

C H U R C H

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Community of St Simon the Zealot.

At the time of writing (end of February) numbers have greatly diminished. Gerald Robinson, a teacher at the Federal Seminary in Alice, was with us for three weeks, in which time he put a lot of work into the youth hostel at St George's School. He and Heidi Burger left on 25th February. The next day Dave went to Ovamboland to do stock-taking in the mission there - leaving Steve Hayes and Nehemiah Hamupembe. Nehemiah is a school-teacher from Ovamboland, and is on his way to Zambia to do a youth leadership training course at the Mindolo Ecumenical Institute.

Our life as a Community - Evaluation by Steve Hayes.

In the last few issues of the Pink Press we have described our situation, and our activities, and our attempts to live as a community in Windhoek. Now that the summer vac has ended, and most of our temporary visitors have left, we have to evaluate further what has been done.

To those familiar with the commune movement, our idea of a community is very unambitious. We have only aimed at having a very sketchy communal life - really the first stage only, with no definite plans for going any further, at least with our present set-up. Some of us have, at one time or another, thought and spoken about starting a Christian Kibbutz, on a far more permanent basis than what we have now. But this is not even something which could be the embryo of such a kibbutz, though it may provide us with some useful experience of the joys and hang-ups of community life.

The basic idea of this particular community is Christian service. There is tremendous scope for almost anything to be done by a dedicated Christian community in South West Africa, and Dave de Beer saw the possibilities for this soon after he came here. He envisaged a self-supporting community, some members of which had full-time jobs, and supported the others in various activities when they were not working. I joined Dave in July 1969, and since then various other people have come and gone. I don't think we can claim to have been a great success. We have achieved some things, of course, but on looking back, our achievements seem to have been almost accidental, and, more serious, they haven't grown out of our community life. In our more enthusiastic moments we have tended to get carried away, and to exaggerate the importance of what we have achieved. We have lots of exciting recipes, but the dishes always seem to turn out half-baked, and nothing seems altogether satisfactory.

As far as community life is concerned, until recently we had none. We were just a group of people living together in the same house. We might claim to have shared the same goals, but we never got round to discussing what these goals were. We talked of common worship, of common life together, but these things never materialised. We did make an attempt to set aside time for common worship, but nothing much seemed to happen. We didn't even eat together. Gerry Robinson fixed this for us - by taking the kitchen table away from the wall, and putting chairs around it. It gets in the way if we want to walk through the kitchen, but at least it provides a focus for our life together.

The main problem is the lack of a common mind - or will, perhaps. We cannot agree to do anything. The intention is there, but we fail to articulate it, and nothing ever seems to get started. One person may get a spurt of enthusiasm, and goes ahead with his scheme without us working it out together first. We could try to overcome this particular hang-up with an old-fashioned monastic rule, but that would still not get to the root of the problem. If the rule is not the expression of a common mind in the first place, it will be a dead letter. The type of common life which can best be encompassed in a rule is one which is entirely self-regulated, but we have in our set-up too many commitments outside the community, so there are too

many interruptions and irregularities.

We would like to hear from others who have had experience of community living - perhaps they can suggest ways of overcoming these hang-ups.

NO MONEY - NO IKONS !

IKON 3 is ready at last, with articles on cities and housing schemes, sex, and bodies, and people who are frightened of both - politics and theology in free Africa - an analysis of the way power operates at various levels - Orthodoxy and the West.....

As we said in a previous issue of the Pink Press, this one is not a promotional issue, so we aren't giving away free copies (except to magazines who exchange with us). If you want to read Ikon, subscribe now ! All you have to do is fill in the form at the back, with your name and address, and the number of copies you want, and post it. You don't have to send money with the form - if it's the middle of the month and you're temporarily broke, send it off anyway, and we'll bill you later.

One anomaly we have noticed is that our overseas circulation is overtaking our Southern Africa circulation. Perhaps you can help us to get Ikon better known on the local scene. It is being sold in the Narnia coffee-bar in Hillbrow, Johannesburg - does anyone know of other similar places where it could be sold? Also, we need articles - not long ones - we have enough of those, but short ones, poems, drawings etc.

COSMIC CIRCUIT

This is the Under- and Overground magazine exchange. We send IKON to all members of COSMIC. In addition we send the Pink Press to those who have sent us their publications. There wasn't room to mention all of them in this issue of IKON, so here is a brief review of some of those we have received.....

Gandalf's Garden (ed. Muz Murray, 1 Dartrey Terrace, World's End, King's Road, London S.W.10. U.K.) This is the mag. which started COSMIC. Mystical Scene Magazine, pop culture, Tolkien. The one we got (No 6) was a little disappointing - too like a Rosicrucian ad. pamphlet, but we believe other have been better.

The Catonsville Roadrunner - we've mentioned before. They turned us on to COSMIC, and also help distribute IKON in the U.K. It has news and views of the revolutionary Christian scene in Britain and elsewhere. Subs 15/- for 10, Send British postal order to 3 Caledonian Road, London N.1. U.K.

Communes (c/o Nicholas Albery, BIT, 141 Westbourne Park Road, London W.11.) The journal of the British Commune movement. With DEVIANT this is the best duplicated publication we have ever seen, with excellent illustrations, and readable too.

Deviant (ed. John Smith, c/o 306 Teignmouth Road, Torquay, Devon, England) Poems, community action, wicked town councils, peace, joy, love. One of the best-produced underground mags going. Price 2/- - send a British Postal Order.

Cormallen (ed. Petr van Mensch, Luitgaardeweg 36, Hilversum, Nederland.) * 'n Nederlandse blad oor communes en Tolkien. As U Afrikaans goed kan lees, sal U Cormallen nie te moeilik vind nie. Daar bestaan ook op die laaste bladsy van elke uitgawe 'n kort opsomming van die inhoud in Engels.

Holland Hapt (Keizerstraat 2d, Amsterdam, Nederland.) This is a postal commune. No editors, no subscriptions. You don't read it, you participate in it. If you want to do that, do your own page (500 copies folio) and send it in.

Hotcha ! (Postfach 304, CH-8025, Zurich, Switzerland) Swiss underground mag. In German. Some exciting layout.

Revo (P.O. Box 252, Brussels, Belgium) Provo-anarchist underground mag in French.

Interzone A (ed. Gary Butler, 50 Princedale Road, London W.11.) Community news, reviews, poetry, a lot of it in a little space.

Peace News (5 Caledonian Road, London N.1.) Newspaper format, politics, protest, war and peace.

There are about 40 magazines in COSMIC altogether - so we have only had about a quarter of them so far.

Theological Education

In South Africa there are over 2000 independent African churches. Some of them are quite small, having only 20 or 30 members. A few years ago a group of leaders from these churches approached the Director of the Christian Institute, and asked for help in the training of their ministers. The result was the formation of the African Independent Churches association, and the establishment of a training programme, in conjunction with the Christian Institute.

In South West Africa there are not nearly as many independent churches, but there are a few which are fairly important. At about the same time as the AICA group was approaching the Christian Institute in Johannesburg, some of the independent churches here were asking the Anglican Church to help in the training of their ministers. A pre-theological school was started some years ago, run by an American priest, but when he returned to America it folded up. Now we hope to help some of the students in that course linked up with the AICA course.

The main church which we have become involved with is the Oruano Church (Unity Church). This was formed in the early '50s when the Herero nation broke away from the Rhenish Mission Church. We have attended services in this church in Gobabis, and were most impressed with the enthusiasm of the members, and the real community which exists among them. Most of their services seem to be sung, with little preaching. The inside of the church is decorated with bright colours, and there are paper streamers hanging from the ceiling making it look happy and joyful. We are also hoping to get in touch with the Church of Africa, which like the Oruano Church, broke away from the Rhenish Church. It is the church of the Mbanderu people, who are related to the Hereros, but have a different political organisation.

Political Column

Colonelissimo in Excelsis Leabua Jonathan is still on the throne. His claim that the King 'automatically abdicated' sounds a little hollow coming from the man who should automatically have abdicated on losing the election. Our award for the most biased and slanted reporter of the year goes to J.H.P. Serfontein of the Sunday Times, - we hope that the Sunday Times will keep its advice to illegal governments on how to stay in power out of its news columns, and publish them as opinions. There was a revealing slip-up which gave the game away - on the same page as a report saying that the B.C.P. were as likely to win seats in the mountain areas as the Nats were to win Houghton, there was another report saying that B.C.P. officials had persuaded a group of farmers from these same mountains that they should not march on Maseru with pitch-forks to remove Jonathan by force.

(Political Comment by S.Hayes, of address above)

KENYA CORRESPONDENT REPORTS

"My work here is progressing, and I am finding it both interesting and rewarding. I am working in the Anglican Diocese of Nakuru, with one of its Rural Extension Teams. This Diocese, under Bishop Neville, is to my way of ~~thinking~~, very forward looking, and is in many ways an example of what the Church should be doing. While it should, of course, be quite obvious that the Church should be as involved in the material aspects of life as in the spiritual side - the two are really inseparable. The Church here is making great efforts to put this into practice, aiming to help the "whole" man, and not as too often in the past, and in the present, just one isolated aspect. So the Diocese has four Rural Service Teams in different parts of Kenya, and I am working with one of these. It is based on a farm owned by the Diocese; the farm itself is intended to be a symbol of the church's involvement in the main economic activity, and to show how good farming is in a way Praise to God for his gifts. The Rural Service team has five members and a Norwegian volunteer working closely with us.

"The first aspect of the work is straightforward agricultural extension. John Fowler, who is in charge of the whole team does this part, as he is a trained agriculturalist. The second aspect is the organisation and running of what are called "Mandaeleo ya wanawake" - progress for women, roughly. Groups of women are set up on the farms (which are all ex-European in the Ex "white" Highlands) ranging in size from twenty to ninety women. At first, they learn sewing, knitting, handicrafts, etc., but later there will be home economics, domestic science, etc., etc.. The third aspect is self-help clubs for young unemployed school-leavers on the farms. This aims at teaching crafts - carpentry, shoemaking, etc., and also at earning money by growing vegetables, keeping poultry etc. We try to involve as wide a range of activities - a really broad education in the widest sense. This is my main work, and I work together with a young African. My other work is helping some of the farms with their accounts - which are all too often non-existent!

"The whole work is very young - only started a year ago, so it is all quite experimental. It is exciting also for that reason, though naturally frustrating at times."

- Guy Wilkinson.

Guy comes from England and is out working in Africa for a year. He thought of coming to work with us in Windhoek, but was committed to go to Kenya where his involvement seems more than superficial. He still hopes to come to South West in due course. His address is c/c P.O. Box 56, Nakuru, Kenya.

OVAMBOLAND , Late Summer

The corn (millet) is standing high in most of the gardens throughout Ovamboland. I first noticed this when we had to stop for just an hour twenty-five miles South of Ondangua. Our left rear tyre had burst and the spare was not pumped up enough to travel on with our heavy load.

The end of our financial year was approaching and with the new system of control it was essential that detailed stock-taking be done to enable us to start the new financial year with accurate records. Thus it was that I spent a week in Ovamboland, fourteen months after my first arrival in South West and those two hectic weeks in which I started two jobs. (luckily the second one is still intact!) Apart from two days 'out' I spent my time with Ian Robson in the office; but those two days were very memorable.

Ohamaala is an outstation in the largest Ovamboland parish of St. Mary's. By Ovamboland standards it is not very far from the centre, only seven miles, but the shelter church of mudbrick and thatch seats more than St. George's Cathedral in Windhoek, even if you are only seated (crouched!) on a log on the mud-floor. I accompanied one of the senior Ovambo priests, Canon Gabriel Namueja, and while he heard confessions in a room at the back of the altar the catechist and the lay-reader said mattins. The Church filled up steadily all during this service, and in the short break before the Communion service I first realised that I was squashed between the shoulders of two others. Our 'pew' had five in it. We were seated well towards the back of the church, just at the door, but suddenly we were where the action was as Fr. Gabriel processed to the font at the back for seven baptisms. Children screaming, mothers comforting, 'I baptise thee in the Name of the Father..', the church in Ovamboland keeps expanding, a movement of the people. Outside, after

the service it was a happy crowd. In all the smiling faces I suddenly noticed one I recognised. Matheus told everyone how he had bought a Kwanyama hymnbook from me in the office in Windhoek. He works in the Administrator's house in Windhoek and was visiting his home for a few days. From knee level his small son smiled cheerfully up at me as he put out his left hand to shake with my right. His father's left hand was his security.

A traditional lunch of oshifima (millet porridge) and tender, tasty chicken washed down with omaludu (millet beer) all prepared by the catechist's wife, and then on to a sick communion in a kraal just off the road back. More omaludu and a gift of a dozen eggs to go with the hand weaved basket from the catechist's wife, Monika. We arrived back at Odibo just in time for late afternoon tea, and time to reflect upon the visit to the church that is the centre of the community.

Cooks Travel Agents could not have devised a more comprehensive one-day multi-stop tour of Ovamboland. Our first stop was scheduled to be Onamutai where the tractor and plough were stranded with a torn rear tyre and flat battery. To get there we had to pass along the sandy track, which so often passes for a road in Ovamboland, that led to Onekuaja. Here Fr. George Pierce stopped to chat with Fr. Theophilus Hamutumbagela the Rector of Onekuaja. There is a Standard III school run by the Church there and we interrupted a Maths class to say hello. The boys sleeping in the small hostel alongside the school pulled us aside and asked whether it might be possible to send some beds out for them. At present they are all on the floor. Could our budget, already overextended, cope with this. I did not think so. On to Onamutai and the tractor, which could only be started by exchanging batteries with the Landrover. What road there was seemed to become smaller after that until suddenly we joined the wide strip of tar - the road to Oshakati. I noticed the difference at once. On the small sand track, dodging pools of water and tree stumps, scraping alongside bushes you feel part of the countryside. On the tar with the edges of the road cleared as well you are merely an observer, a stranger who watches the countryside pass and like the paying customer at a travel film mutters 'How nice!'

It was some time before we brushed the bushes again, for we had to stop off in Oshakati to survey conditions at the church which is now lying half built and unfinished. People were stealing the roofing materials, as yet unused, so we had them staked to the ground and counted. A quick visit to the sprawling State Hospital and a young school teacher having treatment there, and then on to Ongula Netanga a remote outstation where the Church had collapsed after heavy rains. This congregation had built one church, were told to move its location by the local authorities and months after it had been finished for the second time it collapsed. When we arrived there alongside the remains of the old church was the skeleton of a new temporary shelter church - poles hammered together with enthusiasm fired in a congregation seeking a centre of worship for their community. We were not finished yet. On the way back we called in at the Lutheran High School at Oshigambo and at sunset stopped at Ohangwena the Tribal Headquarters of the Kwanyama. We took back with us a large packet of meat - part of a feast celebrated by the killing of two oxen.

The travel agents could not have done as well - for when you come as a fellow member of the Church you come to Ovamboland as a friend, one who has come to share and not to look.

PROTRUDING PREJUDICE DISEASE

The South West Africa Regional News Broadcast one day reported that a stock inspector was found to have been suffering from protruding eye disease - a disease normally found only in animals. The report went on to say:

"This is the first time that this disease has been reported to have occurred in a human being in South West Africa. Last year it was reported that two non-whites in Aranos had the disease."

Gerry Robinson writes

"I enjoyed my stay very much though I am left with an air of disappointment because there were lots of things I wanted to talk to you about and to do which somehow just didn't happen. Probably it was the different times of our having been there which affected it. I certainly felt too alien to let things flow out of me (be open, to put it differently). And it seems to me that one of the aims and signs of growth in any community, is that everyone is open because of being there. Perhaps I am rather over-emphasising that point, as it is in me as much as anything else which is at fault; but, as I said to Dave, I think that it is essential to treat community life like any other living thing and to cultivate it with a few rules and conscious effort, not simply expecting it to flourish by nature. That would be to ignore the sin of men too facilely. I mean, there is evidence that Jesus' own little community (the twelve) were not particularly harmonious - he was always saying 'It shall not be so among you' or 'Live like this if you are part of the Kingdom.' If the apostles can be said to have had a training while Jesus was in Palestine, by living with him and being taught, then isn't it self-evident that at the least you need to study Jesus' ideas together, and also to talk and think about your life together (much as the disciples were doing in their bickering which occasionally emerges in the Gospels) "

International Tour 3

Dave has to attend another session of the Anglican Provincial Synod, and so will be going on tour again. He will be in East London on 9th and 10th April for this, flying to Durban on the night of the 10th, spending a day or two in Pietermaritzburg, then driving up to Johannesburg with Chris Nicholson, and spending two days there before coming back to Windhoek. Chris will be coming to join us then too, bringing two large dogs.

Finances

We hope these will improve dramatically at the end of the month. Steve is back on the worker-deacon line, having just started work as a proof-reader with the Windhoek Advertiser. This should keep us from starving.

We have also received a donation of 50lbs of Pro-Nutro, for the old people's feeding scheme. For this we are very grateful.

Supplements

As well as being the longest Pink Press to date, we have two supplements. One is the Ikon subscription form. The other is a report which appeared in the Windhoek Advertiser on the 6th February. It was written by Doug Lincoln, a reporter on the paper, who is a Methodist, and we hope to do a couple of pop services with him and with the Congregational youth group. The report speaks for itself - it is about one of the congregations we visit every Sunday.

CONTACTS

CHURCH, England . . . Janette Hammond, 20 Albert Street, London N.1. U.K.
THE YELLOW PRESS . . . Dick Usher, 603 Ridge Road, Durban. Natal.

New Visitors

We have just heard that the Trumbulls and the Ushers will be coming up from Durban to join us for a few weeks in July. YAY !

MUSRUM

Musrum is back on the road, with new brakes and subdued noises. Come payday, it will get a new voltage regulator, current consumption being 150 miles per battery. Musrum Restoration Fund is now excessively overdrawn.

Animal lover Musrum stroked a dog till it bled.

Sudden prayers make God jump.

All comment, political and otherwise, by S. Hayes and D. de Beer, of 41. Klein Windhoek Road, Windhoek. Information required by electoral act and . . .