

CHURCH

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CHRISTMAS ISSUE

DAY OF THE BRIBE (16th Dec)

SATAN STRIKES AGAIN !

Larry Weeks, who joined the Community of St Simon on 7th November, has been deported from South West Africa and South Africa. On Friday 4th December he was asked to call at the office of the Department of the Interior, where he was told that his residence permit was cancelled, and that he must leave the countries by Saturday, 12th December.

Larry writes

For me, it has been quite a shattering experience to learn that I must leave this country within a week. Although I have only been here a little over a month, there are two different factors which make it seem like a year. One has been the unbelievably kind acceptance and friendship which has been shown to me by the members of the Community, and those who are close to the Bishop. I have valued this most of all the things which I have experienced here. The second factor which has seemed to stretch time is the constant undercurrent of tension, mistrust and fear which pervades the atmosphere, and is inescapable. When I sit back and try to piece together the events of the last couple of days, my mind dredges up memories of my first encounter with Windhoek and South West Africa. That was in June, in the United States. I remember poring over many books which described the geography, the African and colored people, and gave cold hard statistics. One thing which needed to be added was the most important thing, and that was the human element which would make these statistics come alive. And it is this human element that I have gotten to know in my month here. This element not only includes the warmth of newly-made friends, but also the other side of the coin, the subtle violence which relegates humans to the level of virtual slaves. It is not only the black man who is enslaved, but the white man also. His enslavement is to himself, his prejudices and fears. And for many, this type of prison is much worse than any that can be built with stones.

Back in June, I also read various political texts on South Africa, most of them condemning. I spoke with a couple of South Africans, most of them liberal. But I was skeptical of the situation they described in this country. I think that I came with an open mind. And it is true that one can see certain positive aspects - a new hospital, a new school. And yet here, too, one must look at the other side of the coin There is a new, modern police building, a modern administration building. The uniformity of the houses in Katutura denies all attempts at human individuality, and rightly reflects the government attitude towards the non-white - facelessness.

I must admit that I no longer have an open mind. I cannot believe the destruction of freedom which is taking place here. I cannot believe that someone I trusted betrayed my work, and in doing so betrayed the trust of his own people, and others. I cannot

believe the evil here, and yet it is all too true.

I don't think that anyone in his right mind would choose to be here if he could. I think that the word "Katutura"* sums up the whole of Windhoek, and not just one African location. And yet people do stay, some because they are forced to, some because they are greedy, and some because they see an evil situation and want to destroy this evil. It is this last group of people that I have come to know - these black and white human beings make it a place to fight for. I want to stay and fight with them, for in a twisted sort of way I am the lucky one. I am leaving the frustrations of Windhoek and apartheid. Others must stay, and can never leave. Others will stay because they are willing to sacrifice for their fellow-man. It has been my privilege to fight for a while, and I shall never forget it.

And so the letter from the Minister of the Interior has ended my stay. In a way it has wrecked my plans for the next six years, for I was counting on my time in Windhoek for many reasons. I only hope that I will be able to return someday to find that freedom has come. I think it will be a long time, but I have faith that someday it will come.

LAST PINK PRESS

This will be the last Pink Press we send you, unless you have sent us one of the yellow forms from the back of the previous one. We are attaching another yellow form to this one for those who have not sent them. We are still sending this Pink Press to those who have not replied, because of the delay in receiving mail from overseas.

MORE DEPARTURES.

Apart from Larry Weeks permanent departure, many members of the community will be leaving Windhoek for the next few weeks for the summer holidays. Jill and Chris Nicholson, Cathy Roark and Dick Blair will be going to South Africa. Though to judge from recent weather reports, they will be enjoying skiing in the summer snow! Or perhaps too many people have been trying to turn the world upside down. At Christmas Windhoek is almost empty - everyone goes to revel in the cold misty air on the coast, or to visit friends and family in the reserves.

MAN PROPOSES

For the benefit of those who live outside south Africa the 16th December is a public holiday in South Africa, a 'religious' holiday. In the 19th century a group of Afrikaner Voortrekkers made a bargain with God - that if God would help them to defeat the Zulus, then they would build a church, and keep that day as a sabbath. They defeated the Zulu army under Dingane, and kept the promise. So there is the old covenant which God made with Moses, the new covenant in Jesus Christ, and finally the covenant man made with God, which is celebrated on December 16th, the Day of the Covenant. Hence the date on the front page.

* Katutura . . . the Herero word 'tura' means to settle down in a place. When the Windhoek old location inhabitants were forced to move, the Hereros were the last to leave and put up the strongest resistance. And when they did move, they gave the new location its name - ka tu tura - we don't live here, this is not a proper home, a decent place to live.

STUDENT VISITORS : Stellenbosch and Odibo.

For ten days Anglican Church life in Windhoek was almost unrecognisable as sixteen student visitors converged on Windhoek from Odibo, Ovamboland in the North, and Stellenbosch, Cape in the South. The trip was the brainchild of Fr. Bernard Chamberlain C.R. who was student Chaplain at Stellenbosch University until he was deported from the Republic of South Africa at the end of October. It was in July that he first suggested a Stellenbosch expedition to South West, and by mid-November this had been widened to include students from the Coloured University of the Western Cape, and some students from St. Peter's College, Alice.

Two days before the party was due to leave for Windhoek they received notification from the Secretary for South West Africa that permission had been refused for the Coloured students to enter South West Africa. (No non-white person may enter South West Africa from the Republic without permission. All white people have free access.) Saddened, and with their numbers reduced to eight, the remainder drove up to Windhoek to involve themselves as fully as possible in the Church life in Windhoek. It was decided to ask them to indulge in a little manual labour in helping the parishioners of Khomasdal, the Coloured area of Windhoek, to erect a fence around the Church property there. Joined by Larry Weeks and assisted by others in Windhoek this work proved a perfect inroad into meaningful personal contact with the parishioners. After a few days eight Ovambo seminarians from Odibo came down to join them, and as a combined student group entertained and were entertained throughout Windhoek visiting, swimming and eating.

Able assisted by Cathy Roark on the guitar two Sunday evening services were arranged at the Cathedral, which for their modern and mindstretching approach were enthusiastically joined in with by the representative congregations present. Yet for all the joy and enthusiasm there was the sadness and heart-ache too. For it was in the last three days of their stay that we learnt of Larry's enforced departure. In a moving evening meeting the day the news broke Bishop Winter commented that this was a trip, and more especially a day, that none of us was likely to forget. The trip had, for the Stellenbosch students, begun with the departure of their priest, and now it was ending with the deportation of a friend. Although physically a fence had been built at Khomasdal right throughout Windhoek bridges had been built between people - for this was the Christian task of Reconciliation.

Socially the trip was climaxed by a well-supported braaivleis at the Church in Khomasdal which raised much of the money needed to pay for the materials used in erecting the fence and laying the concrete slab. With much suppressed emotions the Stellenbosch students left on their trip down South followed a day later by the Odibo students.

To them all - our grateful thanks.

DOES YOUR TELEPHONE SOUND FUNNY ?

The visit to South Africa of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Michael Ramsey, seems to have caused a great furor in the local press. The Archbishop came to attend the centenary celebrations of the Church of the Province of South Africa. At the end of his visit, he remarked that one of the things that stuck him most about the country was the prevalence of SB informers, and that people were afraid of speaking their minds because they feared the consequences. He said that at times he wondered whether his room might have been bugged.

In saying this, the Archbishop has put his finger on one of the most characteristic features of south African life today. The press response verged on the hysterical. The English language press admitted the truth of the allegations, but thought it was terribly naughty of the Archbishop to say so. The Windhoek Advertiser (circulation + 2000) launched a bitter personal attack against the Archbishop, and against the church generally. The editor accused the Archbishop of political opportunism - though his editorial did little to disguise his own political ambitions.

The Sunday Times doubted whether the Archbishop's room had been bugged, though admitted that 'Among the people Dr Ramsey met, a number no doubt claimed (probably correctly) that THEIR rooms had been bugged, and that the country was 'riddled' with informers'. The Commissioner of Police, General Gous, said that the informers are not as well paid as the Archbishop seemed to imagine.

It is not surprising that a visitor to South Africa, who did not look at the situation purely superficially, should gain a fairly strong impression of the atmosphere of fear and suspicion which is engendered as a result of SB informers and general intimidation. For the fuzz, and the supporters of their system, to start complaining about the lack of evidence for the Archbishop's allegations is the height of hypocrisy. They recommend to the Minister of Justice who should be banned, who should be banished, who should be able to leave his house, who should have a passport, and they never produce any evidence. They threaten people with indefinite detention, if they do not stop certain, perfectly legal, activities. In Britain it is extremely unlikely that the police would go to the wife of a member of opposition political parties and tell her that unless her husband resigns, he will be put in 90 day detention and then her children will starve, and that will be nasty. The police there will not visit employers of people, and tell them that such and such a person must be dismissed - not that he has committed a crime of any sort - but he is subversive . . . he has publicly criticised the policy of the Nationalist Party, which policy is more important than any mere law. And if this is the situation, which the Government and the police have created, and appear to have created quite deliberately, then they should not complain when people talk about it. They cannot have their cake and eat it. If they think it is important that they should intimidate people, and harass and threaten the churches, then they should not object if outsiders notice that people behave as if they are threatened and intimidated, and if some of the atmosphere of fear rubs off on visitors.

On the other hand, we should not be over surprised at the kind of things that go on. Jesus himself warned his followers that this is what they must expect.

'In the world you have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.' With faith in him, we shall overcome someday.

ANNE WRIGHT WRITES (from Kempton Park, Transvaal) . . .

In Kempton Park in May this year, the RC, Methodist and Anglican churches started an experimental ecumenical discussion group. It was an attempt simply at trying "to be" - to be what we believe Christianity is all about. The group is multiracial, and although it was slow in getting underway, things are speeding up now and every month it seems we reach out and find new people, new problems, new experiences. We are starting a bursary fund for children in Tembisa - an African township about 11 miles from Kempton Park - the result is that many principals and teachers have joined the group. We plan to start a feeding scheme - so a doctor and a sister from the one and only clinic in Tembisa joined us. At present our

white membership is only a fractional part of the total number of people belonging to the three white churches concerned in Kempton Park. We have more or less given up trying to figure out the reasons for this - it's not a disease in itself but a symptom or aspect or a greater issue - organised church vs. ekklesia debate ?

Obviously people outside and not least those who have joined in the group as 'What is being achieved ?' 'What have you done ?' But I don't think it can be expressed in facts and figures on paper. There are concrete things such as the bursary fund and clothes collections, but the real value is simply meeting together, Black and White, seeing each other for perhaps the first time as real people, just laughing and talking together. This will be emphasised in a new idea we have. We are trying to arrange what we rather grandly call "cultural groups", in other words, groups interested in music, films, discussions, poetry etc. Our first meeting of this kind is on Monday evening when we'll show some films for discussion. I don't know about our white culture vultures, but it seems half of Tembisa would like to come ! Seriously, though, transport to and from Tembisa is a big problem - you know, this rather macabre thing of having to smuggle and sneak people in and out at night.

DEATH OF ARTHUR BLAXALL

Arthur Blaxall, an Anglican priest who lived for many years in South Africa, died at his home in Surrey, England, recently. During his time in South Africa, he did much to help the deaf and the blind, especially among the blacks. He was also a pacifist, and did much work with the Fellowship of Reconciliation in Southern Africa. In 1963 he was convicted of a number of charges under the Suppression of Communism Act, including possession of banned literature, and giving assistance to a banned political party, the Pan African Congress. He was sentenced to 6 months imprisonment, but was allowed out after serving one day of his sentence on grounds of ill-health. He retired soon after, and went to live in England, with a short interlude as chaplain of the Mindolo Ecumenical centre in Kitwe, Zambia. His letters have been a great encouragement to us, and there was an extract from one of them in the last Pink Press. We give thanks to God for his life and witness, and wish his wife, Mrs Florence Blaxall, every sympathy.

PLAYS AND THINGS

With Cathy's coming the activities of the community have expanded into some new directions - notably the dramatic arts. Although officially out here to teach swimming Cathy helped to produce short sketches from the play 'Show Me the Mountain' written to commemorate the centenary of the Church of the Province of South Africa this year. The players (non-professional) were the school children of St. George's School, and the performance came at the end of the annual prize-giving ceremony of the school at the beginning of December. With simple costumes, no scenery, and only tables and chairs for props the children roused the imagination of the predominantly parental audience to the early days of the Anglican Church in the Cape just over one hundred years ago. Not all of this was play acting as at least one budding young actress had personal insight into the situation she portrayed - a bishop's daughter playing a bishop's wife.

Having myself just come back from ten days of synodical meeting in Cape Town the scene portraying the historical first synod was laughably true to life - a Standard Five pupil proclaiming 'Synod resumes' as an exact imitation of the present Archbishop, with school fellows forcibly laying down church policy on missionary strategy : one doesn't quite know whether to applaud the school children or laugh at their real life counterparts.....

The second onslaught on the dramatic front was a Christmas pageant in the church in Khomasdal. This church is very small but has booming acoustics, so Christmas Carols accompanied by saxophone and guitar have to be sung loudly before they can even be heard: this does have its advantages for you have to participate fully (i.e. sing loudly) before you can hear even yourself, and participation is further stimulated if you have a small child or two acting out a silent Christmas tableau before the altar. With angels, shepherds and exotic kings (all coloured children under ten years old) and a biblical commentary interrupted by sax, guitar, and voices this short pageant provided the people of Khomasdal with a fine preparation for the season of Christmas.

PINK PRESS TURNS WHITE

The holiday break has caught up with us. A trip through all the office equipment suppliers and stationers in Windhoek not yet closed for Christmas revealed no Pink paper of usable size for this issue of the Pink Press. So we must apologise for the colour change after the first page and stress to our faithful readership that this does not reflect a change in any of our policies. Many White Papers have proved useful documents in past history - we prefer ours to remain pink.

Similarly the 'Yellow Sheet' attached to the back of some copies might not appear yellow in colour to our discerning readers, but for filing purposes it is yellow and will get filed with other yellow sheets on being returned to us....

(For those who have no 'yellow sheet' at the back of their copy it means that their names are already on the 'new' Pink Press distribution list and therefore need no form on which to reply)

DO IT YOURSELF.

We have just acquired two books for do-it-yourself builders, carpenters, etc. which may be of interest to people thinking of starting communes, farmers, peasants, etc. One is the 'Village Technology Handbook' available from VITA, College Campus, Schenectady, NY 12308, U.S.A. for 7 dollars. It has some very useful information on water supply, building, food storage, sewage systems, etc. with clear illustrations.

The other book is the 'Readers Digest Complete Do-it-Yourself Manual' obtainable from Readers Digest, P.O. Box 4444, Cape Town. This is divided into two sections - the first, on how to use tools, techniques of carpentry, building, etc. is very useful. The second section, dealing with specific projects, is mainly designed for a British setting (damp is not the biggest enemy of houses in THIS country) and with more bourgeois suburban requirements in mind (new look for a bathroom). Best part is the section on basic techniques. Price is about R 10.00 - R 19.00, varying in accordance with the value of the "Free" gift accompanying it.

HAPPIES

To all their friends and relations and such, the members of the community send happies for Christ mas, New Year, Epiphany, Lent, and well over the fast.