which rent Afrikaner society in 1915 it is a clear call to unite on the basis of a shared past and to form a common front once more against the British. To do this, the poem evokes the folk memory of the old republics and of Afrikaner rural values which transcend the immediate problems of political life. This manipulation of symbolism is a powerful technique

1. du Toit, 1961, Vol. VIII, p.299.

"Bridegroom:

A Boer bridegroom I am,
who came from the old Colony.
I am not a child of the Trek,
but my heart is in the right place;
therefore I'm binding myself
to a genuine trekker's child.

Bride:

I'm a real Boer bride,
from the true backveld world.
but I've behaved so properly
a colonial asks for my hand!
Yes, the old Transvaal is not as bad
as people think and say".¹

The importance of such a marriage, Totius clearly saw, lay in the children it produced. In recognising this he both idealised the role of the Afrikaner mother and called upon Afrikaner women to do their part in the national struggle

"I'm only a Boer bride,
I can't boast of my education.
and if men talk of politics
then I've nothing to say.
But one day to my children
I will tell: the story of
the old Transvaal".²

Here the theme of the Afrikaner mother which was so well developed in Ragel is taken up in a context which is pregnant with the Biblical command to the children of Israel to tell their children the story of their past.³ With these verses Totius evokes the authority of Moses and recalls Afrikaners to themselves and to their God.

The poem continues from the happy time of prosperity and Afrikaner idealism to the fateful day when gold is discovered on the Witwatersrand. The old trekker makes a characteristic response and urges his family to "trek on".⁴ But his children are seduced by the promise of

1. du Toit, 1961, Vol.VIII, p.300.
2. *ibid*, p.301.
3. Deuteronomy 31.13.
4. du Toit, 1961, Vol.VIII, p.309.

good things and insist on staying in the region of Johannesburg. New times come and members of oom Gert's family are not unaffected. Of one of the daughters Totius writes

"Dina rushed to learn English,
and learnt to sing sweetly ..."¹

Time passes and the scene changes. Dark days grow near as the Second Anglo-Boer War comes upon them to destroy what happiness remains. At this point the story of the poem jumps from 1899 to 1910 and the celebrations to mark the Act of Union.² The old trekker, oom Gert, has fallen on hard times and his daughter is estranged from him.³ The war is over but peace has brought no rest. All that he can see is the triumph of Imperialism⁴

"Our gold goes to a strange shore -
Leaving the Transvaal a poor man's land",⁵ -

In spite of this obvious fact and the grief it must bring to all true Afrikaners Gert looks around to see his countrymen celebrating the Act of Union. This in his eyes is the final humiliation⁶

"So oom Gert went home early,
to him one thing was clear:
he didn't fit in this new world.
He, who had known better days
was too old to change
to a new way, a new time,
and such strangeness"⁷

The poem closes with a reunion between the trekker and his daughter Dina who, like the prodigal son, realises her mistake and returns to her father's home with its older better ways. So Gert's life ends with hope and a vision of the future based on the knowledge that some of his People are returning to their traditions and their God

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1. *ibid*, p.311.
 2. *ibid*, p.318.
 3. *ibid*, p.323 f.
 4. *ibid*. p.327.
 5. *ibid*, p.324.
 6. *ibid*, p.327.
 7. *ibid*, p.328.

"When the nation is revived again,
 which I, dying, prophesy,
 the hills will look small
 as God's glory reappears.

They stared at each other questioningly
 before the break of day ...
 Then she sees how his finger points,
 to where Pardenkraal's hills rise!"¹

So the cycle of poems reaches its climax in a symbolic return to Pardenkraal where years before Paul Kruger and other loyal Afrikaners had unfurled their banner and led the Transvaal's army to victory at Majuba.²

S. J. du Toit in Weg en Werk (The Life and Work of S. J. du Toit)

Although Totius wrote many short prose works concerning theology and church history his only major prose work is his biography of his father, S. J. du Toit, which was published in 1918. This is a curious work written in a popular style which sets out to interpret to the rising generation the significance of S. J. du Toit. It is also an existential work in which the son, an ardent supporter of Afrikaner Nationalism, attempts to heal the wounds created by his father's desertion of Kruger. How could two men who gave their lives for Afrikanerdom disagree so totally as did Kruger and S. J. du Toit? Totius explains the disagreement in terms of political intrigues in the Transvaal and misunderstanding between two equally sincere men. In doing so he is obviously attempting to reconcile Afrikaners to whom Kruger was a hero, with those influenced by his father's pro-British propaganda.³

As an historical study the work fails because its conciliatory^a tone causes it to minimise differences and overlook bitter accusations. At the same time it succeeds in being a powerful political tract aimed at

1. du Toit, 1961, Vol.VIII, p.333.

2. van den Heever, 1932, p.150-182; Nienaber, 1948, pp.199-219.

3. Davenport, 1966, pp.173-176.

the unification of divergent Afrikaner groups united in their basic beliefs but divided over personalities. It removes an historical obstacle from nationalist ideology and makes possible a new beginning.

The book is written thematically even though it has a strange chronological structure. In this way Totius was able to select themes which were important for the Reformed Community as part of their Anti-Revolutionary ideology and expound them in the context of the origins of Afrikaner nationalism. This device enabled him to present Christian-National Education, the need for the reformation of the Church and Christian political action as desires shared by all true Afrikaners and not held simply by Doppers. It also allowed him to root these things in Afrikaner history, thus removing the stigma created by the Reverend Hermanus Boesman of the Dutch Reformed Church who maintained that ideas associated with Kuyper were foreign imports and not truly South African.¹

Through this book as through his poetry Totius was able to project an image of the true Afrikaner, a Calvinist who is conscious of God's Providence and proud of his distinct national identity. In a thousand ways the same point was made until the mind was overwhelmed with a vision and was unable to distinguish the real from the ideal. To a generation hungry for a literature to call its own Totius provided a religious feast which is by any standards a remarkable achievement.

1. Schoonees, 1927, Die Prosa van die Tweede Afrikaanse Beweging, pp.345-349

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Dr. O'kulis and Afrikaans Literature

Willem Postma - Dr. O'kulis

The youngest son of Dirk Postma founder of the Reformed Church, Willem Postma was born in Burgersdorp in 1874 where he was educated and attended the Reformed Church Theological School. He fought with the Boer commandos during the Second Anglo-Boer War and was imprisoned near Middleburg in the Cape. From 1905 to 1915 he served as the Reformed minister in Bloemfontein and after that in Reddersburg in the Orange Free State. In Bloemfontein Postma was a regular contributor to the newspaper De Vriend des Volks (The Friend of the People)¹ in which he had a column entitled Dr. O'kulus se oogdruppels vir Nasionale Siektes (Dr. O'kulis' Eyedrops for our National Sickness). This column contained a running commentary on political and social events from a Calvinist viewpoint and was fiercely nationalist from its inception.¹

In 1906 with the help of General Hertzog, and other leading Afrikaners, Postma helped to establish a branch of the Afrikaanse Taalgenootskap (Afrikaans Language Society) in Bloemfontein. He also played a leading role in the struggle for Christian-National Education in the Orange Free State. He was a member of the commission which began the translation of the Bible into Afrikaans in 1916 and was a frequent contributor to Het Kerkblad. A founder member of the Orangia-Unie² he was very close to General Hertzog and played an important role in the establishment of the National Party in 1914.³

Postma wrote three books which, although not now regarded as very good literature, are classics of their kind, being among the first

1. See p. 232.

2. The Orangia-Unie was an Afrikaner political party in the Orange Free State, equivalent to Het Volk in the Transvaal.

3. Nienaber, 1950, pp.85-87.

full-length books in Afrikaans. His first book Eselskakebeen (Slingshot), a semi-autobiographical novel and powerful polemic for Nationalism, was published in 1909. His second book Doppers, which is a historical-theological work, appeared in 1918; and his last one, a type of historical polemic Die Boer vrou (The Boer Woman), appeared in 1919.

Eselskakebeen (Slingshot)

Although not a particularly good piece of literature Eselskakebeen appeared at a time when very few books existed in Afrikaans and is one of the first Afrikaans novels.¹ Because of this it took on a significance which far outweighs its literary merit and has been reprinted many times as well as being used as a text-book in schools.² The title in Afrikaans is translated literally as The Asses Jawbone³ and is intended to bring to mind the Biblical story of Samson who slew the Philistines with the jaw-bone of an ass. In his forward Postma says that he is attempting to slay the Philistines among Afrikaners. From the book it is clear that by "philistines" he means those Afrikaners who had forsaken their traditions and become Anglicised.⁴

The book purports to be the reminiscences of a young Afrikaner who realises that he can be proud of his nationality in spite of all he has been taught in school. It begins with the earliest memories of the child's life in which he says that above all he learnt that: "I am an Afrikaner". This fact led on to two important questions of personal identity:

"what is an Afrikaner? ... What Language does an Afrikaner speak?"⁵ With these questions in mind the story-teller recounts his

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1. S. J. du Toit and other members of the First Language Movement attempted to produce Afrikaans novels.
 2. This book was reprinted regularly until the late 1960s and is due to be reprinted again. It was used in most Afrikaans schools.
 3. Die Eselskakebeen, see appendix 3 for a note on translation.
 4. Postma, 1909, Die Eselskakebeen, p.8.
 5. Postma, 1909, p.21.

puzzlement in discovering that two kinds of Afrikaner existed. There were "Boers" and "Afrikaners". All Boers, he realised, were Afrikaners but not all Afrikaners were Boers. To be a Boer meant to live like a Boer and to observe Boer traditions, not simply to live on a farm. Many Afrikaners still lived on farms but not all farmers were Boers. The key to being a Boer was a quality of life based upon a simple, natural lifestyle, faith in the Bible and the use of Afrikaans.¹

As the story unfolded, the problem of language became an essential issue in the life of the growing child. Although first taught to speak Afrikaans, as he grew older he realised that many Afrikaners spoke either High Dutch or English and looked down on Afrikaans speakers. This fact was confused by the practice of many clergy who spoke Afrikaans during the week but High Dutch on Sundays.² Like Preller, Postma used humour to make his point and had the child reasoning that if he prayed in Afrikaans

"God is very good. Surely he knows that I can only speak as I do and won't be cross with me".³

Reflecting on these memories the story-teller conceded that Afrikaners were right to use Dutch because their own language had developed from it and it had enabled them to resist the use of English. But in the future, he mused, Afrikaans should be used while Dutch remained as an ally but not as a substitute for their own language.⁴

Returning to his polemic Postma attacked ministers and shopkeepers who spoke English because they confused English and Dutch. In making fun of this practice he gave numerous examples including the following

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1. *ibid*, p.22.
 2. *ibid*, p.24 f.
 3. *ibid*, p.26.
 4. Postma, 1909, p.28.
-

"ons gaan for 'n walk met 'n paar girls ... Het jy nie gesien in die papers of die results van die examinations uit is nie".¹

Even more than the ugly confusions made by poorer Afrikaners, the practice of the educated elite in speaking English better than the English horrified Postma.²

When the child first attended school these problems of identity came to a head. Going to school was portrayed as a traumatic experience which burnt itself deeply into the young mind

"the school is an altogether separate world with a separate way of life ... A world within a world. A life within a life. This world and way of life has nothing to do with the world outside the school".³

The story presented a strong challenge to Afrikaner parents to establish Christian-National Schools which would not confuse their children as the State schools did. Again Postma makes a humorous point as the teacher addressed the child in a language it did not understand and the child translated the teacher's words into Afrikaans. The highpoint of this is reached when the child realised that even though the English do not speak High Dutch they do pray to God.⁴

The book went on to analyse carefully the content of the school-books used to teach the child and the way in which these subtly Anglicised him. Through the Royal Reader series he learnt all about the kings and queens of England and British heroes. The result was that the child came to feel that he must leave South Africa and go to England which was

"the most powerful place on earth - Utopia, a paradise".⁵

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1. *ibid*, p.29.
 2. *ibid*, p.30.
 3. *ibid*, p.32.
 4. Postma, 1909, p.34.
 5. *ibid*, p.42.

Again and again this impression is created as the well-meaning teacher compared the "barren desert" of South Africa with the wonders of the British Isles. The result of this education was that the child became increasingly confused. English speaking children whom he met at school spoke of "home" but where was his "home"?¹

Gradually, however, discrepancies appeared in the Imperial scheme of education

"how can the English leave their paradise and come to this desert in South Africa?"¹

And as he learnt history he came to realise that British internal politics revolved around the South African question

"the liberals try to capture South Africa by friendship. The opposition tries to do the same thing by force of arms".¹

More importantly he began to learn his nationalism from the very lessons intended to destroy it. In priding themselves on the uniqueness of British history English teachers had taught their children that:

"the origin of the British nation is₂ completely separate from the origins of other nations".

Postma used this lesson to create the realisation that each nation had the right to its own separate existence. At the same time he poked fun at the justification of British nationalism presented to the children. He explained that at school children learnt that the British were not like other men in being descended from Adam but were in some way descended from angels. How this could be, though, was not clear because the child also learnt that an Englishman called Darwin had assured everyone that really the English were descended from monkeys.²

So Postma pointed out a contradiction within the British theory of nationalism, between its justification in terms of folk-history and

1. *ibid*, p.43.

2. Postma, 1909, p.47.

national myths and the science taught in British schools. This contradiction was avoided in his version of Afrikaner nationalism through his rejection of evolution and determination to ground the Afrikaner national spirit in God's Providence. Thus it became possible for him to criticise the inconsistencies of British history while showing this cannot be done with Afrikaner history because to question that would be to question the truth of Calvinism.¹

Detailed criticism of the teaching of South African history by British teachers followed and this led the story teller to relate how he became increasingly alienated from his parents. At home he was chided for believing "British lies" and called a little "Rooinek".² When holidays came, though, he returned to the farm and again enjoyed the way of life experienced in his early childhood. This increased the tensions in his school life but also confirmed his love of the old ways.³

The climax of Postma's attack on British education came in a section which discussed matriculation and the effect which the examination system had on Afrikaner children. Realising that his child was a good student, the hero's father decided to allow him to remain at school to sit the matriculation examination. As he studied for this the child came to believe that matriculation was a golden key that would open all doors to him. But when he achieved his goal and passed the examination a shock was in store for him. He quickly realised that matriculation meant very little indeed. He was now too old to train as a tradesman, too soft to become a farmer, too well educated to be a clerk. But he was not well enough educated to be an official, a lawyer, doctor or minister in the Church. All of these professions required years of

1. *ibid*, pp.47-57.

2. Postma, 1909, p.44.

3. *ibid*, p.71.

further study which his family could not afford. So in practical terms, matriculation left him worse off than his friends who had left school years earlier.¹

The story ended with the young man becoming a school teacher determined not to repeat the mistakes of his own education. He returned to his People and their old well-proved ways with a determination to educate Afrikaner children for "time and eternity".² He looked around and saw other young Afrikaners like himself taking their place in society as doctors, lawyers and teachers all imbued with the desire to uphold and uplift their People. He now realised the future of the Boer People was assured because God in his grace had saved them.³

"Doppers"

Postma's next major prose work appeared nine years later and continued the theme of a purified Afrikaner nation proud of its past. The forward was written by the Reverend J. D. Kestell the editor of the Dutch Reformed Church monthly magazine, Die Kerkbode, and emphasised that by "Dopper" Postma did not mean simply members of the Reformed Church but all true Afrikaners. Kestell praised the book highly and urged Afrikaners to see that it was widely read. This introduction is important because it illustrates the popularity of Reformed ideas within the Nationalist movement during the period.⁴ In his own introduction Postma said that he had written the book because "Dopperdom" was a powerful force for Christendom and nationalism.⁵

The book, which is repetitive, began with a discussion of the origins and meaning of the word "Dopper". Postma favoured the view

1. *ibid*, pp.79-82.

2. Postma, 1909, p.91.

3. *ibid*, p.97.

4. Postma, 1918, "Doppers", p.5.

5. *ibid*, p.9.

that it came from the Dutch "domper" which was the device used to extinguish a candle. He believed that the Doppers earned their nickname because they extinguished the "new light" of the Enlightenment which threatened to destroy Afrikanerdom.¹ Explaining who the Doppers were he said they were the true backvelders. The Potgieter trek was, he claimed, a Dopper trek but that of Maritz and Retief was not because they

"were against the English Government but not anti-English. The Doppers would have as little to do with Englishmen as with their Government".²

Thus he reasoned that by being against new ideas Doppers had to oppose the English because the English were the bearers of "enlightenment" in South Africa. It was the English missionaries, soldiers, settlers and officials who threatened Afrikanerdom because of the new ways of life they introduced. Essentially this was a question not of politics but of religion. Englishmen sought to de-nationalise the Boers. Therefore Doppers were

"with heart and soul anti-English".³

Many Afrikaners laughed at Doppers because they were "behind the times". This did not worry Postma because it

"doesn't reflect on the Doppers but on the times. These are not Dopper times. For Doppers the times are too quick, too far out - abnormal".⁴

The Doppers were the conservative element in the Afrikaner People. But their conservatism was not an English conservatism prepared to make gradual changes. It was a religious conservatism based on unchangeable principles.⁵

1. Postma, 1918, p.11.

2. *ibid*, p.13.

3. *ibid*, p.16.

4. *ibid*, p.18.

5. In many ways Postma's position seems closer to the reactionary Christian Historical group in the Netherlands which broke away from Kuyper's Anti-Revolutionary Party in the 1880s.

For Postma, the key to an understanding of Afrikanerdom, and the Doppers in particular, was the realisation that Afrikaners were a "chosen People".¹ In arguing this he discussed their history from the time of the first settlement at the Cape to his own day. He saw the Great Trek as a second Exodus, which led Afrikaners out of the "Egyptian bondage" of British rule to a new freedom in their new Canaan.²

Having made this point Postma answered evangelical critics by defending the Doppers from the charge that their religion was a corruption of the Old Testament. He argued that the apostle Paul's religion was also drawn from the Old Testament, and concluded that the Doppers were in good company. He claimed that they were Calvinists like their fathers who did not isolate the New Testament from the Old but accepted the Bible in its entirety. The Bible was the Word of God and their religion must reflect this fact. In making his case Postma asserted that anyone who had a simple faith in the Bible would arrive at a theological position close to Calvinism.³

Developing this position Postma wrote

"the Boer People, God's chosen People, were brought to this land with the commission to establish and spread the kingdom of God. They were to break the kingdom of darkness and reveal the truth to the heathen".⁴

Postma clearly identified the advance of the Kingdom of God with the triumph of Afrikanerdom. Nowhere does he speak of the conversion of Africans and their incorporation into God's Kingdom. They were simply to be broken and ruled for God's glory.⁵

Naturally if the Kingdom of God is identified with Afrikanerdom the English must be excluded from it. Postma seemed happy to accept this conclusion and argued that the whole English way of life was a product of the Anti-Christ. He illustrated this by citing the marriages of the British missionaries Phillip and Read to coloured women.⁶

1. Postma, 1918, p.21.

2. *ibid*, p.22.

3. *ibid*, p.23 f.

4. *ibid*, p.31.

5. Postma, 1918, p.31 cf. *Totius poems* in Chapter Eleven.

6. Postma, 1918, p.33.

The English and the blacks belonged together

"in truth, as a child I saw little difference between the attitude of Doppers towards the English and towards their black friends".¹

Justifying the Nationalist revulsion against the use of the English language Postma invoked Paul's injunction

"be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean things; and I will receive you. And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty".²

Following up this powerful Biblical passage Postma declared that Doppers:

"instinctively reacted to everything English and Kaffir ...".³

This course was justified because

"the Englishman has never done a service for the Boer unless compelled to do so in his own interest. Moreover the English were always hand in glove with the kaffirs the arch enemy of our People in the old days".⁴

In rejecting the temptation to submit to the English Postma portrayed Doppers as the aristocracy of Afrikanerdom. They were individualists who set a high premium on self-management, self-reliance, self-confidence and independence. Because of this they were nationalists with a strong sense of identity. All the virtues of their religion made them reject and oppose universalism and imperialism in whatever guise they might appear.⁵ From this he concluded

"the hallmark of their nobility is the maintenance of the purity of their race and blood".⁶

1. *ibid*, p.40.

2. *ibid*, p.35; II Corinthians 6.14-18.

3. Postma, 1918, p.16.

4. Postma, 1918, p.47.

5. *ibid*, pp.44-52.

6. *ibid*, p.59.

For Postma "race" and "blood", and not a belief in a spiritual, other worldly, religious salvation, seem to lie at the base of his assertions about the Afrikaner People. For him salvation had become the salvation of the Afrikaner People on earth and not a spiritual relationship with God. This fact became increasingly clear as he went on to describe Dopper religion. The basis of their beliefs, he declared, was a belief in "the Kingdom of God"

"the Kingdom of God is found by Doppers in everything.
It embraces the whole world and the whole of man's life"¹

This understanding of theology, he claimed, shared a continuity with the religion of Moses, the New Testament, and the Reformers. But most important of all it gained its greatest systematic exposition at the Synod of Dort. It was the religion of Calvin as opposed to

"the modern bastard liberalism and Anti-Christian Methodism."²

These false religions had been introduced to South Africa by the scheming British who imported liberal Scottish ministers into the Dutch Reformed Church and so threatened to undermine the Afrikaner People from within.³

Justifying his reification of the Kingdom of God and interpretation of it as incarnate in the Afrikaner People Postma directed his readers' thoughts to the second and fifth commandments and from these deduced that:

"a People grows organically just like a tree - from the trunk to the branches, from the branches to the twigs. Those who honour their father and mother in the sense of this commandment must honour their language, their national life and their religion",⁴

Seen in this light the development of Afrikaner society could be viewed as the advancement of true civilization opposed to the "false-civilisation of the English"⁵

1. *ibid*, p.94.

2. *ibid*, p.96.

3. Postma, 1918, pp.42-43.

4. *ibid*, p.107.

5. *ibid*, p.72.

This argument led very naturally to one for Christian-National Education. Dopper parents were reminded that their children were not their own but that

"the Dopper child is a child of the Covenant",¹

The attitude of many parents who desired to do their best for their children by introducing them to modern education was attacked and a strongly authoritarian upbringing of children was advocated. Parents received their authority from God and must exercise authority over their children if they are to fulfil God's demands.²

Turning to politics Postma put forward the view that as aristocrats Afrikaners cannot accept the rule of others and must of necessity be democrats.³ They will reject socialism and all other ungodly political systems preferring instead those things which are

"the best principles for the good of the People and Fatherland".⁴

Capitalism was also rejected because, like Socialism, it originated in materialism and was opposed to true religion. In a telling critique of political ideas Postma argued that Capitalism, Socialism and Imperialism formed an unholy alliance which exploited South Africa. Following van Prinsterer he saw Socialism as the inevitable result of Capitalism and argued that it in turn led to nihilism.⁵

As an alternative to these political systems Postma proposed Christian-Nationalism based on Anti-Revolutionary principles that accept no neutrality between the forces of good and evil. Christ must be seen to reign over the whole of life and it is in His name that politics must be conducted

1. *ibid*, p.83.

2. *ibid*, pp.84-85.

3. Postma, 1918, p.58, cf. Kuyper, 1900, pp.10-11.

4. Postma, 1918, p.59.

5. *ibid*, pp.60-61.

"Christ is our King. Christ is above all, in all, over all ...
Out of Christ comes our nobility. Christ is our life and -
if necessary we must defend this with our swords".¹

Following Totius, Postma was taking a prophetic stance and like Joshua in the Bible challenged Afrikaners to take sides.² He showed that Doppers stood for all that was good, for truth and Christianity; now the reader must decide where he stood when measured up against the demands of Dopperdom and true Nationalism

"in Doppers we see the unique features of our People"³ ...
Our spiritual heritage is and remains Christian-National,
Calvinist-Boer ... There is no better Afrikaner".⁴

The call was a powerful one, as was the effect of the whole book in challenging the reader to choose for Nationalism.

Die Boervrouw (The Boer Woman)

The last book to be published by Postma, Die Boervrouw (Boer Woman), appeared in 1919. This was written at the request of the Helpmekaar organisation formed by Afrikaner women following the Rebellion of 1914 to help pay the heavy fines imposed on the rebels. It is a very disappointing, lengthy, repetitive and unoriginal work of 266 pages. It can be divided into two parts. In the first, the history of the Afrikaner People was re-told following the scheme devised by S. J. du Toit in Die Geskiedenis van Ons Land in di Taal van Ons Volk (The History of Our Land in the Language of Our People) and developed by Smuts in A Century of Wrong. This half of the book consisted of copious quotations from a variety of writers who commented on Afrikaner society, chosen to prove its uniqueness and value. The second half of the book repeated the general pattern of the first except that it covered the same ground in a systematic rather than a chronological order and used slightly different examples from Afrikaner folk-history.

1. *ibid*, p.66.

2. Joshua, 24:15.

3. Postma, 1918, p.119.

4. *ibid*, p.121.

The book began in a characteristically Christian-National way, arguing that the Boer People constituted a "separate nation". This theme was developed by contrasting the Afrikaner People with the English and the Africans. The God-given purpose of Afrikanerdom was once more explained as being to bring Christianity and civilization to Africa.¹

The book contained a long attack upon English missionaries, especially Dr. Phillip and Dr. van der Kemp and the London Missionary Society. Defending the Boers against the charge that they opposed evangelism Postma argued that they were against only the un-Biblical and anti-Christian missions of the English not missionaries as such. But he never developed a picture of what a Biblical mission would be like. From both his and Totius' writings the impression is gained that Christianity came to Africa through Afrikaner conquest and by no other means.²

After outlining their trials and showing how the courage of their womenfolk had continually sustained Afrikaner men Postma went on to speak about the outstanding characteristics of the Afrikaner woman. In doing this he was obviously setting up an ideal which Afrikaner girls would be expected to emulate. He praised their piety, bravery, love of freedom, sacrificial spirit, self-reliance, and many other talents. Above all he admired their gift of inspiring their menfolk to even greater sacrifices.³

The book closes with a long eulogy on the merits of the Afrikaner woman and a call for Afrikaners to return, once more, to the ways of their People

1. Postma, Die Boervrouw, 1919, pp.20-26.
 2. *ibid*, pp.29-39.
 3. *ibid*, pp.63, & 65.

"no nation has a better, worthier, nobler example than that of the Boer woman, her history, her life and character ... Let us never forget the best Afrikaners are in Africa but we do not always find the best uitlanders here. Africa and all that is African for the Afrikaners. If we want to enjoy the respect of strangers we must begin with self-respect both personal and national ... We shall succeed, we must succeed",¹

On this note Postma ends his book and this represents the end of the Reformed contribution to the Second Language Movement.

1. Postma, 1919, pp.205-206.

PART FIVEReligion and Politics: The Inextricable Involvement

In this section the cultural aspects of Afrikaner Nationalism, which were seen to develop through the Reformed Church, the Christian-National Education Movement and Second Language Movement, are shown to lead to the development of a distinctive political stance. Reformed political theories are developed and the way in which the Reformed Community involved itself in South African politics is shown.

CHAPTER FOURTEENThe Reformed Religion and PoliticsThe Necessity for Politics

In the struggle to preserve their religion from the threat of disintegration presented by the success of Methodism among Afrikaners, the Reformed Community was convinced that they must preserve their Afrikaner identity by resisting the encroachments being made into Afrikanerdom by the English language.¹ Only by retaining strong links with their Dutch ancestors did they believe they could continue to uphold Calvinism in South Africa. Evangelical revivalism, Methodism and Anglicisation went hand in hand. Therefore in order to fight one it was necessary to fight the others. As they saw things one total way of life was locked in a life and death struggle against another exclusive way of life. Afrikaner Calvinism and English religion had nothing in common. At heart all Englishmen were Methodists and Imperialists while all true Afrikaners were Calvinists and Nationalists.²

Thus a desire to preserve a pure form of Calvinism impelled the Reformed Community to hold fast to the language and traditions of its forefathers. This impulse in turn led them to fight for their own schools where they could be sure that pure Afrikaner values were being inculcated. They realised that in the control of the schools lay the key to the future of society in South Africa. Only by careful supervision did they believe they could prevent the education system being used as a tool for the moulding of Afrikaner children in an English image. The insistence

1. See pp. 105-108.

2. Het Kerkblad, 1/7/1903, 15/7/1904; Almanak, 1904, pp.21-22.

"Methodist" is used by Reformed writers to refer to all forms of non-Calvinist Protestant religion which they believed had been introduced into South Africa by the English. See p. 105.

of Lord Milner and his successors upon a centralised school system was diametrically opposed to all the Reformed Community was fighting for. Therefore the intransigence of the authorities and the conviction of the Reformed led to a conflict of ideals which persisted long after Milner had left South Africa. This conflict involving religion, language and education created pressures which eventually drove the Reformed to overt political action and which led them to develop theories which gave birth to the doctrine of Apartheid.¹

The years following the Second Anglo-Boer War can conveniently be divided, for the purpose of analysis, into four main periods culminating in the death of General Botha in 1919. During each of these periods, the attitude of the Reformed Community towards the governing powers in South Africa and the political situation confronting them, changed significantly. The first period from 1902 to 1906 is one in which Afrikaners buried their differences to unite in the fight against the common enemy of British Imperialism. As the year 1906 progressed a visible change occurred with the granting of responsible government to the Orange River Colony and Transvaal. These developments led to an easing of tension between established Afrikaner political leaders and the British authorities, resulting in a more conciliatory policy being adopted by men like General Botha.²

The Reformed Community viewed these developments with a growing suspicion, believing that the new Liberal Government in London had simply replaced Milner's stick with a carrot in an attempt to achieve the same end of a British South Africa, created by the destruction of the Afrikaner People as a distinct national group. The softening attitude of established

1. This point is developed in Chapter 14.

2. Davenport, 1966, pp.236-253; Denoon, 1973, pp.207 and 223-224.

leaders, therefore, came as a shock to them and was resisted with all their might. They regarded Botha and his followers as being too trusting and having been deceived by the wily English. In spite of this failing, Botha at this time still retained the respect and trust of the Reformed Community as a whole who attempted to apply pressure to recall Afrikaners to their old established ways and to encourage their leaders to adopt "Christian-National" principles in their political policies.¹

The third period began with the Act of Union in 1910 when the Reformed leaders started to realise that they were losing the battle for the implementation of Christian-National policies. Their attitude to Botha and his supporters now became increasingly critical and their enthusiasm was directed towards General Hertzog.¹

The final period began in 1913 when the Reformed Community threw its weight wholly behind Hertzog and fought for the establishment of the new National Party. From this time on they became increasingly articulate on political issues and were more directly involved in local and national politics as individuals and as a group.¹

Throughout the period the Reformed made "Christian-Nationalism" the cornerstone of their political outlook and claimed to be advocating truly "Calvinist" policies thereby. Although they described themselves as Calvinists in their political views it is more accurate to call them "Kuyperian" because their political thought was derived from the work of the great Dutch theologian and political leader Abraham Kuyper to whom they acknowledged their debt.²

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1. We get a running commentary on events from a Reformed viewpoint by W. Postma in a regular column he wrote in Vriend des Volks, a Bloemfontein newspaper. A selection of his comments appear in: Nienaber, 1973, ed., pp.28-93; The Church Almanak, Het Kerkblad and various student papers also fill out this background.
 2. See Chapter One.

Religion and Politics

When we speak of the Reformed we are of course referring to the leaders of the Reformed Community because it is from the articulate leadership that we get statements of belief. But, as seen in the earlier chapter on the Reformed Church, its democratic structure allows us to assume that what the leaders said is a fair representation of the views of the rank and file. On important issues it is clear that the leadership was laying down a basis for Christian action and virtually telling the members what they ought to think on various issues. But from the available evidence members of the Church seem on the whole to have accepted the views of its leaders.¹

The Reformed leadership was thoroughly committed to a Kuyperian approach to politics and sought to propagate this view within both their own Church and the whole of Afrikaner society.² In doing so they took issue with the evangelical wing of the Dutch Reformed Church which, they believed, had betrayed true Calvinism as a result of the pernicious influence of Methodism. As Calvinists they believed that their Faith should affect the whole of their lives, and they rejected the theory of the separation of religion and politics as un-Biblical.³

When the common enemy represented by direct British rule was removed in 1907 many Afrikaners began to argue for the separation of religion and politics. But Reformed leaders realised that this attitude had to be resisted.⁴ In an article "De Christen als Staatsburger" (Christian Citizenship) in the Church Almanak for 1908, a powerful argument was put forward attacking the separation of religion and

1. BC, 7/7/1911; PC, 1/10/1915, 1/8/1919.

2. Hammersma and du Toit, 1909, Johannes Calvin, pp.104-106; Hammersma, 1913; J. A. du Plessis, 1917, Op die Spore van Calvinisme in ons Maatskappelite en Staatskundige Lewe; du Toit, 1961, Vol.V, pp.236-237.

3. Almanak, 1908

4. Die Volkstem and Smuts advocated the separation of religion and politics. Cf. du Toit, 1909, Het Calvinisme en ons Volk, pp.8-9,

politics, which it claimed was the result of faulty theology. The Provincial Authorities and Government were attacked for paying lip service to prayer and God's Will but in practice acting in totally un-Christian ways. The Smuts Education Act and other pieces of legislation, and proposed legislation, were cited to prove the argument that Het Volk had departed from Christian-National principles.¹

The necessity for Christian involvement in the whole of life, including politics, was restated in a book Johannes Calvijn (John Calvin) published in 1909 by the student society Korps Veritas Vincet and circulated widely among Church members.² Later in the same year J. D. du Toit, one of the co-authors of the book about Calvin, published Het Calvinisme en ons Volk (Calvinism and our People). In this book he again vigorously asserted the unity of life and the need for Christian politics. He reminded his readers that Moses, Isaiah, Ezekiel and Amos and Peter and Paul were all involved in the political struggles of their day as well as being servants of the living God.³

Further, he argued, Calvin himself was involved in and influenced politics. Calvin refused to separate religion and politics but preached the whole counsel of God.⁴ Out of Calvinism arose the Afrikaner Bond in South Africa with its "Christian-National" basis.⁵ The Transvaal and Orange Free State Republics had also been living witnesses to Christian political activity, as had the inspiring work of Dr. Kuyper in the Netherlands.⁶

1. Hammersma and du Toit, 1909.

2. Hammersma and du Toit, 1909, pp.104-106.

3. du Toit, 1909, p.10.

4. *ibid*, pp.8-9.

5. *ibid*, pp.10-13.

6. *ibid*, pp.13-14.

Christian Ministers and Politics

The involvement of Christians in politics inevitably led to the involvement of ministers of religion in political affairs. This political activity of predikants in South Africa developed naturally from the fact that they were among the better educated members of both the Reformed Community and South African society generally. The main opposition to the political involvement of predikants came from evangelical Christians, like Andrew Murray,¹ and educated Afrikaners who held respected secular positions, such as lawyers like Smuts himself.² In advocating the removal from public affairs of predikants these people were, therefore, supporting a policy which would have removed a sizable proportion of educated Afrikaners from the decision-making processes at work within society. This action would have brought little advantage to men like Murray but it would certainly have strengthened the relative position within society of Afrikaners in the other professions and thus the power of men like Smuts.³

The General Synod of the Reformed Church had agreed as early as 1882 that its ministers were in principle entitled to be involved in politics and if necessary to take a place in Parliament.⁴ This decision remained unquestioned within the Reformed Community until the general crisis of Afrikanerdom, which occurred in 1914, made it necessary for the leaders of the Community to reiterate the Church's arguments on the issue.⁵ In doing so, Willem Postma strongly argued that the prophetic role of the minister led of necessity to pronouncements on political issues and to other political activities.⁶

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1. J. du Plessis, 1919, pp. 428-434; A. Murray, 1916, Godsdienst en Politiek.
 2. Potchefstroom Herald, 15/10/1915.
 3. Higgins, 1972, Predikant and Priest.
 4. General Synod, 1882, art. 185.
 5. Kruger, 1969, The Making of a Nation, pp. 79-96; See also p.
 6. Het Kerkblad, 15/7/1914.

Postma's argument was strengthened by the knowledge which members of the Reformed Community had of events in the Netherlands and the success of Kuyper's movement.¹ In June 1915 an article by Kuyper's son, Dr. H. H. Kuyper, was published in Het Kerkblad, which again emphasised the prophetic role of predikants. It related the action of the Reformers in the sixteenth century to that of predikants in their own day thus providing a strong historical justification for contemporary political activities.² The essence of all these arguments was that just as Christianity embraced the whole of life so too predikants, if they were to fulfil their calling as ministers, in meeting the needs of their people, must be able to take an active part in every aspect of society.³

Christian Politics - Some Practical Problems

Arguments about the involvement of Christians in politics can be deceptively simple because, as the Revellion of 1914 showed, the important question is often not whether Christians ought to be involved in politics but what ought they to do in a given political situation. Granted that the Christian Faith embraces every aspect of life, what should a Christian do when he is called upon to choose between two totally opposed groups.

This issue was raised by a letter published in Het Kerkblad in July 1913 from a Church member in Reddersburg.⁴ The writer began by saying that he agreed with the idea of Christian politics but that in the present situation there was a danger that if ministers became involved in politics their actions would lead to schisms within congregations between the supporters of differing political groups. Continuing

1. Fac et Spera, 15/3/1910.

2. Het Kerkblad, 1/6/1915.

3. Het Kerkblad, 15/7/1914, 1/6/1915 and 2/9/1918.

this argument the writer suggested that only the existence of a truly Christian Party, like that of Kuyper's would avoid this difficulty.¹

In reply J. D. du Toit argued that it was necessary for ministers to become involved in politics before it was possible for them to create a Christian Party. If they kept out of politics, he declared, they would never be able to gain support for a Christian Party. He then went on to argue that in any case the writer of the letter had misunderstood the South African situation. The letter had implied that there was not a Christian Party in South Africa. But, du Toit claimed, if one examined the programmes of the various South African political parties one would find that a division existed between those which were "modern" and the one which was "Christian" in its basic principles. Although he does not say so it is clear that the party he was referring to as "Christian" was the National Party. The implication behind his reply was that, while the National Party was not a Christian political party in the way that Kuyper's Anti-Revolutionary Party was, it was Christian by South African standards.²

At its meeting in 1916 the General Synod of the Reformed Church discussed the subject of predikants who took an active part in politics. Here it was argued that as long as their political activities did not interfere with their ministerial duties, predikants could devote time to political activities. If a farmer could sit in Parliament, they argued, a minister of religion should also be able to do so. On the practical issue of deciding when political office was interfering with other duties the Synod ruled that each individual congregation must decide for itself as the situation arose.³

1. Het Kerkblad, 15/7/1915, letter dated October 1914.

2. Het Kerkblad, 1/7/1915.

3. Het Kerkblad, 15/3/1916.

The issue came up again during the General Synod of 1918 when an elder from the Dordrecht congregation, in the Cape, argued that the decision to allow predikants to take part in politics had been a mistake because in fact it had led to splits in several congregations¹ and therefore it should be rescinded.² He went on to argue that religion and politics belonged to separate realms and that they should be kept apart. This argument was roundly condemned by the other members of the Synod and the view advanced that in these times especially there was a need for predikants to participate in politics to put forward the Christian viewpoint on such issues as the female franchise and socialism.²

Christian Political Theory

Although a well formulated theory of Christian politics developed in the Netherlands³ there are no major works on Christian political theory by Afrikaner writers during the period under consideration. The response of the Reformed Community to the political situation which faced them is scattered throughout various works and was never presented as a systematic whole. This lack of a systematic exposition of their position is probably to be explained by the fact that Kuyper's works circulated widely among them and that the Anti-Revolutionary position was assumed to be part of a common Calvinist heritage. Because of this the leaders of the Reformed Community were never under any pressure to produce their own works on political theory. All they had to do was to apply the existing theory to the South African situation.⁴

As a result they tended to make statements on the subject only when their views were being questioned by fellow Afrikaners. These statements clearly assume a knowledge of Anti-Revolutionary thinking and are therefore best understood as attempts to enable members of the

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1. A split had occurred in the Potchefstroom Congregation and there were hints of a few other minor secessions but little evidence is available about these; PC, 12/8/1916; 15/2/1919; Potchefstroom Herald, 22/2/1916.
 2. Het Kerkblad, 2/9/1918.
 3. Cf. Kuyper, 1879, Ons Program.
 4. du Toit, 1909, p.14; Almanak, 1905 & 1908, De Jong Calvinist, 12/6/1912

Reformed Community to discuss issues with their non-Reformed neighbours rather than as attempts to develop their own theory of Christian politics.¹

The longest and most systematic exposition of the Reformed position on political issues is to be found in a booklet published in 1913 by the Burgersdorp Congregation as part of the celebrations marking the opening of a new Church building. This booklet, entitled Gedenkstukken in verband met de Nieuwe Gereformeerde Kerk Burgersdorp (A Memorial Book for the New Reformed Church in Burgersdorp), had a chapter in it by T. Hammersma: "De Roeping van de Gereformeerde Tegenover de Staat" (The Calling of Reformed Christians with Reference to the State). In this, Hammersma deals with many issues including the basis of Christian politics. His position is explicitly Kuyperian and begins with an exposition of sphere-sovereignty. He develops Kuyper's views and then defines the State as:

"a community of people, most of whom share the same language and ancestry, being united as a People living in the same land with a well ordered government that exercises real authority over them and which alone they obey".²

From this position, Hammersma went on to review what he considered to be various non-Christian theories of the State, such as Utilitarianism, and rejected them in turn. The goal of the State, its aim and true objective, he declared, could be nothing less than the service of Christ. All other ends were vain because only the service of Christ truly satisfies and thus meets man's deepest need.³

The State's duty therefore was to further true religion and to ensure that "Peace, Order, Right and Justice" were preserved.⁴ The

1. cf. Het Kerkblad, 1/8/1905, 1/7/1909; du Toit, 1909, pp.11-12; Fac et Spera, 1/7/1909, 1533/1910.

2. Hammersma, 1913, p.57.

3. *ibid*, pp.61-62.

4. *ibid*, pp.63-64.

State was the basis of civilization, which it must further and strengthen. This was to be done by assisting parents to fulfil their parental role by enabling them to give their children a good education. This would strengthen national ties and create strong families which were always to be found at the centre of a healthy State. In doing all of this the State had to "remember the old traditions and language"¹ of its people. Each People, he argued, has its own character which distinguished it from other Peoples and which is the basis of a nation's self respect.²

For Hammersma, as for Kuyper, there were many sovereign spheres including the Church, State, School, Science, Art, etc., but not a separate "national" sphere.³ The existence of such a sphere may have been implied by both Kuyper and Hammersma but it was never actually mentioned. Hammersma identified the State with the nation and the nation with the family. But he never explicitly spoke of the sphere of the Nation or People. Kuyper also spoke of God creating separate nations but he never developed the implications of this statement. Indeed, other aspects of Kuyper's theory, in which he insisted on "one Humanity" and spoke of the "co-mingling of blood" between the members of different races as a Calvinist virtue, mitigate against any development which would create a narrow nationalism.⁴ However, the theory of sphere-sovereignty easily lent itself to developing Nationalist views and especially to Afrikaner Nationalism. This became clear in 1915 when an elder of the Reformed Church wrote an article in Het Kerkblad in which he said:

"there are sovereign spheres for men and women, children and parents, masters and servants; there are also sovereign spheres for the family, the People, the Church the State and so on".⁵

1. *ibid*, p.64.

2. Hammersma, 1913, p.64.

3. *ibid*, p.56, Kuyper, 1898, p.116.

4. Hammersma, 1913, pp.56-64; Kuyper, 1898, pp.37-42, and 100-108.

5. Het Kerkblad, 15/8/1915.

Here the mention of "the People" clearly illustrates how easily the theory of sphere-sovereignty could be adapted to the needs of a nationalist movement. It also shows that while the Reformed Community was strongly influenced by Kuyper and Dutch Anti-Revolutionary thinking, a strong and pervasive Nationalism underlay many of their views. It is in the development of this dynamic Nationalism that we find the roots of what was to become the theory and practice of Apartheid.

CHAPTER FIFTEENAfrikaner Nationalism, Apartheid and
the Birth of the National PartyThe Origins of Apartheid

Racial prejudice and discrimination have deep roots in South African society. For a full appreciation of the origins of apartheid many factors must be taken into account but when all of this has been done there will always remain a deep-rooted fear of Africans and of blackness in the hearts of Afrikaners which affect all of the other factors in the South African situation.¹ Many excellent books have been written about South Africa's racial situation and no doubt many more will be written, each making its own contribution by advancing our knowledge of the complexity of the society. This chapter, therefore, does not attempt to analyse all the elements involved in the creation of Afrikaner racial attitudes nor does it offer a critique of the various theories which explain these beliefs. What it tries to do is to show the way in which Calvinism as mediated through the Reformed Community contributed to the self-understanding of Afrikaner Nationalism and helped to formulate the theory of apartheid.

No attempt is made to suggest that there is a crude causal relationship between Calvinism and apartheid. Nor is it being suggested that without the intervention of Calvinism South African society would not have taken a form very similar to the one it has today. Instead the suggestion is being made that to appreciate fully the way in which racial and other tensions manifested themselves in South African society it is important to recognise the way in which the religious beliefs of Afrikaner Calvinists altered their own perception of their situation. The ideology of Calvinism is shown to have interacted with South African social realities to help bring about a particular response

1. Cf. Laurens van der Post, "A Region of Shadow", The Listener, 5/8/1971

to the problems of Afrikaner society and in doing so to provide an intellectual justification with a strong religious legitimation for the actions of Afrikaner leaders. This is important because even today, years after the events discussed, it is on the basis of the ideology which was produced during this period that many Afrikaner intellectuals, and others, continue to justify their racial attitudes and actions.¹

The intellectual justification of Apartheid originated with Groen van Prinsterer's dictum, "In isolation is our strength", and the Anti-Revolutionary movement in the Netherlands. By helping to create the verzuiling, or pillars, of Dutch society the Calvinist movement had created a denominational apartheid in the Netherlands. Catholics, Liberals and Reformed all had their own political parties, trade unions, newspapers and even, in practice, shops, thus dividing Dutch society into rigidly segmented groups.²

Therefore when the Reformed Community propounded an isolationist policy for the Afrikaner People in South Africa they had the Dutch example on which to base their plans. When they argued for the separation of Afrikaners from the English as well as from non-whites they were not putting forward totally impractical suggestions, as many English-speaking commentators thought, because they knew on the basis of the Dutch experience that the existence of totally segregated groups within one State was a live option.³

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1. e.g. Stoker and Potgieter, eds., 1935, Koers in die Krisis; Smit, Taljaard, van der Walt and Duvenage, eds., 1974, Reformasie en Revolusie; see also the Reformed journal Woord en Daad; cf. Ruan Maud, "The Future of an Illusion: The Myth of White Meliorism in South Africa" in Leftwich, 1974, South Africa: Economic Growth and Political Change, pp.287-309.
 2. See p. ; Kruijt, 1959, Verzuiling; Moberg, 1961, "Social Differentiation in the Netherlands", Social Forces, 39, 1961, pp.333-337.
 3. Union of South Africa, Archives of the Secretary to the Department of the Prime Minister, (UPM), letter Botha to Engelbrecht, 18/12/1912.

The theology of the Reformed Community and its interpretation of Afrikaner history in terms of Biblical motifs and comparisons with the history of Israel also worked together for the creation of a strong nationalist movement. The nationalism of the Reformed Community was positively for the preservation and development of all things Afrikaner and the protection of Afrikaner life from the two ever present social and cultural threats to be found in the English and non-white sections of the population.¹ The culture of the English was too "high" and that of non-whites too "low" for them. Therefore, Afrikaners must keep themselves apart to preserve their national identity.²

God had brought their ancestors together on the Southern tip of Africa and formed a new nation. Because of this it was their religious duty to maintain their separate identity and avoid national suicide by inter-mixing with the English or non-white races. They were like the children of Israel called to serve God in the wilderness after being saved from national bondage. In a similar way their existence was like that of the Dutch who had fought a long and bitter struggle against Spain to gain independence.³ Their religion had created their distinct identity and to preserve that identity and their religion they keep themselves apart from other Peoples.⁴

As early as 1905 a Reformed writer referred to Afrikaans as the language which had made their nation "an apart nation".⁵ This idea was strengthened in the following years and the Afrikaner People were warned against the dangers inherent in the new Liberal Government

1. Het Kerkblad, 1/12/1908

2. De Jong Calvinist, September 1912.

3. Almanak, 1905.

4. J. A. du Plessis, 1917, pp.18-19; du Toit, 1909, pp.15-16; Hammersma, 1913, pp.71-76, and 79-81.

5. Fac et Spera, 1/7/1905

in Britain. As an enemy seen by all Milner had united the Afrikaner People in a common cause against his policies but now the Liberals appeared to be their friends. It was in this friendship that Willem Postma saw a greater threat than in the policies of Milner.

"the Liberals are in power now !!! Now comes a wonderful time for South Africa! Or so the politicians think. But ... one thing I know is that Chaimberlain, Milner, Jameson - the lot of them - have done far more for Afrikaners than all the liberals put together ... the Liberals will make liberals of us all".¹

The Reformed called for Afrikaner solidarity in the face of the compromising policies of politicians who like Botha and Smuts were wavering under the influence of liberalism.² They must keep themselves separate from the English by rejecting their language and culture³ and from non-whites by territorial separation. Putting forward a theme that has become familiar in Afrikaner Nationalist propaganda, Willem Postma, in 1907, argued

"give the Black nations a piece of ground where they can establish their own schools, churches, prisons, parliaments, universities. If we go there we must not ask to own ground or vote ... If they come here to work they must not play tennis ... Only if we do this shall we have the enduring peace which our fathers talked about".⁴

Support for these ideas came from other Reformed leaders who saw their People's salvation in the separation of races. J. D. du Toit attacked the meddling in South African racial affairs of the English whom he claimed were prejudiced by the pro-African propaganda of Exeter Hall.⁵ England was a long way from Africa and it was their forefathers the Voortrekkers who had learnt to know the African - not Englishmen living in London. The Voortrekkers had known how to

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1. De Vriend des Volks, 22/12/1905.
 2. De Vriend des Volks, 16/11/1906; 26/4/1907.
 3. De Jong Calvinist, September 1912.
 4. De Vriend des Volks, 17/12/1907.
 5. Exeter Hall was the meeting place of the Anti-Slavery Society, the Aborigines Protection Society and the London Missionary Society.

deal with Africans and their descendants should follow their example.¹ Hammersma and other Reformed writers agreed with these sentiments and were afraid that the present Government was ignoring the "native question" in the hope that it would go away, but it wouldn't. Left to itself the racial situation in South Africa could only get worse. The only solution Hammersma could see, consistent with his Calvinism, was that of "separation" or "segregation".²

Against this background of Afrikaner Nationalism Jan Kamp addressed the students of the Potchefstroom Theological School in 1913 with a speech which was published in the Nationalist newspaper Het Westen with the title De Doppers in de Politiek (The Doppers and Politics).³ In this he spoke about the isolationist policy of the Doppers and related it to the Calvinism of van Prinsterer calling the Dopper policy "our apartheid".³ This it would seem was the first use of a word which did not come into common usage until the 1940s.⁴

Dingaan's Day and Afrikaner Nationalism

On 16th December 1838, at the Battle of Blood River, the Voortrekkers defeated the Zulu army sent by Dingaan to destroy them. Slightly more than 300 whites had broken the power of the Zulu king and resisted the onslaughts of an army numbering over ten thousand. This battle, and the mythology which grew up around it about the victory that God had given the Voortrekkers over the heathen hordes, made a deep impression on Afrikaner thinking.⁵ On the same day, in 1880, Paul Kruger and a small group of fellow Transvaalers revolted against the British annexation of the Transvaal. The first Anglo-Boer War followed and resulted in the restoration of independence to the Transvaal.⁶

1. du Toit, 1909, pp.17-19.

2. De Jong Calvinist, September, 1912; Hammersma, 1913, pp.79-80.

3. Het Westen, 24/6/1913, "De „Doppers" in de Politiek".

4. Brokes, 1968, ed., Apartheid, pp.1-2.

5. Moodie, 1975, pp.6-7 and p.21.

6. Walker, 1964, pp.383-385.

Thus the day had a strong emotional appeal for many Afrikaners. Lord Milner summed up its significance when referring to the possible outbreak of war; he said

"the Higher Powers seem twice in the past to have directly intervened and wrought a miracle for the Afrikaners. Why not a third time? It is small wonder that pious persons of the Dutch Reformed Church really believe that the Lord of Hosts is always on the lookout and will get them out of any tight place".¹

In an attempt to placate Afrikaner opinion following the Second Anglo-Boer War the Transvaal Legislative Council decided to make the day a public holiday and to celebrate on it the victory of "civilization" over barbarism in Southern Africa.²

However, before the Second Anglo-Boer War the Reformed Church paid little official attention to the celebration of Dingaan's Day. Only after the war did it become an increasingly important event in the Church calendar. The enthusiasm of the Reformed Community reached a crescendo in 1908, the seventieth anniversary of Blood River. The celebration of Dingaan's Day was seen as a symbol of Afrikaner unity and national identity. On the Day, Afrikaners were able to unite in the re-enactment of God's deliverance from their enemies. God had saved them in the past and He would remain faithful to His promises by delivering them once more in their time of need.³ This attitude towards Dingaan's Day was summed up in an article published in the Almanak for 1909, which was published at the end of 1908

"each People has a great day in its church and national history ... South Africa also has such a great and glorious day, although it has often been neglected and misused. It is Dingaan's Day, the 16th of December 1838 ... when God by means of a small Gideon's band of Voortrekkers defeated thousands of savages and gave birth to our Afrikaner People".⁴

1. Headlam, 1932, p.286.

2. Transvaal Legislative Council, Hansard, First session, 1903, June 9th

3. Almanak, 1909; Het Kerkblad, 1/1/1908; 1/12/1908.

4. Almanak, 1909.

For Willem Postma, Dingaan's Day was an occasion to remember the "murder" of the lost Republics,¹ while Jan Lion-Cachet used it to remind his hearers of the British concentration camps set up during the Second Anglo-Boer War.² It was an occasion to recall Afrikaners to the Faith of their Fathers, to remind them of the threat to their civilization in the ever-present black hordes, and to attack the policies of political leaders who appeared to be betraying Afrikanerdom.³

In a long article in Het Kerkblad on December 2nd 1915, the Reformed understanding of Dingaan's Day was set out in a systematic way. The article describes the Day as a festival of "recollection" and of "self-preservation". Although the Day was described as a religious celebration, which should not be confused with politics, the content of the article had strong political overtones. The Voortrekkers were described as being in "Egyptian bondage" before they were "saved" by the Trek and so accomplished the salvation of the whole of Afrikanerdom.

In Europe, the article continued, people were conscious of their history because they were surrounded by museums and monuments. But in South Africa there were few such reminders. Dingaan's Day was, however, one occasion rich in history when they could celebrate their past and the heritage of their forefathers. As a result of the events at the Battle of Blood River, God had brought the Afrikaner Nation into being.⁴

The exclusivism of this account is obvious and makes void the claim that the Day was non-political. Certainly if by non-political the writer meant it was not tied exclusively to the activities of a

1. De Vriend des Volks, 6/1/1906.

2. Het Westen, 20/12/1907.

3. Potchefstroom Herald, 17/12/1909; De Vriend des Volks, 16/12/1909.

4. Het Kerkblad, 20/12/1915.

political party then it was non-political. But if he meant that it had no political significance and was not aimed at influencing the thinking of Afrikaners on political issues, he was clearly mistaken. The implications of the Day in political terms signified one thing: support the Nationalists.¹

The overwhelming impression gained from an examination of the Dingaan's Day speeches is that they inevitably directed the attention of the Afrikaner People to those things in their past which encouraged isolationism. It is, however, important to note the difference between what speakers on Dingaan's Day actually said and what the press reported them as saying. This point is brought home by an examination of the Potchefstroom Herald's reports of the local Dingaan's Day celebrations for 1908 and 1909. In each case the newspaper reports speeches by Jan Lion-Cachet in terms of "white unity". But, when other reports are examined and Cachet's actual words analysed it becomes clear that he was calling for an exclusive form of Afrikaner unity and warning Afrikaners against the dangers of English culture. The Potchefstroom Herald attempted to play down this aspect of his speech and stressed references to the "black danger". Significantly the local Dutch language newspaper Het Westen gave almost completely different reports of the celebrations and emphasised the uniquely Afrikaner aspects of them. Taken in its total context therefore there can be little doubt that for the Reformed and many other Afrikaners Dingaan's Day was and remained a supremely Afrikaner celebration which recalled the birth of their People and emphasised their national identity and uniqueness.²

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1. Afrikaners often object to outsiders labelling as "political" what they consider to be "cultural". This objection overlooks the nature of political culture. Cf. Dawson & Prewitt, 1969, Political Socialization.
 2. Potchefstroom Herald, 18/12/1908 & 17/12/1909, with Het Westen, 14/12/1907, 20/12/1907, 11/12/1908 and 17/12/1908. The Potchefstroom Herald did not report Dingaan's Day in 1907 and no copies of Het Westen have survived for the period 12/11/1909-12/11/1910.

The political importance of Dingaan's Day is further seen in the attempt by General Botha in 1916 to use the Day as an occasion to celebrate national unity. Botha hoped thereby to heal the wounds created by the events surrounding the Rebellion of 1914 and to weaken the hold of the National Party over discontented Afrikaners. But his plans misfired and Reformed leaders attacked him for trying to create an "Imperial Dingaan's Day".¹ The result of all this was that Botha and his supporters held a very lavish celebration at Paardekraal while the Nationalists held their own simpler rival celebrations at Senekal. The emphasis at Botha's celebrations was unity and the common history of the white races in South Africa, while the Nationalists emphasised the unique history of Afrikaners.² The irony of Botha's celebration is that when the speeches at Paardekraal are examined it is difficult to escape the feeling that even they draw attention to the uniqueness of the Afrikaner People rather than a common heritage with the English.³ Worse still, by making a political gesture of this kind Botha played into the Nationalists' hands by allowing them to denounce him as a cunning politician willing to manipulate the most sacred memories of the People for his own limited ends, while they, the Nationalists held a "pure" memorial celebration devoid of political overtones.⁴ As a result the Nationalists denounced Botha's "imperialism" with impunity while their own subtle use of emotive symbolism went unnoticed.⁵

1. De Volkstem, 30/5/1916.

2. Cf. Potchefstroom Herald, 19/12/1916 & Het Volksblad, 22/12/1916.

3. Potchefstroom Herald, 19/12/1916.

4. De Volkstem, 30/5/1916; Het Volksblad, 22/12/1916.

5. Cf. Dawson & Prewitt, 1969, pp.22-23, 46-51, & 191-194.

Reformed Criticisms of Government Policies

The "misuse" of Dingaan's Day by Botha and his supporters is only one example of the many complaints which the Reformed leaders made against Afrikaner politicians of their day. Believing, as they did, that the task of Christians was to help create a "Christian" civilization and that, if they failed in their duty, God's hand would rest upon them in judgement, the Reformed felt compelled to keep a watch on what was happening around them and to criticise what they saw as breaches of God's law.¹ They were striving for the creation of a Christian State and believed that God's Name should be honoured in its constitution.²

In South Africa Reformed leaders saw the threat to the religious life of the Afrikaner People epitomised in the existence of Johannesburg. Johannesburg was the incarnation of all that was English and evil. It was described as "a small London in the Transvaal", a microcosm of the world with the riff-raff of all nations, languages and cultures mixing together. The miners and their capitalist masters had had no sympathy with the old Republic and now had none for the aspirations of Afrikaner People. It was in fact their hope and desire to destroy Afrikanerdom.³

From 1905 onwards, as has already been indicated, the Reformed Community was increasingly critical of the policies of established Afrikaner leaders. Botha was being misled by the English and Het Volk seduced by the gold of Jingoistic Capitalists.⁴ The ideal of the political leaders of the day was a united white South Africa which would become one race. This the Reformed found totally unacceptable and they attacked the idea constantly.⁵

1. Hammersma, 1913, pp.66, 77, 83; Almanak, 1917.

2. General Synod, 1916, art. 167; Hammersma, 1913, p.66.

3. Fac et Spera, 15/5/1910, 5/4/1910. In interviews with several older members of the Reformed Community I was told that their parents had hated Johannesburg and all that it represented.

4. Vriend des Volks, 26/4/1907.

5. Fac et Spera, 1/7/1907.

The leaders of the Reformed Community reminded their followers that the battle in their day was essentially the same as in the days of "Father Postma". Outwardly the situation had changed but the basic principles in question remained the same.¹ They felt that their political leaders had given little thought to religion and were ignoring the true interests of the Afrikaner People. So great was the change which had overtaken the Afrikaner leadership after the granting of Responsible Government that they wondered if the General Botha of 1911 could possibly be the same man as the General Botha they had known in 1901.² Botha had deserted them and the cause of his People. But General Hertzog remained a man after their own heart, a true Afrikaner.³

By 1910 their criticism of Botha had changed from assuming that he was being duped by the English to accusing him of no longer being a true Afrikaner.⁴ Botha, Barlow, Schreiner, Spriggs, Smuts and Jameson were identified as their enemies; Hertzog and Merriman as their friends. One group represented opportunism, the other, principle. The choice between them was clear.⁵ Why Reformed leaders should like Merriman may not be immediately clear, but it would seem that he was generally regarded as an honest man while Botha was mistrusted by many people other than members of the Reformed Community.⁶ The Reformed may not have agreed with all that Merriman stood for but they respected his honesty and his willingness to denounce Botha's intrigues.⁷

1. du Toit, 1909, p.4.

2. Het Kerkblad, 20/10/1911.

3. De Vriend des Volks, 28/7/1907.

4. ibid, 28/1/1910.

5. ibid, 4/10/1907, 23/7/1909, 15/2/1910, 18/1/1910; Hammersma, 1913, p.83; Het Kerkblad, 1/9/1911.

6. Potchefstroom Herald, 16/6/1911.

7. Lewson, ed. 1969, Selections from the Correspondence of John X. Merriman, Vol.4, pp.166, 170, and 172-173.

When the Union of South Africa was first proposed, it was regarded with suspicion by the Reformed, who, while they saw the need for the centralisation of the railways, telegraphs, etc., feared the centralisation of Government. A central Government would, they believed, strengthen the ability of the State to impose its own monolithic education system against the wishes of the people and would also work against the language rights of Afrikaners.¹ Provincial Councils, however, could be relied upon to stand between the people and the Central Government.² However, when Union was achieved, the Reformed accepted the fact and gave it a guarded welcome. They pointed out that their Church had been ahead of political developments in South Africa by 50 years because they had had a united Church which spanned the different States which now formed the Union of South Africa.³ Nevertheless the Reformed leaders would have been far happier with a federal system, which was more in keeping with the checks and balances envisaged in Kuyper's political theory.⁴ Thus for once, the Reformed found themselves in agreement with Lord Milner who also preferred federation to union.⁵

General Hertzog and the Reformed Community

Following the creation of the first Union Government, the relationship between Hertzog and the other members of Botha's cabinet deteriorated rapidly.⁶ On December 7th 1912 Hertzog chose the Reformed stronghold of de Wildt, in the Rustenburg district, to make what was to become one of his most historic speeches. The speech split the South African Party, and has been called the speech which marked the "birth of the National Party".⁷ As Smuts' biographer, Hancock, observes

1. De Vriend des Volks, 16/2/1909.

2. De Vriend des Volks, 16/2/1909; J. A. du Plessis, 1917, pp.28-29.

3. Almanak, 1910; Fac et Spera, 15/5/1910.

4. De Vriend des Volks, 17/12/1907; J. D. du Toit Papers, letter 12/4/1948, Stanford-Driver to J. D. du Toit; Die Huisgenoot, 24/12/1950.

5. Headlam, 1933, Vol.2, p.339.

6. Kruger, 1969, pp.46-62.

7. Wilson & Thompson, 1971, p.369.

"after the de Wildt speech, there could no longer be room for Hertzog and Botha in the same government".¹

It was, as Hertzog's own biographer points out, a speech which formed the climax to a drama which had been developing since 1910.² From then on there could be no going back. The Reformed recognised this and threw their weight solidly behind Hertzog.³

At first the Reformed did not want to break away from the South African Party but hoped to be able to gain control of it by winning over its members to Hertzog's views. As late as July 1913, F. C. Eloff, a prominent lay member of the Reformed Community, was still attempting to acquaint Botha with the Reformed viewpoint on education and the "native problem" in the hope that Botha could be persuaded to change his position. Hertzog, Eloff declared, should be reinstated in the Cabinet, Christian-National Education supported by the State and Afrikaner children awarded their "rights". He also argued that the Government must change its policy towards Africans because it was "doing too much for them" and if it continued its present policies Africans would soon outstrip Afrikaners in social and educational advancement. At first Botha replied to these letters personally, but loosing patience he acknowledged the later ones with a curt note signed by his secretary.⁴

Botha was, in fact, fully aware of the political outlook and influence in Afrikaner society as a whole of the Reformed Community.⁵

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1. Hancock, 1962, Smuts: The Sanguine Years, p.357.
 2. van der Heever, 1946, General Hertzog, p.149.
 3. De Vriend des Volks, 16/1/1913; 7/7/1913; 14/7/1913; UPM, letters, Coetzee to Botha, 3/3/1913; Esselen to Botha, 12/5/1913; Botha to Esselen, 15/5/1913; Pienaar to Botha, 28/3/1913. Hertzog's views can be summed up by the slogan "Sough Africa first" which was generally interpreted, despite Hertzog's protests, to mean "Afrikaners first". He supported single-medium schools where the home language of the children would be the medium of instruction and the segregation of Africans to protect white workers and poor Afrikaners.
 4. UPM, correspondence between F. C. Eloff and General Botha, 2/2/1913 to 31/7/1913.
 5. UPM, letter, Botha to Coetzee, 6/3/1913.

But he objected to their policies as unworthy of true South Africans¹ and rejected what he identified as their "principle of isolationism".² He recognised that this action cost him the loyalty of a section of his "own people" and he complained to Lord Selborne that although he had always been motivated by a desire to serve the Afrikaner Community many Afrikaners now regarded him as a "traitor". This did not worry him unduly because he had never had any illusions about the likely reaction of his opponents should he defy their demands and he believed that it was inevitable that they would slander his good name.³

Even though Botha was aware of the strength of Reformed opinion and the dangers inherent in Hertzog's political movement he was able to convince himself that all the men "of real importance" in the strongholds of Hertzogism were on his side.⁴ This judgement seems to have been based upon the fact that he received many letters from Afrikaner professional men, such as doctors and lawyers, assuring him of their support. In accepting the opinions of his supporters Botha overlooked the influence of Reformed predikants and ignored the feelings of the inarticulate masses. Subsequent events were to show how badly he misjudged the situation.⁵

The Birth of the National Party

A last desperate effort to reconcile Botha and Hertzog failed in July 1913. Following this failure, in November of that year, the Annual Congress of the South African Party, which was held in Cape Town, endorsed Botha's policy with a large majority.⁶ In reaction to

1. UPM, letter, Botha to Cotezee, 3/3/1913.

2. UPM, letter, Botha to Englebrecht, 18/1/1913.

3. UPM, letter, Botha to Selborne, 5/9/1913 and 17/3/1913.

4. UPM, letter, Botha to Selborne, 5/9/1913.

5. Patterson, 1957, p.98; Walker, 1964, p.564; In the 1915 election the South African Party polled 95,000 votes to the Nationalists 77,000 votes.

6. Kruger, 1969, p.68.

these events Hertzog called a conference of his supporters in Bloemfontein for January 1914. At this conference the inevitable break with the South African Party was made.¹

This special congress was heavily supported by members of the Reformed Community,² and was opened in prayer by Willem Postma who also supplied a draft constitution for the new party which they hoped to form.³ This draft constitution was then given to a constitutional committee for discussion. Of the seven members who were on this committee and drew up what was to become the Programme of Principles of the National Party, three members, including Willem Postma and Professor Kamp, belonged to the Reformed Community.⁴

During the Congress discussions it was argued that the new party must have a religious basis in keeping with Afrikaner traditions. But Hertzog warned against making their programme too theological and possibly placing it beyond the ability of many potential supporters to understand it. Therefore he thought it undesirable to include words with specific theological significance that people in general might not appreciate. Professor Kamp agreed that some people might have difficulty with theological terms but wanted to retain a theological basis as an eventual aim. In answering Hertzog's doubts about the wisdom of having a theological basis he argued that:

"... it had not been made clear to the people which commandments of God had to do with politics. When that had been made clear it would be possible to include the words" (i.e. words of theological significance).⁵

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1. The Friend, 8th to 10th January, 1914.
 2. Members of both the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk (Dutch Reformed Church) and Hervormde Kerk (Re-formed Church) supported the Nationalist movement and formation of the National Party but they did so as individuals and not as the representatives of their religious communities. An examination of the publications of these Churches shows that up to 1919 their leaders held the view that religion and politics must be kept apart and that on the whole they rejected the Kuyperian views of the leaders of the Reformed Community. Moodie, 1975, pp.58-72.
 3. Kruger, ed., South African Parties and Policies, 1910-1960, 1960, p.68. Het Westen, 30/12/1913.
 4. The Friend, 9/1/1914.
 5. ibid, 9/1/1914.

Another Reformed leader, the Reverend L. P. Vorster, thought that the Calvinist viewpoint had been sufficiently catered for by the inclusion of the words "Christian-National" in what became the second clause of the Programme of Principles.

Jan Kamp found himself in disagreement with the wording of what was proposed as clause four, which spoke of "the control of the people". His view was that

"under Calvinist principles there was no control in the hands of the people but of the Government. He thought it would have been better to insert the words 'the privileges and rights' of the people. At the same time he thought that Calvinist principles had not yet been scientifically explained in South Africa",¹

The outcome of this discussion seems to have been that clause four became clause eight in the final draft, which spoke of the "rights and liberties" of a people.² The party also adopted an educational clause which was thoroughly Christian-National and referred to the rights of parents to choose "the direction in which such instruction should be imparted."³

The whole Programme of Principles had in fact a very Calvinist tone to it.⁴ The Party was described as "Christian-National" it "acknowledged the guidance of God", and the "calling" of the State in developing the "spiritual, national and material welfare of the people". Generally it reflected the tone of Reformed political discussion.⁵ History, language, religion, morals and customs were also stressed in this very theoretical programme which in true Kuyperian manner concentrated on principles rather than current issues.⁶

1. The Friend, 9/1/1914.

2. Kruger, 1960, p.70.

3. Kruger, 1960, pp.70-71.

4. *ibid*, pp.69-72.

5. *ibid*, p.69, cf. Hammersma, 1913.

6. Kruger, 1960, pp.69-72 cf. Kuyper, 1889, p.4.

On the subject of labour relations the very Kuyperian phrases "the worth of the labourer" and "sphere of work", were used.¹ The clause on "native policy" was equally Reformed when it spoke of the "spirit of Christian trusteeship" and of "rejecting every attempt to mix the races", while allowing "the Native" the opportunity to "develop according to his natural talent and aptitude." In this there is a clear continuity with what Reformed writers, like Willem Postma, had been saying. And the Programme contains all the fundamental tenets which we now recognise as the theory of Apartheid.²

During the Congress there was an interesting discussion on Sunday observance. One speaker attacked the South African Party because it did not have a clause on Sunday observance in its programme and said that the existing South African legislation on the subject was "wishy-washy". Their new party was, therefore, urged to take a strong line on Sunday observance. But two Reformed members of the Congress cautioned the other members against interfering in the liberty of other people. Making this point very strongly L. P. Vorster said

" ... they could not make a man a Christian by Act of Parliament. That was a good Calvinist principle. They had fought for the liberty of every individual to act as he pleased. But for themselves they wanted to keep the Sabbath and not be disturbed. Any man could play cricket or football on Sunday, but he must not bring crowds together or disturb the peace",³

As a result of this discussion the Congress approved an interesting statement of principle which used Reformed terminology to delineate the role of the State in maintaining Sunday as a day of rest and avoided compulsory Sabbath observance.⁴

1. Kruger, 1960, p.71; cf. Kuyper, 1891, Christianity and the Class Struggle.

2. See pp. 243-246.

3. The Friend, 9/1/1914.

4. Kruger, 1960, p.72.

The Decline of Reformed Influence in the National Party

The National Party was thus launched in 1914 in a very Calvinist way and equipped with Calvinist principles based on those of the Dutch Anti-Revolutionary movement. It comes as a surprise therefore to find that at the time of the 1915 Party Convention, the Reformed played virtually no part in the proceedings. The impression gained from reports of this Convention is that Hertzog is the undisputed leader of what appears to be yet another secular political party.¹

This turn of events is perhaps best explained by two factors, the first being that Hertzog was a good organiser and had consolidated his hold on the party. Secondly, the leaders of the Reformed Community had suffered a series of setbacks following the foundation of the National Party. Willem Postma, who has been described as Hertzog's "right-hand man", had suffered a severe decline in health and as a result had virtually dropped out of politics.² At the same time the 1914 Rebellion had shaken the Reformed Church and dissipated its energies. Apart from the general pressures created by the hardship and disturbances associated with the Rebellion, two important Reformed political leaders, Piet Grobler and L. P. Vorster had been imprisoned and temporarily removed from active politics.³

The result was that, by biding his time and not getting embroiled in the Rebellion, Hertzog gained greater control over the new party while his potential rivals for leadership were greatly handicapped. At the same time the actions of the Botha Government against the rebels increased the loyalty of the Reformed towards Hertzog and made them all the more eager to work for him in the constituencies.⁴

1. The Friend, 15/7/1915.

2. Kock & Kruger, eds., Dictionary of South African Biography, Vol.2, p.555.

3. Het Kerkblad, 3/10/1914; Potchefstroom Herald, 6/12/1914, 27/7/1915; Het Westen, 23/2/1915.

4. Steynsburg School Correspondence, letter, Postma to van der Walt, 21/6/1915, do Wet to unknown person, 27/10/1915, Potchefstroom Herald, 23/3/1915, 8/10/1915, 22/2/1916, and 13/6/1916.

Local Politics in Potchefstroom

Throughout 1910 the Potchefstroom Herald warned its readers against the "reactionary element" in Botha's Cabinet and called upon Botha to "keep a check on Hertzogism".¹ The great danger as it saw things was not between political parties in South Africa but between different groups of Afrikaners bitterly opposed to each other.² Until the municipal elections of October 1910 the paper had taken a sympathetic attitude towards the Reformed Community and its Theological School and Literary Department which had moved to Potchefstroom from Burgesdorp in 1905.³ But this attitude changed when Professor Duvenage stood as a candidate representing the Afrikaner viewpoint against the English commercial interests which dominated the Town Council.⁴

Overnight the College became a symbol of bigotry and "Hertzogism". Speaking about an election meeting held in the College buildings at which Duvenage spoke, the editor wrote

"who can doubt that at the Theological School on Saturday night pure, unadulterated racialism was preached, racialism in its worst form, racialism tending to coerce the ratepayer into voting 'Afrikander' as against 'the English'".⁵

A few weeks later, after Duvenage had been defeated by the English candidate, the paper published a long attack upon the Theological School and questioned its right to receive rate relief as an educational institution. The same article also made a bitter personal attack upon Professor Duvenage which seems to have been totally unjustified.⁶ This attack was the beginning of a campaign launched by the paper to discredit the College and to have the decision to exempt it from paying rates revoked. At the centre of the argument was the claim that

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1. Potchefstroom Herald, 27/5/1910.
 2. Potchefstroom Herald, 2/9/1910.
 3. *ibid*, 17/12/1909, 9/9/1909. The Theological and its Literary Department will be referred to as the Reformed Church College or College.
 4. *ibid*, 14/10/1910.
 5. *ibid*, 14/10/1910.
 6. *ibid*, cf. 25/11/1910 and 25/7/1913.

the College was a hotbed of "Hertzogism" and that instead of getting on with their studies the students spent their time involved in politics.¹

The involvement of the students in local politics is not indicated in the Reformed Church College records until 1911 when the students decided at a meeting of the Student Society⁷ to raise money to help General Hertzog pay his fine.² This was a reference to the case in which Hertzog had dismissed three school inspectors in the Orange Free State for not being bi-lingual and was subsequently sued for wrongful dismissal and slander. Hertzog lost the case and had to pay heavy damages as well as the costs of the case. As a result collections were organised all over South Africa in support of Hertzog; and the Afrikaner community as a whole paid his expenses.³

In June 1912 an article in the Jong Calvinist on the "native problem" strongly attacked the policies of the Botha Government as being the result of confused "English thinking", and advocated "separation".⁴ Later, in September 1912, the same magazine came out strongly in support of Hertzog. There could, they declared, be no mixing of black and white in South Africa because this would weaken both races. The only solution as they saw it was one of "afscheiding" or separation.⁵

In February 1913 the Potchefstroom Herald reported that in the North Ward of the town, six out of the nine South African Party members were Hertzogites and that students from the Theological School were enrolling new members for the Party in order to build up support for Hertzog.⁶ In March 1913 Hertzog visited Potchefstroom and spoke

1. *ibid*, 16/12/1910; 9/12/1910.

2. Notulen Boek van Vergadering Gehouden door de Studenten der Gereformeerde Theologische School, (SS), 11/11/1911.

3. The Friend, 26/8/1911; 2/11/1911; 3/11/1911; 4/11/1911; Het Westen 10/11/1911.

4. Jong Calvinist, 12/6/1912.

5. *ibid*, September 1912.

6. Potchefstroom Herald, 28/2/1913.

7. There were three student societies in the College. These were the Student Society, the Literary Society and one known as Corps Veritas Vincet. For more details about the College see appendix 8.

at a meeting in the Town Hall. The Reformed leader and local minister the Reverend W. J. de Klerk, Professors Duvenage, du Toit and Kamp were all on the platform with Hertzog along with several other notable members of the Reformed Church in the town.¹ Tension increased between the English and Afrikaans sections population and several rowdy incidents occurred in the town. In addition to the disruption of political meetings fights broke out at the local cinema.²

But the Potchefstroom Herald seems to have persuaded itself and its readers that Hertzogism was "a declining force".³ With this perspective the paper was convinced that the formation of the new National Party was simply the last fling of defeated reactionaries in the South African Party.⁴ In July 1914 the Theological School again came in for criticism for its support of Hertzogism, which was said to attract the students and "the poorer class of the Dutch population".⁵

Very little is said about "the Rebellion" in the minutes of student meetings or in student magazines. A meeting of the Literary Society noted with "grief and shock" the death of General De La Rey but this is the only reference during 1914 to events connected with the Rebellion.⁶ Early in 1915 members of Corps Veritas Vincet were informed that three of their members had been imprisoned for refusing to take part in the invasion of South West Africa.⁷ Later in the year, a special student meeting was held to welcome back their fellow students who had been released by the authorities. The meeting was

1. *ibid*, 28/3/1913.

2. *ibid*, 7/2/1913; 28/3/1913; 4/4/1913; Professor Stoker also told me that he remembered fights between students and supporters of pro-British policies. These were particularly frequent at the local cinema.

3. Potchefstroom Herald, 9/4/1914.

4. *ibid*, 7/7/1914.

5. *ibid*, 31/7/1914.

6. Notulen Boek der Letter Kundige Vereniging van de Studenten aan de Theologische School (SLS), 9/4/1914.

7. Notulen Boek Het Gereformeerde Studentencorps Veritas Vincet, (CVV) 20/3/1915,

a highly emotional one with the singing of Afrikaner Nationalist songs and long speeches about the "oppression of the People" which, it was said, was always related to the oppression of their College. The history of recent events was outlined and then one of the released prisoners gave a full account of his imprisonment. The meeting closed with the students singing the national anthems of the old Orange Free State and Transvaal Republics.¹

Throughout 1915 tension ran high in Potchefstroom. A political meeting held in the College caused local troops to threaten to attack the College and the buildings had to be guarded. Later the electricity supply to the College was cut off apparently in connection with the hostile feelings of some of the townspeople towards it. As a result of these incidents the Curators of the School warned the professors to be careful how they acted and to try to avoid involving the College in disputes within the local community.²

The Potchefstroom Herald reflects the tensions of this period very well. Throughout July and August 1914 it whipped up a war fever and attacked Hertzogism for casting doubt on the loyalty of Afrikaners.³ As the war grew nearer the opportunity of taking over German South West Africa was pointed out as one of the possible advantages which the Union of South Africa could derive from the outbreak of war.⁴ In September 1914 the editor attacked a "false patriotism" which was leading some Afrikaners astray and although the College was not mentioned on this occasion it was clearly in his mind.⁵ A report on October 2nd spoke about a boycott of British firms which it would seem involved

1. SS, 11/6/1915.

2. Notulen Boek van de Kuratore van de Gereformeerde Theologische School, (KTS), 1/12/1915.

3. Potchefstroom Herald, 31/7/1914.

4. ibid, 4/8/1914.

5. ibid, 1/9/1914.

members of the College. The same edition of the paper spoke about a protest meeting against Botha's war plans and the invasion of South West Africa being organised by members of the College.¹ This meeting was reported in the next edition of the paper which described it as a "fiasco". At the meeting fighting had broken out between rival Afrikaner groups and Ferdinand Postma had told those present that

"the Afrikaner people did not go to the poets for guidance, but to God's Word, and the Bible told them not to cross over the border but to keep out of other people's country".²

The College came in for repeated attacks in the following months even though the paper seemed satisfied that while they opposed the invasion of German South West Africa members of the School were not active supporters of the Rebellion.³

Further light on the attitudes of the students and staff at the College during this period comes from a notebook kept by L. J. du Plessis who was a student during these events. From what du Plessis says it appears that the staff and students were sympathetic towards the German cause and felt very strongly that the invasion of German South West Africa was evil. As a result they felt that the Botha Government had exceeded its powers and was acting contrary to Christian principles. The students also were strongly republican during this time although du Plessis indicates that they did not take an active part in the Rebellion and regarded the incident as a protest against the Botha Government and not an attempt to overthrow the constitution of the Union of South Africa. The Rebellion in fact took the students by

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1. *ibid*, 2/10/1914.
 2. *ibid*, 6/10/1914.
 3. *ibid*, 26/1/1915; 16/3/1915.

surprise and caused a sensation among them. But even though they did not agree with rebellion as such they had a great sympathy for the rebels whom they believed had been provoked by Botha.¹

Although the Rebellion itself made a great impression on the students the aftermath was even more decisive in confirming them in their Nationalism. The effect of the Rebellion on the English and pro-British Afrikaners in Potchefstroom, as the students saw it, was to make them even more arrogant than before and as du Plessis puts it, to "play the baas" in the town. This angered the students, because now former National Scouts were once more lauding their loyalty over those who had remained loyal to Afrikanerdom. The local press proved to be extremely biased and although Het Westen was on their side, it was censored. Therefore to get accurate news of what was happening in Europe and South Africa they had to read Abraham Kuyper's paper Die Staandard. Even more important in creating a strong Nationalist reaction amongst the students was the deaths of so many honoured Afrikaner leaders and the savage treatment of the rebels by the courts.¹

Reflecting on the significance of these events for the Afrikaner People du Plessis came to the conclusion that it was as well that the Rebellion had failed, because the Afrikaner People were too divided and uncertain of their identity to take on the responsibilities which success would have forced upon them. The failure of the Rebellion had forced many Afrikaners to reflect upon the meaning of their national identity and to consider once more what it meant to be an Afrikaner. In this way he saw a new opportunity arising out of the ashes of the Rebellion and because of this could speak of it as the "salvation" of the Afrikaner People.¹

1. L. J. du Plessis, 1916, Rebellie Herinneringe deur 'n student.

After the excitement of the Rebellion the Reformed students in Potchefstroom once more dedicated themselves to serving the Nationalist cause. Now, more than ever, they felt that it was necessary for them to propagate the truth about events in South Africa and the need for Afrikaners to be recalled to their traditions and heritage. To an extent, they acknowledged, they had created a wedge between student life and the life of ordinary Afrikaners. This must be abolished and the students must begin to communicate with Afrikaners of all classes. The existing education system was taking its toll of Afrikaner traditions and the younger generation was growing up without a true knowledge of past events. It was their duty to rectify this situation by effective propaganda. Reformed principles on Church and State must be urged on the People and explained to those who did not understand the significance of Christian politics.¹

At a meeting of the student society Corps Veritas Vincet in May 1915 the students drew up a programme of propaganda activities for themselves during the College vacation. They would attempt to incorporate opportunities for giving classes in local communities on History, the People, Afrikaans, Politics and Education with the normal vacation work of the students. In addition a drive would be made to sell Reformed literature to sympathetic people in their home communities.² This plan was put into action and when students reported back after the vacation, the student body was generally very satisfied with the results of this campaign.³

The attempts of the students to provide a Nationalist leadership for Afrikaners did not go unnoticed by the Potchefstroom Herald. In an editorial on July 9th the editor declared

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1. CVV, 10/4/1915.
 2. CVV, 1/5/1915.
 3. CVV, 24/8/1915.

"the Theological School is synonymous with Hertzogism ... The Theological School has become notorious for following a line which is, in the opinion of citizens, detrimental to peace and goodwill".¹

A few weeks later, on July 27th, Professor Duvenage was attacked for allegedly saying that "the best of the Afrikaner people were in the gaols,"² and three days later the paper accused students and staff of attempting to take over the local Carnegie Library by dominating the Library committee.³

The students asked the authorities to cancel the College's subscription to the Potchefstroom Herald and decided to make a special effort to raise subscriptions for the new Nationalist newspaper Ons Vaderland, which had just begun publication.⁴ They organised a concert in Potchefstroom for the Helpmekaar organisation.⁵ They also committed the organisation of Corps Veritas Vincet to working for the Nationalist cause and assisting Hertzog in every way possible.⁶ This decision was probably taken in view of the impending General Election.

No student society accounts exist of the 1915 election but a fairly full picture is obtainable from reports in the Potchefstroom Herald and the local nationalist paper Het Volksblad.⁷ On the whole Het Volksblad gave a straightforward account of election meetings placing its emphasis on the Nationalist case.⁸ But the Potchefstroom Herald went out of its way to stress the role of the College in the election and to discredit the Nationalist candidate by identifying him with religious bigotry. This task was made easier by the fact that the Nationalist candidate was the local Reformed Church minister,

1. Potchefstroom Herald, 9/7/1915.

2. ibid, 27/7/1915.

3. ibid, 30/7/1915.

4. SS, 3/8/1915.

5. SLS, 6/8/1915.

6. CVV, 8/8/1915.

7. Het Volksblad was formally known as Het Westen; the name was changed in March 1915.

8. e.g., Het Volksblad, 5 & 8/10/1915.

the Reverend W. J. de Klerk.¹ In view of the Potchefstroom Herald the troublemakers in the election were the Hertzogites who drew most of their support from "Hollanders" and "Doppers".² The close association between the Doppers and the Nationalist Party was developed in an article published by the Potchefstroom Herald on 8th October 1915, saying

"if the Hertzogites party GOT A MAJORITY in Parliament, they would introduce denominational education. The Dopper Church had been striving for it for years ... It was certain that THE DOPPER CHURCH would vote solid for the Hertzogite candidate ... Potchefstroom was like the Nazareth of Transvaal Hertzogism",³

Reporting an election meeting in which General Smuts took part the newspaper recorded the following incident

"Mr. de Klerk said that Mr. Esselen had referred to political predikants. He (the questioner) wanted to know how many Bishops there were in the House of Lords in England.

General Smuts (amidst much laughter) replied that he was quite satisfied that the political predikants of this country should also be placed in the House of Lords in England".⁴

After this interchange several students from the Theological School got involved in the meeting and attempted to hold a Nationalist rally when it was over.⁴ At another meeting the same week Ewald Esselen attacked the "Theological Seminary" for its political activities among Afrikaners.⁴ Several other meetings and incidents are reported all of which indicate a high level of involvement by the students at the Theological School.⁵

When the election was over and de Klerk had been defeated the Potchefstroom Herald changed its tone from one of bitter personal attacks and strong condemnation of the Doppers and the College to one of reconciliation and even went so far as to say

1. van der Vyver, ed., 1959, p.248.

2. Potchefstroom Herald, 4/5/1915; 24/9/1915; 8/10/1915; cf. van der Vyver, ed., 1959, pp.248-249.

3. Potchefstroom Herald, 8/10/1915.

4. *ibid*, 15/10/1915.

5. *ibid*, 19/10/1915.

" he Reverend Mr. de Klerk is to be congratulated on the gentlemanly way in which he fought. There was no bitterness - but a conviction in his cause",¹

Such a reversal of attitude in so short a time makes the reader wonder if he can believe anything the newspaper ever said by way of comment on its opponents.

1. ibis, 22/10/1915.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

War, Rebellion and Social Issues.

War

The outbreak of the First World War found the Reformed Community in sympathy with the Germans, as were Kuyper and his followers in the Netherlands.¹ The correct course for South Africa, they believed, was one of neutrality and because of this they refused to fight on the side of the British Empire.² The call of Botha's Government for a day of prayer to help the war effort was seen by the Reformed as an act of enormous hypocrisy, even sacrilege.³ Throughout the period of hostilities they campaigned for peace and the cessation of the conflict in collaboration with their fellow Reformed Christians in the Netherlands.⁴

In this situation the decision of the Botha Government to invade German South West Africa was seen as naked aggression against a hitherto friendly neighbour.⁵ Consequently Reformed Christians refused to take part in the invasion, even at the cost of imprisonment. The Reformed community felt that the Government was breaking God's commandments by coveting the land of another nation and they would have nothing to do with the ungodly act of taking it by force.⁶

Rebellion

When the Botha Government proposed the invasion of German South West Africa a series of events were set in motion which have become known as the "Rebellion". Although some leaders of the movement may have intended the Rebellion to be an armed revolt which would overthrow the Botha Government and restore the Republics, it seems likely

1. Het Kerkblad, 1/9/1914; 15/9/1914; Vanden Berg, 1960, p.276.

2. Het Kerkblad, 15/4/1915; Almanak, 1915

3. Het Kerkblad, 15/9/1914.

4. Almanak, 1917; Het Kerkblad, 20/12/1917.

5. du Plessis, Notebook, 1915, January 2nd 1915 & 1/9/1914; General Synod, 1916, Appendix N.

6. L. J. du Plessis, 1916, KVV, 11/6/1915; KTS, 1/12/1915

that many of those who took part believed that they were joining a legitimate political protest and not an attempted revolution.¹ It is clear also that, in the light of their doctrine of sphere-sovereignty and their general views on Christian morality, for the Reformed the Government had already far exceeded its legitimate powers on various issues. Seen in this light the "protest-rebellion" was a justifiable reaction to a call to arms by a Government acting despotically and not simply an attempted social revolution as Botha and Smuts interpreted it.²

The Reformed Community and the Rebellion

Even given the confused background of events which accompanied the Rebellion the involvement of the Reformed Community in such a movement comes as something of a surprise. Like Kuyper, the Reformed claimed to be upholders of "anti-revolutionary" principles which would seem to preclude the possibility of involvement in events such as the Rebellion.³ The very idea of revolution was anathema to Kuyperians, including the Reformed.

In their rejection of revolution the Reformed faced a number of problems within their own history and tradition. The Dutch had revolted against Spain, Cromwell, a fellow Calvinist whom they greatly admired, had fought against his king, the Voortrekkers had defied their rulers by trekking and the Boers had revolted against British rule in 1880. The justification the Reformed offered for these events all had the same basic premise. They argued that the ruling authorities had exceeded their rightful powers and persecuted the people. They further

1. Kruger, 1969, pp.89-90.

2. L.J. du Plessis, 1916.

3. Fac et Spera, 15/3/1910; L.J. du Plessis, 1917, pp.14-19.

argued that in each case persecution was accompanied by a threat to the religion of the people who were therefore forced into rebellion to protect their Faith. Another factor which they claimed separated these "Calvinist revolutions" from other revolutions was that in each case the rebellion of the Calvinists was led by the "minor magistrates", which gave them an authority lacked by other revolutionaries. The argument here is that the revolutions stemming from the French Revolution were motivated by a desire to destroy all authority and abolish all law, while the rebellions of Calvinist history were intended to uphold the law and maintain authority by protesting against unjust Governments which were exceeding their rightful powers.¹

The Reformed Judgement on the Rebellion

Following the failure of the 1914 Rebellion the Reformed community held its own inquest into the events during the 1916 General Synod. Instead of issuing an outright condemnation, as certain sections of the Dutch Reformed Church had done, the Reformed Church made a careful study of the conditions under which citizens may legitimately resist the authority of their Government. This study was later issued as a report on the Rebellion. In it they asked whether in the light of the conditions laid down in the Bible the Rebellion of 1914 could be regarded as sinful. The problem, they conceded, was that a number of very different accounts of the events of 1914 were in circulation. The official Government version was that it was an armed revolt aimed at overthrowing the elected representatives of the people and that it had been carefully planned in collaboration with the Germans.²

1. General Synod, 1916, Appendix, N, point 8; J. A. du Plessis, 1917, pp.21-27.

2. Kruger, 1969, pp.80-95.

Many of the rebels claimed that they were simply protesting against conscription and the proposed invasion of German South West Africa. This protest, it was argued, had taken the form of the old republican commando protests which were essentially peaceful demonstrations. When the Government chose to treat the protesters as rebels they provoked the rebellion which eventually took place.¹

As a result of these conflicting opinions about the nature of the Rebellion the General Synod came to the conclusion that everyone must be allowed to follow the guidance of his own conscience in deciding whether the Rebellion was sinful or not.² Whatever the logic of this argument it failed to satisfy some members of the Church who brought up the subject again at the General Synod of 1918. But the Synod stuck to its decision and the protesters went away unsatisfied.³ As a result of these decisions many people came to the conclusion that in fact the Reformed Church supported the Rebellion even if they did not publicly say so, and there is no doubt that many members of the Church were in sympathy with the rebels.⁴

The Aftermath of Rebellion

The Rebellion left the Afrikaner People bitterly divided between those who supported the actions of the Botha Government and those who sided with the rebels. This division created a crisis of conscience that led many previously uncommitted Afrikaners to side with the National Party. To punish the rebels the courts imposed fines which many could not hope to pay and which threatened to deprive them of their means of livelihood by forcing them to sell their farms. To

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1. Schoeman, Het die Rebelle nie 'n Ander Kant nie?, n.d.
 2. General Synod, 1916, Appendix, N, & articles: 92, 99, 101, 104, 111 & 172.
 3. General Synod, 1918, Appendix, D, & articles: 35, 38, 42, 108, & 109.
 4. L. J. du Plessis, 1916; Boshoff, Rebelle Sketse, 1916; W. L. & J. W. du Plessis, n.d., De Synode der Gereformeerde Kerk over Rebelle.

prevent this the Helpmekaar organisation was formed to raise money to pay the fines. This organisation gained great sympathy for the rebel cause and thus for the Nationalists.¹ Some people also suggested that the Helpmekaar diverted some of the money it collected to the National Party.²

Though the Rebellion failed in military terms there can be no doubt that it had a significant psychological effect upon Afrikaner society and became a powerful propaganda weapon in the hands of the Nationalists. This was because of the ineptness of the Government in handling the initial protests and in the way the rebels were punished. Thus a military disaster became a political success.

Republicanism

There is a tendency for Afrikaner historians like D. W. Kruger to see republicanism as one of the enduring themes of Afrikaner politics,³ while historians like Rene de Villiers, who do not share Kruger's Nationalist bias, play down the role of republicanism in Afrikaner politics during the period 1902-1919.⁴ From the evidence available in press reports it would seem that republicanism was not very much in evidence among Afrikaners generally between 1902 and 1916.⁵ But in Reformed circles there was a continuous republican tradition. This is to be found in the poetry of Totius⁶ and general utterances by Reformed leaders.⁷ Certainly from 1910 onwards the Reformed leadership was actively supporting the idea of a republic,⁸ and this seems to have been a general hope within the community.⁹

1. Helpmekaar Gedenkboek, 1917.

2. Potchefstroom Herald, 8/8/1916; 24/11/1917.

3. Kruger, 1969, pp.43-44, 70, 85, 106, 110-111, 115-116.

4. Wilson & Thompson, 1971, pp.390-392.

5. The first post-war references to republicanism appear in both the Potchefstroom Herald and Het Westen in 1916

6. See Chapter Eleven.

7. Het Kerkblad,

8. De Vriend des Volks, 15/2/1910.

9. L. J. du Plessis, 1916.

Poor Whites and Industrialisation

The use of the ideal of a republic, harking back to the pre-war days of the rural Transvaal¹ and frequent references to the "old ways",² has led some commentators to characterise Afrikaner Nationalism as a romantic movement which desired a return to the past. This may have been true of certain aspects of the nationalist movement but it is certainly not true of the leaders of the Reformed Community. The past, as has been shown, played an important role in their self-identification and the formation of their political attitudes and ideals. But, the past was not used to encourage a return to a rural way of life. True, the Reformed had an intense dislike of Johannesburg and modern capitalism but they did not indulge in the illusion that a return to the land would solve their country's economic problems.³

The problem of South Africa's "poor whites" was one which the Reformed community took very seriously. As a Church the Reformed Church helped those of its members who were poor as much as it could.⁴ But it rejected the notion, fostered by some members of the Dutch Reformed Church, that the plight of the poor was entirely the responsibility of the Church. The Reformed also objected to the socialist view that the State was primarily responsible for the care of the poor.⁵ They argued rather that in keeping with the theory of sphere-soverignty the welfare of the poor was the responsibility of society as a whole.⁶

It was the social sphere which must be invoked when attempting to aid the poor. Society had a duty to create work for them. As Verwoerd was to argue at a later date,⁷ it was the Afrikaner People

1. du Toit, 1961, Vol. VIII, p.301.

2. Eloff, 1919; Postma, 1909.

3. Hammersma, 1913, p.78; and Fac et Spera, 15/4/1910, 15/5/1910.

4. Coetzee, 1953, Die Barmhartigheidsdiens van die Gereformeerde Kerk in Suid-Afrika.

5. Het Volksblad, 9/10/1917.

6. Het Volksblad, 9/10/1917.

7. Hepple, 1967, Verwoerd, pp.26-30.

as a People who must care for its own poor. Such caring, leaders of the Reformed Community believed, could best be done through organisations like the Helpmekaar and other societies which claimed had grown organically out of Afrikaner society.¹

The Reformed also rejected the tendency, supported by some sections of the Dutch Reformed Church, to urge the return of the poor whites to the land. The solution of the poor white problem was seen as a long-term one and improved educational facilities were regarded as one of the keys to the solving of the problem. Education was to be geared to the needs of the people and an emphasis placed upon industrial skills which would enable Afrikaners to enter industry. At the same time an effort was to be made to create work through the building up of Afrikaans commerce and industry. Taken together the views of Reformed leaders on industrialisation were those of a modernising group which saw in the application of technology the means of overcoming pressing social problems.²

Capitalism and Socialism

When they advocated industrialisation the Reformed leaders were careful to say that they were not advocating a crude form of Capitalism. What they wanted to see was the use of industry to supply employment without the excesses of the Capitalist system. This could perhaps be described as social rather than Capitalist or State industrialisation. The social development of industry which they hoped for was seen in terms of an Afrikaner People's movement and not of the European Socialism which they rejected. Capitalism and Socialism as they had developed in Europe were seen as equally un-Christian. Capitalism exploited Afrikaner workers while Socialism introduced Atheism among them.³

1. Het Volksblad, 9/10/1915; Het Kerkblad, 15/12/1916.

2. Het Volksblad, 9/10/1915; Het Kerkblad, 15/12/1916; Korps Veritas Vincet, 1/8/1910, 6/4/1911; Education Commission, 1916, Orange Free State, pp.4-14.

3. Het Kerkblad, 2/12/1918.

Hammersma argued that Socialism was the younger brother of Capitalism and had grown out of the excesses of Capitalism. Thus the sins of the capitalists had created socialists. Christians, therefore, had a duty to work for the abolition of the abuses of Capitalism and so to undermine the appeal of Socialism.¹

While recognising the injustices inherent in the Capitalist system the Reformed did not support the idea of a classless society. Indeed they believed that social differences and variations between the rich and poor were the result of inherited talents and could therefore never be eliminated from society. Divisions between rich and poor and the envy created by them went back to the time of Noah and must be accepted.²

Socialism was in fact the social despotism of the worker and amounted to nothing less than communism. As such it presented a real threat to Africa.³ It was a new religion and must be recognised as such and rejected by all true Calvinists.⁴ To the Reformed, Socialism implied the nationalisation of all industries and of land as well as the acceptance of beliefs like the theory of evolution. They claimed that it was a political system based upon atheism and grounded in the spirit of the Revolution.⁵ The fact that Socialism was making progress in the world in their own day was a sign of the times and a signpost toward the future. Revolution was near and could come at any time in South Africa. The Reformed must resist this with all their might because it threatened not only their lives but their religion.⁶

1. Hammersma, 1913, pp.77-79.

D. P. du Plessis, n.d., Die Kalvinistiese Lewens en Werlbeskouing, p.11.

2. D. P. du Plessis, n.d., pp.5, 11-12.

3. D. P. du Plessis, n.d., p.12; Het Kerkblad, 1/5/1919.

4. D. P. du Plessis, n.d., p.17.

5. D. P. du Plessis, n.d., p.11; Het Kerkblad, 2/12/1918.

6. Het Kerkblad, 1/2/1919.

The great folly of the Socialists was that they would pay the city engineer of Johannesburg at the same rate as a Calvin or Luther and would even put an equal value on their work.¹ Statements such as this vividly illustrate the value placed upon correct belief by the Reformed Community and reflect the high status which ministers held among them. They also show the way in which their religion could be used to attack political theories. To defeat an opponent's argument all that it was necessary to do was to assert its incompatibility with Calvinism and produce some theoretical evidence to this end. There was no need to examine the theory itself or to see how it matched up to political realities because reality itself was defined in terms of their religion.

The Female Franchise - A Revolutionary Belief

One of the results of socialism and of the revolutionary principles which soured the politics of their day, the Reformed believed, was the clamour for the female franchise. The women's movement was the outcome of a "modern" world view which was opposed to Calvinism, and which expressed the spirit of the times. Its origin was to be found in the French Revolution in Europe and in South Africa it was to be seen as the fruit of English rationalist thought.²

Although his argument is not clear in 1916 J. D. du Toit, taking the tenth commandment as a basis, argued that women and the home go together. This fact, he claimed, using a type of exagesis applied to everyday speech, which Reformed preachers normally used to expound the Bible, was summed up by the Dutch word "huisvrouw" (housewife), which indicated that a woman's place was in her house and that she was at the

1. D. P. du Plessis, n.d., p.12.

2. D. P. du Plessis, n.d., p.15; J. A. du Plessis, 1917, p.19; Het Kerkblad, 15/2/1916.

centre of the home. In the home the wife should have very great authority. She should supervise the finances, relations with neighbours, the upbringing of the children, etc. But her rule was bounded by the boundaries of the home. Women must be faithful to their calling and could take a part in the wider society only in so far as was necessitated by duties associated with the home. For example a woman could sit on the local school council if she had the time. In doing so she would be fulfilling her calling as a mother by caring for the welfare of her children. But in public affairs generally she had no place because there her man acted on her behalf.¹

The Calvinist, du Toit argued, believed in a corporate franchise which recognised that the man was the head of the family. Society was made up of families, not individuals; therefore, each head of a household ought to have one vote. In this way the family's future as the basis of the State was assured and the component parts of the State bound together in a fundamental unity. The only women who should be enfranchised were widows and then the vote of each widow should be exercised for her household and not for herself as an individual.¹

In the Church, du Toit believed, women must always remain subordinate to men. Some opponents of this view had tried to argue that the Bible taught that Christians were "all one in Christ". This, du Toit acknowledged, was true. But the verse, he pointed out, said "in Christ" not "in the Church". He did not believe that it could be used to support the case for giving women authority in the Church; and, therefore, women ought to be excluded from all of the decision-making bodies of the Church.¹

1. Het Kerkblad, 15/2/1916.

The corporate vote argument advocated by du Toit was also favoured by Abraham Kuyper who even proposed a special parliamentary Chamber for women to give them a say in matters which concerned them. But the Dutch theologian Herman Bavink opposed this and argued that by the restriction of women to their role the home meant that those who never married were in effect being excluded from the body politic and placed outside society.¹ As a result of these arguments the Reformed Community in South Africa began to reconsider its views on these matters. du Toit and others realised that political pressures outside the Reformed Community were going to bring about the enfranchisement of South African women and that given this reality their task was to try to bring about as Christian a solution to the problem as they could obtain. du Toit argued this case in Het Kerkblad in February 1918 and urged support for L. P. Vorster who was trying to get the South African Parliament to accept his own modified version of a corporate franchise.²

Vorster's proposal, which was based on Anti-Revolutionary principles, was aimed at giving some women a vote. He suggested that unmarried women and widows should receive a single vote each. Every male head of a family would be given one vote for himself, another for his wife and one for each of his minor children. This proposal was rejected by parliament and Vorster then attempted to popularise the idea but appears to have gained little support outside the Reformed Community.³ (These proposals were, of course, intended to apply to "white" women only).

1. *ibid*, 15/2/1916; 15/9/1916; 15/2/1918.

2. *ibid*, 15/2/1918.

3. Vorster, 1920, The Organic Principle of the Franchise.

By modifying their position on the female franchise the leaders of the Reformed Church were showing a political realism in an attempt to apply Christian principles in a given situation. In characteristic fashion Willem Postma did not see things in this light and wrote an angry letter to Het Kerkblad accusing du Toit and the other Reformed leaders who favoured a corporate franchise of departing from Biblical principles and the historic position of Reformed Christians on this issue. "Adam", he argued, "was the head of the Covenant, not Eve," and this signified that the rightful place of women was one of subjection to men. The Reformed Church, he went on, must remember this truth and have the courage to stand by its principles even if the world scorned them. du Toit replied that he had not changed his fundamental beliefs but was simply attempting to face up to the question of what members of the Reformed Community must do when women eventually achieved the franchise.¹ The theoretical arguments over this went on for years but when in 1930 white South African women were finally given the vote, the Reformed Community accepted Parliament's decision and has shown no sign of trying to change it even though the electoral system is based on the "English" model.

This example of the discussion surrounding the female franchise illustrates the commitment of the Reformed Community as a whole to Anti-Revolutionary principles. They were prepared to accept change and even to anticipate it but always in terms of their own Biblical view of the world. Christians, they believed, were called to action on political issues and must struggle to apply their principles to all aspects of life however difficult that might prove. What was needed was not a destructive revolution but continual reformation.

1. Het Kerkblad, 1/4/1918.

The Church had a positive duty to preach against abuses within society in the hope of exposing them and bringing about changes which would remove them. And at the same time the State had a duty to protect the weak and remove grievances which could lead to revolution if left unchecked. In this way the Reformed were being true to their Anti-Revolutionary principles by attempting to remove the conditions which might make revolution inevitable.¹

1. Het Kerkblad, 1/5/1919; 15/6/1919.

POSTSCRIPTTOTALITARIAN CALVINISM

Many writers claim that modern South Africa is a totalitarian state.¹ Others go on to argue that the source of Afrikaner totalitarianism is to be found in the austere Calvinism which is the religion of all true Afrikaner Nationalists.² Behind this association of Afrikaner Calvinism with totalitarianism is a commonly held belief that Calvinism is by definition authoritarian. George Sabine, in his popular work A History of Political Thought, writes:

"In its initial form Calvinism not only included a condemnation of resistance but it lacked all leaning towards liberalism, constitutionalism, or representative principles ... it ... was, in general, illiberal, oppressive, and reactionary. This was the nature of Calvin's own government in Geneva and of Puritan government in Massachusetts."³

On the other hand some writers, such as Christopher Hill, see in Calvinism the source of modern democracy and constitutional liberty.⁴ The question to be asked is which interpretation best fits the South African case.

When the religion of the Reformed Community in South Africa during the years 1902 to 1919 is examined it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that their Calvinism was totalitarian in form. The Reformed sought to apply their religious beliefs to all areas of life and rejected a pietistic religion which separated the sacred from the secular. Calvinism, in their view, saw the whole of life as a totality in which religious principles were fundamental. This fact would seem to imply, or at least support, the argument that totalitarianism in South African

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1. cf. Adam, 1971, Modernizing Racial Domination, p.37. van den Berg, 1965, South Africa: A study in conflict, pp.78-85.
 2. cf. van Rensburg, 1962, Guilty Land; Bunting, 1964, The Rise of the South African Reich.
 3. Sabine, 1963, A History of Political Thought, p.363
 4. Hill, 19

society, is derived from Calvinism.

There is also no doubt that the Reformed Community played an important role in the creation of Afrikaner Nationalism, of the National Party in 1914, and in the development of the theory and practice of apartheid. However it would be wrong to conclude from this that the totalitarian Calvinism of the Reformed Community is identical with the totalitarianism of fascism. Their beliefs formed a coherent whole which affected every area of their lives, but unlike modern totalitarians or even the imperialists of the period under consideration, they did not attempt to force their views on other people. Indeed there is evidence that the Reformed Community was happy to encourage other groups to develop in their own way provided they themselves were left to their own devices.¹ It would seem therefore that while the Calvinism of the Reformed Community is rightly described as "totalitarian" it must be carefully distinguished from political totalitarianism.

An objection to the above statement would be that the type of Afrikaner State which eventually emerged in South Africa as a result of the Nationalism created at least in part by the Reformed, was politically totalitarian in every possible way. Whatever may be the pros and cons of the debate about modern South Africa as a totalitarian state, to reach this conclusion it would still be necessary to prove that the totalitarian aspects of modern South Africa are in fact derived from the Calvinism of the Reformed. To do this would require another study at least as long as the present one. But it should be noted that even if the politically totalitarian aspect of Afrikaner Nationalism is dressed up in Calvinist terminology, there is some evidence that these features of Afrikaner Nationalism came from non-Calvinist sources and that the Calvinists of the Reformed Community have within the Afrikaner Community generally stood out as critics of political totalitarian influences at work in Afrikanerdom.²

1. See p. 152; cf. p. 286.

2. Patterson, 1957, The Last Trek, pp.93-94; Roberts and Trollip, 1947 The South African Opposition; Potgieter, 1972, Op die Voorpunt van die Tye; Moodie, 1975, The Reise of Afrikanerdom.

Appendix 1 - Sources

The most important sources for the study are to be found in the Archives of the Reformed Church in Potchefstroom. The documents in these archives are, on the whole, complete and in good order. They include the minute books of various Church organisations plus collections of correspondence. The archives also contain a large collection of publications connected with the Reformed Church as well as a valuable collection on contemporary publications from other sources.

Two sets of documents eluded investigation. These were the papers of Jan Kamp which Professor Noel Garson endeavoured to obtain; and a series of letters from Jan Lion Cachet to his brother in Amsterdam which Mrs. J. C. van Rooy tried to locate. Both sets of documents seem to have been lost fairly recently.

Additional information about the Reformed Community during the period under discussion was obtained from various official sources. The most useful of these are the Archives of the Secretary to the Department of the Prime Minister, in Pretoria, and the Archives of the Superintendent General of Education, in Cape Town.

The two local newspapers, the Potchefstroom Herald and Het Westen, were invaluable in providing a background to the events under discussion. The Potchefstroom Herald is available for the entire period with the exception of the months July to December 1917 which are missing. Het Westen is less complete. The first fifty-three issues are missing as well as those for the period November 12 1909 to November 18 1910. The earliest available copy of Het Westen is dated November 17 1905. It changed its name to Het Volksblad in March 1915 when the place of publication was moved from Potchefstroom to Bloemfontein. While Het Westen was published in Potchefstroom, Jan Kamp, of the Reformed Church Theological School was one of its editors.

In September 1915 Jan Kamp was given six months leave of absence by the Theological School to edit the new Nationalist newspaper Ons Vaderland which was to be published in Pretoria. Unfortunately no copies of Ons Vaderland published during Kamp's editorship have survived.

Appendix 2 - Informants

Very valuable information and many illuminating insights into the period studied were obtained from informants who remembered the events under consideration. The most important of these were: Mrs. J. C. van Rooy who is the daughter of Jan Lion Cachet, Dr. H. F. Kamp the son of Jan Kamp, Professors J. Chr. Coetzee and H. G. Stoker and the late H. G. Schulze. A number of the older members of the English speaking community in Potchefstroom also talked about their memories of earlier days but asked not to be mentioned by name.

Appendix 3 - Translation and Afrikaans Spelling

In translating passages from Afrikaans the principle followed was that of attempting to convey to an English reader the feel of the original rather than simply giving its literal meaning. This was to enable English readers to enter, as far as possible, the thought world of Afrikaners. At the same time every effort was made to reproduce accurately the meaning of the original.

The translations of Totius' poetry were checked by Mrs. Elsa Pretorius of Madwaleni Mission, Elliotdale, Transkei. A number of students helped in the reading and translating of handwritten documents in the Reformed Church archives. Of these Paul Kruger, Vorster Combrink, and Mrs. Estelle Kruger were particularly helpful as well as Dr. Louis Leal of the Department of Romance Languages, Potchefstroom University. Finally, before any passage was used in the thesis or a major argument built around it my wife, Kirsty Hexham, rechecked my translation and understanding of it.

Throughout the thesis various Dutch and Afrikaans words are used. In most cases these are used in giving the titles of books and articles. The reader will note that the spelling of various words differs on the separate occasions when they are used. Thus the definite article is rendered as "Di", "De" and "Die". This is because Afrikaans as a written language separated itself from Dutch during the time discussed in this thesis, and its spelling was not immediately standardised.

Appendix 4 - The Term "Volk"

Many writers speak of the "Afrikaner Volk" which is a permissible way of rendering the equivalent Afrikaans term into English. But for English speakers the word "volk" has connotations derived from German National-Socialism and is therefore likely to lead the reader to associate Afrikaner Nationalism with the Nazis. The use of "volk" in Afrikaans preceded the rise of Nazi Germany and has a number of different connotations. Therefore it was decided to follow the example of Dunbar Moodie and to replace the usual term "Afrikaner Volk" by the more neutral "Afrikaner People".

Appendix 5 - The Reformed Community 1920-1975

The Reformed Community continued to play an important role in Afrikaner Society following the end of the period covered in this thesis. Members of the Community are alleged to have played a crucial part in the reorganisation of the Afrikaans Broederbond in the late 1920s and were in the forefront of the republican movement. They continued to struggle for Christian-National Education and greatly affected the Bantu Education Act of 1953 as well as the University Acts of 1959. In the 1930s they were deeply involved in Afrikaner party politics and the Ossewa Brandwag as well as other Afrikaner cultural/political organisations.

Dunbar Moodie discusses the activities of the Reformed Community from 1920 to 1948 in his book The Rise of Afrikanerdom. Its members also figure prominently in The South African Opposition 1939-1945, by Roberts and Trollip.

Since the early 1960s members of the Reformed Community have been increasingly critical of the official policies of the National Party and of the practice, if not theory, of apartheid. This criticism has found expression in the influential journal Woord en Daad and the more radical but short lived Loog.

At present members of the Reformed Community are among the most radical members of Afrikaner society. Their most outspoken representative is Dr. Willem de Klerk, the present editor of Die Transvaaler. Dr. Connie Mulder, Minister of the Interior, is their chief representative in Parliament.

Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education remains a centre for Calvinist thought and has around 7,000 students. Plans are being made within the Reformed Community for the establishment of an independent Christian University for Coloured and Black members of the Reformed Church.

The Reformed Church has established several missions amongst non-Europeans in South Africa and out of these missions flourishing independent Reformed Churches have emerged. Each of these Churches has its own Synod and a new Reformed General Synod has been created which unites the Synods of the various ethnically based South African Reformed Churches. At the new General Synod each independent Reformed Church is represented by an equal number of delegates and the decisions of the General Synod are taken as the decisions of the Reformed Church as a whole. Practically this means that in the new General Synod Afrikaner members are outnumbered by non-European members. In this way the Reformed Community believes it is practicing its theory of apartheid in a just way.

Appendix 6 - The Kuyperian Tradition Outside South Africa

In the Netherlands Kuyper's Anti-Revolutionary Party dominated Dutch politics until 1939, and continued to play a leading role in Dutch political life until 1966. Since 1966 the Anti-Revolutionary Party has been in decline, and at present it is attempting to work out a new political position in conjunction with the old Catholic Party. The Free University of Amsterdam continued as a Calvinist university with strong theological roots until the mid-1960s when rapid expansion and parliamentary reforms of the Dutch education system eroded its confessional stance. Calvinist Labour Unions, a Christian Television Service and Christian Schools continue to exist and exert an influence on Dutch life but they are increasingly under attack from anti-clerical secular forces.

Throughout the period 1920-1960 Dutch nationals and Calvinists in particular continued to encourage Afrikaner Nationalists in their struggle against the British. But since the 1960s many Dutchmen have been very critical of South Africa because of the policy of apartheid. The Free University of Amsterdam which until very recently had a close relationship with Potchefstroom University has now broken off all contact with the Calvinists in Potchefstroom and is seeking to establish some form of relationship with the University of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland.

In North America a similar Church to the Reformed Church, the Christian Reformed Church, was set up as a result of Dutch immigration. The history of the Christian Reformed Church resembles that of the Reformed Church in many ways except that its members accepted the use of the English language and the American political system. This Church also established its own Theological and then Liberal Arts College, Calvin College, which is now one of the better Liberal Arts Colleges in America although it has never grown into a university.

Following the Second World War a new wave of immigrants from the Netherlands settled in North America. Many of these people were also Calvinists and followers of Kuyper. Unlike earlier Dutch settlers they have been less willing to accept the American way of life. As a result a number of Kuyperian-type organisations have developed in the United States of America and Canada. The most important of these is the Association for the Advancement of Christian Scholarship which has its headquarters in Toronto. It has set up an embryo Christian university, political movement and trades union as well as being involved in establishing Christian day schools.

Dutch immigrants from Calvinist backgrounds in Australia and New Zealand have also been active in the creation of "Christian" social movements and the popularisation of Kuyperian ideas among evangelical Christians. In Britain Kuyper's ideas have been recently introduced among evangelicals by Christians who have had contact with Dutch Canadians. As a result in the October 1974 General Election, Mr. A. Storkey stood as a "Christian" candidate on a Kuyperian platform in the Bassetlaw constituency. It seems that Dr. A. Cramp, of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, is to offer a course on "Christian" Economic Theory in the year 1975-1976 based on Dutch Calvinist thinking.

Appendix 7 - Biographical Notes

Willem Bilderdijk (1756-1831), Dutch Calvinist leader and national poet who inspired what was to become known as the "Anti-Revolutionary Movement".

Jan Lion Cachet (1838-1912), third son of Dutch Jews converted to Christianity by Bilderdijk. He was educated in the home of the Calvinist-Dutch-Jewish poet and disciple of Bilderdijk, Isaak da Costa, and then at the Seminary of the Free Church of Scotland in Amsterdam. He qualified as a school teacher in 1857 and emigrated to South Africa in 1861. After teaching in Cape Town and Ladysmith, Natal, Cachet moved to the Transvaal. In 1865 he joined the Reformed Church and began training for its ministry. He was ordained in 1868 and became the Church's first full-time lecturer in theology at its Theological School in 1894. A keen supporter of the Afrikaans Language Movements Cachet was also heavily committed to the ideals of Christian-National Education and Christian Politics. He married three times and had several children. His only son was killed while fighting for the Boers in the Second Anglo-Boer War. In 1909 Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands awarded him the Order of Orange-Nassau for his services to the Dutch community in South Africa.

J. Chr. Coetzee (b.1893), a student at the Reformed Church College in Potchefstroom and teacher at the Christian School in Steynsburg. He became a leading South African Educational theorist and advocate of Christian-National Education.

W. J. de Klerk (1875-1943), educated at the Reformed Church College in Burgersdorp and became a minister in the Reformed Church. In 1911 he accepted a "call" by the Potchefstroom congregation. He played a leading role in local politics and stood as the National Party's candidate in the 1915 election in Potchefstroom.

J. D. du Toit (1877-1953), better known as the poet "Totius". A leading figure in the Second Language Movement and theologian of the Reformed Church. He was educated first at the Reformed Church College in Burgersdorp and then at the Free University of Amsterdam. In 1911 he became professor of theology in the Theological School in Potchefstroom. His father was S. J. du Toit.

S. J. du Toit (1847-1911), leader of the First Language Movement, minister in the Dutch Reformed Church, founder of the Reformed Church under the Cross, organiser of the Afrikaner Bond, editor of Di Patriot, author of many books including the influential Di geskiedenis van ons land in di taal van ons volk. du Toit was a political advisor to Kruger and Minister of Education in the Transvaal from 1882-1889 when he had a disagreement with Kruger and switched his allegiance to Rhodes. A follower of Abraham Kuyper he introduced Anti-Revolutionary thinking into the Afrikaner Community in South Africa.

L. J. du Plessis (1897-1968), a student at the Reformed College in Potchefstroom who wrote an account of the Rebellion during 1914-1915. He was an enthusiastic Calvinist and influential political thinker who is said to have originated the concept of "separate development" in its present form.

A. P. C. Duvenage (1883-1923), educated first at the Reformed Church College and then the South African College in Cape Town, Duvenage became the first professor of mathematics and natural science at the Literary Department of the Reformed Church College in Potchefstroom. A strong Nationalist, Duvenage played an important role in local politics and was for many years a town councillor in Potchefstroom.

F. C. Eloff (1850-1924), the son-in-law of President Kruger and a wealthy landowner, Eloff was a leading lay member of the Reformed Church and noted for his conservative views. He was a strong advocate of Christian-National Education and Christian Politics as well as author of several booklets on the Reformed way of life.

Jan Kamp (1861-1924), born in the Netherlands, Kamp was an active member of the Dutch Anti-Revolutionary Movement and worked as an editor on Abraham Kuyper's daily newspaper De Standaard before emigrating to South Africa in 1898. In South Africa he became first a lecturer and then professor in the Reformed Church's College in Potchefstroom. He was an enthusiast for the Afrikaans language and played an important part in helping standardise its written form. He wrote several books and articles advocating Christian-National Education and helped edit the Potchefstroom newspaper Het Westen until 1915. For six months towards the end of 1915 he edited the Pretoria newspaper Ons Vaderland. Kamp appears to have been the first person to use the term "apartheid" to describe the Nationalist policy of separation.

Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920), leader of the Dutch Anti-Revolutionary Movement following the death of Groen van Prinsterer in 1876. A prolific writer, Kuyper produced works on theology, philosophy, politics, art, and social issues. He edited a daily newspaper De Standaard and a weekly religious paper De Heraut. In 1880 Kuyper founded the Free University of Amsterdam and in 1886 he led a major secession from the State Church. He was Prime Minister of the Netherlands from 1901-1905.

S. O. Los (1871-1944), born in the Netherlands, he studied theology at the Separated Christian Reformed Church Seminary in Kampen before being ordained. While working as a minister in Hilversum Los met and became a friend of President Kruger who was living there in exile. As a result of this friendship he emigrated to South Africa in 1907 where he became a minister in the Reformed Church. From 1914-1920 he was professor of philosophy at the Reformed Church College in Potchefstroom. In 1920 he returned to the Netherlands due to his wife's ill health.

Arnoldus Pannevis (1838-1894), Pannevis emigrated to South Africa from the Netherlands in 1866 and taught at the Paarl Gymnasium where he interested S. J. du Toit and several other young Afrikaners in their language Afrikaans. He also introduced them to Dutch Anti-Revolutionary thinking.

Dirk Postma (1818-1890), born in the Netherlands, Postma was ordained in the Separated Reformed Church in 1840. He was sent by his Church to minister in South Africa in 1858. In 1859 with the aid of Paul Kruger, he founded the Reformed Church. In 1869 he started the Church Theological School and College in Burgersdorp. Postma married five times and had twenty-one children.

Ferdinand Postma (1879-1950), the grandson of Dirk Postma. He was educated at the Reformed Church College and the Free University of Amsterdam. In 1904 he was appointed professor of classics and taught languages in the Literary Department of the Reformed Church College. He became Rector of Potchefstroom University College in 1921 and had a distinguished career as an Afrikaner academic.

Willem Postma (1874-1920), son of Dirk Postma and an early Afrikaans prose writer who used the pen name Dr. O'kulis. He was for many years a political columnist in various Bloemfontein newspapers and a close friend of General Hertzog. Postma drafted a constitution for a National Party which he published in Het Westen in December 1913. This constitution was adopted with minor changes by the special congress held by General Hertzog in January 1914 which created the National Party. After 1914 Postma's political activities decreased due to his failing health.

H. G. Stoker (b. 1899), studied philosophy at the Reformed Church College. He obtained his doctorate from Cologne University where he worked under Max Scheler. Stoker is possibly the most original philosopher yet produced by South Africa. His work was highly praised by Martin Heidegger. He became professor of philosophy at Potchefstroom University College and was interned during the Second World War for his supposedly pro-German sympathies and activities in the Ossewa Brandwag.

L. P. Vorster (1862-1934), educated in Burgersdorp by the Reformed Church, Vorster was ordained in 1884. He ministered to several congregations and was a strong advocate of Christian-National Education and Calvinist political activities. During the Second Anglo-Boer War and again in the Rebellion of 1914-1915 he was imprisoned. In 1915 Vorster won the Albert and District parliamentary seat for the National Party.

J. C. van Rooy (1890-1954), a student in the Reformed Church College during the years 1910-1920, van Rooy married Jan Lion Cachet's daughter. He later became the Rector of Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education. He is reputed to have been the leader of the Broederbond and was for many years head of the powerful Federale van Afrikaanse Kultuurverenigings.

Groen van Prinsterer (1801-1876), founder and leader of the small Dutch Anti-Revolutionary political grouping in the Dutch Parliament and Calvinist theorist. Educated at Leiden van Prinsterer came under the influence of Bilderdijk but was not converted to Calvinism until the mid-1830s. From 1827 to 1829 he was Referendary to the Cabinet of William I and from 1829-1833 he was the Cabinet Secretary. In 1833 he was appointed official archivist to the House of Orange. His major theoretical work Unbelief and Revolution was published in 1847.

Appendix 8: The Reformed Community in Microcosm -
The Life and Development of the Reformed Church
Theological College and its Literary Department,
1899-1919.

During the South African winter of 1899 the members of the Reformed Church Theological School, in the small north-eastern Cape town of Burgersdorp, became aware of "dark clouds" which were gathering on their political horizon. They were an intensely political group with strong republican sympathies who looked to the northern republics rather than to Cape Town for their inspiration. Yet when hostilities eventually broke out between the British and Boer Governments members of the Reformed Church in Burgersdorp seem to have been taken almost completely by surprise.¹

At the outbreak of war the principal of the School, Jan Lion-Cachet, consulted the only member of the School's Curators who was in the district and on his advice decided that they lacked the authority either to close the school or to allow students to leave. So classes continued as normally as possible until November 1899 when a Boer commando from the Free State occupied the entire area, including the town of Burgersdorp, and closed the School. Most of the students either joined Boer Commandos or returned home but seven remained in Burgersdorp with Cachet, to form a Red Cross Ambulance brigade.²

The British re-occupied the area early in 1900 and in April of that year Cachet was able to reopen the School with the seven students who had remained with him. Student numbers began to rise once more until the British military authorities closed the School in March 1901 and arrested Cachet on a charge of high treason. This appears to have been connected with his association with the Boer commandos during the occupation of the Albert District, which included Burgersdorp, and his Red Cross work which was seen as an attempt to aid the enemy. Cachet spent six weeks in gaol but was finally released after a trial in which many leading British residents of the area testified on his behalf. It was said that although known to be very sympathetic to the Boer cause, Cachet and his students had observed strict neutrality and rendered valuable assistance to the wounded of both sides. As a result of this evidence the charges against him were dropped and he was freed.³

The School reopened and in September 1901 Cachet reported to the Curators that he had twenty students studying under his direction. The School itself was an all purpose institution where Cachet and two other members of staff prepared the students for a whole series of examinations from pre-matriculation to a post-graduate course in theology. Of the twenty students enrolled at the school in 1901 only one was doing the post-graduate theology course leading to ordination by the Reformed Church. Another was

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1. Het Gereformeerde Studentencorps „ Veritas Vincet", (CVV), 12/5/1899, 22/9/1899; Notulen Boek van Vergadering Gehouden door de Studenten der Gereformeerde Theologische School, (SS), 16/9/1899.
 Steevens, 1900, From Capetown to Ladysmith, pp.19-27 & 30-32.
 2. Notulen Boek van de Kuratore van de Gereformeerde Theologische School, (KTS), 15/9/1902.
 3. Albert Times and Molteno News, 19/4/1901; KTS, 15/9/1902.

completing the final stages of a B.A. offered by the University of the Cape of Good Hope, which was an examining body only, while two more were working for the intermediate B.A. Of the remaining students eight were in the matriculation class and seven in the pre-matriculation class. And three ex-students, who had left the school in 1899, were furthering their studies at the Free University of Amsterdam.¹

During the war three students, including Cahcet's son, were killed in action against the British and another eight were imprisoned.¹ Few records were kept during the period following the occupation by Boer forces and subsequent re-occupation by the British. But, when the School's various student societies² resumed their activities and began once more to keep minutes of their meetings a picture emerges of frustration and despair brought on by the defeat of the Boer armies and the conquest of the republics.³ This impression is also gained from the students monthly magazine Het Studentenblad when it resumed publication in March 1903.⁴

The Society "Corps Veritas Vincet" was the first to resume its activities, in February 1903.⁵ At the first meeting of the De Vergadering de Studenten der Theologische School (Student Society) in March 1903 a Biblical talk was given based on Psalm 123 and the Book of Samuel, which encouraged them to look beyond their present circumstances to God for their salvation. They were told that during "these trying times" they must learn to defend themselves and fight as Judah fought with the weapon of prayer. The speaker also reminded them of the sacrifice of their brothers who had died in the war and a suggestion was made that they consider the erecting of a monument to the war dead.⁶

Students attending⁷ a meeting of the School's Literary Society held on the same day were also reminded of their fallen companions and given a talk on the exploits of General de Wet.⁸ This was the beginning of a whole series of talks and poetry readings at the various student societies dealing with Boer heroism and the war.⁹ In addition a number of talks were given which expounded the significance of various Biblical passages for the students. These invariably dealt with the afflictions which were suffered by the Children of Israel and made strong comparisons between Biblical incidents and the history of the Afrikaners.¹⁰

The impression gained from the reports of the meetings held during 1903 is that the students were attempting to keep up their spirits despite a growing feeling of defeat, and the depression which it brought with it. They felt oppressed and acknowledged that the times were very bad for Afrikaners. In this situation they looked for comfort to their religion and found it in an identification of their situation with that described in the Old Testament. Their present circumstances might seem bad and they could wonder why God had allowed such evil to befall them but they were sure that He would ultimately vindicate them.¹¹

1. KTS, 15/9/1902.

2. Information is available on student activities from the minute books of the three student societies in the School: De Vergadering de Studenten der Theologische School or Student Society (SS); De Letterkundige Vereeniging or Literary Society, (SLS); and Het Gereformeerde Studentencorps, "Veritas Vincet" or Reformed Student Society "Corps Veritas Vincet" (CVV).

3. e.g. SS, 24/6/1903; 20/7/1903 & 4/12/1903.

4. Het Studentenblad, 6/3/1903.

5. CVV, 7/2/1903.

6. SS, 6/3/1903.

7. From the minutes it would seem as though most students attended these meetings and those of the Corps Veritas Vincet were compulsory.

8. SS, 6/3/1902

9. SLS, 20/3/1906; 2/4/03; 17/4/03; 15/5/03;

10. SS, 6/3/1904, 20/7/03, 20/7/04. 30/10/1903.

11. SS, 24/6/1903; 4/12/03; 1/3/04.

Nowhere do we find that they ever doubted God's ability to deliver them or that they had doubts about the validity of their Faith. Neither do we get a heartsearching inspired by their afflictions which made them wonder if it was possible that they had been wrong in their actions and that God was judging the Afrikaner People because of their sins. The use of the Bible in their situation was a selective one which took God's promises to Israel and applied them to the Afrikaner People without looking at what the Bible taught about God's judgement upon Israel because of Israel's sin. It was always the British who were wrong and who were regarded as still being wrong, while the Afrikaner republics were always regarded as the innocent victims of naked aggression. The question was never raised whether the republics had sinned and thus brought God's judgement upon them or whether the British were in some way God's agents in Africa.¹

The students felt that they could best serve their God and People by working hard at their studies to enable them eventually to help lead their People out of bondage.² They believed that Afrikaners generally were intellectually backward and grossly ignorant and that the salvation of their People lay in education.³ The keen interest taken by Dutch Christians in the plight of Afrikaners was one of their few encouragements during the dismal year of 1903. The students felt a personal debt towards the Dutch when a gift of £833-6-8 was sent to the School to assist them.⁴

The students saw the question of language in a close relationship to education because they believed the English hoped to destroy the language and with it, the sense of nationality of the Afrikaner People in their schools.⁵ South Africa was a "poor land" because although it was rich in beauty and natural resources its people did not value their language. To remedy this situation the students in Burgersdorp wanted Dutch to be taught in State schools. But they made it clear that the "Dutch" to which they referred was not the Dutch of the Netherlands but South African Dutch - Afrikaans. South Africa was not the Netherlands and because of this basic fact it was silly of South Africans to try to preserve a pure form of Dutch. What Afrikaners must do was to develop their own spoken language, which was the language of South Africa.⁶

For them, an Afrikaner was not anyone born in South Africa, as many people believed and as their political opponents claimed. An Afrikaner was a white descendant of the Dutch, French and Germans who settled the Cape in the seventeenth century. The English could never be regarded as Afrikaners because they were "colonials" who looked to England as their true home.⁷

By the end of 1903 the spirits of the students were slowly reviving and this was greatly assisted by the success of the conference organised in December 1903 by the Reformed Student Corps "Veritas Vincet" on Christian-National Education.

It was argued that Afrikaners needed to be made aware of the advantages of education because farmers could no longer afford to divide up their farms to give each son his own piece of land. Therefore, Afrikaners had to learn to compete with other classes in society and Christian schools must equip them by placing an emphasis on practical training. The teaching

1. SS, 24/6/1903; 4/12/1903; 1/3/1904.

2. Het Studentenblad, 6/3/1903.

3. SLS, 30/10/1903.

4. Het Studentenblad, 12/8/1903.

5. CVV, November 1903.

6. Het Studentenblad, 14/10/1903.

7. Het Studentenblad, 28/8/1903.

of Latin and Greek might be all right for wealthy English children but it was of no value to someone who could not afford to continue his studies and so must learn a trade. Christian schools must, therefore, meet the real needs of the people and not imaginary ones based purely on academic criteria. Further, because of the pressures created by modern society, by cities and industry, it was essential that Afrikaner children were given a thorough grounding in the religion of their parents. They must be truly prepared for life both physically and spiritually and only Christian-National Education could meet this requirement. They must heed van Prinsterer's slogan, "In isolation is our strength", and press for their own Christian-National school system.¹

They concluded the conference with a declaration that the Reformed Church must be urged to separate the Theological Department from the Literary Department and work towards establishing its own Christian University. In the Netherlands Christians had created their own educational system which included a university. Were Christians in South Africa to lag behind the Netherlands in this respect? They believed in "free" education which meant education free of Government interference. Looking at the Dutch and English systems of education the Dutch one seemed closer to this ideal and the hope was expressed that one day South Africa might adopt the Dutch system.¹

As 1904 progressed the tone struck by the Corps "Veritas Vincet" conference remained and the commitment of the students to Christian-National Education grew. They agreed that each student would contribute an eighth of his monthly income to furthering Christian-National Education. Parents must be made to realise that the character of their children was being formed in the schools and that:

"Whoever controls the school controls the future."²

To bring home this truth to parents who still remained "in darkness" and did not recognise the importance of Christian-National Education the students decided to publish a small booklet.³ If only Afrikaner children could be educated in a truly "Christian-National spirit" then their troubles would be over and they could face the future with confidence.⁴

The death of President Kruger naturally excited the students attention and they decided to erect a monument to his memory.⁵ Het Studentenblad wrote of him:

"a great statesman and great believer, our father, has died."⁶

The article went on to describe the way in which Kruger was their "father" in both political and spiritual matters as a true leader of the Afrikaner People. After giving a long account of his life the article urged the students to take courage from his example and to hold fast to Kruger's conviction that:

"however things may appear God never abandons His People."⁶

1. CVV, 9/12/1903.

2. Het Studentenblad, 9/3/1904; cf. Oliver, 1969, The Missionary Factor in East Africa, p.276.

3. This seems to have been the one produced by Cachet in 1905 ; Het Studentenblad, 11/5/1904.

4. Het Studentenblad, 27/4/1904.

5. SS, 7/8/1904.

6. Het Studentenblad, 27/7/1904.

He knew that God was sovereign and that He ruled and universe. The Bible was his only guide in daily life and he applied its principles, like a true Christian, to matters of State as well. He was one of the founders of their Church and members of the Reformed Community were his strongest, most reliable, supporters. Because of this they could be referred to as the "Ironsides" of the Transvaal.¹

Like Kruger, the students distrusted the English. They saw the association of South Africa with Britain as a thoroughly bad thing for the present and a potentially harmful policy for the future. What would happen, they wanted to know, if Britain became involved in a European war? Perhaps they would even be faced with the prospect of an invasion by some enemy power simply because they were an ally of Britain. To them it was clear that whatever happened South Africa would be the loser. Therefore, they urged Afrikaners to renounce all ties with England. The warning they wished to proclaim was simple and they summed it up in the following phrase:

"Afrikaner, be yourself and remain an Afrikaner."²

Even before the Second Anglo-Boer War there had been a move to transfer the Reformed Church Theological School from Burgersdorp to a more suitable centre of population.³ The issue was raised again at the meeting of the General Synod of the Reformed Church in 1904. After careful consideration the Synod decided that the School would move to the Transvaal town of Potchefstroom early in 1905.^{3a} The Curators were thereupon instructed to carry out the move as quickly as possible.⁴ The students were delighted by this prospect and greeted the news with great enthusiasm.⁵

The Curators received various gifts from different congregations and a grant of £3,000 from the Transvaal Provincial Synod to help with the move. Ex-president Kruger sent £750 from the Netherlands. They estimated that the move would cost £5,000 which they hoped to raise without difficulty. They visited Potchefstroom and were welcomed by the Town Council which offered them land suitable for their purpose.⁶ This offer was attacked in the local English language newspaper, the Potchefstroom Herald, claiming that the land in question had been designated for "English settlers".⁷ Despite this objection the preparations for the move seem to have gone very smoothly.

1. Het Studentenblad, 27/7/1904.

2. ibid, 24/8/1904.

3. General Synod, 1894, Appendix, A.

3a. General Synod, 1904, Appendix D-G art. 64-73.

4. KTS, 11/4/1904

5. Het Studentenblad, 27/4/1904

6. KTS, 27/6/1904.

7. Potchefstroom Herald, 14/9/1904.

The Theological School of the Reformed Church and its Literary Department opened in Potchefstroom on February 13th 1905.¹ Its head was Professor Jan Lion-Cachet who was called the Rector and who was responsible for teaching theology throughout the School. Cachet was assisted in the Literary Department by two other full-time professors, Ferdinand Postma, recently returned from the Free University of Amsterdam, and A. P. C. Duvenage. Postma concentrated on arts subjects while Duvenage was given the task of teaching maths and the sciences. They were assisted in this task by several part-time tutors, including Jan Kamp who was given a full-time post in 1907.²

It is difficult to know how many students were in the School when it moved to Potchefstroom in 1905. Their numbers are not indicated in the Minutes of the Curators meetings and do not seem to appear elsewhere. The situation is also complicated by the fact that there were at least four grades of students recognised by the School. Post-graduate students engaged in the study of theology in preparation for the ministry of the Reformed Church were the most senior students. They were engaged on a four year course and may have been divided into two groups: intermediate and final course students. Below these were the members of the Literary Department who were preparing for the B.A. examinations of the University of the Cape of Good Hope. These were divided into final and intermediate students and into "students" and "juniors". In addition there appears to have still been a number of matriculation candidates despite a ruling of the Curators against this practice in 1904. The available evidence indicates that when the School moved to Potchefstroom in 1905 it had about twenty students. In 1907 there seem to have been thirty four students, six of whom were studying post-graduate theology. The numbers fluctuated slightly over the years but gradually increased so that by 1918 the School had a total of thirty six students, two of whom were working for M.A.s.³

The students brought with them from Burgersdorp a love of Afrikaans and a strong desire to propagate it. They were encouraged in this by Reformed leaders like Cachet and J. D. du Toit as well as by the Curators of the Theological School who decided to allow them to submit written work in Afrikaans if their tutors agreed.⁴ At student meetings throughout 1905 and in subsequent years poems were read in Afrikaans, talks given on the language and discussions held on its history and rules for spelling were proposed. Articles on these themes were also published by the students in their magazine Fac et Spera.⁵

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1. KTS, 7/12/1904.
 2. du Plessis, 1926, Die Theologiese Skool, pp.6-7; van der Vyver, 1969, My Erfenis is vir my Mooi, pp.114-115; van der Vyver, ed. 1959, Die Gereformeerde Kerk in Suid-Africa 1859-1959, Coetzee, "Die Gereformeerde Kerk en Christelike Hoer Onderwys", p.228; KTS, 10/2/1905; 5/12/1905; 11/12/1906.
 3. These figures are derived from a variety of sources and can be arrive at by comparing: KTS, 8/3/1907; 7/12/1910, 23/8/1918; General Synod, 1910, Appendix 2; 1918, Appendix E; van der Vyver, ed. 1959, pp.228-232.
 4. KTS, 5/12/1905.
 5. STS, 19/6/1905; 26/6/1905; Fac et Spera, 1/7/1905; 1/10/1905.

When Gustav Preller took the initiative in publicly proclaiming the value of Afrikaans and urging Afrikaners to create their own literature, the students enthusiastically greeted his call and wrote to him expressing their delight at his stand.¹ They criticised Afrikaners like Jan Hofmeyer who hoped to popularise Dutch and attacked the students in Stellenbosch for supporting Dutch.² They agreed that Dutch had a value in South Africa but only as a basis for the creation of an Afrikaans literature.³

After this enthusiasm for Afrikaans it comes as quite a surprise to find that at a meeting of the Student Society in October 1907 the issue of keeping the minutes in Afrikaans was raised and the secretary of the society said that if he could not continue to keep them in Dutch then he would resign. A vote was taken and it was decided that the minutes could be kept in Dutch. In fact, however, from then on Afrikaans was increasingly used.⁴

At a student meeting in July 1906 Jan Lion Cachet told the students about his early education in the home of the Dutch poet Da Costa.⁵ This, together with many other references to the activities of Dutch Calvinists, underlines the influence of Dutch thinking upon the students.⁶ At a more theoretical level Dutch ideas of "Christian Education" were expounded in an article about a new book by Professor Wolter of the Free University of Amsterdam. In this article the Anti-Revolutionary, Kuyperian, approach is ably expounded in reply to the question of a hypothetical critic who asks "What's so special about Christian Education?" The article said that Wolter had demonstrated the answer by showing that even in the apparently "neutral" realm of natural science there was a distinct Christian approach. Teachers as well as ministers of the Word had to prepare men for life in the world and to equip them with a Christian outlook which would enable them to overcome the problems they would encounter in their daily activities. The laws of nature, it was argued did not remain the same for the Christian and the non-Christian because absolute objectivity is impossible. Therefore men are unable to approach any subject without their basic convictions colouring their perception of it. Even the study of nature must involve one's basic principles. Christians accepted that in the beginning God had created the heavens and the earth. For this reason they had a supernatural perspective which coloured their science that was rejected by their non-Christian colleagues. This perspective meant that a "Christian science" was not only possible but essential if Christians were to study science.⁷

1. STS, 19/6/1905.

2. Fac et Spera, 1/7/1906; 1/10/1906.

3. Fac et Spera, 1/10/1905.

4. SS, 1/3/1907, cf. SS, 1/3/1908 where the Dutch "nie" is replaced by the early Afrikaans "ni".

5. Fac et Spera, 1/7/1906.

6. Fac et Spera, 1/10/1905; 1/10/1907; 1/12/1908.

7. Fac et Spera, 1/10/1905.

These same arguments were applied to the field of history. In South African State schools history was taught from a British perspective which undermined the role of Afrikaners and threatened to destroy the sense of national identity of Afrikaner children. In the Literary Department of the Reformed Church national history was taught alongside Biblical history. In this way the students came to realise that there was a Christian perspective on history and began to see God's Providence in the creation of the Afrikaner People.¹

As part of the post war nationalist revival of Afrikanerdom great interest was shown in "national days", monuments, and traditional Afrikaner culture. The social significance of these was rarely a subject for reflection in the enthusiasm of Afrikaners to retain their heritage. A number of articles in Fac et Spera, during 1907, are, however, exceptions to this lack of reflectiveness and set out very clearly why the leaders of the Reformed Community thought it was important to preserve national days and monuments.

In July 1907 Fac et Spera published an instructive and important article on "The Erection of Monuments". The author said that, although most people knew what a monument was few realised its true significance.

When God lead the Children of Israel out of their captivity in Egypt He commanded them to remember what He had done for them.² They were to teach their children and their children's children the mighty acts of God. This was essential for the formation of the Nation of Israel and remained vital to the creation of any Nation.

This was where monuments became important because they reminded a People of their National history. Here also was the justification for Christian-National Education because a monument alone meant very little to the observer. The person who saw a monument must understand the significance of the events to which it bore witness. This meant that he must know the history of his People and if this was to happen he must have been educated in a Christian-National School, where he would have been taught to listen to what the monument had to say to him about his People.

Some people had argued that instead of erecting monuments Afrikaners could use the money they collected to commemorate their past, and the war dead, by building useful buildings or sportsgrounds. But a useful memorial became a useful object and people would soon forget of what it was supposed to remind them.³

A similar article in the October issue of Fac et Spera tackled the question of national days. National days brought joy into people's normally sombre lives and created a national consciousness by building up bonds among neighbours. Afrikaners lacked such days and ought to institute them for the benefit of their national life. They needed occasions when they could celebrate their joy in their traditions and heritage.

1. Fac et Spera, 1/7/1905.

2. The writer quotes Deuteronomy 6.7 as his proof text.

3. Fac et Spera, 1/7/1907.

Should some people object that this suggestion was opposed to religious principles the author of the article, who may have been Cachet, replied that an examination of the Bible would show that national days were Biblical.¹ Israel had great and joyful national days. David held one at Mount Hebron and Solomon arranged a great celebration to mark the opening of the Temple. In addition the Jews had many annual feasts. They celebrated the Passover and many other days, as did the people of New Testament times.

Further, the Reformers knew the importance of festivals and Calvin had said that a person should never withdraw from national festivities. In addition he had encouraged the theatre in Geneva and the custom of eating communal meals. It was good for people to meet communally over a meal before taking important decisions which would affect the entire community. This in fact was what had happened at the Synod of Dort. Therefore Afrikaners had many examples before them of godly men who celebrated national days and other festivals.

The Transvaal Republic had also celebrated national days. Celebrations were held on the anniversaries of Majuba, Paardenkraal, Dingaans Day, and on the President's birthday. In their own time these celebrations had fallen into disuse. Some people would object that the old national days had been misused. The writer agreed that this had been so but said that they should be celebrated like a Sunday in the future. People's lives would be impoverished if they were allowed to disappear, and, far worse, the bonds which bound the nation together would be weakened and the Nation's ability to survive lessened.²

These articles stressing the national identity of Afrikaners were accompanied by various pieces dealing with contemporary politics. The most important of these was an article which appeared in the July 1907 edition of Fac et Spera, under the title "What Must We Do?". The theme of this was that true Afrikaners must be vigilant against the trend towards a mixing of the white races in South Africa.

After two quiet years of 1908 and 1909 there followed the hectic events of 1910-1915 discussed in the section on local politics in chapter 15. The remaining years until 1919 were then ones of anti-climax.³ The Literary Society held its last recorded meeting in February 1916 and two months later the Student Society also ceased to function.⁴ From then on Korps Veritas Vincet remained the sole surviving student society to record its meetings. Its meetings in the following years covered a wide range of subjects, theological,⁵ literary,⁶ educational,⁷ political,⁸ and cultural.⁹ But something of

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1. The author signed the article as "Ben-Ezra", which is the sort of pen name Cachet sometimes used.
 2. Fac et Spera, 1/10/1907.
 3. See p.
 4. SLS, 10/2/1916; STS, 4/4/1916.
 5. CVV, 25/3/1916
 6. ibid, 5/9/1917.
 7. ibid, 16/6/1916.
 8. ibid, 19/8/1917.
 9. ibid, 21/10/1916.

the old enthusiasm was missing and although there was a strong interest in Calvinism and the application of Calvinist principles to all areas of life, the impression gained is that the students were not as active in promoting these principles as they had been.¹ The explanation for much of this inactivity possibly lies in the fact that the College was entering a transitional phase and until their future was more certain the conditions were not such as to encourage wild enthusiasm for Christian-Nationalism. There is also some evidence that while delicate negotiations were being conducted with the representatives of the Government, the Curators and staff of the College discouraged the students from taking any action which might prejudice the chances of a satisfactory settlement with the authorities.² At the very end of 1919, however, things were beginning to change once more and at the last meeting of Korps Veritas Vincet the students were urged to renew their dedication to the ideals of Christian philosophy and science.³

In 1911 a period of institutional change began for the College when a chair of pedagogy was established in the Literary Department in 1911 and Marthinus Postma, the youngest son of Dirk Postma, the founder of the Reformed Church, installed as the professor. Jan Kamp was promoted from lecturer to Professor of Dutch and Afrikaans language and literature and J. D. du Toit was given the chair of theology upon the retirement of Professor Cachet. du Toit also took over Cachet's position as Rector and head of both the Literary Department and Theological School.⁴

In 1913 the Curators resolved to separate completely the Literary Department and Theological School, but the decision was not put into effect immediately. They also decided to seek a State subsidy for the Literary Department, and to begin to work "in the direction of a university."⁵ Later in the year Dr. S. O. Los was appointed as the second professor of theology in the Theological School and given some lecturing responsibilities in the Literary Department in connection with the teaching of philosophy.⁶

The Curators wrote to the Senate of the Free University of Amsterdam in 1914 to ask them to exempt Potchefstroom students from the first part of the Free University's doctoral programme by recognising the courses offered in the Literary Department.⁷ Members of the Literary Department staff also appeared before a Commission appointed by the Union Government to enquire into university education. The Commission commented on its high academic standards.⁸

As a result of the report presented by this commission three Acts of Parliament were passed in 1916 which completely reorganised university education in South Africa. Two of these Acts granted university

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1. CTS, 12/2/1919.
 2. CTS, 1/12/1915; 8/3/1916.
 3. CVV, 15/11/1919.
 4. CTS, 6/12/1911; van der Vyver, 1969, pp.125-130.
 5. CTS, 1/3/1913.
 6. CTS, 26/11/1913; van der Vyver, 1969, pp.129-130.
 7. CTS, 25/11/1914; Jooste, n.d. Die Geskiedenis van die P.U. vie C.H.O. (tot Inkorporasie), p.30.
 8. Union of South Africa Universities Commission Report and Minutes of Evidence 1914.

charters to two of the independent colleges which had previously prepared students for the examinations of the University of the Cape of Good Hope and thus created the universities of Stellenbosch and Cape Town. The third Act replaced the University of the Cape of Good Hope by the new University of South Africa based in Pretoria. Six other colleges which had prepared students for the degrees offered by the University of the Cape of Good Hope were incorporated into the University of South Africa. But the status of the Reformed Church College in Potchefstroom remained in doubt.¹

The years following 1916 were ones of great uncertainty for the Reformed College in Potchefstroom. The Literary Department needed a Government subsidy and official recognition to survive as a credible institution of higher education. However, members of the Reformed Church wanted to preserve the Christian character of their College and believed it necessary that the academic staff should consist only of Calvinists in sympathy with the religious basis of the College. In setting up the University of South Africa the Government had explicitly rejected the imposition of religious tests by any bodies associated with the University. This meant that unlike other colleges which had prepared candidates for the degrees of the University of the Cape of Good Hope, the College in Potchefstroom could not automatically be incorporated into the University of South Africa.²

Negotiations continued between leaders of the Reformed Community, the University of South Africa and the Minister of Education. But it was found impossible to reach agreement on the Reformed Community's terms. Therefore, after careful consideration by the General Synod in 1920 the Reformed Church reluctantly accepted the removal of religious tests.³

In anticipation of a negotiated solution to the problem, and with the help of funds from the Netherlands, the Literary Department had been reorganised and expanded in April 1919 in accordance with decisions taken by the General Synod of the Reformed Church in 1918. This reorganisation finally separated the Literary Department from its parent body the Reformed Theological School, and a new liberal arts type college Potchefstroom University College was created.⁴ Thus fifty years after the founding of the Reformed Theological School in Burgersdorp, and sixty years after the formation of the Reformed Church itself, the Reformed community took an important step in the establishment of an independent Calvinist University in South Africa. It was not, however, until 1950 that the dream of the founders of the College was fulfilled and Parliament granted a charter to create Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education as an independent institution with its own religious test for members of its staff.⁵

1. Pells, 1938, 300 Years of Education in South Africa, pp.119-120.

2. CTS, 8/3/1916; 29/11/1916; van der Vyver, 1969, pp.133-146.

3. CTS, 15/6/1920; General Synod, 1920, Appendix, B; art., 21, 23, 28, 29, 30 & 31; van der Vyver, 1969, pp.201-204.

4. CTS, 23/10/1917; 22/8/1918; 12/2/1919 & 21/5/1919.

5. van der Vyver, 1969, pp.217-232.

APPENDIX 9: PHOTOGRAPHS



Willem Bilderdijk.
(1756-1831)



Groen van Prinsterer.
(1801-1876)



Abraham Kuyper.
(1837-1920)



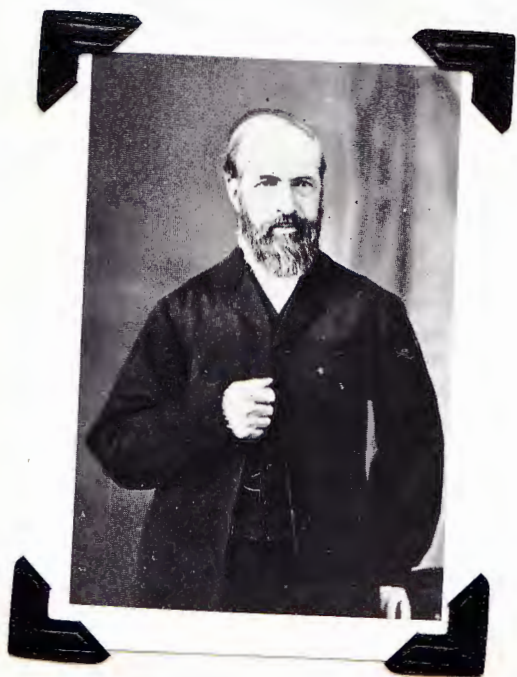
Arnoldus Pannevis.
(1837-1884)



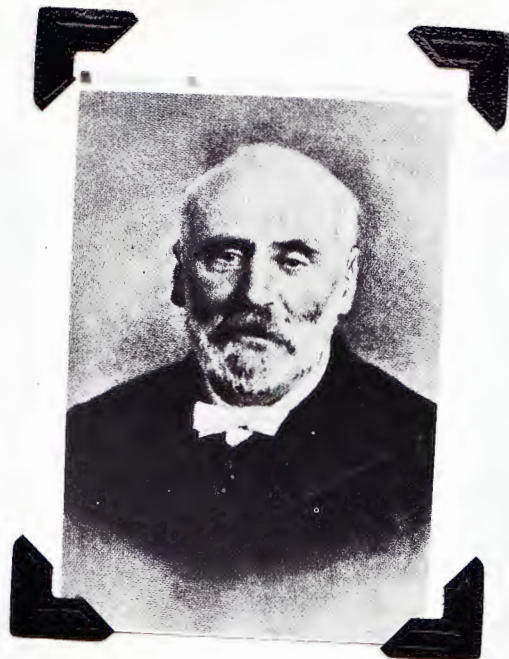
S. J. du Toit.
(1847-1911)



Paul Kruger.
(1825-1904)



Dirk Postma
(1818-1890)



Jan Lion Cachet
(1838-1912)



Willem Postma.
(1874-1920)



J. D. du Toit right
(1877-1953) and left
Ferdinand Postma (1879-1950)



A. P. C. Duvenage.
(1883-1923)



Jan Kamp.
(1861-1924)



L. J. du Plessis.
(1897-1968)



J. C. van Rooy
(1890-1954)



General J. B. M. Hertzog.
(1866-1942)



Right: Rev. H. S. Bosman
(1848-1933)
Left: Andrew Murray.
(1828-1917)



General Louis Botha.
(1862-1919)



Jan Smuts.
(1870-1950)



Lord Milner.
(1852-1925)



The Synod of the
Reformed Church in 1904.



Staff and students in 1910 at the Reformed Church's College in Potchefstroom. Centre front: Jan Lion Cachet, on his right Jan Kamp with A. P. C. Duvenage on his left. First student on the left in the middle row is J. Chr. Coetzee and on the top row J. C. van Rooy.



Staff and Students 1915. The student in the top left corner is H. G. Stoker.



The student society Korps Veritas Vincet 1919.



The ruins of a Reformed Church pastorie in 1902.



Potchefstroom high street about 1905.



The Theological School, Potchefstroom, 1905,
with the monument to students who died in the
Second Anglo-Boer War in the foreground.



The Women's and Children's Monument, Bloemfontein.

Appendix 10 - Map of South Africa

Places where Reformed Communities were to be found 1902-1919 are underlined in purple. For a complete list see pp.99 - 100.

BIBLIOGRAPHYUnpublished SourcesCape Archives Depot, Cape Town

Superintendent-General of Education. These files contained letters and reports relating to education in the Cape during the period under consideration. They provided very useful material on the Christian-National Education Movement in the northern Cape.

Central Archives Depot, Pretoria

Archives of the Secretary to the Department of the Prime Minister (1910-1922). These contain the correspondence of General Botha and could almost be described as the "Botha Papers". The correspondence is kept in a large number of boxes and is filed in both alphabetical and date order. The most useful boxes were numbers: 468, 469, 470, 474, 476, and 478.

Free State Archives Depot, Bloemfontein

a. President M. T. Steyn-versameling. This collection of papers contained several useful letters from Reformed leaders. They have not been utilised in the text because while they confirmed impressions already gained they added nothing which could not be found in greater detail in other sources.

b. Orange Free State Education Department Records. These proved to be one of the greatest disappointments experienced while carrying out research. The Free State Archives Depot contains a room full of boxes of correspondence from the education department. But, unfortunately these are completely unorganised and unmarked. The only method of finding anything is, therefore, by random selection. This method proved unfruitful.

Free University of Amsterdam Archives, Amstelveen

Abraham Kuyper Papers. These are in good order and contain an index to Kuyper's correspondence. There were a large number of letters from S. J. du Toit to Kuyper and a number from W. J. Leyds as well as several from leaders of the Reformed community in South Africa. While the correspondence is further evidence of close contact between Reformed leaders and Kuyper it contained no material worth mentioning in the text of the thesis.

Archives of the Gereformeerde Kerk, Reformed Church, Potchefstroom

This is the main source of material used in this thesis. There is a large amount of material in the Archives which is kept in a special room in the Library of the Reformed Church's Theological School on Potchefstroom.

a. Frans Lion-Cachet-versameling. There are two boxes of roughly sorted papers, none of which was used in the thesis.

b. Jan Lion-Cachet-Versameling, Cachet Papers. There are three boxes of papers containing the correspondence of Jan Lion-Cachet and various other items related to Cachet's life. They are sorted into a rough date order but because they are loose tend to get misplaced. A series of letters from his brother Carl in den Haag written between 1900 and 1911 were especially useful.

- c. J. D. du Toit-versameling, J. D. du Toit Papers. These are contained in five boxes. The papers themselves are sorted into date order but because they are loose tended to contain a number of misplaced items. One of the boxes contains sermon notes exclusively. On the whole these papers were not very helpful.
- d. S. J. du Toit-versameling. This collection contains the edited papers of S. J. du Toit which are neatly bound in several large volumes. The papers were consulted but not used in the thesis.
- e. Dirk Postma-versameling. Like the S. J. du Toit collection these papers have been edited and bound. They were consulted but not used in the thesis.
- f. Algemene Vergadering Notule, (Provincial Synod Minutes). These are the minutes of the Algemene Vergaderinge of the Reformed Church. Each province had its own Algemene Vergadering which kept the minutes of its meetings in bound ledgers each of which covered five or six years. The minutes for the Algemene Vergaderinge in the Cape, Transvaal and Orange Free State were consulted. The minutes were handwritten and usually have article numbers for separate items but on occasion this procedure was ignored. These minute books provided a particularly rich source of information upon which to base this thesis.
- g. Kerkraad Notule, (Church Council Minutes). These were the minutes of Church Council meetings of various congregations. Like those of the Algemene Vergaderinge they were handwritten and bound in ledgers. The Church Council Minutes for the congregations of Bloemfontein, Burgersdorp, Johannesburg, Middleburg, Cape, Potchefstroom, Rustenburg and Steynsburg were consistently examined in the course of the study. Other Church Council Minutes were occasionally referred to. Church Council Minutes provided another rich source for the thesis.
- h. Notule van die Kuratore van die Theologiese Skool. The minutes of the Curators of the Theological School are handwritten and bound in ledgers. These provided another valuable source of information on the thinking and activities of the Reformed Church.
- i. Notulen Boek van Vergaderingen gehouden door de Studenten der Theologische School van de Gereformeerde Kerk. Minutes of the Student Society, handwritten in a ledger. The title says "of Burgersdorp" but in fact they also cover the period up to 1916 in Potchefstroom. The minutes begin in 1892 and provided good material on student activities and views.
- j. Notulen Boek der Letterkundige Vereenig, van de Studenten aan de Theologiese School te Burgersdorp. Minutes of the students literary and debating society. These are handwritten and bound in a ledger. They cover the period 1892 to 1916, and were the least valuable of the student sources.
- k. Notulen Boek van Het Gereformeerde Studentencorps „Veritas Vincet”. Minutes of the most important student society which are handwritten and bound in a ledger. They cover the period 1894 to 1920 and give very useful information about student views and activities.
- l. Steynsburg School Commissie. Five boxes of correspondence and other material relating to the Christian School in Steynsburg. Although a useful source of information the value of this collection was reduced by the fact that copies of the school's correspondence were kept on an early form of carbon paper which proved unreadable.

m. Burgersdorp School Commissie. Several boxes of correspondence covering the period 1888-1926. This collection contained some helpful material but was not as useful as might be imagined.

A number of other items in the Archives were consulted but none were found to be particularly relevant to the work being undertaken.

Potchefstroom University Archives.

Material relating to the early development of the university was found in the Reformed Church's Archives. The only documentary material consulted in connection with this thesis was:

Notulen voor de Commissie voor Christelijk Nationaal Onderwijs. Minutes of the Christian-National Education Commission in the Transvaal. This proved to be a very valuable source of information which, surprisingly, has not been used in other studies of Christian-National Education.

Transvaal Archives Depot, Pretoria

- a. Colonial Secretary, 1901-1910. File number 14998 vol. 175 provided some interesting information about the activities of members of the Reformed Church following the Second Anglo-Boer War. Other files had material on the British view of Christian-National Education. This material was referred to but not used in the thesis.
- b. G. S. Preller-versameling. The papers of Gusav Preller. These were consulted but not used.
- c. Dr. A. Wypkema-versameling. This is one of the more important collections of papers in the Transvaal Archives Depot. It contains sub-collections of varying size of the papers of many prominent men and important organisations. Among those papers consulted but not cited in the text were the following groups of material: W 31 Transvaalse Onderwyservereniging; W 71 Nederlandse Vereniging; W 75 Louis Esslen-versameling; W 94 Suid-Afrikan Akademieversameling; W 127 Piet Grobler-versameling; W 133 & 201 Statute van Het Volk; W 201 Suid-Afrikan Nasionale Party; WHA 57 W. J. Leyds-versameling; WHA 85 H. J. Emous-versameling; and WHA 74 H. J. de Graaf-versameling.
- d. Smuts-versameling. This contained much general material of great interest but nothing that seemed to refer to the activities of the Reformed Community. It was therefore consulted but not used.

Rhodes House Archives, Oxford.

Rhodes Papers. These contain a series of interesting letters from S. J. du Toit to Rhodes but no other correspondence from anyone connected with the Reformed community. None of the material in the letter bore directly on the theme of the thesis and was therefore not used.

In addition to using the above archives I was given access to the L. J. du Plessis Papers by Dr. P. J. J. S. Potgieter of the Department of Politics, Potchefstroom University. Of these only the following proved useful for the period researched:

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The Archives Depot of the Gereformeerde Kerk, Kampen, the Netherlands, was also visited but the material there proved to relate to the period

before 1900. A certain amount of work was also done at the Public Records Office, London, but this did not contribute anything of particular importance to the thesis.

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