

CITP  
Cahiers Internationaux de Théologie Pratique

Série « Documents » n° 4A

---

The social teaching of the catholic bishops and other christians leaders in Zambia. Major pastoral letters and statements. 1953-2001

JOE KOMAKOMA (éd.)

Publié sur le site : [www.pastoralis.org](http://www.pastoralis.org) en décembre 2011



THE SOCIAL TEACHING  
OF THE  
CATHOLIC BISHOPS  
AND OTHER  
CHRISTIAN LEADERS  
IN ZAMBIA

MAJOR PASTORAL LETTERS  
AND STATEMENTS

**1953-2001**

---

THE SOCIAL TEACHING  
OF THE  
CATHOLIC BISHOPS  
AND OTHER  
CHRISTIAN LEADERS  
IN ZAMBIA

MAJOR PASTORAL LETTERS  
AND STATEMENTS

Edited by  
Fr. Joe Komakoma

*Printed by Mission Press, Ndola - Zambia*

*First Printed in 2003*

ISBN 9982 - 07 - 146 - 7

---

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This book is the fruit of painstaking work which took several years to accomplish. Some of the Statements unearthed and included to the list were found in the most unlikely places, like old dusty IMPACT magazines. Thanks to the cooperation of various people, this task was done.

I am greatly indebted to the close cooperation of Rev. Fr. Damian K. Musonda, Rector of St. Dominic's Seminary and Rev. Fr. Peter Henriot S.J., Director of the Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection (JCTR). The three of us cooperated to arrange the documents and contribute to the main introduction and the short introductions to each particular document.

Special thanks goes to Mr. Samuel Mulafulafu of the CCJP National Office for seeing to it that the project went ahead during the long months of my absence on my sabbatical year. I also acknowledge the contribution of Sr. Diana Hess, who suggested the format for the guiding questions at the end of the main introduction.

Many thanks to the selected people who took the trouble to read the first manuscript and offered priceless critical reviews on the best way to present the material. Among them are: Bishop Paul Duffy of Mongu Diocese, Fr. Ignatius P. Mwebe, the Secretary General of the Zambia Episcopal Conference, Fr. Hugo Hinflaar M.Afr, Sr. Teresita Abraham, Fr. Umberto Davoli OFM, and Fr. John Mujdrlica S.J.

Thanks to the SMA Frs. Owen Maginn & Sexton Doran for proof-reading the final text. Thanks to Ms Mercy Mbololwa Simutowe for typing the voluminous documents onto a computer disk in record time.

I also wish to thank Br. Camillo and all the staff at Mission Press for their patience during the times the project moved at a snail's pace!

I wish to thank all those who in one way or another gave me encouragement to soldier on despite the various problems on the way.

My final thanks go to CAFOD, MISEREOR, and the JCTR for generously supporting this project financially.

May good Lord bless you all with justice and peace!

*Joe Komakoma (Fr.) – Editor*

*"The Second Vatican Council teaches that Bishops are both heralds of the faith, who draw new disciples to Christ, and authentic teachers, that is, teachers endowed with the Authority of Christ, who preach to the people entrusted to their care."*  
(Pope John-Paul II)

### **A LIST OF THE COMPILED PASTORAL LETTERS AND STATEMENTS**

	Page No.
1953 Northern Rhodesia Ordinaries Conference: <i>Pastoral Letter Addressed to all Catholic Missionaries and Members of the African Clergy in Northern Rhodesia</i> .....	32
1958 <i>Joint Pastoral Letter</i> of the Catholic Bishops of Northern Rhodesia <i>Addressed to the Catholics of All Races</i> .....	64
1964 <i>Statement</i> from the Catholic Bishops of Zambia <i>to mark Zambia's Independence Day - 24th October 1964</i> .....	76
1972 <i>Declaration</i> of the Zambia Episcopal Conference <i>on abortion</i> .....	81
1974 <i>Pastoral Letter</i> of the Catholic Bishops of Zambia. <i>On the Occasion of the 10th Anniversary of Independence, 24th October 1974.</i> .....	88
1976 <i>Letter to All Catholics</i> Signed by the Bishop Chairman - ZEC .....	96
1978 <i>Statement</i> of the Catholic Bishops of Zambia <i>on the Elections</i> .....	102
1979 <i>Marxism, Humanism and Christianity,</i> A Letter from the Leaders of the Christian	

---

Churches in Zambia to All their Members about Scientific Socialism (EFZ, CCZ & ZEC) .....	107
1986 <i>Reflections of the Catholic Bishops For the Season of Lent</i> .....	134
1987 <i>Christian Liberation, Justice and Develop- ment: The Churches' Concern for Human Development in Zambia (EFZ, CCZ &amp; ZEC)</i> .....	140
1988 <i>Choose to Live: Reflections on the AIDS Crisis by the Christian Churches in Zambia (EFZ, CCZ &amp; ZEC)</i> .....	197
1988 <i>Growing Together in Christ Our Hope: Pastoral Letter of the Catholic Bishops of Zambia Announcing the Papal Visit and Centenary Celebration</i> .....	219
1990 <i>Economics, Politics and Justice: Pastoral Statement from the Catholic Bishops of Zambia</i> .....	224
1991 <i>You Shall Be My Witnesses: Pastoral Letter of the Catholic Bishops of Zambia to mark 100 years of Catholic Faith in Zambia</i> .....	237
1991 <i>Letter to All Christians Before the 31st October (1991) Elections (EFZ, CCZ &amp; ZEC)</i> .....	259
1992 <i>Press Statement on the Declaration of Zambia as a Christian Nation (EFZ, CCZ &amp; ZEC)</i> .....	263
1992 <i>The Future is Ours: Pastoral Letter by the Catholic Bishops of Zambia</i> .....	266
1992 <i>Pastoral Statement on Drought and Famine (Bishop Chairman - ZEC)</i> .....	285

---

1993	<i>Hear the Cry of the Poor: A Pastoral Letter on the Current Suffering of the People of Zambia (ZEC)</i> .....	291
1994	<i>Open Letter to President Chiluba: On the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development - Cairo (ZEC)</i> .....	304
1994	<i>Statement on Agriculture and Food Security</i> from the Zambia Episcopal Conference, 10th August.....	312
1995	<i>Year of Political Responsibility: Joint Pastoral Letter by the CCZ, EFZ &amp; ZEC</i> .....	323
1995	<i>Press Release: Call For Legitimising the New Zambian Constitution</i> (EFZ, CCZ & ZEC) .....	329
1995	Church Leaders' <i>Statement on the Constitutional Debate</i> (CCZ & ZEC).....	332
1996	<i>Open Letter to the President and Members of Parliament</i> (Catholic Bishops of Zambia) .....	336
1996	<i>Called to be the Family of God: Pastoral Letter to Launch the Synod Implementation of the theme of the Church as the Family of God</i> (ZEC) .....	341
1996	<i>Building for Peace: A Pastoral Letter from the Catholic Bishops of Zambia in View of the 1996 General Elections</i> .....	347
1997	<i>The Church as a Caring Family: A Pastoral Letter by the Catholic Bishops of Zambia on the 1997 Theme for the Synod Implementation</i> .....	353
1997	<i>Press Statement on Violence and Civil Disobedience</i> , by the CCZ, EFZ, and the ZEC .....	368

---

1997	<i>Choose Life: The Sacred Value of Human Life and the Evil of Promoting Abortion - A pastoral Letter from the Catholic Bishops - ZEC</i> .....	370
1998	<i>Joint Communiqué, by the CCZ, EFZ, and the ZEC - 14 January 1998</i> .....	390
1998	<i>Jubilee 2000: Cancel Zambia's Debt! (EFZ, CCZ, &amp; ZEC)</i> .....	394
1999	<i>The Missionary Family, A Pastoral Letter to all Catholics from the Bishops of Zambia on the 1999 Theme for the Implementation of the African Synod - (ZEC)</i> .....	400
2000	<i>Reconcile and Celebrate: A Pastoral Letter from the Catholic Bishops of Zambia for the Jubilee Year 2000</i> .....	409
2000	<i>Communiqué of the Catholic Bishops on Particular Social Concerns, February 2000</i> .....	421
2000	<i>Pastoral Statement of the Zambia Episcopal Conference on Solidarity in the Face of the Country's Social Crisis, 10th June 2000</i> .....	426
2001	<i>Press Release On The Third Term Bid by President Chiluba (CCZ, EFZ, &amp; ZEC), 25th January 2001</i> .....	432
2001	<i>I was A Stranger and You Welcomed Me: A Pastoral Letter of the Catholic Bishops of Zambia to mark the World Refugee Day, 20th June 2001</i> .....	435
2001	<i>Discipleship and Citizenship: A Pastoral Letter on the Current Political Climate and the 2001m General Elections, 20th July 2001</i> .....	445

## FOREWORD

"As Church leaders, we have always to speak out for human rights, for the rights of the people." Cardinal Adam Kozlowiecki

"As a Church, we have the duty to say the truth. When something is unjust we should not hesitate to speak against it". This has been our guidance whenever the Church has spoken out.

I came to this Country 57 years ago, just after the Second World War. From that time, I saw that the people were not treated well.

The British South African Company (BSA) had constructed the railway to the Copperbelt. The prospectors (BSA) did not have an idea about the people of the land in which they had come. All they were interested in was the copper.

Later, when the country became a British Protectorate before it became Northern Rhodesia, the people were still not being treated rightly. It was therefore not surprising that people (Africans) started thinking of independence.

We as Church leaders, at that time, stood for the self-determination of the Africans. We spoke about the rights of the African population to participate in the affairs of their land.

The question of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland was one example. It was an issue that was only between the settlers alone without the participation of Africans.

I was personally so outspoken that the Federal Government used to call me a "Polish mad-man".

I remember the visit of Bishop Kiwanuka, from Uganda, when he came to bless the Church of the Martyrs of Uganda in Luanshya. He was the first black African to become Bishop. He arrived in Salisbury (Harare) and was put in a third class hotel because of a law they used to call "Land Apportionment Act", famously known as the "colour bar". Under this law, people were segregated according to the colour of their skin. I asked my secretary to call the Northern News (what is known as the Times of Zambia today). I said, "I want to protest the way an important guest was treated". I was told, "That was the law". I said, "then I want to protest against such laws".

We as Bishops spoke against the colonial Government for some of their bad laws and policies. We still were very critical after independence, especially during the One Party rule of the Kaunda regime.

We are still speaking out today during the Third Republic during the rule of President Chiluba. We have always spoken on behalf of the people. This is the essence of the pastoral letters the Bishops have been writing since 1953!

**Cardinal Adam Cardinal Kozlowiecki, SJ**

---

# BISHOPS



*Standing from the left: Bishop Aaron A. Chisha - Mansa, Bishop George Lungu - Chipata, Bishop Emilio Patriaca - Monze, Bishop Dennis de Jong - Ndola, Bishop Paul Duffy, OMI - Mongu, Rev. Fr. Ignatius Mwebe, S.G., - ZEC. **Sitting from the left:** Bishop Noel O'Regan, SMA - Solwezi, Archbishop James Spaita - Kasama, Cardinal Adam Kozłowiecki, SJ, Emeritus - Lusaka, Archbishop Medardo J. Mazombwe - Lusaka, Bishop Telesphore-George Mpundu - Mpika*

---

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

"Why has the Catholic Church become vocal all of a sudden?" These were the sentiments of a person reacting to the number of strong pastoral letters that the Catholic Bishops issued in the early nineties, such as the one on economic justice, *"Hear the Cry of the Poor"* (1993). Little did this person know that the Church has been issuing Statements as early as 1953! At that time already, the Church was speaking about human rights and the role of public authorities.

This book is an effort to bring together those major pastoral letters and statements issued by the Church in Zambia into one volume. The book is a timely reminder of what the voice of the Church has been over the past half century. This is a good preparation for the Church as it enters the new millennium.

In its effort to be guided where social issues are concerned, the Zambia Episcopal Conference (ZEC) established the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace – (CCJP) in Zambia, in 1986. The overall aim of the CCJP, as approved by the ZEC, is that of social education. The CCJP was tasked to "awaken God's people", through the process of conscientization, "to a fuller understanding of their call as Christians with regard to social justice, leading to a greater awareness of human rights and consequent duties". Furthermore, the CCJP has a duty to form in people "a critical conscience which empowers them to challenge, and to act, in order to overcome unjust situations". In line with this aim, the CCJP felt duty bound to take on the task of compiling these documents into one volume. (cf. CCJP - Zambia Training Manual - Aims and Objectives.)

Though most of the Statements are from the Catholic

Bishops of Zambia (Zambia Episcopal Conference - ZEC), a good number of the Statements are co-signed by the three mother bodies of the Church in Zambia, namely, the Christian Council of Zambia (CCZ), and the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia (EFZ), as well as ZEC.

Many people consider the Social Teaching of the Churches (STC) as being mysterious. Sometimes it is called the "best kept secret of the Church".<sup>1</sup> This comes from the lack of access, by ordinary Christians, to the many documents issued by the Church on important social issues. Reading through the pastoral letters and statements on all these issues gives one a solid basis for social action as a Christian. It is hoped that ordinary Christians within Zambia will find them useful as a guide to their social action, to which all Christians are called.<sup>2</sup>

The STC holds that the essence of Christianity is a call to active involvement in the affairs of this world. Christians live a unitary life. Christians are the same people that face political, economic, and cultural realities of everyday life. They cannot afford then to be aloof to the realities that affect their daily life. This is why the Church recognises that it has a mission to be involved in promoting the welfare of the human person in all the spheres of life.

---

1 Henriot J, Peter, DeBerri P. Edward, and Schultheis J. Michael, *Catholic Social Teaching - Our Best Kept Secret*, Orbis Books, Maryknoll, New York, and Centre of Concern, Washington D.C., 1992.

2 Call by Pope Paul IV in his Apostolic Letter, "Octogesima Adveniens", #48-51, 14 May 1971.

There are three major themes under which these Statements can be looked at. The three sections comprising these themes are an arbitrary choice by the editor and his two chief collaborators. These three groups encompass socio-political, socio-economic, and moral issues. The contributors to the sections have picked out, for comment, pastoral letters and statements, which have that theme as the strongest element.

## **Socio-political Issues**

*by Fr. Joe Komakoma*

It is often heard that the "Church should stay out of politics". Those who hold this view fail to understand both the meaning of politics and the role of the Church in society.

As the Bishops of Northern Rhodesia say in their letter of 1958, "The Church has the right and duty to teach and guide Christians not alone in purely religious matters but also in social, economic, and political affairs in so far as they are connected with the moral order."

The Bishops contend that there is "one moral law" and this law cuts across all spheres of human activity. This is the major role of the Church in politics. In their robust pastoral letter, *Economic, Politics, and Justice*, 1990, the Catholic Bishops of Zambia say, "It is not the role of the Church to make decisions concerning the type of political system to be adopted by any nation"

However, the Church has a role to play in politics, if "politics" are understood as simply a way of life, or the social organisation, of a given society, in relation to exercising power and the distribution of wealth. This is an area where the Church has a role to play, and a duty to offer moral guidance. The Church is not involved in "partisan" politics,

that is, making preferences between political parties or candidates. The Church encourages individual Christians to play an active role in party politics. Instead the Church draws attention to the values of the Gospel, to the promotion of the dignity of every human being.

The Church stands for justice, true freedom, a just living wage, freedom from unjust laws and harassment; freedom of expression and association; freedom of the press and other mass media; and the provision of equitable social services, especially education and health services.

The Church has a task of education. Right from their earliest Pastoral Letter of 1953, the Bishops of Zambia have endeavoured to fulfil this task by educating citizens about their rights and duties. Through its Social Teaching, the Church promotes "Gospel Values". These values are of special concern to the poor the principles for a just economy, the principles of subsidiarity and the common good, human rights, civic co-operation, etc. In promoting these values the Church makes a great contribution to the Kingdom of God. At the end of the day, the Church wants to see a just society where equity and the full participation of all is at work.

### *Advocacy*

The Church often portrays itself as the "voice of the voiceless". In fulfilling its duty to speak for the poor and powerless, the Church often stands up to make a strong statement. When the Government tried to force scientific socialism, upon the Nation the Church stood firm in opposition. *Marxism, Humanism, and Christianity* (1979) became the first pastoral letter that was co-signed by Church leaders from the three umbrella bodies that exist

in Zambia. It was the first among a number of Statements, issued between 1979 and 1982, in which the Churches analysed the dangers that scientific socialism posed for religion. The fundamental danger was that the Marxist view of religion would present an obstacle to men and women becoming masters of their own destiny. Marx called religion the "opium of the masses". Lenin called for the abolition of religion. At the time, it was clear that in communist countries there were concerted efforts of persecuting the Church. Again in 1995 and 1998, the Churches were very firm in urging the Government (in 1995 and 1996) to tread carefully on the issue of a new constitution. Church leaders spoke out in defence of good governance.

### *The Church and Human Rights*

This is one specific dimension of the Church's role in politics. The Church teaches that all human beings are made in the image of God. As such, every person is dignified. To violate the fundamental rights of people is to violate a dignity that is God-given. For this reason, the Church considers Human Rights to be God-given and not granted by the State.

In *Galatians 3:28* we are told that in Jesus Christ all the natural differences which exist between humans lose their alienating and discriminating character. There is *neither Jew nor Greek*, there is *neither slave nor free*, there is *neither male nor female*; all are made one in Christ. To this universal, undifferentiated dignity of the children of God, all people are fundamentally called.

In his Encyclical *Pacem in Terris*, Pope John XXIII gave a full statement on the Church's understanding of

human rights. Pope John contended that lasting peace could only be achieved if people's rights were respected. The observance of rights these rights are on the individual level, at the level of public authorities, and national and international community levels.<sup>5</sup>

The Church urges all Christians to observe human rights and duties as part and parcel of their evangelising work. This is central to Catholic Social Teaching as can be seen from the Synod of Bishops in 1971 on the theme; "*Justice in the World*". The Bishops concluded emphatically that, "*action on behalf of Justice is a constitutive dimension of preaching the Gospel*".<sup>6</sup>

The Catholic Bishops of Zambia had this concern as early as 1953 when they spoke of the "Social rights of Africans" (*Pastoral Letter addressed to all Catholic Missionaries and members of the African Clergy in Northern Rhodesia, 1953*). When Zambia entered the third republic, with the promise of democracy beckoning, the Bishops come back to this theme in 1992 when they say, "democracy rests upon human rights". (*The Future is Ours – 1992*) The Church's concern for human rights does

---

5 Encyclical Letter of His Holiness Pope John XXIII, *Peace on Earth* (Pacem in Terris), Addressed to all mankind, Given at Rome at St.Peters's, on Holy Thursday, the Eleventh Day of April, in the year 1963, the Fifth Year of His Pontificate. St. Paul's Editions, Boston, 1963.

6 FLANNERY Austin, O.P., Editor, "*Justice in the World*" (Convenientes ex Universo), Vatican Council II – The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents, Vol. I, Costello Publishing Company, Northport, New York, 1984, pp. 695-710.

not just encompass political rights, but rights in all spheres of life. Economic rights are a case in point. In their letter, "*Hear the Cry of the Poor*" (1993), the Bishops spoke at great length on the need to have economic policies that go towards serving the human person as the central being in God's creation.

### *Political Rights*

The Church advocates the right of people to participate in decision making when it comes to issues that will affect them. Lack of consultation diminishes the legitimacy of public policies and laws. The people also have a right to participate in choosing leaders of their choice, and also presenting themselves as candidates, through their God-given right to vote. These matters are discussed in the various letters that deal with elections, especially the following; *Statement of the Catholic Bishops on the Coming Elections, 1978, Letter to All Christians Before the 31<sup>st</sup> October 1991 Elections, Year of Political Responsibility, 1995, Building for Peace, 1996, and Discipleship and Citizenship, 2001.*

### **Good Governance**

Throughout the three Republics of Zambia's history, the Church leaders have spoken about areas of concern regarding good governance. Wary of the abuse of power by political leaders, the Church leaders have issued letters highlighting such values as authority is for service and not a means towards the oppression of others. In the letter following the momentous elections of 1991, *The Future is Ours, 1992*, the Church leaders call on political leaders to have a spirit of service, and to be transparent and accountable to the people.

### The Church and State

The beginning point in understanding the relationship between the Church and State is that of collaboration based on mutual independence and self-governance. This would give room to the Church to have the freedom necessary to allow her to fulfil her prophetic mission of being the conscience of the Nation. The position encouraged by the teaching of the *Second Vatican Council* documents is that the Church should concern itself with general principles such as human rights and justice. At this level, the Church remains free to pass moral judgements, even on matters touching the political order. The Church cannot be expected to come out in support of one political system or party.<sup>7</sup> Direct involvement is left to individual Christians who can belong to different political persuasions.

While lay people are encouraged to play an active role in politics, there ought to be separation of Church and State. However, the Church has a *moral responsibility* of being the moral *conscience of the Nation*. The Church has a mission to “announce” the “Good News” and “denounce” violations of human rights. The concern of the Church is also for a healthy separation of Church and State. This is why the Catholic Bishops were not enthusiastic about the December 1991 declaration of Zambia as a “Christian Nation” by the new MMD Government. In “*The Future is Ours*” (1992) they reminded the people that “no nation is Christian by proclamation but by deeds”.

---

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., “*Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*” (Gaudium et Spes), Art. 76

## Peace

This is a major theme that underlies the Statements relating to the condemnation of violence (1996 and 1997). Peace is understood as not simply the absence of war (negative peace), but the presence of all the conditions that promote social justice (positive peace). A peaceful society is one where there is respect for human dignity, the promotion and defence of human rights, the rule of law where everyone is equal before the law, equal access to economic opportunities, and full participation of the people in the public affairs of their land.

## Economic Justice and Development Issues

by Fr. Peter Henriot S.J.

In Vatican II documents, one of the most important themes in the Church's social teaching is economic justice and development. Since the first modern social encyclical of Leo XIII on *The Condition of Labour* (1891)<sup>8</sup> through the most recent major document of John Paul II, *One Hundred Years* (1991),<sup>9</sup> a focus on economic issues has been central.

This central emphasis on economic justice and development is true also in the social teaching of the Church in Zambia. Even in the 1950s, the documents from the Bishops of Northern Rhodesia highlighted issues such as wages and employment conditions. With Independence in 1964, Zambia's economy became more nationalised and more centralised. Experiencing new

---

8 Encyclical letter *The Condition of Labour* (*Rerum Novarum*) of Leo XIII, 1891

9 Encyclical Letter, "One Hundred Years" (*Centesimus Annus*) of John Paul II, on the Hundredth Anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*. St Paul's Publications – Africa, Nairobi.

prosperity, the Government invested in many social improvements (schools, hospitals) and physical infrastructures (roads, railroads, water and sanitation). But a decline in economic conditions in the 1970s, caused by the collapse of copper prices and the quadrupling of oil prices, brought about widespread suffering of the people.

Zambia's economy never regained strength (and prosperity) and heavy borrowing brought Zambia deeply into debt. An enforced economic reform programme designed by the IMF and World Bank (Structural Adjustment Programme) meant major changes in the operation of the economy, especially after the political transition of 1991. Liberalisation, privatisation, budget cuts, imposition of fees for education and health care, devaluation of the Kwacha, retrenchment of workers in both the public sector and the private sector: all of this meant hardships especially for those already suffering from the economic decline.

It is in this context that the social teaching of the Church in Zambia (that developed), as it relates to economic justice and development. The letters of the Catholic bishops, statements from the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace, and ecumenical statements from the Zambian Episcopal Conference, the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia and the Christian Council of Churches, have all emphasised the need to attend to economic issues with more concern for social consequences.

There are several themes that are constant in the Zambian social teaching about economic justice and development. These themes are repeated over the years

in the documents because the issues that they touch on do not go away.

### **People First**

“The economy is for people, people are not for the economy.’ This very straightforward statement emphasises that an economy is always to be evaluated by its impact on people.

The focus on people is probably the reason why several of the Pastoral Letters endorse the philosophy (ideology) of *Zambian Humanism* espoused by President Kaunda. Putting the human person as central has consequences for economic systems. Thus the pastoral letter of the Catholic Bishops at the time of the *Tenth Anniversary of Independence* (1974) and the ecumenical letter “*Christian Liberation, Justice and Development*” (1987) both speak favourably of Humanism, noting several of its agreements with Christian ideals. But the 1987 letter also cautions against a Marxist-Leninist interpretations of Humanism that would lead to the promotion of atheistic doctrines and anti-Church stances.

### **Option for the Poor**

When economic systems and programmes are to be evaluated, a basic question that the Church’s social teaching puts to them is: *what does this mean for the poor?* The STC considers the biblically-based “*preferential option for the poor*” as a major principle of analysis and a key orientation for action. In Zambia, official figures of Government agencies and international donors such as the World Bank place from 70-80% of the population as living below an absolute poverty line (this is higher in the rural areas).

Therefore the social teaching found in the Zambian documents can be expected to place great emphasis on what is happening to the poor.

The 1986 Lenten letter of the Catholic Bishops spoke of the impact on the poor of the dramatic rise in the cost of living. The 1987 ecumenical letter approved of the maintenance of subsidies on mealie-meal because of the impoverished conditions of so many Zambians; while the 1990 pastoral letter, following riots and an attempted coup traced the civil unrest to the suffering of the poor: The letters and statements of the 1990s have called for an evaluation of SAP in terms of its effects on the poor.

### **Priorities**

With many demands on the Government in the midst of economic decline and social suffering, there is very serious need to sort out priorities. Hence the theme of choosing correct priorities has been central to the Church's social teaching. The criteria for choice must be the two themes mentioned above: place the people first, and put special focus on the poor.

The 1987 ecumenical letter on "*Christian Liberation, Justice and Development*" therefore emphasised a set of priorities that centres on agricultural development and rural improvements, and examines closely the benefits and privileges given to Government and Party officials but not to ordinary Zambians. After the riots and attempted coup of 1990, the pastoral statement of the Catholic Bishops, "*Economics, Politics and Justice*," raised questions about priorities in the allocation of scarce foreign exchange. — which was more important to meet social needs in schools and hospitals or to important cars for government leaders?

---

The emphasis on priorities in matters of economic justice and development has also marked the analyses of the national budgets prepared by the CCJP since 1997 (of the national budgets), "What are our priorities?" has been a constant question, as the budget allocations are analysed and evaluated.

### **Participation**

Two emphases on participation that are very important for economic justice and development are the participation of the people in economic programmes and the participation of Christians in influencing policy decisions.

Development that is sustainable requires the active participation of the people who are involved. Development must not come only from the "top-down," but must be from the "bottom-up." This ensures that people are the *subjects* of development and not merely the *objects*. This point is very well made in the Catholic Bishops' 1992 pastoral letter, "*The Future Is Ours*": People centred development programmes — that is, programmes which involve the people in identifying the problems, planning the responses, and co-operating together to work for solutions — are essential." The Development Education Programme (DEP) that is present throughout Zambia is a good example of this effort to promote grass-roots participation.

The second emphasis is the active participation of the laity in the effort to influence public policy. Major decisions that affect the future well being of the Country — such as the imposition of the Structural Adjustment Programme — must be widely explained, fully debated and openly decided. The 1993 pastoral letter of the Catholic Bishops, "*Hear the Cry of the Poor*," stressed the

importance of open and democratic debate over the future of the economic reform programmes. Central to all pastoral letters is an appreciation of the contribution that Christians can and should make to the debate. This is very much in accord with the teaching of Paul VI's letter, "*The Development of Peoples*" (1967)<sup>10</sup>, that stressed that the role of the laity is "to infuse a Christian spirit into the mentality, customs, laws and structures" of their communities and Nations (#81).

## **Moral And Pastoral Issues**

by Fr. Damian Musonda

### **Marriage and the Family**

The family is considered by the Church as the basis for the well being of the individual, human and Christian societies (*Vatican II, The Church in the Modern World*, no. 47). In fact it is considered to be one of the most precious of human values (John Paul II, *The Role of the Family in the Modern World*, no. 1). That is why the Church is very concerned about the family.

The Church in Zambia realises that this precious human family is "the heart of our Nation and our Church" and has played a role in nurturing, educating, protecting and sustaining several generations (*You Shall be My witnesses*, no. 37). However, it has been beset by

---

<sup>10</sup> Encyclical Letter of Pope Paul VI, "*On the Development of Peoples*" (*Populorum Progressio*), delivered in Rome, on 26th March 1967. Cf. St. Paul's Publications – Africa, Nairobi.

many problems. "Economic hardships, increased urbanisation, and the breakdown of traditional patterns have today caused serious family difficulties. These are seen in the rising rate of divorce, the prevalence of abortion, the problems among the youth such as theft, street crimes, dagga smoking and prostitution." (*You Shall be My Witnesses*, no. 37).

In spite of the many problems facing the family today the Church does not offer a pessimistic and gloomy picture of the family. It calls for the promotion of family values and the support of families through intensified marriage preparation, enrichment courses, and family life education especially directed at young people. It further urges Christians to ground their marriages and family life in Christ. It is convinced that it is only by the acceptance of the Gospel that people will live authentically their family life.

### **The Church as the Family of God**

The extended family in Africa is a most important reality. Thus the Special assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops (*African Synod*) took the model of the Church as the family of God as its guiding idea for the evangelisation of Africa. For the African Synod, it was an expression of the Church's nature particularly appropriate for Africa. This image emphasises care for others, solidarity, warmth in human relationships, acceptance, dialogue and trust.

The Synod took this model as a priority. In this process all ethnocentrism and excessive particularism should be avoided. Instead reconciliation and true communion between different ethnic groups that favour

solidarity and the sharing of personnel and resources among the particular Churches, should be promoted.

In order to realise the full potential of the Church as the Family of God, Small Christian Communities should be built. These will foster close human relationships. These communities “should be places engaged in evangelising themselves, so that subsequently they can bring the good news to others; they should moreover be communities which pray and listen to God’s word, encourage the members themselves to take on responsibility, learn to live an ecclesial life, and reflect on different human problems in the light of the Gospel. Above all, these communities are to be committed to living Christ’s love for everybody, a love which transcends the limits of the natural solidarity of clans, tribes or other interest groups.” (*John Paul II, The Church in Africa, no. 89*).

Realising the importance of the model of the Family of God and its importance for evangelisation, the bishops of Zambia issued two Pastoral Letters in 1996 (*Called to be the Family of God*) and 1997 (*The Church as a Caring Family*) in order to encourage Zambian Catholics to reflect and implement the implications of this model in concrete life.

### **The Dignity of Human Life**

Fostering the dignity of human life is a major concern of the Social Teaching of the Church. According to the Church this dignity is not based on social status, race, gender, or achievement but on what the person is as created in the image and likeness of God.

God is the author of life and he is the one who gives each life its dignity. Therefore, for the Church, “Whatever

is opposed to life itself, such as any type of murder, genocide, abortion, euthanasia, or wilful self-destruction, whatever violates the integrity of the human person, such as mutilation, torments inflicted on body or mind, attempts to coerce the will itself; whatever insults human dignity, such as subhuman living conditions, arbitrary imprisonment, deportation, slavery, prostitution, the selling of women and children; as well as disgraceful working conditions, where people are treated as mere instruments of gain rather than as freehand responsible persons; all these things and others like them are infamies indeed. They poison human society, and they do more harm to those who practice them than to those who suffer from the injury. Moreover, they are a supreme dishonour to the Creator" (*Vatican II, The Church in the Modern World, no. 27*).

That is why the Church has strongly defended the unborn. This is one of the bases for the condemnation of abortion. The Church sees marriage and married love as being ordained to the procreation and education of children. The Church in Zambia has repeated this teaching in a number of letters. It has pointed out that Christians should be aware that even when abortion has become legal in Zambia under certain conditions, it can never be morally justified. This is a point stressed by the Bishops' letter of 1972, *Declaration of the Zambia Episcopal Conference on Abortion*. Furthermore, the Church warns people against the use of abortifacients as contraceptives because in reality they kill the unborn (*Choose Life* #s 12-14). Abortion, can never be justified as it is contrary to Christian teaching (*Choose Life* #31)

The Church has also argued that respect for the unborn and the value of children is not only a

Catholic principle but is also found in traditional African tradition. Although for some abortion is resorted to in difficult situations, for others it is rooted in a hedonistic mentality, unwilling to accept responsibility in matters of sexuality. They claim a self-centered concept of freedom, which regards procreation as an obstacle to personal fulfilment.

As a result the life, which results from a sexual encounter, becomes an enemy to be avoided at all costs, and abortion becomes the only possible decisive response to failed contraception.

The Church makes a distinction between abortion and contraception. While abortion is the killing of the unborn child, contraception is the prevention of conception. However, the Church sees a connection between the two. This is clearly stated by Pope John Paul II in *"The Gospel of Life"*, and in the *Zambian Catholic Bishops Letter, "Choose Life"*. Both documents see a connection between abortion and contraception. This is because the negative values inherent in the "contraceptive mentality" are such that they strengthen the temptation to abortion when an "unwanted" life is conceived. Indeed, the pro-abortion culture is especially strong precisely where the Church's teaching on contraception is rejected. The Church also recognises the real life difficulties that women who abort and use contraception go through. It recommends compassion towards such women.

### **The Youth**

The Church has a special interest regarding the development of youths into responsible adults. This is why the

Church attaches a lot of importance to programmes relating to youth like pastoral formation and skills training (*The Church as a Caring Family* # 29.6) Other concerns are seen in the Church's dedication to education.

Currently, the socio-economic situation has brought about new challenges for the pastoral care of youth. In these times of high levels of poverty and the HIV/AIDS pandemic, the Church has to contend with the problems of street kids, orphans, and child headed households.

### **Women**

The concern about upholding the rights and dignity of women has been one of the important themes of the social teaching of the Church. The desire of women to participate in public life and to have their rights respected is seen by Pope John XXIII as one of the characteristics of the times. "Since women are becoming ever more conscious of their human dignity, they will not tolerate being treated as mere material instruments, but demand rights befitting a human person both in domestic and in public life." (**Peace on Earth, # 41**).

In the Pastoral letters of the Zambian Churches the concern has been to uphold the rights of women. In the centenary Pastoral letter the Catholic Bishops of Zambia mention some areas in Zambian society where the rights of women are violated. The Bishops say, "The oppression of women in the family, the injustices done to widows, the high incidence of female illiteracy, the exploitation of women for sexual favours, the violence done to women: all these are signs of denial of basic human rights, an injustice that cries out to our Creator." (**You Shall Be My Witnesses, no. 42**). The problem is two-pronged:

addressing traditional practices that oppress women and changing the modern conditions that perpetuate the oppression of women.

The Church recognises that it is not without fault in this regard, so it pledges itself to educate its members to a more correct view of women and to actively redress the injustices done to women in Church, State and family life. It recognises that injustices done to women can be ended if they are given a role in decision-making both in the Church and society.

### **The scourge of HIV/AIDS**

HIV/AIDS has been a major concern of the pastoral letters of the Churches of Zambia. The Christian Church leaders in Zambia issued an educative and informative statement on HIV/AIDS called "*Choose to Live*", in 1988. In other pastoral letters the Catholic Bishops address this important issue e.g. *Choose Life*, 1997, *The Church as a Caring Family*, 1997, and *The Church as a Missionary Family*, 1999. The Church leaders call for recognition of the seriousness of the disease and a multi sectoral approach to combat the disease (*The Missionary Family*, 1999). The letters state that HIV/AIDS is a problem for the whole community and therefore public authorities and every social force must be harnessed to find a solution (*Choose to Live*).

As regards suggestions for action, they call for the education of people about the nature of AIDS, how it is contracted and why? They ask that it be avoided. Special attention be paid to the youth who are the future of the nation and most at risk because of their inexperience.

The pastoral letters further urge the proper treatment of AIDS victims, they should be cared for preferably in families where the local community can be involved. They should not be isolated but given medical, moral and spiritual support. Prostitutes must be rehabilitated by giving them occupations that will enable them to support themselves in an honest way. Dependants of AIDS victims should be cared for by society by provision of foster homes or institutions for them. The medical profession is encouraged to maintain their morale in spite of witnessing the death of many of their patients due to HIV/AIDS. AIDS sufferers are encouraged not to lose hope.

The Churches warn that condoms are not a safe way of combating HIV/AIDS because of their high failure rate in preventing pregnancy. Advising people to use condoms gives people a false sense of security and encourages them to continue conduct they might otherwise have abandoned.

The Churches reflect on HIV/AIDS as a "Sign of the Times"; a call to people to reflect on the meaning of human love and sex, and its place in our lives. It asks how it can be seen as a loving and life-giving force instead of a source of self-gratification and the means through which the human race may yet destroy itself.

Concerning the Christian attitude to see the Churches emphasise chastity before and during marriage. They further recommend that people should have responsible sexual behaviour, by avoiding promiscuity. Those already infected are urged not to infect others. They are further recommended to go on living fully and take extra precautions against diseases of any kind.

## A SUMMARY OF THE IMPORTANT ISSUES OF CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING

Some authors, Peter Henriot and others, have argued that it is not easy to draw up a list of “major lessons” of Catholic Social Teaching (CST)<sup>11</sup>.

This is due to the very large body that constitute Catholic Church teaching.<sup>11</sup> Because of the huge output on the subject we commend the very good work that was done by these authors by reproducing what they called the “14 major lessons” of Catholic Social Teaching today, giving in parentheses the documents that illustrate each major lesson particularly well.

**1. Link of religious and social dimensions of life.** The “social” – the human construction of the world – is not “secular” in the sense of being outside of God’s plan, but is intimately involved with the dynamic of the Reign of God. Therefore faith and justice are necessarily linked together (*The Church in the Modern World; One Hundred Years*).

**2. Dignity of the human person.** Made in the image of God, women and men have a pre-eminent place in the social order. Human dignity can be recognised

**3. Political and economic rights.** All human persons enjoy inalienable rights, which are political-legal (e.g., the right to vote free speech and to migrate and protected only in community with others. The fundamental question to ask about social development is: what is happening to people? (*Peace on Earth; On Human Work*).

---

<sup>11</sup> This section is an extract from the book already cited above: Catholic Social Teaching; Our Best Kept Secret, pp. 22-25.

free speech, migration) and social-economic (e.g. food, shelter, work, education). These are realised in community. Essential for the promotion of justice and solidarity, these rights are to be respected and protected by all the institutions of society (*Peace on Earth*).

**4. Option for the poor.** A preferential love should be shown to the poor, whose needs and rights are given special attention in God's eyes. "Poor" is understood to refer to the economically disadvantaged who, as a consequence of their status, are prevented and suffer oppression and (*Call to Action*).

**5. Link of love and justice.** Love of neighbour is an absolute demand for justice, because charity must manifest itself in actions and structures which respect human dignity, protect human rights, and facilitate human development. To promote justice is to transform structures which block love (*Justice in the World*).

**6. Promotion of the common good.** The common good is the sum total of all those conditions of social living – economic, political, cultural – which make it possible for women and men readily and fully to achieve the perfection of their humanity. Individual rights are always experienced within the context of promotion of the common good. There is also an international common good (*Christianity and Social Progress*).

**7. Subsidiarity.** Responsibilities and decisions should be taken where possible at the level of individual initiative in local communities and institutions. Mediating structures of families, neighbourhoods, community groups, small businesses, and local Governments should be fostered and participated in. But larger Government

structures do have a role when greater social coordination and regulation are necessary for the common good (*The Reconstruction of the Social Order*).

**8. Political participation.** Democratic participation in decision-making is the best way to respect the dignity and liberty of people. The Government is the instrument by which people cooperate together in order to achieve the common good. The international common good requires participation in international organizations (Pius XII, "Christmas Message," 1944; *The Missionary Activity of the Church*).

**9. Economic justice.** The economy is for the people the resources of the earth are to be shared equitably by all. Human work is the key to contemporary social questions. Labour takes precedence over both capital and technology in the production process. Just wages and the right of workers to organize are to be respected (*On Human Work*).

**10. Stewardship.** All property has a "social mortgage." People should respect and share the resources of the earth, since we are all part of the community of creation. By our work we are co-creators in the continuing development of the earth (*On Human Work*).

**11. Solidarity.** We belong to one human family. As such we have mutual obligations to promote the rights and development of all people across communities, nations, and the world, irrespective of national boundaries. In particular, rich nations have responsibilities towards poor nations, and the structures of the international order must reflect justice (*The Development of Peoples; The Social Concerns of the Church; One Hundred Years*).

**12. Promotion of peace.** Peace is the fruit of justice and dependent upon right order among humans and among nations. The arms race must cease and progressive disarmament take place if the future is to be secure. In order to promote peace and the conditions of peace, an effective international authority is necessary (*Peace on Earth*).

**13. Work.** Work can and must serve an individual's humanity and dignity. Work is a way that humans share in the activity of God. People have a right to work, a right to receive a just wage, and a right to form unions (*The Condition of Labour; On Human Work*).

**14. Liberation.** Liberation from oppressive social, political and economic situations and structures is an important part of the Church's activity. Liberation, however, must encompass the *entire* person, including the spiritual and religious dimensions (*The Missionary Activity of the Church*).

**SCHEMA**  
**OF THE PASTORAL LETTERS AND**  
**STATEMENTS**  
**in Relation to the Socio-political**  
**Development of Zambia (1953-2001)**

The Pastoral Letters and Statements in this book form the body of work one can call the *Social Teaching of the Churches in Zambia*. It has been born out of the application of gospel values as made clear by the universal teaching of the Church to the Zambian situation at different times and in varying circumstances.

This is why we find that the principles that Church leaders expounded in their letter of 1953, in the colonial context, are the same principles that they fall back on when critically evaluating the elections in 2001.

The schema below points out significant epochs in Zambia's history and how Church leaders responded to the social situation that characterised each epoch. Reference is made to the major events in that epoch.

Key Pastoral Letters of each epoch are cited to demonstrate how the Church's thinking has evolved.

The epochs range from the colonial period 1924-1964 when Zambia was then known as Northern Rhodesia to the present day. The first pastoral letters recorded date back to this colonial era.

In 1964 Zambia gained independence. It was a mineral rich country with a lot of hope for rapid social and economic progress. The independence Euphoria after characterised the second epoch of the 1<sup>st</sup> Republic from 1964 to 1972.

The third epoch, 1972-1991 corresponds to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic. The euphoria after independence was on the wane. Zambia became a One Party State. An economic regression heralded the beginning of serious social problems which culminated in the "winds of change" that swept the Movement for Multi-Party Democracy (MMD) into power.

The fourth epoch is the current one which is characterised by the return to a multiparty political system and a liberalised economy. Social problems have become entrenched owing to the partial withdrawal of the State from the provision of social services.

## ZAMBIA'S POLITICAL HISTORY: THE SCHEMA OF THE FOUR "SOCIO-POLITICAL EPOCHS"

	Socio-political Realities	(The) Zambia Church Teaching
Colonial period (1924-1964)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Colour Bar</li> <li>- Exclusion of Africans from Politics (welfare societies)</li> <li>- The Independence struggle</li> <li>- Chachacha (civil disobedience)</li> <li>- The Lenshina uprising</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The "Social Rights of Africans" (1958 P/Letter): rights to education, employment, political participation, and socialisation.</li> <li>- P/Letter to mark independence (1964)</li> </ul>
1st Republic (1964-1972)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Post Independence Multiparty-Period (UNIP, ANC, UPP NP)</li> <li>- Accelerated Nation</li> <li>- Building...</li> <li>- Welfare State</li> <li>- Party violence</li> <li>- Legalisation of an Abortion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- P/Letter for 10th Anniversary of Zambia's independence (1974)</li> <li>- Appreciation of Church and State as partners in development.</li> <li>- Recognition of the Government's development programmes especially infrastructure.</li> <li>- Declaration on Abortion (1972)</li> </ul>
2nd Republic (1972-1991)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- One Party State (Choma Declaration)</li> <li>- Humanism (Scientific Socialism)</li> <li>- Centralisation of power (the "PIG")</li> <li>- Economic decline (internal and external factors)</li> <li>- Food riots (1966, 1990)</li> <li>- Coup attempts (1982), 1988, 1990)</li> <li>- Winds of change (MMD)</li> <li>- Emergence of HIV/AIDS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Letter on elections (1978)</li> <li>- Marxism, Humanism, and Christianity (1979)</li> <li>- 1986 Lenten Letter - on corruption and economic decline</li> <li>- Economics, Politics, and Justice</li> <li>- (1990) - on the crisis of the One party State and call for change</li> <li>- An Ecumenical P/Letter on HIV/AIDS, Choose to Live (1988)</li> </ul>
3rd Republic (1991) .....	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Return to Multiparty System (Art. 4)</li> <li>- Peaceful change of Government: Zambia as shining example</li> <li>- International good-will</li> <li>- Privatisation (including the mines)</li> <li>- Constitutional crisis (1995)</li> <li>- The Rule of Law 'Black Mamba' saga, the Nolle Prosequi, the Public Order Act)</li> <li>- Coup Attempt (1997)</li> <li>- Poverty levels reach 80% of population in rural areas</li> <li>- The Third Term "debate"</li> <li>- Tripartite Elections 2001 (End of the Chiluba Era)</li> <li>- Social crisis.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A Christian View of Multi-Party Politics and Culture</li> <li>- The Future is Ours (1992) – call for a new political culture of democracy: of transparency, accountability, and hard work.</li> <li>- Hear the cry of the Poor (1993)</li> <li>- Open Letter to the President and MPs on Constitutionalism (1995)</li> <li>- Year of Political Responsibility (1996)</li> <li>- Discipleship and Citizenship (2001)</li> <li>- Several Pastoral Letters on the Family.</li> </ul>

## GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR READING AND USING THE PASTORAL LETTERS

***“One of the principal duties of the bishops is to proclaim the Gospel of Christ to all...” (Christus Dominus 16)***<sup>12</sup>

This collection of Pastoral Letters and Statements is concerned with a wide range of socio-political issues, economic and development issues, moral and pastoral issues. But the main concern of the bishops remains to proclaim the Good News of Jesus to the people of Zambia, to evangelise. Our pastors know that the Church exists in order to evangelise, that is ‘to carry forth the Good News to every sector of the human race so as to transform humanity from within and make it new ...’<sup>13</sup>

This had already been the main concern of the bishops at the African Synod: to bring the Good News of faith, hope and love, of justice and peace, to everything that makes our life as human beings. Proclamation, witness, teaching, sacraments, love of neighbour, social transformation, and action on behalf of justice - all of these aspects are the means by which the one Gospel of Christ is transmitted.

Whilst reading these different Pastoral Letters and Statements it might be helpful to recall the challenge of the African Synod: ***what must we do to make the Message relevant, effective and credible?***

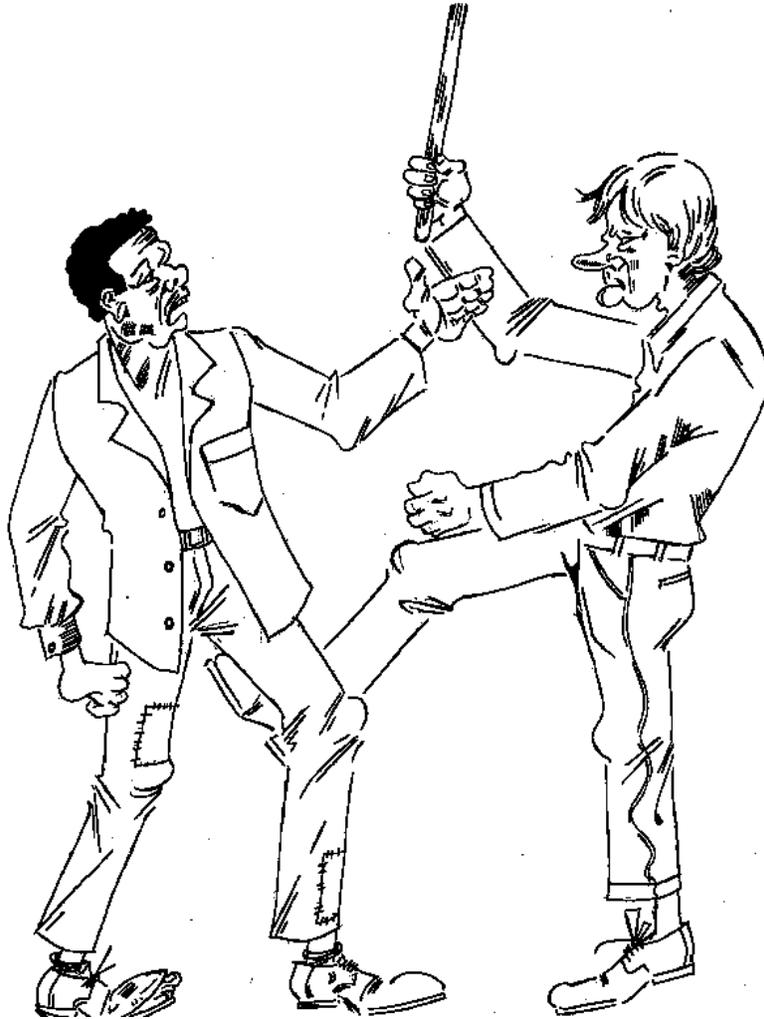
<sup>12</sup> FLANNERY Austin, O.P., Editor, *“Christus Dominus” (Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church)*, in *Vatican Council II – The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*, Vol. I, Costello Publishing Company, Northport, New York, 1984, #16, pp. 572-573.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. II, *“Evangelii Nuntiandi” (Evangelisation in the Modern World)*, *More Post Conciliar Documents*, , Fowler Wright Books Ltd., Leominster, Herefords, #18, p. 718.

**To make each one of these statements relevant and effective in our concrete pastoral situations, the following guiding questions might be helpful:**

- Which passage or word in the Bible comes to your mind when reading this text? Why?
- What has been touched you in a particular way in the text you have just read? Why?
- Do you think that the pastoral vision expressed in this text is the vision found among the pastoral agents of your diocese and parish? If not, could you explain why?
- According to the African Synod, the biggest problem for us seems to be how to link faith and our every day life. How is this integration done in the document you have just read?
- Do you think that the main issues mentioned by the Bishops are integrated in the pastoral plans of your diocese/ parish/ lay organisation? How?
- What concrete means would you suggest in order to make the message of these documents known in a relevant and effective way in your parish? Your Small Christian Community? Your lay organisation?
- Is there anything in the document you have just read that you feel has real relevance to the current economic situation in Zambia?
- Is there anyone in your church, your family, your political party, your work place, etc., to whom you would like to pass this particular document? Why?"

## THE COLONIAL PERIOD 1924 - 1964



*... A time of conflict between the white settlers and black African majority!*

**PASTORAL LETTER ADDRESSED  
TO ALL CATHOLIC MISSIONARIES AND  
MEMBERS OF THE AFRICAN CLERGY  
IN NORTHERN RHODESIA  
1953**

*In 1953, a debate was raging on the formation of a federation that would comprise Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia) and Southern Rhodesia, (now Zimbabwe) and Nyasaland (now Malawi). Africans were not part and parcel of this debate even though they were the indigenous people of the areas under consideration. Only settlers had the political right to make decisions. In this context, the Bishops of Northern Rhodesia wrote the following letter to guide the clergy in matters of politics, in particular, the colonial politics of the time. The Bishops are careful to point out the non-partisanship of the Church. They state that the Church ought to be "above politics" except in exceptional cases. They remind the colonial power to respect the right of Africans to participate in decisions that would affect their land. Also Africans were not to be denied opportunities in fields of education, employment, and health.*

*In the era of the "colour bar", based on inequality, they emphatically point out that sound racial relations ought to be based on the fundamental recognition of the human dignity of people. Basing themselves on the Biblical teaching from Genesis 1: 26-28, they say that all rights come from God. All human beings, regardless of the colour of their skin, are of equal dignity before God since they are made in God's image. The bishops also point out that all human rights have corresponding duties. "One can not claim rights without at the same time fulfilling one's duties". They end the letter with a self-critical analysis of justice within the Church, especially the question of a "just salary".*

To all Catholic Missionaries and Members of the African Clergy in Northern Rhodesia.

Dear Missionaries,

1. You are all aware that the present circumstances in N. Rhodesia are indeed critical. On the other hand, everybody is bound to recognise that, during the past 30 years and more, this Country as a whole has made considerable progress in the religious, economic, educational, social and political fields, and that important plans for further development are in course of gradual implementation. But, on the other hand, nobody concerned with the advancement of N. Rhodesia as a whole, and especially nobody concerned with the advancement of the Africans, can ignore the fact that the present political situation, arising from the proposal for a Central African Federation for the two Rhodesias and Nyasaland, overshadows the peaceful development of this Country, as well as the relations between Africans and Europeans in Northern Rhodesia.

2. Gravely concerned at the present political situation, and with a deep sense of affection for the Africans, the Conference of the Catholic Ordinaries of N. Rhodesia, which met in Lusaka in April, has expressed the wish that some definite instructions be issued to the Missionaries and members of the African Clergy to serve as a guide in the practice of their apostolic work at this critical period of the history of N. Rhodesia.

#### **THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IS NOT POLITICAL**

##### **Juridical Aspect of the Question According to Canon Law**

3. As a question of principle, it is well to recall the very strong prohibition included in Can. 139, with regard to the participation of the clergy in the political affairs of any Country. Par. 4 of this canon strictly forbids all members of the Catholic Clergy to assume official functions in the Legislative Body of any State unless they have obtained the explicit consent of the Holy See and of their Ordinary.

4. Can. 141.1 strongly urges all members of the Catholic Clergy to refrain from taking any part in the internal quarrels of a Country, and in the perturbation of public order.

5. Numerous Statements made by the Holy See, at different times, authoritatively confirm these clauses of Can. 139 and 141.

6. Pope Leo XIII had already written to the Bishops of Spain, on the 8th December 1882: "When priests throw themselves into the quarrels of political parties, in such a way as to give the impression that they are taking more interest in the things of this world than in the advancement of the Kingdom of God, they certainly do not fulfil the duties of their state of life" (A.A.S. t.XV, p. 244).

7. On the 16th November 1922, Pope Pius XI wrote to the Bishops of Belgium: "The members of the Clergy are bound to lead to a supernatural life. They must therefore regard all purely human interests as a field, which is inferior to their high calling. Above all, they must avoid all discussions which tend to divide the citizens among themselves, especially political quarrels."

8. On the 24th March, 1924, the same Pope publicly declared in Consistory: "As we have already proclaimed and frequently repeated, it is forbidden to every member of the Clergy to misuse the authority attached to his sacred character, or to misuse the influence of the Catholic Action movement, for purely political purposes and with a view to favouring any political party". (A.A.S t.XV, p. 126).

9. It is well to remember that, in signing concordats or agreements with the Holy See, "many Governments have requested that a clause be inserted forbidding members of the Clergy to join a political party, or to take any active and influential part in the activities of any political party". (A.A.S. t.XV, 407).

10. It is true that there may be times when the direct intervention of the Church in political affairs may be justified, as when, for instance, a political party aims at depriving the Church of her rights or at destroying the faith of the people. But such cases are undoubtedly exceptional, and, even when they occur, it would often be imprudent on the part of the Clergy not to leave this intervention to the Hierarchy. The Hierarchy itself, before taking any step, will have to make sure that the matter requiring its intervention is not strictly temporal but has a specified and well-defined effect on the spiritual interest of the Church and of the faithful. Moreover, it must be borne in mind that, in such matters, the Hierarchy will almost always use an indirect channel to forward its representations to the Civil Authority, thus keeping as much as possible outside the field of political quarrels.

**Practical Applications to N. Rhodesia at the Present Time.**

11. In the light of the above principles, it is our strict duty to keep out of the political quarrels, which are nowadays dividing the various people of N.Rhodesia with regard to the proposed Federation.

12. With the Church, we must be above Politics, and not interfere with the views that the great majority of the Africans may hold in the matter.

13. But as human beings, and as citizens of N. Rhodesia, they have the legitimate right to hold their own political views on the problem at stake, and, as long as Federation is not an accomplished fact, they have also the right within the limits of true moderation and through constitutional means to endeavour to postpone and even prevent the formation of the proposed Central African Federation.

14. In a matter, which is strictly temporal, we, as missionaries and servants of the Church, would act against the

principles of the Church if we took sides and used our authority to influence the opinion of the people.

15. In this regard we have indeed a great responsibility, and we must refrain from expressing any decided views that we might hold personally on the question whether or not these views coincide with those of the Africans.

16. It is true we may occasionally, and when the question is brought up in private conversation by certain categories of Africans, touch prudently on Federation. But we should never take the first step in introducing the subject. Moreover, even then we should use the utmost tactic and reserve in treating the matter as outsiders (sic)<sup>14</sup> who have no vote on the problem, and we should make it perfectly clear that we, as men of God, leave it entirely to the decision of the citizens concerned.

17. This is only fair, first to the Africans themselves, and also to those who oppose them. Possibly some of them will say that, since the missionaries are neutral in the question, this is a sign that they are in fact in favour of Federation. But surely this would be a rash and unfounded judgement. Such a statement will not withstand the cool reasoning of men of good faith. The great majority will agree that by remaining above Politics, the Church did the right thing, that she trusted the growing political consciousness of the Africans, and that by not interfering with their rights she gave them a chance to stand in all freedom and legality by their opinions.

---

<sup>14</sup> A great effort has been made to stick to the original texts as they are. This is to preserve the actual style and language used. A term like 'bystander' must have been understood with a particular meaning at the time it was used as it is presented. There are other terms below like 'disdainful attitude' and 'unmannerliness' (See subtitles preceding paragraphs 52 and 58). In paragraph 61, we come across 'unconcernedness' as another term of this nature.

---

## THE SOCIAL RIGHTS OF THE AFRICANS

### *Consideration in the Light of the Papal Encyclicals*

18. We would like now to come down to a few points which are worthy of the attention of all missionaries, and indeed of all true Catholics in N. Rhodesia, whether Africans or Europeans.

19. At all times, but especially in the present crisis, it is of the utmost importance that we should endeavour to foster among the peoples of N. Rhodesia that genuine spirit of Christian Charity which alone can provide a solid foundation for sound Race Relations.

### **The Dignity of Man, Irrespective of the Race to which he Belongs**

20. It must be remembered that sound Race Relations ought to be based on the recognition of man's dignity, irrespective of race or colour.

21. In this respect it can be said in all truth that the Church did not wait until the relatively recent Atlantic Charter to proclaim the dignity of all men. Right from the early centuries she made clear the following doctrines:

- i) That all men, irrespective of race, are God's beloved creatures and made by Him in His own image.
- ii) That all men, irrespective of race, are called upon to become God's children through sanctifying grace.
- iii) That all men, irrespective of race, are bound to one another by the same destiny, since they are all made by God in the same manner, have all received the same characteristics common to all human beings, and are all destined to the same eternal life in heaven

- iv) That by means of sanctifying grace all men, irrespective of race, are called upon to become brothers of Christ, as well as brothers of one another and through their union with Christ to be one with Him, and to form in the community of their fellow men one Body which is the Mystical Body of Christ.
- v) That all men, irrespective of race, have the duty to respect and love one another.

In these doctrines lies the essence of Man's dignity.

22. We should remind ALL sections of our Community - Europeans and Africans as well - of these *rights* of every man. Europeans should remember that the Africans have these rights - and Africans should remember that equally the Europeans have them. We must recommend to Europeans greater *respect* for people of other races - and at the same time we must remind very strongly to the Africans, their duty to *love* non-Africans.

23. Along with rights go *duties*, and one cannot claim rights without at the same time fulfilling one's duties.

24. Unfortunately Europeans and Africans as well talk today too much of their RIGHTS and too little of their DUTIES.

25. Therefore in general in our dealings with both Europeans and Africans we should speak more about their duties than about their rights.

a) *The Teachings of St. Paul.*

26. Right from the very beginning of the Church, St. Paul emphasised the dignity of man, and its implications for the mutual relations between men.

27. In his epistle to the Galatians (III, 26-28), he writes: "For through faith you are all the children of God in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were baptised into Christ

---

have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither slave nor free person; there is neither male nor female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus."

28. He comes back to the same subject in the epistle to the Colossians (III, 11): "There is no more Gentile and Jew, no more circumcised and uncircumcised; no one is barbarian or Scythian, no one is slave or free man; there is *nothing but Christ in any of us*".

29. And again, in his first epistle to the Corinthians (XII, 13), he says: "We too, all of us, have been baptised into a *single body* by the power of a single Spirit, Jews and Greeks, slaves and free men alike." He continues in his epistle to the Romans (XII, 5) "We though many in number, form one body in Christ, and *each acts as the counterpart of another*".

30. St. Paul develops the same idea, bringing in the doctrine of mutual love and assistance, in his epistle to the Corinthians (I Cor. XII, 24-26): "God has established a harmony in the body... There was to be *no want of unity* in the body; all the different parts of it were to make *each other's welfare* their common care. If one part is suffering, all the rest suffer with it; if one part is treated with honour, all the rest find pleasure in it." He stresses the same in the epistle to the Romans, speaking also about brotherly affection (Rom. XII, 9-10): "Let love be sincere... love one another with mutual affection; anticipate one another in showing honour".

31. It would be indeed too long to quote all the passage in which St. Paul explains the motives on which man's dignity is based. But the great Apostle reminds us equally of our duties, as the passage from the epistle to the Ephesians shows distinctly (Eph. VI 5-9): "Servants, be obedient to them that are your lords according to the flesh, with fear and trembling in the simplicity of your heart, as to Christ. Not serving to the eye, as it were pleas-

ing men; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart with a good will serving, as to the Lord, and not to men. Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man shall do, the same shall he receive from the Lord, whether he be bond or free. And you, masters, do the same things to them, forbearing threatening; knowing that the Lord, both of them and you, is in heaven. And there is no respect of persons with Him.

*b) The teachings of the Popes.*

32. After St. Paul, the Popes also have re-affirmed this doctrine of the dignity of man, and of its implications on the mutual relations between men.

33. Pope Leo XIII, in his encyclical "In plurimis" wrote: "Thanks to Christ, there can now exist a fraternal union of all men and peoples. As they all have the same origin in the order of nature, so also, in the supernatural order, they all have the same opportunities with regard to faith and salvation. All without exception are called upon to be adopted as children by the same God who is the Father of all, and has redeemed them all at the same price. All without exception are admitted to the same divine banquet. All without exception are offered the same advantages with regard to grace and eternal life.

34. Pope Pius XI devoted to the same teaching another one of his encyclicals called "Quadragesimo Anno", in which he developed the statements previously made by Pope Leo XIII in the encyclical "Rerum Novarum". Among many other relevant passages, let us quote the following: "According to Christian doctrine, man, endowed with a social nature, is placed here on earth in order that he may spend his life in society, under an authority ordained by God; that he may develop and evolve to the full his faculties to the praise and glory of his Creator, and

that, by fulfilling faithfully the duties of his station, he may attain to temporal and eternal happiness" (C.T.S. "Quadragesimo Anno", p.53)

35. "Then only", continues the encyclical, "will it be possible to unite all men in harmonious striving for the common good, when all sections of society have the intimate conviction that they are members of a single family, and children of the Heavenly Father, and further, that they are "one body in Christ, and everyone members one of another", so that "if one member suffers anything, all members suffer with it" (id. p.64).

36. Pope Pius XII, in his encyclical "Mystici Corporis", proclaims "if Christ took our human nature, He did so that He might make us share in His divine sharing in the world, by the joy of heaven" (Quoted from the Grail edition - This is Unity - No. 44).

37. And further on he remarks that "in the Mystical Body there is a supernatural bond of unity existing and active in the whole body, and in each and every part of it; A bond of unity that cannot be compared with that existing in a human body. This bond of unity is infinite and uncreated; it is the Holy Spirit, who "numerically one and the same, fills and unifies the whole Church" (id - No. 60).

38. Further on, he says: "With the love of God and the love of Christ, must go the love of all other human beings. Now can we pretend to love Christ if we hate those He has redeemed with His blood that He might make them members of His Body? St. John therefore warns us that a man is a liar who says that he loves God and yet hates his brother. For if the man cannot love the brother whom he sees how can he love God who is invisible? And, says St. John, God Himself commanded that those who love Him should also love their neighbours. Indeed, it must be said that the closer we are united with each other, the closer we are united with God and with Christ" (id. No. 73).

*c) Need for serious personal consideration of the teachings of the Holy Scripture and Encyclicals.*

39. Surely, these teachings of the Church provide us all with ample matter for personal consideration, and it is of the utmost importance especially at this crucial time, that all sections of N. Rhodesian society should remember that every man, irrespective of race, is endowed with the dignity of a human person, and entitled to the respect and sympathy of everybody else.

40. In this matter we all have to scrutinize our consciences in order to see whether we treat everybody, irrespective of race, with the true politeness and gentleness, which are commanded by God and by the Church. Such an examination of conscience fits everybody in N. Rhodesia - Europeans as well as Africans - members of the Clergy or of religious congregations as well as the Laity. Should anyone among us, in examining his conscience on this particular point, discover that his conduct does not exactly correspond with the requirements of Christian doctrine, then it would be his duty to amend those of his manners which are in opposition to Christian charity, and to the dignity and respect to which every human person is entitled.

41. With regard to this, there is much that could be said. Among many other points that every one of us will be able to discover by himself, it does not seem irrelevant to mention the following.

**Discrimination Or Segregation**

42. The very terms of "segregation" and "discrimination", in themselves, are such as to hurt immediately Catholic feeling and conscience.

43. We do not want to treat here the crucial doctrine which, in countries other than N. Rhodesia, favours a

large scale policy of "Partition", "Segregation" or "Apartheid". It is enough to say here that the Church regards such a policy as opposed, in principle, to that Christian Charity which must be the only basis for sound Race Relations, and which requires that every citizen of a Country may have, equally with all others, the opportunity of developing and evolving his faculties to the full.

*But even in this Country, though on a smaller scale, there are a few things, which, in one way or another, might resemble to a certain extent the system of discrimination.*

*a) Separate Churches for Africans and for Europeans.*

44. There is, for instance, the question of separate Churches for Africans and for Europeans. In the conditions prevailing in N. Rhodesia, we think that, in centres where the European Catholic population is important in size, it is indeed easier to have separate places of worship for the European section, so that it may receive adequate religious instruction in the European language.

45. But, surely, the Catholic European population should be made to understand that African domestic servants, at least, and even a few others who, for one reason or another, cannot go to another Church, should never be refused access to the Churches frequented by the European section.

46. Moreover it should also be made to understand that separate places of worship can only be an exception and temporary measures, until such time as the two sections will be able to pray and receive religious instruction in the same language. This may indeed take a very long time before it materialises. But when conditions of African development justify it, this distinction in the use of Churches must disappear as opposed to the unity of the Mystical Body.

47. In the meantime, every African of good faith will understand that, in tolerating such a distinction in places

of worship, the Church is in no way guided by colour prejudice, but by the sole and legitimate intention of giving to each of the two sections of the Catholic Community adequate religious instruction in its own language.

b) *The unconscious dislike of those poorer than us.*

48. This is found amongst some Europeans and even amongst some educated Africans. It is easy for both groups, on account of their position in life, to wear clean and fashionable clothes, but they are inclined to look down with a sort of unconscious dislike upon their less privileged African brothers whose low salaries do not allow of such a manner of dressing. This is quite wrong.

49. We agree that, under the present circumstances, the results of poverty may cause difficulties. But, surely, at a time when the standards of cleanliness and dress among Africans is gradually rising, and, generally speaking, has already reached a satisfactory level, Christian brotherhood should dictate the attitude to every Catholic to the effect that he would find it natural even to share the same benches in Church and everywhere else.

50. Would it not be convenient to recall here the words of St. James in chapter II, 1-9 of his Catholic epistle: "Brethren, you believe that all glory belongs to Our Lord Jesus Christ; do not combine this faith of yours with *flattery of human greatness*. Suppose that a man comes into your place of meeting in fine clothes, wearing a gold ring; suppose that a poor man comes in at the same time, ill clad. Will you pay attention to the well dressed man, and bid him take some place of honour; will you tell the poor man: Stand where thou art, or sit on the ground at my footstool. If so, are you not *introducing divisions into your company*? Have you not shown *partiality* in your judgement? Listen to me, my dear brethren, has not God chosen the men who are poor in the world's eyes to be rich in

faith, to be heirs of that Kingdom which He has promised to those who love Him? And here are you *putting the poor man to shame*. Is it not the rich who use their power to oppress you? Are not they the very men who drag you into court, the very men who speak evil of that honoured name, by which you are called? True, you do well to observe, in their regard, the *royal law* you find in the words of scripture: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. But if you flatter the great, you incur guilt; the law finds you out in transgression."

51. It is well to note here that the expression "*respect of persons*", or partiality, recurs frequently in the New Testament. As you know, "*to have respect for persons*" is to make distinction or discrimination between persons, to like one and to dislike another, to seek the society of some and to avoid that of the others. The very frequency with which the expression is used in the New Testament is a clear warning to us that such an attitude is contrary to the Catholic spirit.

c) *Disdainful attitude.*

52. There is that disdainful attitude often noticeable in Europeans and not seldom even in highly educated Africans, of looking down on most of the Africans as persons of inferior status, who are not entitled to the same measures of respect and politeness as those of a higher rank in society. To those also, we would recommend the careful meditation of the passage of St. James' epistle which we have quoted above, as well as meditation on the example of Christ, who proclaimed the beatitude of the poor, and of whom it has rightly been said He was poor at His birth, poorer still in His life, and quite destitute on the cross.

53. Should not every one of us, in dealing with persons who happen to be at a lower standard of education, use the same inexhaustible patience and loving sympathy as Christ displayed towards His apostles and is still displaying towards us"

*d) Colour Bar.*

54. There is that colour bar of which we are unaware and which may unconsciously affect our relations with members of different races. And here we would venture to say that colour bar is not the exclusive possession of Europeans. It works indeed both ways, and very often may be found in Africans whose feelings towards Europeans are also prejudiced by it. Hence the suspicions, distrust, resentment which sometime set members of the two races against each other - suspicions, distrust and resentment which rise more or less instinctively from the fact that the pigmentation of the skin is different.

55. Like all other human instincts, this colour, prejudice has to be controlled and mastered by our reason enlightened by faith. This duty binds on everybody, Africans and Europeans alike. Did not Christ die for the salvation of all men? Has not the Church always imparted her motherly affection and solicitude to all peoples, without regard to racial distinctions? Has not Holy Scriptures emphasised that fact that all men, irrespective of colour and race, have got the same rights as human persons, and share in common "One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in us all" (Eph. IV, 5). Has not Christ, on the last moments of His earthly life, prayed that all men "may be one (as the Blessed Trinity is one)... that they may be made perfect in one" (John XVII, 21-23)?

56. Have not the Popes, all through the centuries, preached the same doctrine of unity? Has not the Church administered to the erroneous doctrine of colour prejudices, the deadliest blow, by developing education at all levels among the Africans; more than that, by admitting African men and women into religious congregations; still more than that, by conferring upon Africans the Holy Priesthood and even the Episcopal dignity.

57. Nowadays, in our beloved Africa, we may receive the sacraments from the hands of African priests as well as (may receive them) from the hands of European priests. We may confess our sins to African priests as well as confess them to European priests. To whomsoever we may go for the sacraments, we may be sure to receive the same pardon and the same grace in exactly the same measure.

58. There cannot be a colour bar in the Church of God, among the children of the same Father.

#### **Unmannerliness**

59. There are those regrettable manners with which the Africans have been, so to speak, forced to familiarize themselves on account of lack of consideration on the part of many an official or employer, and even sometimes on the part of missionaries who, by virtue of their holy calling, should imitate St. Paul and be "everything by turns to everybody, to bring every body salvation" (I Cor. IX, 22).

60. There is that long and often unnecessary waiting at the doors of offices before people are admitted and allowed to state their business. Certainly there are instances when people cannot be given immediate attention, but such expressions, as "I have no time... I am busy... Wait a moment" have possibly become too much of an unconscious habit with some of us.

61. There are those people who apparently take little notice of the persons who come to them for business. There are also those who do not look at people, or who deal with them with that unconcernedness and apparent indifference which is so opposed to mutual sympathy and Christian Charity.

62. There are those who, through impatience, often address people with harsh words, which may not come from ill will, but nevertheless are likely to hurt. There is indeed a polite way to say: "What can I do for you?" and to set people at ease immediately.

63. There are those who are too slow in realising that the modern educated Africans, rightly conscious of their respectability, wish to be addressed with such titles as "Mr. So", etc.

64. There are those who would never take the first step in saluting or addressing Africans, as there are those who never invite them to take a chair when they come for business, simply because this was not the custom in the old days.

65. There are those to whom it has not yet occurred that it is good occasionally to invite certain categories of Africans to a tea party or some other social meeting, and there are also those who would feel uncomfortable if they had to accept similar invitations from the same categories of Africans.

66. There are also those Africans who, when set in authority over their fellow Africans, do not treat them with the courtesy required.

67. This is indeed an examination of conscience, and we apologize for proposing it to you with such an abundance of details. But, in suggesting these points to you for

consideration, we ourselves are conscious that we also happen at times to do the wrong things to others. That is why we consider that every Catholic, *a fortiori*, every missionary, should do everything possible to act at all times in such a way as to insert into the daily structure of his life and occupations those elements which will undoubtedly improve Race Relations and put into practice the teachings of Christ and of the Church.

#### HUMAN RIGHTS IN SOCIETY

68. Consequent on his dignity as a human person and a creature of God, man has certain rights, which nobody can take away from him.

69. People sometimes are mistaken in believing that the proclamation of these rights has its origin in the declaration of *Human Rights* made by the General Assembly of the United Nations at one of its early meetings after World War II. This is not true. Since the very beginning of the Catholic Church, she has always been the champion of human rights, and no human organisation in the world has ever made on this subject any statement comparable with such pontifical encyclicals as "*Rerum Novarum*" of Pope Leo XIII, "*Quadragesimo Anno*" and "*Divini Redemptoris*" of Pope Pius XI, and various important messages issued to the whole world by Pope Pius XII.

70. Truly, the Catholic Church, by upholding the rights of all men, and more especially of the poorest among them, has well merited the gratitude of all the races of Mankind, and in particular of the working classes all over the world.

### **What Are These Human Rights?**

71. To have an idea of what these rights are, it will be enough to quote a few passages from the remarkable encyclicals we have mentioned above.

72. The encyclical "*Divini Redemptoris*" says: "*It is God who made man and gave him a soul. This soul is endowed with wonderful gifts and with certain rights.*"

73. *God gave to man a share in His own divine life: This share in God's life is called sanctifying grace. Through sanctifying grace man is raised to the dignity of a son of God.*

74. *Opposing the materialistic doctrine of Communism, the Church says that God gave man rights when He gave him a soul. He made it natural for men to live together in society, because only then can men help each other, enjoy their rights, and develop the gifts God has given them.*

75. *It is true; man cannot live in society nor enjoy freely his human rights unless every man does his duty towards society. That is why if a man fails to do his duty, he may be forced to by society. But society may never take away or destroy the rights of man.*

76. **THESE ARE HIS RIGHTS:**

*The right to LIFE.*

*The right to THE NECESSITIES OF LIFE, AND TO A DECENT LIVING.*

*The right to WORSHIP.*

*The right to THE NORMAL DEVELOPMENT OF HIS FACULTIES.*

*The right to PRIVATE PROPERTY AND OWNERSHIP.*

*The right to SOJOURN AND MOVEMENT.*

*The right to MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LIFE.*

*The right to GIVE HIS CHILDREN THE EDUCATION OF HIS CHOICE.*

*The right to ASSOCIATE WITH HIS FELLOW MEN.*

*These rights may never be taken away: THEY WERE GIVEN BY GOD.*

77. *The Church today preaches to a world filled with injustice, that justice must be done. She defends the workers from those who oppress them and deny them their rights.*" (Quoted from the Grail edition "*This is Justice*", No. 24-30 and No. 35-56).

#### **General Consequence Of These Rights**

78. It is not our purpose to explain in details the nature and extent of every one of these rights.

79. We may sum them up by saying that, according to the teachings of the Church, they all presuppose, as we have already found in the encyclical "*Quadragesimo Anno*", that every man irrespective of race is surely entitled to improve his conditions and standards of living and to develop and evolve his faculties to the best of his ability.

80. Surely, the Church cannot agree with a policy that would debar the Africans from evolving gradually towards full participation in the political, economic, industrial and cultural life of the Country, and from trying to reach the same standard of education and living conditions as any of the most developed races. Such a policy would simply be a denial of their fundamental rights as human persons. She cannot agree with any sort of discriminatory legislation that would in principle restrict the legitimate aspirations of the Africans.

81. We are aware that this promotion of the African people, which we have broadly outlined, is no easy task, nor one that can be achieved immediately. It will require

time. Above all it will require that Europeans do their best to help the Africans in their progressive promotion, as it will require that the Africans earnestly prepare themselves for the duties connected with the rights they hope to enjoy.

82. But, as the South African Bishops put it recently in a joint Pastoral: "this task can be made lighter by the prayers, good will, and co-operation of all who earnestly desire to see justice and peace reign in this Country, and who sincerely believe that it is a Christian duty to love one's neighbour as oneself."

83. However hard and long the process of this evolution may prove to be, the principle remains and cannot be changed: as the Africans acquire competence and qualifications in all spheres of activity, there cannot be any arbitrary limitation or restriction on their advancement. In the meantime, and until they acquire these necessary qualifications, they must be given all opportunities of developing themselves towards that goal, and they must themselves use the opportunities given to them to progress not only academically and technically but above all morally, becoming trustworthy and conscientious performers of their duties.

84. The advancement - both spiritual and temporal - of the Africans is the very reason why the Church has come to Africa and N. Rhodesia.

### **Some Practical Applications**

a) *The right of the Africans to be given the best educational opportunities.*

85. The Church has always held the view that in the process of the promotion of the African Society, education

was bound to be the very first and determining factor. Truly, she never varied in her determination to secure for the Africans of this territory the assurance that they would not be debarred from rising progressively to the same educational standards as the Europeans.

86. Long before Government had taken any step in the field of African Education, the Catholic Church had opened schools. Even now, one has to realise that almost 90% of the African schools are still in the hands of the various missionary societies, and that the Catholic Church herself holds a prominent place among the other denominations.

87. Long ago the Church made it her first aim to train a corps of qualified teachers who would spread literacy and knowledge among the Africans. One has to acknowledge the immense service she has rendered in this way to African Society.

88. Long ago, the Church realised that African education and advancement would not go very far unless girls were enabled to enjoy the same educational opportunities as boys. One cannot but admire the marvellous results she has reaped in the sphere of girls' education.

89. Right from the beginning of the Catholic Missions in this territory, the Church has kept a watchful eye on the whole educational ladder. Starting with Elementary Schools, she rose to Lower Middle Schools, and further on up to Upper Schools. She was not satisfied until she had secured on behalf of the Africans suitable opportunities for full secondary education.

90. Aware also of the great importance of technical education in an age of intensive industrial development, the Church was one of the very first agencies to give attention to Trades Schools for Africans.

91. Nowadays, the Catholic Church is eagerly looking forward to the day when education at University level will be available for a fairly large portion of the African *intelligentsia* on a basis of academic equality with the corresponding section of the European community.

92. That is why she so warmly welcomes the point made in the House of Commons on the 6th May by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, to the effect that "there must be a Central African University, providing university education of a sufficiently high standard to enable undergraduates to qualify locally at all levels equal to those obtainable at United Kingdom universities, and that this Central African university should be multi-racial, undergraduates of any race sharing the same teachers and undertaking the same courses on a foundation of academic equality."

*b) The so-called industrial colour bar.*

93. The part played by the Catholic Missions in N. Rhodesia in raising a category of African skilled workers can in no way be minimised. Long before the present system of Government Area schools for the formation and improvement of African artisans had been established, the Catholic Missions had taught many an African the elements of brick work and carpentry. Some years ago, as we have already said, she was one of the very first agencies to open African Junior Trade Schools, and there are even instances of her having run such schools at her own expense long before a scheme for technical education had been evolved by Government.

94. In this, as in the field of education, the Church has always held the view that, in as much as a certain category of Africans could attain the same skilful and professional

competence as Europeans, these Africans should not be debarred from the opportunities of rising, on a foundation to professional equality, to the same high levels in industry and commerce as European wage-earners.

95. In this respect, the Church holds the view that one of the most urgent tasks of the moment is to provide African industrial workers with all possible opportunities to develop to the full their professional capabilities and skill. This should be obtained both through efficient Trade Schools, and through an apprenticeship legislation, which would cater for the professional instruction of the African learner among industrial workers.

96. But, besides purely professional and manual ability, the Church rightly believed that a primary and essential factor in the industrial advancement of the Africans is for the latter to train themselves in such necessary qualities as professional *responsibility and conscientiousness, strict honesty, punctuality and steadiness at work, and the effort to do a job as well as possible* which are *the authentic characteristics of the skilled, conscientious and responsible worker*.

97. Granted these qualities of professional efficiency and conscientiousness on the part of the African workers, the Church proclaims, and will always proclaim, that discriminatory legislation basing access to certain higher types of industrial employment and levels on the sole grounds of colour is fundamentally unjust and an offence against the natural dignity of the Africans as human persons, and against their right to promotion. The definite view of the Church in this important matter is that promotion, access to skilled and responsible jobs, as well as rates of salaries, must not depend on the colour or race of the worker, but solely on his industrial efficiency and professional conscientiousness.

98. In close connection with this point, the Catholic Church in N. Rhodesia was pleased to hear that, on 5th May of this year, the four Copperbelt Mining Companies had approached the European Mineworkers Union, suggesting preliminary discussions between the Companies and the European Mineworkers Union on the question of the advancement of a progressive section of African Labour in the mining industry. In his proposal, the general manager of the Roan Antelope Mine put the question in the form: "I feel bound", he said, "to place on record my profound conviction that no satisfactory and harmonious industrial relations on the Copperbelt will not be attained unless or until effective steps have been taken to enable the African workers to advance to positions of greater responsibility and importance than those which are now open to them."

99. The general managers of the Rhokana Corporation, and of Nchanga Mine made virtually similar proposals to the effect that qualified Africans should be given better opportunities for promotion in the service of the Companies than those which they enjoy at the moment.

100. The Catholic Church in N. Rhodesia is anxiously waiting for a satisfactory acceptance by the European mineworkers of the proposals put up to them by the Mining Companies. Taking the liberty of quoting the words of His Grace Archbishop David Matthew, Apostolic Delegate, whose affection for the Africans is well known, we wish to say that "the question of providing a better opportunity in the Copperbelt for the African industrial worker is a matter that all missionaries in N. Rhodesia have much at heart," and that "it is our conviction that a move towards industrial equality would, if successfully carried out, do much to promote co-opera-

tion between the races for the peaceful development of this Country.”

*c) A just salary.*

101. Closely connected with the matter of professional promotion is the question of a just salary. We have already pointed out that the social encyclicals and messages issued by Pope Leo XIII, Pius XI and Pius XII have considered the question of wage as one “of great importance”, and given prominence to the right of every man, irrespective of race, to the necessities of life and to a decent living.

102. We do not want to be too long on this subject, and we will be content with summing up the points made in this regard by Pope Pius XI in the encyclical “QUADRAGESIMO ANNO”.

Pius XI solemnly proclaims:

- i) That “the wage paid to the workingman must be sufficient for the support of himself and of his family” (C.T.S. - Quadragesimo Anno - p. 32).
- ii) That, on the other hand, the rates of wages must be such as to allow the employing business firm or company to carry on and develop itself. It would indeed be “unjust to demand wages so high that an employer cannot pay them without ruin, and with consequent distress among the working people themselves”, since such a demand would reduce the firm or company to closing down, thus leaving a number of workers without employment and without the normal means of supporting themselves and their families. (C.ST. - Quadragesimo Anno - p. 33-34).

iii) That, "finally, the wage scale must be regulated with a view to the common good and welfare of the whole community", employers and employees alike. "All are aware that a scale of wages excessively high causes unemployment", because it makes the prices of the goods produced so high that only a few can afford to buy them, and consequently the production has to come to a standstill, and is forced to close down (ibid. p. 34 - 35).

Similarly, "all are aware that a scale of wages too low also causes unemployment", because the wage-earners - who form in every Country the largest section of the whole community - earning too little, cannot afford to buy the goods produced by the firm. Again, this means reduction of the production and consequently closing down of the business (ibid. p.35).

iv) That, if an employer, for one reason or another has not sufficient means to give all his employees such salaries as would correspond with the cost of living and enable them to support themselves and their families decently then he should take counsel whether the business ought to be discontinued, or whether he should not make up his mind to reduce the number of his workers so as to be in a position to pay a just salary to those he would retain in his employment.

103. As we have said, this is a difficult problem, because, besides involving the exigencies of strict justice, it also requires the common goodwill of all concerned - the goodwill of the employers in as much as they will not "lower the wages unduly with a view to private profit", -

the goodwill of the employees in as much as they will not claim excessively high wages disproportionate with the actual requirements of a decent living and with the local cost of living, in as much also as they will, by their professional efficiency and conscientiousness, endeavour to make the business prosperous.

104. In this respect, however, due attention being paid to the present living conditions of the Africans and their professional abilities, we think, with special regard to the wealthy mining companies employing African Labour in this Country, that an attempt should be made to reduce gradually the enormous margin differentiating the scale of wages of the Africans, and that of the Europeans, employed in the same industry.

105. The *employer* has a strict DUTY to pay his employees a just salary, to which corresponds his RIGHT to receive from the employee's efficient and conscientious work.

106. The *employee* on the other hand has a strict DUTY to give his employer efficient and conscientious work for which he has a RIGHT to a just salary.

*d) Rates of salaries of Mission employees.*

107. Finally, we would like to touch a point, which is of deep concern to us, as Ordinaries, and indeed to all missionaries and Lay Leaders of the N. Rhodesian Catholic Community. It is the question of the wages, which the Missions can afford to offer to their employees, whether these catechists, artisans or domestic servants.

108. Surely, there cannot be any comparison between the enormous resources of the various Government services, mining or trading companies, and the extremely poor means which the Missions have at their disposal - mostly

from the alms of overseas Catholics - for the maintenance and expansion of their apostolic activity and for the salaries of their employees.

109. It would also be unjust to the Mission not to take into serious consideration the fact that they are entirely and exclusively devoted - not for personal profit - but to the expansion of the Kingdom of God, and the furtherance of the spiritual and even temporal interests of the African population.

110. In this regard, we do appreciate the generous attitude of the majority of our flock who have, over so many years, willingly accepted to serve the Missions at rates of salaries much lower than those prevailing in Governmental, industrial or commercial concerns. In doing so, they have undoubtedly shown their esteem for the Missions, and expressed in concrete terms that they regard the missionaries really as their best friends, their spiritual fathers, and, so to speak, as close relatives of the African community. In doing so, they have to no small extent contributed to the marvellous development of the Catholic Church in N. Rhodesia, and we wish to express to them the sincere gratitude, which is owed them by God, the Church, and ourselves.

111. As Ordinaries of N. Rhodesia, entrusted by the Holy See with the work of extending more and more the influence and the benefits of the Catholic Faith among the Africans, we realise, more than anybody else, and every year more than the year before, the increasing expenditure which is attached to the development of the Catholic Missions. It is heart-rending for us to consider that lack of funds very often prevents the Church from undertaking new foundations or new activities which would be to the greatest spiritual, and even temporal and social, advan-

tage of the African community. With this in view, we will continue to appeal to the generosity of Africans for the increased financial support of the Church in N. Rhodesia. On behalf of Christ Himself, we will continue to cry out to them for donations, and to represent to them that it is one of their fundamental duties, as true children of the Catholic Church, to co-operate by their voluntary contributions in money with the voluntary work of love carried out among them by the missionaries.

112. It seems to us however that the time has come for a revision of the wage scales of our employees in order to bring them to a closer level with the wage scales prevailing elsewhere.

113. This aim cannot, of course, be achieved immediately. Careful study and prudent planning by those among us who are familiar with financial affairs will be required before the scheme can be successfully implemented. In no case, should imprudent and premature changes be allowed to endanger the maintenance and normal continuation of Mission work.

114. But none of us will deny that the Church has a great responsibility in matters of social justice. Does not Can.1524 stipulate that all those "concerned with the administration of the temporal property of the Church must assign a just and honest retribution to those in their employment and service"? It is true, the text of this article of Canon Law applies mostly to those employees of the Church whose work it is to look after the Church buildings and articles connected with the performance of sacred worship. But every one of us will agree that the clear understanding of the spirit shown forth in Can. 1524 demands that the same just and honest retribution be extended to all other servants of the Mission.

115. Such a scheme towards a better retribution of all Mission employees will indeed, most certainly, call for a certain reduction in our standard of living. Eventually cuts will have to be made in the use of commodities, which are not essential to life and health. Building construction and furniture will have, when ever possible, to be planned on a stricter basis of poverty. More could be said on this return to the apostolic rule of life ordained by Christ when He sent His apostles out to the conquest of souls, saying: "Go yee... Do not provide gold, or silver, or copper to fill your purse, nor a wallet for the journey, nor second coat nor spare shoes, or staff; the labourer has a right to his maintenance" (Mat. X, 6, 9-10).

116. Moreover, such a scheme towards a better retribution of all Mission employees will inevitably call for a rationalisation of the various branches in which the Mission employees labour. Instead, for instance, of two underpaid workers, it will be necessary to employ only one, but give him a proper salary. In this way shall we, not only comply with the demands of social justice, but also place those we will retain in the service of the Mission in a better position to develop their professional abilities and conscientiousness to a higher extent.

117. Surely it is more in accordance with the social principles of the Church, and more advantageous to the good name of the Catholic Church, now and later on, to give our employees an honest salary and then to ask them for a more substantial support of the Church than to pay them low salaries on the assumption that what we arbitrarily take away from their wages is but their supposed contribution to the work of the propagation of the faith.

Dear Missionaries and Members of the African Clergy. We come now to the end of this long letter.

118. We beg all of you to give its contents the greatest attention, and to listen to its considerations with that unfailing generosity which is the ideal of your vocation, and of which you give daily so many valuable examples.

119. Our only intention in writing this letter has been to help you in your apostolic work. The critical moments in which we live, command us all to put the interests of the Church, and her fulfilment of the doctrine, before any other consideration.

Thanking you for the high spirit with which you carry out the work of God,

We remain, dear Missionaries and Members of the African Clergy,

Yours devotedly in Christ,

The Catholic Ordinaries of N. Rhodesia.

April 1953

**JOINT PASTORAL LETTER  
OF THE CATHOLIC BISHOPS OF N. RHODESIA  
ADDRESSED  
TO THE CATHOLICS OF ALL RACES  
1958**

*Following their letter of 1953, the Bishops of Northern Rhodesia repeat their call for unity in the land. They qualify their earlier Statement on the non-partisanship of the Church by saying **the Church has a pastoral right and duty to speak out on social issues**. The Church has a right and duty to teach and guide Christians on social, economic, and political matters in as far as these touch the moral order. This is where the **authority of the Bishops to speak** comes from. They speak of the Church as the guardian of the moral order in society.*

Dear Beloved Brethren,

1. Before His passion and death Our Lord Jesus Christ prayed in a special way for unity among men. "Holy Father", He prayed, "keep them true to Thy Name, that they may be one, as we are one." (John 17:11). "That they may all be one; that they too may be one in us as Thou Father art in me, and I in Thee; so that the world may come to believe that it is Thou who hast sent me. And I have given them the privilege which Thou gavest to me, that they should all be one, as we are one; that while Thou art in me, I may be in them, and so they may be perfectly made one. So let the world know that it is Thou who hast sent me, and that Thou hast bestowed Thy love upon them, as Thou hast bestowed it upon me." (John 17:21-23).

2. The Church continually reminds her children of this prayer of our Divine Saviour for unity amongst men.

Accordingly it is with anxiety and solicitude that She witnesses instances of unhappy relationships between citizens of this Country, of the development of unhappy and ruinous divisions fomented by a totally erroneous emphasis on racial disparity.

3. We judge that the time has come for us, your Bishops, to speak to you on this grave matter of race relations. We address ourselves to you, Christians in communion with the Holy See, members of every race in Northern Rhodesia, in order to remind you of the basic Christian principles underlying all problems of a racial or other social nature, and to admonish and exhort you to carry out your individual and collective duty before Almighty God to do all in your power to bring about racial and social peace, the peace of Jesus Christ.

#### **The Authority And The Duty Of The Bishops To Speak**

4. It is unnecessary for us to prove our authority to instruct you in the context of social affairs. Our mandate is that the Church was ordered by Jesus Christ, her Founder, to "Go... preach the Gospel to the whole of creation". (Mark 16:15). Given this mandate the Church has the right and duty to teach and guide Christians not alone in purely religious matters but also in social, economic and political affairs in so far as they are connected with the moral order. There is only one moral law, and it is basic in every field of human activity be it religious, social, economic or political. The Church is the guardian of that law and states the principles concerned with it. It is for Governments and experts in each field to work out the concrete applications of these principles in every day life by legislation and by good custom. It is the duty of Christians to give their support only to those laws and

customs which do not contradict the guiding principles of the moral law.

We now address ourselves to the questions of race relations.

### **The Unity Of The Human Race**

5. One of the fundamental doctrines of the Church is that the *human race is one*. The fact of its oneness is not altered by any secondary difference, such as difference in colour, in the various families that compose the human race. The Church teaches that the whole human race is descended from Adam and Eve, and has therefore the same origin, the same nature, the same basic rights and duties and the same supernatural destiny.

6. Furthermore, the whole of mankind is united in a common brotherhood in Christ. St. Paul emphasised this truth when he wrote: "Through faith in Christ you are all now God's sons. All you who have been baptised in Christ's name have put on the Person of Christ; no more Jew or Gentile, no more slave and freeman, no more male and female; you are all one person in Jesus Christ" (Gal. 3:23-28). Again, in this first Epistle to the Corinthians (12:12-14), he writes: "A man's body is all one, though it has a number of different organs; and all this multitude of organs goes to make up one body; so it is with Christ. We too, all of us, have been baptised into a single body by the power of a single Spirit, Jews and Greeks, slaves and freemen alike; we have all been given drink at a single source, the one Spirit." Our Holy Father the Pope, in his Encyclical Letter "Mystici Corporis," remarks "in the Mystical Body there is a supernatural bond of unity existing and active in the whole body and in each and every part of it... This bond of unity is infinite and uncreated; it

is the Holy Spirit, Who numerically one and the same, fills and unifies the Whole Church," Our Holy Father goes on to point out that as we all are of the same origin and of the same Mystical Body of Christ - we have the same supernatural destiny - eternal happiness in heaven.

7. We wish to make it clear that we recall this truth of the essential oneness of the human family for the benefit of all sections of our flock, and not of one section only. We appeal to all Catholics to think and speak and act in conformity with their belief in the unity of mankind, and not to pay exaggerated attention to accidental differences within the human family particularly to colour difference.

#### **All Men Enjoy The Same Human Rights**

8. Since the human race is essentially one, all men possess the same basic human rights. The Church declares that God gave every man certain rights when He gave him a soul. Among these rights the following are relevant:

- The right to life and bodily integrity.
- The right to the necessities of life and to a decent living.
- The right to worship.
- The right to normal development
- The right to private property and ownership.
- The right to sojourn and movement.
- The right to marriage and to family life.
- The right to give his children the education of his choice.
- The right to associate with his fellow men.

9. Man cannot live in society or freely enjoy his rights unless he does his duty towards society and respects the rights of his fellow men. Thus, if a man fails to do his duty or fails to respects the rights of others he may be compelled to do so by society acting through its lawfully

established courts of justice. It is the role of properly constituted authority called Government to regulate the use of human rights so as to protect the rights of each individual and of the whole community, but it can never arbitrarily take away the basic rights which every person enjoys, no matter what that person's social, economic or educational standing is.

10. We realise that it is not an easy task to reconcile the rights of each group in a Country like Northern Rhodesia, the population of which is composed of peoples who differ in many respects. But the differences are often wilfully exaggerated, and the adjustment of allegedly conflicting rights is often unjustly delayed, with the results that bitterness is caused and divisions grow between people who can and should form one harmonious Nation. What is needed - and urgently - is the spirit of Christian goodwill to permeate all the peoples of the Territory, and the determination to see justice done by the active support of other's rights as well as one's own.

### **Corresponding Duties**

11. As well as claiming rights, men must accept and fulfil their duties. Unfortunately, in Northern Rhodesia today, there is sometimes too much emphasis laid on rights, and too little on duties.

12. One of the primary duties of every man is to exercise the virtue of justice, which means to respect and to grant the rights of others. Sometimes it is said that it would be dangerous to grant every man the full and equal exercise of his rights, on the grounds that all men are not equally able to fulfil their duties to society. This fear is sometimes expressed especially in respect of one particular race. By applying uncritically this argument to one

race, we may be guilty of an act of injustice to many members of the race who are fully able and willing to realise their responsibilities.

13. There is the further duty of every man to love all other men. This is part of the first and most important commandment given to us by Our Lord Jesus Christ: *"I have a new a commandment to give you, that you are to love one another; that your love for one another is to be like the love I have borne you. The mark by which all men know you for my disciples will be the love you bear one another."* (John 13:34-35). There are few words more misunderstood than the words "charity" or "love". Christian love is not the emotion we feel towards those who are dear to us; it consists in wishing our fellow men well and in taking genuine and active interest in their spiritual and material welfare. It is not alone hatred, which is contrary to the laws of Christian charity but also indifference to the welfare of our neighbour. In this Territory the commandment of love is violated by those who in their political, social or professional activities aim at the welfare of their own section of the community with little or no regard for the welfare of other groups. It would be hypocrisy to claim that we stand for Christian civilisation if we ignore one half of the most important commandment of Christ, viz. to love our neighbour - all neighbours - as ourselves.

14. Let us recall the characteristics of charity according to St. Paul: "Charity is patient, is kind; charity feels no envy; charity is never perverse or proud, never insolent; does not claim its rights, cannot be provoked, does not brood over an injury, takes no pleasure in wrong-doing, but rejoices at the victory of truth." (1 Cor. 13:4-6)

15. For that reason the Church, speaking as the voice of Almighty God, condemns all words or actions calculated

to arouse ill feeling, for these violate the special commandment of Jesus Christ that we love every other human being whatever be his colour, his standard of culture or his social position.

16. We warn all Catholics against falling into the snares of the apostles of hatred "who come to you in sheep's clothing, but are ravenous wolves within" (Matt. 7:15), and who under the cloak of love for one group preach hatred or contempt of another. Those who have attained a higher standard of culture are not only forbidden by Jesus Christ to despise their less-cultured brethren or to deny them the right and means to attain to a higher culture, but they are obliged to help them to attain to that position even if this demands sacrifices on their part. On the other hand, the under-privileged must also be reminded that hatred of those who are better off is a grave sin against the first and most important commandment. Envy is a sin, and it is not by envying others but chiefly by one's own steady effort that one reaches a higher standard of living.

17. Pope Pius XII warns against the apostle of hatred in his Encyclical Letter "Fidei Donum", saying "We know that atheistic materialism has spread its virus of division, alas, throughout various regions of Africa, stirring up passions, making peoples and races rise against one another, making use of real difficulties to seduce minds with easy mirages or to sow rebellion in their hearts. In our solicitude for the genuine human and Christian progress of the people of Africa, we wish to renew here in their regard the grave and solemn admonition which we have already addressed to the Catholics of the whole world on this subject".

**Northern Rhodesia As A Multi-Racial Society**

18. The most ardent desire of your Bishops is to see Northern Rhodesia develop into a happy, prosperous harmonious Country.

19. A Multi-racial society can exist only where the different groups are permitted to live together in harmony, to co-operate in schemes for the common good, and to share the same political, social, educational, professional and cultural facilities. Then, and only then, can there be common interests and National unity.

20. Nothing short of this concept of a Multi-racial society will have the approval of the Catholic Church, because it is the only system which will safeguard the requirements of human dignity and secure equality in human rights for all its citizens, thus helping the less developed towards the same levels as the others in public and professional life. The mere physical juxtaposition of African, European and Asian zones is but a perversion of the term: "multi-racial society", and it cannot build up a society or Nation. There is no multi-racial society as long as the various section of the population are compelled to live segregated from each other. Some barriers may have been justified in the past. They are no longer justified today. If any barrier has to be retained its only justification should be the common good; it should not be erected for the benefit of one section alone of the people.

21. We are fully aware of the difficulties of moulding into one multi-racial society a community like ours where there are so many and such great differences between the component groups. Some differences between men always exist; absolute equality among men, and a classless society, as preached by Marxian Communism, are

impossible of attainment. But we reject the classification of persons on the ground of colour, with the intention of keeping people of one colour in an inferior position, of another colour in a superior one.

22. We disapprove of any attempts to delay the process of bringing the less developed sections of the community up to the level of the more developed. It is the duty of society especially in a Country such as ours where large sections of the people are living in less developed conditions, to make every effort to raise these as quickly as possible to a higher material and moral level. And on their part, the underprivileged must bear in mind that it is their duty to the community to have a sincere desire to improve their present conditions, and they must realise that it is mainly through their own work and effort that this should be achieved. In proportion to their effort it is the duty of the community - and indeed we would say one of its first duties - to improve the living conditions of those of its underprivileged fellow citizens.

23. The people of Northern Rhodesia, like every human society must have their laws and regulations. As individuals are bound by the laws of justice and charity, so also are the organs of the State. The aim of laws must be the good of the whole community and not merely the good of any one section. We would like to see policy and legislation in Northern Rhodesia based more on the human race than on the secondary differences between the sections, which inhabit it. We warn all Catholics that they cannot reconcile with their Catholic conscience any tendency to introduce legislation, which would secure the rights of one section of the community by curtailing the rights of others, especially those rights which we enumerated previously.

24. We call upon the faithful of all races to do every thing in their power to help build a happy and harmonious society in Northern Rhodesia. If any Country is to enjoy Christian order and to set an example of Christian brotherhood and co-operation to a world torn in so many places by racial and social strife, none of its Catholics may sit idle. They represent a large part of its population. Firmly united to their Bishops and Clergy, and supported by an elite of Catholics of all races well instructed in this doctrine of the Church, they must make this doctrine heard in all spheres of public, social and professional life. Thus they will share in the building up of a Christian order in this our Country. If they fail to do so, they will open the door to the manifold evils, which have befallen those countries which have rejected Christian principles.

25. In his Encyclical "Fidei Donum" already quoted our Holy Father the Pope writes: "The majority of these (African) territories are going through a phase of social, economic and political evolution which is full of consequences for their future. We express our wish that a task of constructive collaboration may be carried out in Africa, a collaboration free of prejudice and mutual sensitiveness, preserved from the seductions and strictures of false Nationalism and capable of extending to these people rich in resources and prospects, the true values of Christian civilisation, which have already borne so many fruits in other continents."

26. "May God the author of all endurance and all encouragement, enable you to be all of one mind according to the mind of Christ Jesus "(Rom. 15:5). By keeping this thought always in our minds, we will all, regardless of our race, render to this Country the invaluable service of helping it to become a worthy State built on justice, charity, liberty and unity.

Given in Lusaka, on the Feast of the Epiphany, 6th January,  
1958

Signed:

FRANCIS MAZZIERI, OFM. Conv.	Bishop and Vicar Apostolic of Ndola
MARCEL DAUBECHIES, W.F.	Bishop and Vicar Apostolic of Kasama
TIMOTHY PHELIM O'SHEA, OFM.Cap	Bishop and Vicar Apostolic of Livingstone
FIRMIN COURTEMANCHE, W.F.	Bishop and vicar Apostolic of Fort Jameson.
ADAM KOZLOWIECKI, S.J.	Bishop and Vicar Apostolic of Lusaka.
RENE PAILLOUX, W.F.	Perfect Apostolic of Fort Rosebery.,
A. FURSTENBERG, W.F	Vicar Delegate of Abercorn Vicariate.

## THE FIRST REPUBLIC 1964 - 1972



.... A period of economic boom and accelerated national infrastructure development.

**STATEMENT FROM THE  
CATHOLIC BISHOPS' OF ZAMBIA  
TO MARK  
ZAMBIA'S INDEPENDENCE DAY  
24th October 1964**



*In their pastoral letter of 1953 and 1958, the Catholic Bishops called upon the colonial administration to respect the rights of people of the land, the Africans. They demanded that the people had a right to participate fully in the affairs affecting their land. It is in this light that one should read the Bishops' Pastoral Statement to mark Zambia's Independence Day. With great expectations at the birth of this new Nation, the bishops reminded the people that independence was not an end in itself but a call to hard work. Development, in the eyes of the Bishops, depended on the desire of all citizens to work in solidarity with each other. In this sense, the Bishops called upon all Catholics to be "shining examples" of selflessness and hard work in contributing to the well being of the Country.*

1. On this day when a new flag flutters all over the Country and the new Nation of Zambia joins the community of free Nations, the Bishops of the Catholic Church in Zambia wish to say a few words to their children in Christ.

2. We rejoice with you today and we give thanks to God for the Independence of Zambia. We believe that a great future lies before the people of our Country. We are confident that the same enthusiasm and energy expended in the struggle for Independence will now be directed towards the building up of a great Nation.

3. Today we are celebrating the birth of a Nation. Now, birth is only a beginning. After birth come the difficulties of growth and further development. There was a time when some people thought that when the great goal of Independence was reached, everything would be different immediately; that poverty, disease, ignorance, would in some wonderful fashion disappear. No one any longer thinks this way and the leaders of the Country have made it clear that Independence is not a magic medicine to cure all ills, but an incentive and a call to work, to dedication and service.

4. The Church encourages her children to look with confidence and hope to the future. But looking will not be enough. Nor will talking be enough. We must make our future. When the people of God in the Old Testament times reached the Promised Land, their lives did not suddenly become easy; they had to work hard for many years before 'the milk and honey' appeared.

5. Everyone in this Country too, should be ready to exert himself. In particular Catholics should set a shining example of dedication and self-giving. Let them remember that when the Son of God came on earth, He came to

serve others. Let us ever remember and try to follow his example of service.

6. There are still some people who think that they are entitled to obtain all they can for themselves, from the Government, the Church, and from whatever Associations they belong to. Such people may hope that after Independence there will be less work and more money and leisure. But such people will benefit their Country in nothing.

7. Zambia needs for the making of its future greatness not getters but givers; people who will be willing and even eager to give of their time, strength and all their energy to their work. Our Lord said: "it is a more blessed thing to give than to receive". It is to be hoped that all Catholics will likewise give themselves in service to their Country and their people. This is the only way by which better conditions of living will be achieved for all the people; only then will poverty, disease and ignorance be controlled.

8. Let no one say: Others can do the work; I will not exert myself. The Country needs the help of every man and woman. What a single ant brings to the anthill is very little; but see what a great hill is built when each one does his proper share of the work. So it is also with us: we will achieve much if we realize our responsibilities and do each his own part of the work.

9. It is also necessary to remind our people that they must cooperate well with others. See how well the ploughing goes when the oxen work well together as a team. If they don't pull together, see how much time is lost trying to control them. In this Country there are people belonging to different tribes, races and religions. It is essential for the good of all that they work together for the common good. When men work together in this way, there is progress.

When men think only of themselves and their own particular group, then there is division and frustration.

10. We must work to make our Country great. But we must not expect the impossible. This world is a valley of tears; it is not our permanent home. Our Lord has warned us not to lay up treasure where the rust and the moth consume. St Paul says: "we have an everlasting city, but not here; our goal is the city that is one day to be" When we look at the other countries of the world, even the prosperous ones, we see that an earthly Paradise is not possible in the present condition of man.

11. Certainly, every Catholic should be in the forefront of those who strive by all human means to improve the material condition of his fellow citizens; this is plain common sense but he does this in the full awareness that he will not and cannot fully succeed. Remembering this he will not throw up his hands in despair when his efforts do not achieve the success he dreamed of. In spite of the disappointments, he will continue in his efforts to achieve the limited success that is the best that can be done.

12. Lastly we must not omit to pray on this day and on all the days that are to come, for the blessing of God on our Country and on our efforts towards betterment. The Bible says: Vain is the builder's toil if the house is not of the Lord's building; vainly the guards keep watch, if the city has not the Lord for its Guardian. (Ps 127:1) Let us not be dazzled by the material advancement that we all hope for. May the good things that the Lord has made and that He has allowed men to make, bring us ever closer to Himself. The knowledge and the love of God are the greatest treasures any people can possess.

13. And the Bishops recited the following National Prayer:

*O God, the Father of all people of the earth, look with favour on us and hear the prayer we make for our Country.*

*Bless all of us with a Father's blessing as you blessed Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Bless all the races and tribes of our land as you blessed the twelve tribes of Israel.*

*Deliver us from all evil as you delivered the Israelites in the desert from their enemies.*

*Heal our misunderstandings and teach us to love one another as your Son Jesus taught us to love. Give wisdom to our rulers and a spirit of obedience and loyalty to all our people.*

*We seek your Fatherly guidance especially for our young men and women upon whom the future depends. We pray for all those who have not yet heard the Good News brought to us by your Son, Jesus.*

*Bless the work of our hands and make it fruitful so that our Country may deserve an honoured place among the family of Nations; and while we dedicate ourselves to the service of our Motherland here upon earth, help us to keep constantly in mind that other Home which you, our good Father, have prepared for all of us in Heaven, Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.*

The Catholic Bishops of Zambia  
24th October 1964

## DECLARATION ON ABORTION

1972

*This declaration was issued as a reaction to the enactment of Termination of Pregnancy Act of 1972, which amended the Penal Code concerning the law of abortion. The Act permitted abortion under various circumstances a move that the Catholic bishops of Zambia saw as going against the Church's teaching. The intention of the Declaration was to "remind the Catholic community in Zambia of the unchanging law of the Catholic Church on abortion." Therefore it was directed to the Catholic community rather than to the wider society. The reason being that the objections voiced by the Catholic community before the Act was enacted were ignored by Parliament. Thus the Declaration wanted to state that the fact that abortion was legalised under certain circumstances did not mean that it is acceptable. Catholics have to distinguish between law and morality. In practice Catholics should invoke the conscience clause contained in the Act so that they are not forced to participate in the procurement of abortion.*

1. The recent enactment of the Termination of Pregnancy Act 1972 affords an occasion to the Catholic Bishops of Zambia to remind the Catholic community in Zambia of the unchanging doctrine of the Catholic Church on abortion.

2. This doctrine is very simply stated. Abortion is the deliberate killing of a non-viable unborn child. Abortion is morally wrong. Regardless of the reasons that lead to abortion, or the circumstances attending it; whether it is performed in a hospital, in a clinic or secretly, abortion is evil and nothing can make it good.

3. In repeating this basic condemnation of abortion, the Catholic Bishops of Zambia speak as the spiritual pastors of

their community but they are convinced that they do not speak alone; their voice is joined to that of the leadership of other Christian Churches in condemning abortion. They find the basis for their position, as other Christian Churches do, in the Biblical command "thou shalt not kill", and in the reasoned arguments of contemporary moralists, Catholic and non Catholic.

#### **Distinguish Civil Law And Catholic Morality**

4. Thus it can be and should be clearly understood that the legalisation of abortion under certain circumstances by the civil authority does not in any way make the act of abortion any more acceptable to the Catholic Church. No matter what arguments, medical or social, are adduced, no matter what precautions or provisions are laid down to surround the act of abortion with safeguards, the Catholic Church cannot accept them as making the performance of abortion morally good.

5. It is necessary to state this doctrine clearly and without ambiguity because in modern times quite a substantial number of people have allowed themselves to be swayed by allegedly good reasons into condoning abortion. Such reasons are risk to the life of the pregnant woman, risk of injury to the physical or mental health of a pregnant woman, and the risk that the unborn child might be physically or mentally abnormal or seriously handicapped. Some people even think that the Catholic Church accepts these reasons as adequate and valid reasons for the performance of abortion, or as they prefer to call it, the termination of pregnancy.

#### ***Legal reasons unacceptable to Catholic teaching***

6. We, the Catholic Bishops of Zambia, would like to

take this opportunity unequivocally and clearly to state that none of the reasons are acceptable to Catholic teaching as valid reasons for performing abortion and killing human life. We maintain, and we know that in medical circles it is an admitted fact, that abortion is never a necessary means of saving the pregnant mother's life. Cases of pregnancy with heart, lung and kidney complications which were formerly regarded as necessitating therapeutic abortion are now carried through to term or at least to viability and in most cases result in an improved physical condition of the mother.

7. The mere risk of injury to the physical or mental health of the pregnant woman or that of her existing children is not an adequate or valid reason for the taking of the life of the unborn child. Similarly, medical science with all its modern developments is still unable with certainty to predict that a non-viable unborn child will be seriously handicapped by physical or mental abnormalities. Even if it were possible to predict this state with certainty it would still not be accepted by the Catholic Church as an adequate and valid reason for performing an abortion.

8. To those who are carried away by arguments such as the above, the position of the Catholic Church appears to be intransigent if not fanatical.

9. The Catholic Church however is perfectly willing and ready to have such epithets hurled at her in maintaining a position, which sets the value of the life of a human being, the life of the unborn infant, above other values and considerations.

*The transcendent value of the human person*

10. As Catholics, we have a special commitment to the dignity of man. We believe that man has a special sacred-

ness because he lives his life in God's presence and is the recipient of God's special care and has an eternal destiny. Jesus Christ did not die for an abstraction like 'humanity' or 'mankind'. On His own admission, He died for his friends and this friendship extends to every person. He emphasised the special personal character of His Love. He is the good shepherd who will leave the ninety-nine in the desert to go in search of the one who is lost. And so we Catholics are reinforced in our conviction of the transcendence of the value of the human person.

11. Abortion is unacceptable because it is wrong and evil. Abortion is evil because it involves the taking of an innocent human being's life and subordinates that individual to society. It is total subordination because it involves the forced death of the individual for the benefit of society. And that is an inversion of values. Society is for man not man for society. For the good of our grand children we cannot agree that we must kill our children.

#### *Evidence of erosion of Moral Principles*

12. We are saddened by the erosion of moral principles which is evident in society today and we deplore the acceptance of the principle that material welfare, convenience or unwillingness to do one's duty make it lawful to do away with a human life.

13. We realise that abortion is often advocated from a mistaken sense of compassion, from a desire to redress or reduce social evils, from a concern about the quality of life, which the as yet unborn will have to face. Nevertheless, in fact one might say precisely because of the strong emotive content of such arguments, it is necessary to maintain the principle of the unique sacredness of human life.

14. We have refrained until now from making this pronouncement and declaration on the termination of Pregnancy Act 1972 because we had, privately and in an unpublicised manner, made representations in the hope that the legislation would not be enacted. Now that the Act has become law we can no longer delay the expectations of the Catholic community of Zambia by withholding this present declaration. We trust that we shall be supported in our stand on the sacredness of unborn human life by all who profess their faith in Jesus Christ.

*Catholics' duty to invoke the conscience clause*

15. We wish to point out to all Catholics, including particularly those in the medical and allied professions, that it is their bounden duty to invoke the Conscience Clause of the Termination of Pregnancy Act in the case of any attempt being made to compel them to participate in any treatment, either to themselves or others, authorised by this Act.

16. We believe that the provisions of the Termination of Pregnancy Act 1972, which allows for the legal performance of abortion under certain circumstances, are so widely open to abuse that its introduction to Zambia is bound to have fearful repercussions.

17. We direct that this **DECLARATION ON ABORTION** should be studied and discussed at Parish level in all the Catholic communities of Zambia with a view to informing them of the Church's position on Abortion. We would hope that as a result of this deeper understanding all those who honour and respect human life will work towards the repeal of the Termination of Pregnancy Act 1972.

## Signed:

Bishop M.J. Mazombwe	Bishop of Chipata
Archbishop E. Milingo	Archbishop of Lusaka
Archbishop C. Chabukasansha	Archbishop of Kasama
Bishop T.P. O'Shea, O.F.M.Cap	Bishop of Livingstone
Bishop A Furstenberg, W.F.	Bishop of Mbala
Bishop J. Corboy, S.J.	Bishop of Monze
Bishop N. Agnozzi, O.F.M.Conv.	Bishop of Ndola
Bishop E. Mutale	Bishop of Mansa
Mgr A. Potani, O.F.M.Conv.	Prefect Apostolic of Solwezi
Archbishop A. Kozlowiecki, S.J.	Archbishop Emeritus of Lusaka
Bishop F. Mazzieri, O.F.M.Conv.	Bishop Emeritus of Ndola

12th November 1972

## THE SECOND REPUBLIC 1972 - 1991



.... A time of deep economic problems, characterised by endless queues for essential commodities.

**PASTORAL LETTER OF  
THE CATHOLIC BISHOPS OF ZAMBIA  
On the Occasion of the  
10<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF INDEPENDENCE  
24th October 1974**

*Filled with the spirit of the Second Vatican Council, the Bishops of Zambia encouraged the members of the Church to cooperate with the Government in promoting the social welfare of all citizens. Looking back at the decade since Independence, the Bishops judge that the economy and development of Zambia have grown and prospered year by year. They admit that there are difficulties but their judgement in general endorses the direction the Government has taken and specifically applauds the reconciliation and unity brought about by the establishment of a one-party State and recommends the philosophy of Zambian Humanism as a guide to life and conduct. Virtues — honesty, thrift, industry, sobriety — plus social concern are urged as the foundation for the future. It is noteworthy that although the Bishops see no opposition between professional and social activities and the religious life of good Catholics, they do not specifically urge Church members to be politically involved as a way of promoting justice.*

1. We, the Catholic Bishops of Zambia, on this joyful occasion of the 10th Anniversary of Zambia's Independence, address our fraternal greetings and congratulations to His Excellency The President of Zambia, Dr. K. Kaunda, to the Central Committee of UNIP to the Government of Zambia, to all Catholics and to all Zambians of good will.

2. We recall that on the attainment of Zambia's Independence in 1964 we expressed the hope and prayer that God would guide our new-born Nation along the paths of peace, justice, and co-operation in the development of all the material and spiritual resources of the people of Zambia.

3. It is with a sense of deep gratitude that we recall the great kindness with which God has blessed this Country and its people over the past ten years. We have been blessed with a sincere and dedicated leadership that has given Zambia a decade of out-standing political stability. The economy and development of Zambia has grown and prospered year by year. In spite of difficulties from outside and inside Zambia the goal of a genuine inter-racial and non-tribal society has been pursued with unremitting adherence to the highest principles of justice and charity and respect for the dignity of man as the summit of God's creation.

4. As leaders of the flock that Christ has committed to our charge we rejoice in the fact that the Catholic Church in Zambia, of which we are but the servants, has made a significant contribution to the work of building up this new Nation in accordance with the new inspiration given by the Second Vatican Council:-

5. "This Council looks with great respect upon the true, good, and just elements found in the very wide variety of institutions which the human race has established for itself and continues to establish. The Council affirms, moreover, that the Church is willing to assist and promote all these institutions to the extent that such a service depends on her and can be associated with her mission. She has no keener desire than that, in pursuit of the welfare of all, she may be able to develop herself freely under any kind of Government which grants recognition to the basic rights of person and family and to the demands of the common good.<sup>15</sup>

---

15 Pastoral constitution on the Church in the Modern World, Art. 42.

6. Therefore, let there be no false opposition between professional and social activities on the one part, and religious life on the other. The Christian who neglects his temporal duties neglects his duties towards his neighbour and even God, and jeopardizes his eternal salvation.

Christians should rather rejoice that they can follow the example of Christ, who worked as an artisan. In the exercise of all their earthly activities, they can thereby gather their humane, domestic, professional, social, and technical enterprises into one vital synthesis with religious values, under whose supreme direction all things are harmonized unto God's glory."<sup>16</sup>

7. During the past ten years the Catholic Church in Zambia has more than ever before involved herself in the service of the Zambian Nation in the fields of education both secondary and primary, in medical and paramedical activities, in the development and support of Credit Unions, Co-operatives and Savings Societies, in promoting the involvement of the laity in social works and in agricultural projects. We are grateful that no mean measure of success has attended these efforts, which were carried out in concert and with the support of Government Ministries and Departments.

8. We rejoice also in the fact that during the past ten years the fundamental mission of the Church has seen spectacular development in the Zambianisation of the Hierarchy of the Church and the placing of responsibility for its guidance in the hands of the sons and daughters of Zambia. Similarly great progress is reported in the area of the constitution of Church Councils composed of Zambian laymen and women, the development of the National Council of the Lay Apostolate and the promotion of genuine indigenous forms

---

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, Art. 43.

of worship in the Liturgy. More recently we have cause to rejoice in the fact that the highest institution for the formation of priests has been sited in Zambia and plans are well on the way for the establishment of a National Seminary in Lusaka. We hope that in due time this institution will become associated with the University of Zambia to demonstrate the mutual development and interdependence of the sacred and secular sciences.

9. We wish to record our joy and appreciation development in co-operation with other Christian Churches in Zambia in common enterprises in the fields of communications, medical services, social works, community development, and in producing a joint syllabus for Religious Education for both primary and secondary schools, and we trust that these common endeavours on the part of the Churches will continue to have the support and encouragement of the State.

10. As we enter upon the second decade of Independence we are in the midst of celebrating a Holy Year whose theme is reconciliation. We applaud the measures which have been taken by His Excellency the President of Zambia in bringing about the reconciliation necessary for the establishment in Zambia of a One-Party State for we realise that the unity of the Nation is of paramount importance. The Party and the Government have repeatedly emphasised the important role that the Church has to play in the affairs of the Nation, and the Church for her part accepts the duty and responsibility of instilling into the members of her flock a basic concern for reconciliation, unity and justice not only on the National level but also in the international sphere.

11. "While helping the world and receiving many benefits from it, the Church has a single intention: that God's

kingdom may come, and that the salvation of the whole human race may come to pass. For every benefit which the People of God during its earthly pilgrimage can offer to the human family stems from the fact that the Church is "the universal sacrament of salvation" simultaneously maintaining and exercising the mystery of God's love for man."<sup>17</sup>

12. In their proper sphere the political community and the Church are mutually independent and self-governing although, by a different title, each serves the personal and social vocation of the same human beings. The Church is committed always and everywhere to preach the faith with true freedom, to teach her social doctrine and to discharge her duty among men. She maintains her right to pass judgement on moral issues, whenever basic rights make such judgements necessary, for it is her task to uncover, cherish and ennoble all that is true, good and beautiful in the human community.

13. We thank God that here in Zambia both the State and the Church work in wholesome mutual cooperation and thus can render service more effectively for the good of all.

14. We recommend to all our flock the study and practice of the philosophy of *Zambian Humanism*, which is proposed for the direction of the lives and conduct of the people of Zambia. Today, especially under the impact of industrialisation, urbanisation, migration and technological developments, where the survival motive is no longer paramount, it requires an unselfish motivation for its practice, which can be provided only by Christian ideals.

---

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid* Art. 45.

15. The mission of the Church is to preach the meaning of man's life in the light of the life and example of Christ. "The image of the invisible God" (Col. 1:15), the perfect man, who, by the revelation of the mystery of God the Father and his love, fully reveals man to man himself and makes his supreme calling clear. "By manifesting Christ, the Church reveals to men the real truth of their condition and their total vocation. For Christ is the source and model of that renewed humanity, penetrated with brotherly love, sincerity, and a peaceful spirit, to which all aspire."<sup>18</sup>

16. We are only too keenly aware that our society is not liberated from the many ills listed by St. Paul as the works of the flesh - "immorality, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, dissension, party spirit, envy, drunkenness, carousing and the like" (Gal. 5: 19-21).

17. It is our earnest desire and prayer that all Catholics in Zambia and all who profess to be followers of Christ should on this joyful occasion renew their dedication to the commitment of Christian living and become a leaven within our society. We propose to all the summary of the Law of Christ "You shall love your neighbour as yourself" and we trust and pray that all will be imbued by the gifts of the Spirit and live together in "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control." (Gal 5: 22, 23)

18. The most ardent desire of the Church is to contribute to the strengthening of the moral fibre of the Nation by the incessant preaching of the virtues of honesty, thrift, indus-

---

<sup>18</sup> Decree on the Missionary activity of the Church, Art. 8.

try, sobriety and the development of social concern for one's neighbour. On these virtues we may hope to build a strong mature and noble Nation.

19. We address ourselves, especially, to Christian parents and the youth of our Country with an appeal to them to give grave consideration to the need for a great increase in the number of Zambian priests brothers and sisters. We call on them to come forward and offer themselves in ever-growing numbers to embrace the ministry and consolidate the Church in Zambia.

20. Finally we call God's blessings on all our beloved people and pray that under His guiding providence Zambia will continue to prosper materially while remaining faithful to the assurance of Christ that if we seek first the kingdom of God all other things shall be added to us.

24<sup>th</sup> October, 1974

Catholic Bishops of Zambia

+ Emmanuel Milingo,	Archbishop of Lusaka.
+ Elias Mutale,	Archbishop of Kasama.
+ Medardo J. Mazombwe,	Bishop of Chipata, Chairman
+ Timothy P. O'Shea, OFM Cap.	Bishop of Mbala.
+ James Corboy, S.J.	Bishop of Monze.
+ Nicholas Agnozzi, OFM Conv.	Bishop of Ndola.
+ James Spaita,	Bishop of Mansa
Mgr. Abdon Potani, OFM Conv.	Prefect Apostolic of Solwezi.

---

**NATIONAL PRAYER**

*O God, Father of all the peoples of the earth  
Look with favour on us,  
And hear the prayer we make for our Country.  
Bless all of us with a Father's blessing as you blessed Abraham,  
Isaac and Jacob  
Bless all the races and tribes of our land as you blessed the  
Twelve Tribes of Israel.  
Deliver us from all evil as you delivered the Israelites in the  
desert from their enemies.  
Heal our misunderstandings and teach us to love one another.  
Give wisdom to our rulers, as Your Son, Jesus, taught us to love;  
And the spirit of obedience and loyalty to all our people.  
We ask Your Fatherly guidance especially for our young men  
and women upon whom the future depends.  
We pray for all those who have not yet heard the Good News  
brought to us by Your Son, Jesus. Bless the work of our hands  
and, make it fruitful so that our Country may deserve an  
honoured place among the Nations;  
And while we dedicate ourselves to the service of our Motherland  
here on earth  
Help us to keep constantly in mind that other home  
Which you, Our Good Father, have prepared, for all of us in  
Heaven.  
Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.*

## ZAMBIA EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE LETTER TO ALL CATHOLICS

1976

*This letter came at the time when a weakened Zambian economy was beginning to affect many Zambians. The letter first describes the causes of the weak economy. Among these causes are, (the result of) the solidarity, of (which) the people of Zambia (had made) for the people in neighbouring countries who were fighting for freedom and justice; worldwide economic problems and the internal problem of the unfair distribution of wealth in Zambia.*

*The Letter calls on all Catholics to see this as an opportunity to build a society based on justice and brotherhood. In this society each would be the concern of all and special attention would be paid to the needs of the weak and poor. To do this the Letter proposes the following: 1) get rid of selfishness and greed in order that others may have the necessities of life; 2) look at the problem of justice in our society; 3) not to rely on violent means of resolving the disputes that may occur in the Country, because violence leads to greater sufferings than the ones it was supposed to remove.*

*The letter singles out two issues that it sees as being of great National importance: abortion and educational reforms. On abortion it states that it is a crime and a great injustice because it takes away the right to life. On educational reforms it states that the principles on which they are based are in keeping with the Gospel. It therefore calls on all Catholics to collaborate in translating them into practice. This means taking part in the debate and the process of syllabus making and constructive criticism.*

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

1. At this time when our Country is passing through great difficulties we think of suggesting to you what is called for by our Christian commitment.

2. The Holy Father has recently reminded us that it is not enough to proclaim Christ and celebrate the Sacraments. As Christians we are sent to bring the Good News to every part of human life. (Message on Evangelisation, Pr. 17:8). We now ask what contribution we can make to life in Zambia today so that our presence and our action really become "Good News" for our fellow-citizens.

3. The political situation in Southern Africa together with worldwide economic problems have produced a real crisis in our economy with no little inconvenience for individuals in their daily lives. We have only to think of the effect of closing our southern border and of the war in Angola on the export of copper and the import of essential supplies. Worldwide inflation is reflected in the increased cost of living. It has been found necessary to devalue the Kwacha.

4. Many of the sacrifices we are called to make cannot be avoided. Others have been accepted in solidarity with those who are struggling for freedom and justice. We may see in them an invitation to take up our cross daily and follow Our Lord. (Matt. 16:24).

5. This is surely a time for stirring up our sense of National purpose. Was the achievement of Independence only a chance for us to scramble and see who could have the most? Or was it an opportunity to work out our own destiny as free men, to build together a society based on justice and brotherhood, where each would be the

concern of all and special attention would be paid to the needs of the weak and poor?

6. In this case, let us remember that "he who loses his life will find it".(Matt: 16:25). Let us put aside selfishness and greed and accept to have less for ourselves in order that others may have the necessities of life. Many of us could reduce our consumption of luxuries. Where circumstances impose this on us, we may even see it as a gain, in so far as we achieve a simpler life-style that is more in keeping with the Gospel and helps us to understand the problems of the really deprived. We need to work harder, especially in increasing food-production. This calls for taking part seriously in the Rural Reconstruction Programme and for an increase in Church development programmes aimed at agricultural improvement.

7. Above all we have to look at the problem of justice in our society. The wealth of the Country belongs to all its citizens and should be distributed fairly among them. As Pope Paul has said all property rights whatsoever must yield to this fact. (Letter on the Development of Peoples. No. 22). As long as some lack the essentials of life, those of us who have more than we need are collectively guilty of concealing what we have stolen from the poor (Is. 3:14). We may hear addressed to ourselves God's words as announced by Jeremiah: "*Rescue the man who has been wronged from the hands of his oppressors, or else my wrath will leap out like a fire, it will burn and no one will be able to quench it.*" (Jeremiah 21:12)

8. The burden to be carried at this time should be laid on those most able to bear them. We support strongly any measures taken in favour of the urban and rural poor, the old and the unemployed. School leavers who cannot find work deserve special attention. In this light, whatever

may be said about certain details, we praise the Zambia National Service and the Rural Reconstruction Camps as efforts to do something radical about a chronic problem that seriously threatens the life and even the peace of the Nation.

9. As a developing Country, Zambia is itself the victim of injustice at the hands of more developed countries, who pay as little as possible for our products and sell us their goods as dear as they can. Even the so-called Development Aid is sometimes a hidden form of exploitation that leads to greater dependence on the donors with a corresponding loss of freedom. We ask our leading laymen to study these problems.

10. It is not to be expected that everybody in the Country will always agree on every question, even the most fundamental ones. But we strongly condemn violent methods of resolving these disputes. "Those who take the sword will perish by the sword." (Mt. 26:52). We have only to look around the world to see that violence usually leads to greater suffering than the ones it was supposed to remove. This is not to ignore the fact that many apparently peaceful situations are only maintained by the institutionalised violence of oppressors against the oppressed. Even here let us do everything we can for a peaceful solution. When these efforts fail we cannot deny that it is lawful to meet force with force in defence of one's own life.

11. Violence and injustice are partners in the crime of abortion. It is sad to note that the Termination of Pregnancy Act is having the effects we foretold when it was passed. It is the greatest injustice in our society since it takes away the very first of all human rights, the right to live. The National Council of the Lay Apostolate has made submissions to the Law Reform Commission, which

they hope will lead to the repeal of the Act. We ask all men of good will to study this problem in order to understand the complicated issues involved and to find the right course to be followed. Above all, let us go on searching for the means of removing the injustices and selfishness that drive women to have abortions.

12. We find the principles on which the proposed Educational Reforms are based to be thoroughly in keeping with the Gospel.

13. Hence we urge all Catholics to collaborate in translating them effectively into practice. This will mean taking part in the National debate and the process of syllabus making, through constructive criticism or the making of alternative proposals on points, which seem to need improvement. The Church is a large voluntary educational agency. The Government should be assured of the support of all its members in carrying this difficult project to a successful outcome.

14. We have already drawn attention to the fact that the educational proposals make no mention of Religious Education. We are grateful for the positive reply received from the Government and its assurance that there is no intention to drop Religion from the syllabus. As parents are responsible for the religious education of their children they should continue to study this point and make their views known to collaborate in carrying the Government's declared policy into effect.

15. The Education Programme calls for our collaboration, especially as volunteers in promoting literacy. This is also a concern of the Church. Even before the publication of the reforms the National Council of Catholic Women had resolved to engage all Catholic Women to learn to read and write. We endorse this resolution and call on all

to take part either as students or teachers. The campaign will be carried on in collaboration with the Government Department responsible. We urge all our members to be generous in responding to the call now made upon them.

16. As we are convinced that Christ is Lord of the world, let us continue to struggle that his kingdom may be seen not only in the lives of individuals but also in the life of society. This is the sphere where the laity express their Faith through working for the renewal of the temporal order as the Second Vatican Council puts it. For this they must be present where society is being shaped, in voluntary organisations that have development and improvement of civic life as their aim, in politics and every branch of public life.

17. We commend our members who have already dedicated themselves to this task and call on others to join them, inspired by their Faith and the rich teaching of the Church about man in society. To be effective, action like this demands that we prepare ourselves by serious study of social problems and the principles the Church gives for their solution. It means giving our energy and our time. Our Lord redeemed us by his sufferings. It is only by agreeing to share in them that we can in turn offer salvation to our brothers and become the light, which we are supposed to be for the world.

May God bless you all!

Signed: †Elias Mutale.  
Chairman - Zambia Episcopal Conference  
25th August, 1976.

## **STATEMENT OF THE CATHOLIC BISHOPS IN ZAMBIA ON ELECTIONS**

**1978**

*Many Christians often wonder whether participation in politics in general, and in elections in particular, has anything to do with their faith. The Bishops answered this question in this letter. "Voting was a right from God", they say, which all Christian people are called to exercise. Election-time was an opportune time that Christians have to participate, not only to vote for leaders of their choice, but also to vote for honest, courageous, hard-working, and God-fearing leaders who have the good of all people at heart. Elections can become a futile exercise when they are conducted in a climate of great social suffering. The Bishops point out the serious difficulties encountered by people at this time: shortage of essential commodities, insecurity, declining morality, corruption, unemployment, and political propaganda. These problems, if neglected by Government, can cast a shadow on the meaningfulness of elections.*

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ,

1. As followers of Jesus Christ we share fully in the joys and hopes, sorrows and anxieties of our fellow men and we are not insensitive to any aspect of human life. It is this concern for our Country and the welfare of its entire people, which prompts us, your Bishops and Shepherds in Christ, to address you before the forthcoming Presidential and General Elections.

2. The Elections come at a time when our Country is experiencing great difficulties. It is only human and easy for us to seek to apportion blame to others and thereby evade our own responsibilities to the Nation and our-

selves. The Gospel, which tells us that we are a Pilgrim People and have not here a lasting city (Heb. 13:4), equally reminds us of our commitment to our civic obligations and to measure up honestly and sincerely to these duties, each according to his calling (Thess. 3:6-13; Eph. 4:28).

#### *The Right and Duty to Vote*

3. We therefore remind all our Christian people that they have the vote as a right, not only accorded to them by the Constitution of our Country, but also as a responsibility given by God for the proper exercise of human rights and freedom as well as for the establishment of good Government. We urge all our people to make full use of their right to vote and consider it a Christian responsibility to do so.

4. While respecting the freedom of the individual to vote according to his choice, our Christian conscience calls us also to vote wisely and only for men and women who are known for their honesty, ability and dedication, as well as their concern for the good and welfare of all the people of Zambia. It is necessary to stress this as we go to the polls to elect a new Government, as much will depend on the choice of candidates that we make to lead the Nation.

#### *National Problems*

5. The Nation is going through a serious economic crisis. People are often lacking in essential foodstuffs. The National and external and internal security of our Country is threatened and there is considerable unemployment. The Nation is facing shameless corruption among some of our public servants and there is a decline in morality. Many spheres of public life suffer from a lack of clear thinking and planning. Conflicting ideologies are propounded by some misguided self-styled politicians and the suggested

remedies are often based on half-truths brought in from outside to confuse the people and gain influence from outside powers. The Zambian people are particularly disturbed by the decline of honesty in some of their leaders; the complete disregard for life and property by unruly bandits; the inordinate desire for personal enrichment by wrong means by some of those who are in public office, to the detriment of the people. It is to these deep-rooted problems and difficulties that the Government we are called to elect should address itself.

6. Dear brothers and sisters, as Election Day approaches we may expect that harmful propaganda will be stepped up. Many will try to sow seeds of uncertainty and hatred in the mind of the electorate by spreading false rumours in order to manipulate the people for their own selfish ends. Subsequently, the danger of civil disorder is real unless reason prevails.

7. We should try to remember what Christ says about truth. He says, "The truth shall make you free." Therefore, only proven facts, not rumours; genuine promises, not vague slogans, should be believed and used in the election campaign.

8. We are all grateful to the Press, Radio and Television for informing us continually, as well as for commenting on the problem facing the Nation. We expect the Mass Media even more so during this time to put before us scrupulous honesty concerning the true State of the Nation. We ourselves should also be wise and discerning in the use of the information we receive.

#### *Competence of Candidates*

9. We are all aware of the fact that democracy gives everyone a chance of participating in the affairs of the

State. This, unfortunately, enables even the unscrupulous to use the same machinery for furthering their own evil designs. Thus we should by prayer and serious reflection carefully judge aspiring candidates by their past performance in office or in their private lives, as to whether they should be entrusted with the destiny of the Nation. We would like to suggest the following in testing the competence of the aspiring candidates: -

- a) We should particularly look for candidates who respect and are guided by the law of God. We must distrust people who do not show signs of fearing God, their creator. We cannot expect them to safeguard our interests or those of the Nation honestly.
- b) We should look at our candidates for the qualities of conscientious work, courage to speak out for the truth, professional ability, as well as moral integrity.
- c) We should look for candidates who have a deep knowledge of the needs of society and have a balance of judgement on possible solutions. We should know that rabble-rousers may glibly highlight the weak points of our situation and that of the Nation, but being vocal is no substitute for professional competence.
- d) We should reject candidates who have in any way enriched themselves by taking advantage of their office rather than by relying on personal effort and ability. Those candidates cannot be trusted to be defenders of the rights of the people.
- e) We should look for candidates with vision as well as candidates who have the welfare of the whole Nation of Zambia at heart.

10. Although we elect candidates for a particular constituency, they should be of a calibre who do not confine themselves to promoting sectional or tribal interests.

### **Conclusion**

11. In conclusion, dear brothers and sisters, we would like to ask you to join us in sincere prayer for the outcome of the forthcoming Elections:

“Unless the Lord build the house, they labour but in vain that build it.” (Psalms 127:1)

### **List of Bishops in Alphabetical order**

Bishop James Corboy, S.J.	Bishop of Monze
Bishop Dennis H. de Jong	Bishop of Ndola
Bishop A. J. Furstenberg, W.F.	Bishop of Mbala
Bishop Medardo J. Mazombwe	Bishop of Chipata
Archbishop Emmanuel Milingo	Archbishop of Lusaka
Bishop Adrian Mung'andu	Bishop of Livingstone
Archbishop Elias Mutale	Archbishop of Kasama
Bishop Abdon S. Potani OFM Conv.	Bishop of Solwezi
Bishop James Spaita	Bishop of Mansa

## **MARXISM, HUMANISM AND CHRISTIANITY**

### **A Letter From the Leaders of the Christian Churches in Zambia To All Their Members About Scientific Socialism 1979**

*The Government tried to introduce compulsory study of Scientific Socialism in all institutions of learning; from primary school to university level. The argument of the Government was that this would enhance the promotion of the philosophy of humanism which had become the State's ideological model for development.*

*This intention by Government worked to unite Christian Churches in Zambia. For the first time, they stood together to oppose the Government plans. The three Christian Church mother bodies, namely, the Christian Council of Zambia (CCZ), the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia (EFZ), and the Zambia Episcopal Conference (ZEC), co-signed this pastoral letter.*

*The main points in this letter are: (a) Socialism was in harmony with Christianity only in so far as it meant a system that tries to make a Nation's wealth serve all the members fairly through public ownership of the means of production. (b) The Churches rejected Marxism for its view on religion as an obstacle to men and women becoming masters of their own destiny. Marx called religion the "opium of the masses". Lenin called for the abolition of religion in order that communism might succeed. This resulted in by the persecution of Christian Churches in communist countries. Furthermore, the Churches contended that Marxism was a danger to the constitutional freedoms of people, especially the freedom of worship.*

The Church leaders clarified and amplified their sentiments in two subsequent letters, namely; **“Christian Responses”**, and **“A Letter about the Seminar on Humanism and Development”**. This was after the President of the Republic, Dr. D.K. Kaunda, had summoned all Church leaders to a workshop on Scientific Socialism at Mulungushi Hall, from 18<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> of March 1982. The President wanted to share with Church leaders the reasons the Government had in wanting to introduce Scientific Socialism. The Church leaders present, more than 200 of them, gave their responses, which form the basis for the **“Christian responses”** Statement. The responses were extemporaneous oral Statements made by Church leaders. A major point made was that the rejection of Marxism was not an endorsement of capitalism. The Church leaders condemned exploitative capitalism.

Zambia Episcopal Conference  
Christian Council of Zambia, and  
Zambia Evangelical Fellowship

August, 1979 - Lusaka

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

1. There is much talk today about advancing to Humanism through Scientific Socialism. Christians have been advised not to worry about this, because there is no intention to introducing atheism or attacking religion. Indeed we have been assured that one can be a Scientific Socialist and a Christian as well.

2. On the other hand we know that Scientific Socialism normally treats religion as an enemy to be destroyed. Governments who follow it usually try to wipe out belief in God and place many difficulties in the way of the Church.

3. In this situation many of you are confused and look at us to clarify the Church’s stand. For our part we feel bound

to speak, lest our silence should be taken to mean that we agree with what is being said. We think it well to make our contribution before it is too late.

### **What is Socialism?**

4. Whenever the word "Socialism" is used we must ask what the speaker or writer means. Using the same word for different things is at the heart of today's confusion about the "Socialist path to Humanism".

5. It is difficult to define Socialism. Experts have discovered many brands - some say twenty, others say as many as one hundred - and it is not possible to find one description that fits them all.<sup>19</sup>

6. Therefore, we will not attempt a definition. We prefer to look briefly at the history of Socialism and then contrast the two types which are mentioned in Zambia today: Zambia Humanist Socialism and Scientific Socialism.

### **History of Socialism**

7. The modern movement towards Socialism began in the 19th Century in reaction to the uncontrolled Capitalism of the Industrial Revolution. Its general thrust is that the wealth of society should be placed at the service of all through public ownership of the means of production. It has taken different forms in different countries throughout the world and is still undergoing various transformations.

8. Over fifty year ago, the socialist movement split into two paths, Democratic Socialism and Scientific Socialism.

---

<sup>19</sup> Cf. *Encyclopedia of Theology*, Ed. Rahner, Burns & Oates, London, p. 1595.

### **The Two Main Types Of Socialism**

9. Democratic Socialism seeks to end exploitation and to protect the people through public ownership of major industries and natural resources. It sets up a Welfare State that freely provides all citizens with the necessities of life: health, education and social services. Examples of this are found today in Great Britain, West Germany, Zambia and Tanzania. Scientific Socialism refers to a clearly defined doctrine and programme of action inspired by the writings of Karl Marx and I.V. Lenin. (Hence it is also called Marxist-Leninism). It says it is impossible to reform Capitalism. Instead, this must be eliminated by transferring ownership of all the means of production to the State. The State is to be controlled by a party, which claims to represent the urban and rural working class and aims at bringing about a communist society. In theory everything belongs to the people. In practice the State tends to control the whole of life and the people are subject to it and the Communist Party. Progress towards Communism is to take place through the unavoidable and evolutionary movement of history, the result of a "material dialectic". This process can be hastened and guided by the revolutionary struggle of the working class under the leadership of a "vanguard" party.

10. Marxists say men should be absolute masters of their own destiny. Belief in God is seen as an obstacle to this development. Marx said, "The abolition of religion as the illusory happiness of people is required for their real happiness". Lenin confirmed this view: "Communism will never succeed until the myth of God is removed from the minds of men."

### **Christianity and Socialism**

11. Socialism is in harmony with Christian beliefs in so far as it means a system, which tries, by public ownership of the means of production, to make a Nation's wealth serve all its members fairly. God intends the earth and all it contains for the benefit of every member of the human family. Therefore, created goods should flow fairly to all.
12. The right to own property must be subordinated to this principle. The story of the Rich Man and poor Lazarus warns the "haves" against closing their hearts to the needs of the "have-nots."
13. Socialist ideals are very much in line with the message of Christ who came "to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives and to set the down-trodden free" (Luke 4:18). That is why we had no criticism to make of socialist policies outlined by His Excellency the President in his book "Humanism in Zambia" nor of the Preamble to the Constitution of the Ruling Party, which states, "The main task of the ruling party is to accomplish a victorious transition from Capitalism to Humanism through Socialism as a means of the eradication of imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism, fascism, and racism, on the one hand, and poverty, hunger, ignorance, disease, crime and exploitation of man by man, on the other."
14. Moreover there are many socialist States in the world where nothing is done to trouble the Christian conscience.
15. The Christian Churches find it necessary to reject only those forms of Socialism which do not respect the dignity and religious dimension of man and which, therefore, can never lead to real humanism. Scientific Socialism is one of these.

**Capitalism Rejected**

16. It should hardly be necessary to point out that criticising one brand of Socialism does not turn us into capitalists any more than that a man who is not going north must be going south.

17. We condemn all forms of Capitalism, which place profit before persons and are based upon the exploitation of man by man. In line with our understanding of the importance of the human person, we reject the Materialism of any form of Capitalism, which ignores his dignity.

18. Indeed Christian social teaching has been misrepresented as being concerned with the defence of private property. Christianity never taught an absolute right to private property; it has always qualified the right of ownership in two ways. Firstly, it has insisted that God designed the good things of creation for the benefit of all men and women. Ownership is therefore really a stewardship of property given by God to owners for the benefit of all. This carries obligations towards others, towards society and especially towards the poor. Secondly, Christianity has insisted that ownership should be widely distributed so that each one may have his or her just share. Hence, the economy too must always remain at the service of man.

19. For this reason, we strongly condemn the exploitative elements of Liberal Capitalism, which result in the increase of material benefits for the few at the cost of oppressing the many. We condemn equally the materialism of Liberal Capitalism and the materialism of Totalitarian Communism because both fail to acknowledge the sanctity and value of the human person.

### **Marxist-Leninism and Religion**

20. Marx and Lenin alike were professed atheists and hostile to religion. Marx was ready to tolerate religious practice, believing that it would necessarily fade away when the economic basis of society has been transformed, resulting in the destruction of the false belief that God is the ultimate ruler of human life. He did not, however encourage an active campaign for the abolition of religion.

21. Lenin, on the other hand, campaigned to wipe out religion, in all its forms. "A Marxist must be a materialist" he wrote, "that is, an enemy of religion." He later spoke even more openly:

22. "The party strives for the complete dissolution of the ties between the exploiting classes and the organisation of religious propaganda, as for the real emancipation of the toiling masses from religious prejudice; to this end the party organises the widest possible scientific, educational and anti-religious propaganda. At the same time, it is necessary carefully to avoid giving offence to the religious sentiments of believers as this only leads to the strengthening of religious fanaticism."<sup>20</sup>

23. Since Lenin's death (in 1924), his doctrine on religion has come to be treated as the last, definitive word on the subject by his followers in the Soviet Union, China and elsewhere. Marxism -Leninism always includes this attitude to religion, whether it is stated explicitly or not.

---

<sup>20</sup> Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenii, Vol. XXXIII, p.118.

24. An authoritative modern Marxist author has written: "Marxism is not agnostic but uncompromisingly atheistic. Nothing exists beyond nature and humanity. Nature has been the generator of human kind through organic evolution. Humankind has become the producer of a nature humanised through social evolution"<sup>21</sup>

25. In case we should doubt their words, Marxists add the testimony of their deeds. There is not a single Country where they have come to power where they have not taken steps to root out religion from the hearts of the people. To verify this, we have to look no further than to what is presently happening in Africa from East to West.

26. The second Conference of the Mozambique Department of Ideological Work took place in June 1978, at Beira. It declared that "religion is an obstacle to the advancement of the revolutionary process" and that "The activity of religious organisation is harmful." Its resolution on Religious Matters stated "The fight against religious alienation is an essential condition for the triumph of new ideas and the effective evolution of the political indoctrination of the masses." Our brothers in that Country know what difficulties a Government with such attitudes places in the path of religion every day.

---

21 George Novak, *Humanism and Socialism*, Pathfinder Press, New York.

27. In December 1977, the Catholic Bishops of Angola issued an appeal to the Government to respect the rights of religion: "The Church of Angola greeted with joyful enthusiasm the birth of the Angolan Nation. With joy we saw that freedom of religion was included in the Constitution, as in the constitutions of most modern States. It is a fact, however, that steps have not yet been taken to implement this part of the Constitution and that it remains in operative. Hence the frequent and lamentable violations of it, which are almost always unpunished and given specious justification. The Christian community witnesses with sorrow a systematic propaganda in favour of atheism, discrimination against the faith because of their religious beliefs and practice, and sacrilegious profanations of Churches and sacred objects. Parents often report to us their distress at seeing their children, not only teenagers but even young children taken away from them to far distant places, with grave danger to their faith and in disregard of parental rights. In a word, one has the impression that there is a deliberate attempt to paralyse the Church and prevent it from working, as it has done until now, for the integral development of the people".

28. In June 1978, the President of Equatorial Guinea closed all Catholic Churches and banned Catholic worship, although 80 per cent of the people are Catholics. Protestant Christians have suffered equally in these countries.

29. For these reasons we think it is important to point out the implications for religion of taking the scientific road which may not be understood fully at present. Scientific Socialism is thoroughly opposed to Christianity and even to a simple belief in God.

**Why “Scientific”**

30. The label “Scientific” also has its origins in the ideas of Marx as developed by Lenin and Stalin. They claim to apply the methods of the physical sciences to man, history and society. In this way they offer a so-called absolute knowledge that supposedly helps us to master the past and future course of history and to hasten the inevitable coming of a classless society where all exploitation will end. Part of this “Scientific” approach is, as we have said, to find the notion of God and belief in God harmful to men and women. That is why they seek to uproot it.

31. The word “Scientific” also implies that other kinds of socialism are unscientific and naïve. It seems to put the theories of Marx in an unassailable position and to give them an absolute guarantee of future success. As a result they have a kind of magical power that bewitches people so that they are unable to look at facts. For this reason, Marxism is regarded by many as a kind of religion, which makes absolute and transcendent claims that are strengthened by its vision of a this-worldly future utopia in a classless society.

32. In this way Marxist-Leninism becomes more than a theory or even a programme of action. One cannot easily accept one part of this programme without committing oneself to the whole and all its implications which, indeed, are not always clearly defined. One of these implications is its anti-religious thrust.

**Marxist Theory And Facts**

33. Marxist Scientific Socialism is only one of many theories put forward to explain social change. Until now, its truth has not been proved by facts even in Russia,

which many regard as its prime model. Developments in the Western industrialised world have not taken place as Marx predicted. Scientific Socialist States themselves are far from being utopias, even for the proletariat. If we think of the Berlin Wall and other barriers on their borders, they have been erected to prevent people from escaping and not to keep out those who wish to get in from non-scientific socialist States. In spite of this plain evidence the word "Scientific" retains its magical charm.

#### **Different Kinds Of Humanism**

34. Like Socialism, there are many brands of Humanism, some of which quite contradict some others. They have in common a desire that human beings should be at the centre of things and that all that is on earth should minister to them.

35. Atheistic or secular Humanism says there is no God and that we should look to ourselves as the highest authority and on the material world of the senses as the only reality. The spiritual world does not exist. We are in charge of our own lives and destiny and do not need to refer to any deity.

36. Christianity sees men and women as called not only to be fully human but also to grow as members of God's family -"To mature manhood to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:13). We believe that the organisation of society and everything else in the world should help them to grow in that calling. This is the meaning of Christian Humanism.

37. For *Zambian Humanism* "Man is the centre of all human activity"<sup>22</sup> "All of us are Gods creatures and this is a firm enough foundation to see us through what we are about to do.-that is to lay down a solid foundation on which to build One Zambia and One Nation".<sup>23</sup> The world, then, and all that is in it must serve man<sup>a</sup> while man himself is centred on God.

### **Zambian Humanist Socialism**

38. In "Humanism in Zambia" Part II, His Excellency the President has written: "One cannot be a humanist without being a socialist... Socialism is, to a humanist, the stage of human development attained just before that of the final one which is Humanism. On the other hand one can be a socialist without being a humanist. Elsewhere in this book we shall refer in passing to the various phases of human development, namely, the creation of pre- historic age, primitive state of man, slavery, Feudalism, Capitalism, Socialism and finally Humanism" (p. 6).

39. "To a humanist, Socialism is a away of organising society in such a way as to remove, in the final analysis, all forms of exploitation of man by man. The major instrument applied to achieve this objective is to take away all the major means of production and distribution from private hands - unbridled Capitalism - and put them under the control of the State " (p.10)

---

<sup>22</sup> *Humanism in Zambia*, Part I, p. 4.

<sup>23</sup> *Humanism in Zambia*, Part I, p.29.

40. This is a call for Socialism in order to end the exploitation of man by man and to establish a humanist society. Even if the Marxist model is followed up to a point for the analysing of history (with the difference that the final stage of our history is to be Humanism and not Communism), the Socialism outlined above tends towards the Democratic Socialism described earlier on and is defined as a "common ownership economy" (p.52). By this we may understand a man-centred socialisation of the Nation's resources, aimed at sharing fairly life's opportunities and the National wealth, which is to be placed as far as possible at the service of all. This goal has been pursued by the provision of free health and education along side the Nationalisation of major industries and the creation of parastatal bodies and firms. Land reform has aimed at preventing individuals from owning land. In all of this, the nature of human beings and the place of God in human life have been respected.

#### **Zambian Humanism and Scientific Socialism**

41. The documents on Zambian Humanism mention Scientific Socialism rarely and then only to reject it. In *Humanism in Zambia, Part II*, we read:

"While a communist believes in what is generally called Scientific Socialism a humanist believes that it is impossible for Man to live by bread alone. A true communist believes *not*<sup>24</sup> in the Super-being and after life. His religion is his ideology. On the other hand, a humanist believes in the presence of a Super-being - the source of life.

---

<sup>24</sup> Emphasis in the Original.

To a humanist, Man is the centre of all creation and nothing is more important" (p.8). Thus, Humanism disowns the essential atheism of Scientific Socialism. Let no one pretend, then that Scientific Socialism and Humanism are the same. To speak as though they are is to introduce confusion into the debate. The proponents of Scientific Socialism clearly understand the conflict they face with Zambian Humanism. They openly say that Humanism will eventually disappear and be replaced by Scientific Socialism.

Meantime, they are content to lull people into a false sense of security by pretending that Scientific Socialism is the same path to Humanism as the Socialism described in "Humanism in Zambia, Part II."

42. The point to be emphasised is that Zambian Humanist Socialism has a completely different basis from Scientific Socialism. When you replace "Zambian Humanism" by "Scientific", you radically alter the kind of Socialism that is in question.

43. You have also replaced Humanism by Communism as the final goal in clear contradiction of the President's words. To disguise these changes by speaking of Scientific Socialism as though it were the same as Zambian Humanism is most misleading.

44. We know that Zambian Humanism is not just a theory propounded by one man but a distillation from the traditional wisdom of our people.

45. It is strange that the very persons who accuse Christianity of having attacked traditional values are also the ones who wish to destroy them by introducing atheism to our society.

### **Opposition Between Christianity And Scientific Socialism**

46. Our first main reason for rejecting Scientific Socialism is that as a philosophy it denies God. Our second reason is that this rejection of God necessarily leads to a rejection of man. We differ profoundly from Marxists in our understanding of the human person, so that Marxist Humanism is also radically different from Christian Humanism.

### **Christian View Of The Human Person**

47. We proclaim again the dignity of the human person of whom the Psalmist cries out: "Thou hast made him little less than God and dost crown him with glory and honour Thou hast given him domination over the works of thy hands. Thou hast put all things under his feet." (Psalms 8)

48. This is the man whom God's son, Jesus Christ took as brother and sister, who is redeemed with his blood and not only is he called but is a child of God (Rev 1:4, 1 John 3:1).

49. We believe that God is the father of all mankind and that each man and woman has been created in his likeness (Genesis 1:26-27). They are destined to live with God forever. Therefore, every individual human being is precious in his eyes and has a dignity, which nobody may ignore, diminish or destroy. A truly humanist society must recognise the spiritual element in man and be built around it.

50. In the person of Jesus Christ. God became a man of flesh and blood like ourselves. He immersed himself in our material world In this way, he renewed the world and emphasised its importance for human life From the begin-

ning, as we read in the Book of Genesis (Ch. 1:28), God placed men and women in the world to develop it. By entrusting them with this task he made them co-creators with himself. The purpose of human labour is to master the material world and create the conditions in which each human being can discover his or her talents and develop them to the full.

51. Thus, the human person has been placed by God at the very centre of creation. The dignity and worth of each individual human being is of infinitely of greater value than the whole material world, which is merely the environment in which he or she can fulfil himself or herself. It is the spiritual value of human persons that lends importance to the material world, which serves them.

52. When Christ placed justice, love and peace at the centre of his teaching, this was to stress the importance of each person. He identified himself with "the least of his brothers" - the hungry, thirsty and naked, the sick and imprisoned-and declared that our lives would be judged by our treatment of them (See Matthew 25:31-46). But He emphasised that man does not live on bread alone (Matthew 4:4, 6:25) and constantly spoke of spiritual needs that surpass our material necessities.

53. From this we conclude that a world fit for men and women, besides economic and political structures within which they can fulfil themselves, must also take account of their spiritual nature and respect each one's dignity and worth. Without this no revolution can better the lot of mankind nor bring true welfare.

54. A society based on respect for the human person will protect those inviolable rights which extend to both material and spiritual needs: the right to a fair share in

the wealth that is given to the Nation for the good of all, to food, clothing and shelter; the right to a fair opportunity in life; rights to freedom in bringing up and educating children, rights to free speech and participation in politics, rights to freedom of religion and conscience. Society must protect all these rights for everybody. It may not treat them just as something to be achieved at a future date. It must secure them in practice here and now. That is why we reject a programme of social, economic and political action that is ready to suppress fundamental human rights in view of some future classless society. Totalitarian economist countries may say that freedom is a luxury the poor cannot afford. Christians on the other hand, condemn a system that does not try to protect basic rights at all times, even in the midst of the struggle for a better society. Equality means not only the fair sharing of material goods but also and even more the recognition of each one's equal value on a level that far surpasses that of material needs. We are called to that "freedom of children of God"(Romans 5:21) which is given by the truth (John 8:32) and includes the right to "worship in Spirit and truth" (John 4:24).

### **Marxism and the Human Person**

55. Marxism does not value human beings for their intrinsic worth nor because of their personal relationship with God. It thinks men and women are valuable only in so far as they contribute to the development of humanity. Humanity for the Marxist takes the place given by Christians to God. It takes on an absolute value in its own right and no other value can come before it. The individual is subordinated to the development of humanity, which will be complete with the coming of the classless society. To bring about the classless society any means

are justified and the rights of individuals may be suppressed, because the only rights they have are those, which enable them to serve humanity and the classless society. Since the Communist Party expresses the cause of humanity, it is supreme and the rights of individuals can only have meaning in so far as they serve its policy. The individual who does not serve the Party fails to be responsibly free and loses his right to freedom. In the name of a future classless society, the totalitarian Marxist state takes away in the present freedom of speech, political freedom and freedom to educate one's family according to one's beliefs. This abolition of freedom follows logically from the Marxist principle that man is a being composed of nothing but matter. For the Marxist, there is in us no power to choose and no spiritual freedom, because the material conditions of life decide how we are going to act. Likewise, the ideas of God and life after death are meaningless because there is nothing outside the limits of the material world and human development will be completed on the visible earth.

56. No human being man, woman or child, should be subjected to the kind of oppression that is normal in Marxist-Leninist States, an oppression that takes away from them that which most belongs to a human being, their freedom to be responsible for their own lives. We recognise that in every society the freedom of individuals needs to be restricted for the sake of the common good. But the individual also has an absolute value. There is a point beyond which his rights may not be curtailed. We therefore reject an ideology which subjects the individual at all times to the collectivity and is ready to abolish his rights to property, freedom, religion and even life itself when these seem to stand in the way of revolutionary goals.

**A Double Error**

57. So far Marxists have everywhere failed in their ambition of producing an ideal society because of another twofold error. They misunderstand the origin of evil and think that a humanist society can be established merely by political and economic action.

58. The origin of injustice: Marxists say that all injustice springs from the class conflict, which in its turn is a result of private ownership of the means of production. They believe that doing away with private property will make all forms of oppression disappear. We find this explanation of the "human condition" wholly unsatisfactory. The root of evil is within us, so that we need God's help to become more human and to create a better world. "What goes into a man from outside cannot defile him... What defiles a man comes from within, out of the heart of man" (see Mark 7:20-23). The origin of evil is found not on the level of matter but in the human spirit with its selfishness, pride, greed, and hunger for power. This is not to deny that evil can be embodied in social structures that are dehumanising and sinful or that the organisation of society affects us powerfully for evil or for good. But the causes of injustice are not found only in the economic or political circumstances of life. Consequently, however necessary a revolution may be, if it is based only on politics and economics it will not remedy injustice.

59. No New Society without New Hearts: It is our sinful tendencies that prevent us from making a world fit for humans. Political and economic reforms are necessary. But of themselves they do not affect the inner man and do not touch the root of evil. If a person living in extreme poverty is dying of cancer we can bring him to live in luxury. But this change in the external conditions of his life will not by

itself cure the illness within him. We may compare sin to a cancer that can only be healed by God's action in the depths of our hearts. Unless we renew ourselves with his help there can be no new society because society cannot be better than those who compose it.

### **Belief About Religion Is Central**

60. It is said that the only difference between Christianity and Scientific Socialism is that the latter does not believe in God. This is a gross over-simplification. It is like saying that the only difference between Zambia and Zimbabwe is that Zimbabwe is not free. It is a difference that makes all the difference.

61. Religion is not like our clothes which we can put on or take off without changing the way in which our body functions. Our belief about God penetrates whatever programme we adopt to achieve Humanism, because the Humanism we pursue depends on our idea of man. This in its turn is determined by our belief in God or our denial of Him. We repeat again, because the point is crucial, that in Christian Humanism men and women are important because they are like God who is personally concerned for their full growth. That is why the Christian Humanist strives to bring about conditions which meet spiritual as well as material needs. The Marxist Humanist, on the contrary, measures the value of people by their usefulness to the growth of humanity. They are material beings, subject to material forces and find their fulfilment in a material utopia.

62. Our Christian belief in God necessarily results in a clearly defined view of man and which runs through everything we try to do for human development. Likewise the atheistic belief of Marxists affects their understanding of man and all that they do with or for him. Both Christians

and Marxists claim that Humanism is the key to their actions. But for Christians God is what men and women are finally aiming at and this destiny protects the inalienable rights of each individual person. For Marxists there is no such guarantee of human rights. The totalitarian communist State both claims and exercises absolute power over people in the name of the materialistic classless society, of which it knows no higher Goal.

63. Belief or disbelief in God then should not be likened to clothes, which we put on or take off, leaving ourselves unchanged. They are rather like the blood that runs through our body and affects all our actions. If it is pure, we will be healthy and act vigorously. If it is poisoned we fall sick.

64. His Excellency the President made this same point recently in an address to Church members: "This article of our Christian faith (belief in life after death) is the watershed in the life of every person. The truth or otherwise of this article of faith makes the overriding differences in the thought, work and deed of every living man and woman on this earth."<sup>25</sup>

### **So-Called "Christian Marxist"**

65. It may be objected that in the Western world a dialogue is now going on between Christians and Marxist and that they have found collaboration possible. This fact is used to suggest that one can be a "Christian Marxist". We find this term no less self-contradictory than would be a "Socialist Capitalist".

---

<sup>25</sup> Address to the Synod of the Anglican Diocese of Lusaka, 19th May, 1979.

66. It is clear that the beliefs of Christianity and Marxism are incompatible with regard to religion since one cannot at the same time believe in God and deny Him. If one calls oneself a Christian Marxist simply because he shares the desire for a social revolution in order to attain a just society or finds some truth in what Marx said this is bound to lead to confusion.

### **The Good Elements In Marxism**

67. Whatever our criticisms of Scientific Socialism, we do not wish to be blind to the truth contained in the judgements of Marx and his followers. "Marx was right in accusing religion of being an opium, when he saw on one side the humiliating situation of the workers, the progress of machines and of capital and on the other side the social absenteeism of the Church and the bourgeois attitude of the Christians".<sup>26</sup> Christians too often silently observed the plight of the working class in capitalist industry or consented to the colonial situation. Marxian criticism has played a large part in making them aware of the exploitation suffered by a large section of mankind. This, in its turn, led to a revival of the Church's dedication to the cause of justice and to its present option to be on the side of the poor.

68. Believers possibly share no small portion of the blame for the appearance of atheism. The religion Marx rejected was a caricature of the faith that has been given to us, a result of sin from which the Church's members are never free. To recognise this fact is to be called to conversion. While asking for forgiveness for our sins of omission, let us pray that we may be more faithful to the light that is given to us in our own day.

---

26 M. V. Pinto, Bishop of Nampula, Mozambique, Pastoral Letter, Christmas, 1978.

69. It is also legitimate to think, as some do, that certain elements of Marxist analysis can be used as satisfactory tools for examining social change. This is just a particular example of the general principle that there are positive elements in every ideology and every religion. These elements need to be studied and appreciated as a point of departure for a constructive dialogue, which is possible only if both parties are sincerely seeking the truth.

#### **Collaboration in Action**

70. On the level of action, both Marxist and Christians call for an end to exploitation and injustice and strive for the better restructuring of society. In this search for social justice, they can collaborate. But they can do so only if they are willing to hold their ultimate beliefs in abeyance. On the same condition they can dialogue to understand each other better and to discover areas of common concern in which they can work together while respecting each other's convictions.

#### **Obstacles to Collaboration**

71. Christians may find collaboration with Marxists difficult because Marxists are ready to pursue the achievement of a just society through means that not seldom offend the Christian view of the Human person. We are not prepared to do injustice to some so that justice may result for others. Indeed, injustice done to one is injustice done to all.

72. We also find in fact, whatever they may have said while the struggle was going on, once Scientific Socialists come to power they quickly lose any ideas they had about respect for the convictions of others. Where is the Marxist Country in which freedom of conscience and freedom of religion are honoured in practice?

**Introduction of Scientific Socialism to Zambia**

73. It is only recently that, in contradiction to the policy previously followed, an open determination to reject Humanistic Socialism in favour of Scientific Socialism has been expressed in our Country. It is not clear where the demand for this has come from. It is certainly not the result of that participatory democracy, which is central to our political process. What is happening is very much in line with the Marxist-Leninist idea of a "vanguard party" that claims to know what is good for the people and proceeds to give it to them whether they like it or not. Not only what is being done but also the manner in which it is being done confirms our fears that there are those among us who are trying to force our Country along a communist path and are prepared to manipulate people and politics for that end.

74. "Doublespeak" - saying one thing while doing the opposite - is a well-known Marxist tactic for keeping opponents in false security. An example is camouflaging as "People's Democracies" systems where a Communist Party simply dictates to the people and where civil rights are respected only to the extent to which they are exercised in support of Party policy. The same could happen here and talk of participation and democracy could become a mere smoke screen for dictatorial rule. His Excellency the President himself has warned us of this. "If you are not careful", he has said, "the One Party Participatory Democracy can become tyrannical. It can enslave the people it is supposed to serve".

75. Once the classless society becomes an absolute, it justifies any means used to hasten its coming, whether these respect human rights or not. The choice of means is decided by the power of the "Vanguard Party" and not by consideration of what is morally right or wrong, by which we mean what respects or abuses human dignity.

76. We note with appreciation the high degree of freedom of speech and other personal liberties that exist in our Country today and which compare favourably with any other Country in Africa. But we wish to point to the danger of adopting a programme, which will inevitably lead to the erosion of these freedoms.

**Participatory Democracy And The Move Towards Scientific Socialism.**

77. Some important questions need to be asked about the shift to Scientific Socialism.

78. From the fact that courses where Marxism is taught are being held for Party leaders and "political educators", it seems that a decision has been made to give the Party a Marxist ideology. Who in the Party has taken this decision?

79. Are the views of the "common man" being sought? If he expresses them will they be listened to? If not, what becomes of participatory democracy?

80. Are even the leaders free to disagree with the new policy? The emphasis on "re-educating" them suggests that they are not and imply that they have to be enlightened about the wisdom of what is being done.

81. One of the purposes of the recently established Young Pioneers is precisely to indoctrinate young people with Scientific Socialism. Have parents been asked about this? In this context we record our alarm at the proposal that all youth organisations should be suppressed in favour of the Young Pioneers.

82. Is Scientific Socialism to be taught in our schools? If so, to what extent will it interfere with the teaching of religion, which is the strong desire of the great majority of our parents?

**Conclusion**

83. Dear brothers and sisters, we must warn you that, if Zambia follows a Marxist-Leninist, Scientific Socialist path, then the freedoms enshrined in our constitution will be threatened. We can, indeed, expect the kind of pressure on religion and personal freedom that is found wherever this inhuman doctrine is applied.

84. Before it is too late, we call our Church members to take a stand so as to protect our present liberties. Many members and leaders of the Ruling Party are Christians. We ask them to do all in their power to keep the Party true to its own principles. Now is the time for everyone to take political life seriously and not to allow an oppressive system to be introduced because of their indifference and inactivity.

85. It is not enough for us to be against Scientific Socialism or against Capitalism. We need to reflect seriously on our traditional values, on the social teaching of the Churches and the Gospel in order to contribute to building a society, where Humanism can flourish, where the goods given by God for the use of all are justly shared, where basic needs are met, the dignity of man is represented and freedom reigns. This is the challenge of the present hour.

Signed:

**Christian Council of Zambia:**

Rev. Kingsley Mwenda, (General Secretary)

**Zambia Evangelical Fellowship:**

James Hess

**Zambian Episcopal Conference:**

Dennis de Jong, Bishop of Ndola (Chairman)

Most. Rev. Emmanuel Milingo, Archbishop of Lusaka.

Most Rev. Elias Mutale, Archbishop of Kasama

Rt. Rev. Adolf Furstenberg, Bishop of Mbala.

Rt. Rev. James Corboy, Bishop of Monze

Rt. Rev. Medardo Mazombwe, Bishop of Chipata.

Rt. Rev. Adrian Mung'andu, Bishop of Livingstone.

Rt. Rev. James Spaita, Bishop of Mansa

Rt. Rev. Abdon Potani, Bishop of Solwezi.

**Lusaka 1979**

**REFLECTIONS  
OF THE CATHOLIC BISHOPS  
FOR THE SEASON OF LENT  
1986**

*The Bishops acknowledge that the proper Lenten call cannot be for fasting, since the majority of Zambians are already hungry due to the incredibly high cost of living! For those who are privileged, the call is to open their eyes to see those in desperate need and respond to them by sharing resources. But there is also need to respond as a community to the unjust plight of people affected by high prices and fees, inadequate wages, unemployment and ineffective social welfare help. The Bishops endorse the call of SECAM that the Church must be an instrument of justice and peace.*

1. The holy season of Lent has come upon us again, and we, the bishops of Zambia would like to take this opportunity to offer some reflections for our Christians and indeed for the whole Nation.

2. For us Christians of today, like our ancestors in faith throughout the centuries, Lent has always been a special time of prayer and deep reflection on how we stand as individuals, as communities and as a Nation before God, and before our fellow men and women.

3. There has been a long tradition of fasting and almsgiving characteristic of this season. Each day during Lent the Lord invites us through the words of the prophet Joel, "come back to me with all your heart, fasting, weeping, mourning" Joel 2:12-18. The second Vatican Council describes Lent as "a period of closer attention to the Word of God and more ardent prayer." (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, art.109). In the carefully selected readings in the daily and Sunday Liturgy of this season, we find over and over again a deep call to conversion of heart.

### At the Personal Level

4. What can we at the personal level, first of all, understand by this call to conversion? For instance, who is called to fast and give alms? Surely, it is not a literal call to the vast majority to give some food! Already, many children and adults alike go to bed hungry, due to the incredibly high cost of living! Surely, the vast majority of people have more than their share of self-denial and suffering? We think of many parents who, despite all their sacrifices, fail because of their low income to find the necessary money to meet the expenses involved in sending their children to school. As a result of this situation, many children are deprived of the opportunity of education even at Primary level. This is hardly the kind of fast that pleases God as can be clearly seen in the holy Bible.

5. There are some in our society however, who are protected and cushioned from these harsh realities. Isn't the call to fast and self-denial, as expressed in this first letter of John, a very urgent one for such privileged people, if the idea of Christian fellowship and brotherly love is to have genuine meaning? *"If a man who was rich enough in this world's goods saw that one of his brothers was in need, but closed his heart to him, how could the love of God be living in him?"* (Jn 3:17)

6. Pope Paul VI, in the Encyclical *Populorum Progressio* (No.17) brings to our notice an even stronger statement made by one of the Fathers of the early Church: *"If any man is rich and does give help to one who stands in need, he only gives the poor man what was already his. The earth was made for all, not just for the rich."* (St Ambrose)

7. The call, in his view, goes beyond charity to Christian duty. In the parable of the Last Judgement, in chapter 25 of Matthew's Gospel, the vital importance of showing active concern for others is clearly made. At the

close of life, according to this parable, we shall be judged, not on all we have achieved, but on how much we have shown love for one another, especially for those people on the margins of our communities.

8. Can we then honestly open our hearts and minds in this season of Lent, and take stock of our privileges? For instance, in terms of material goods: many of us have more clothes than we need, food that appears luxurious by contrast with the lot of many, comfortable homes, and personal transport. Secondly, in terms of opportunities in life, e.g. education, health-care, employment, and recreation: can we reflect on how fortunate some of us are also in this respect? All of these things in themselves can be good, and we should indeed be thankful for such good fortune. However, they can also make us self-centred and concerned for our own welfare only, and consequently indifferent to the plight of the less fortunate. For many people their situation in life is often pre-determined by their poor social and economic circumstances, which deprives them of the basic needs to live a fully human life.

9. We, the Bishops of Zambia, appeal earnestly to you to let this Lenten season be an occasion and a grace for opening our eyes, and sharing our resources with the needy.

### **On the Level of the Wider Society**

10. Secondly, there is the wider call to all the community, as a whole, in the time of Lent to consider what fasting, self-denial, and in short, a conversion of heart means on a social level. The prophet Isaiah is very explicit: *"Is this not the sort of fast that pleases me: to break unjust fetters, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break all yokes."* Is 58:6-7

11. What are these unjust fetters in our society today? The things that oppress people in these times are readily seen:

- i) the soaring prices of basic commodities, like-mealie-meal, sugar, cooking oil, soap, etc.
- ii) the sudden introduction of school fees beyond the reach of the ordinary person in these times
- iii) an inadequate wage structure
- iv) unemployment on a wide scale with the social problems arising consequently; and
- v) the absence of an effective form of social welfare to help families crushed by these factors.

12. These kind of hardships surely reduce the quality of life, more and more, to mere anguished survival for so many. Isn't this sinful discriminating state of affairs indeed a cause of *"weeping and mourning?"*

13. We, the Bishops of Zambia, make an urgent appeal to our leaders in Society to do more to redress this pitiful and unjust plight of so many of our people. It can be said generally that the more disadvantaged people are, the less able are they to speak on their own behalf. Rather, they tend to become the silent suffering masses. Can we Christians stand by indifferently? Surely not! So we appeal to all Christians, indeed to all men and women of good will in this Country, to join their voices with ours in pleading the case of the silent majority.

**A year of Peace: What does it mean?**

14. This year has been declared by the United Nations, as the Year of Peace. In his address for the New Year day of peace, Pope John 11, stated: *"Even if there is no actual armed conflict as such, where injustice exists, it is in fact a cause and*

*potential factor of conflict. In any case a situation of peace in the full sense of its value cannot coexist with injustice. Peace cannot be reduced to the mere absence of conflict; it is the tranquillity and completeness of order. It is lost by the social and economic exploitation of social interest groups which operate internationally, or function as elites in developing countries."*

15. In 1981, we jointly with our brother bishops throughout this Continent stated that: *The Church in Africa desires to be an instrument of justice and peace"* (SECAM: Symposium of Episcopal Conference of Africa and Madagascar.)

16. We urgently call on each one, and on the community as a whole to make this a priority task in their lives now. Can we take a sincere decision this Lenten season to open wide our eyes and hearts to our brothers and sisters in need? Can we do something concrete, starting with the example of our lives? We will fail to convince anyone of the value and urgency of charity and justice if it is not first of all seen in the way in which we live.

17. Can we also make a strong commitment socially, to join together in our efforts to increase the effectiveness of our action, for as it is said in the book of Proverbs "*where brother helps brother, theirs is the strength of a fortress."* (Chapter 18)

18. We, therefore, earnestly encourage adults, young people and children, together with their leaders in every community throughout the Country, to enter into the kind of fast that Isaiah calls for, so that the unjust fetters will, in some practical way, be broken. Look around in your local situation, become aware of the many who are weighed down by heavy cares and worries, making all of life a burdensome yoke, and an unending struggle for survival. Engage in a solid plan of action this Lent, so that on Easter day this year, many more may truly have cause to celebrate

the resurrection of a caring and saving Lord made visible in our communities.

19. May the Spirit of the Lord Jesus whose power is working within us, be our strength, inspiration and mainstay in this responsible and urgent call to conversation and reconciliation.

*“Blessed are the peacemakers  
for they shall be called the children of God  
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for justice  
for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven.”(Matthew 5:6-9)*

James Spaita,	Bishop of Mansa, ZEC Chairman
Dennis De Jong,	Bishop of Ndola, ZEC Vice Chairman
Adrian Mung'andu,	Archbishop of Lusaka
Elias Mutale,	Archbishop of Kasama
Adolf Furstenberg, M.Afr.	Bishop of Mbala
James Corboy, S.J.	Bishop of Monze
Medardo Mazombwe,	Bishop of Chipata
Abdon Severian Potani, OFM.Conv.	Bishop of Solwezi
Raymond Mpezele,	Bishop of Livingstone
Adam Kozłowiecki, S.J.	ZEC Member

**CHRISTIAN LIBERATION  
JUSTICE AND DEVELOPMENT**  
**The Churches' Concern for Human Development**

**Christian Council of Zambia  
Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia  
Zambia Episcopal Conference**

Lusaka, February 1987

*This is the largest and most substantive Statement coming from the Churches, combining both keen social analysis and solid theological reflection. It responds to President Kaunda's call for the Churches to contribute to the economic welfare of the Country and make practical suggestions. The problems Zambia is suffering, with an overall dramatic decline in the standard of living for the majority of people, are described as rooted in history, the international situation and decisions made by the Government.*

*Fruits of progress since Independence have not been adequately shared, especially with the rural population, and measures to improve the situation have caused greater suffering for the poor. Critical reflection is called for on the acceptance of free-market forces as the basis of economic development. The theology of the document is Kingdom-oriented and well supported by scripture.*

*Christians are called to involve themselves in the transformation of this world, since true religion is not merely a private or spiritual matter. Given the fact that Scientific Socialism still had its adherents in Zambia society and in the Government, the document challenges political education that becomes mere ideological indoctrination, a Marxist-Leninist reading of Zambian Humanism. The sharpest questions that can be put to this excellent text are: did it make any difference, was it widely circulated and discussed, what was the Government and the ruling party's response?*

## **INTRODUCTION**

1. In all spheres of human endeavour, the Christian Churches share the joy and the hopes, the sufferings and the anxieties of the people and leaders of our Country. Hence, our responsibility and concern, our practical involvement, and our suggestions as members of our society, as followers of Christ, and, finally, as leaders of the Churches in Zambia.<sup>27</sup>

2. This document is firstly addressed to the members of our Churches, our fellow brothers and sisters of all walks of life. Our proposals are also addressed to the leadership of the Nation in a spirit of constructive dialogue. We are indeed responding to the call of His Excellency the President and presenting suggestions for the socioeconomic betterment of our Country.

3. This concern for socioeconomic development leads us to draw the attention of the members of our Churches to a number of biblical principles of particular relevance to the socioeconomic crisis affecting us. We are striving to raise their consciousness so as to enable them to respond to the present situation.

---

<sup>27</sup> This ecumenical document comes from the leaders of the main Christian groups in the Country: the Christian Council of Zambia, the Zambia Episcopal conference and the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia. Depending upon the context, it refers to "the Church" or "the Churches". This is a reflection of the present situation: a basic unity on the one hand, a diversity of denominations on the other hand.

4. As leaders of the Christian Churches we furthermore give our fellow Christians guidelines for greater involvement in the promotion of development, social justice and liberation from all forms of oppression.

5. Our concern for integral development also moves us to fulfil our role as the moral conscience of the Nation or, as has often been said, the “mirror” of the Nation. To a certain extent, we are therefore addressing ourselves to all Zambians.

6. There cannot be any real development without social justice. In this respect, our prayerful reflection has led us to realise that it is not enough for the Churches to denounce or to try to redress *individual* malpractices. We have therefore taken into account the *general structure* of *society*, and, guided by the teaching of the Bible, feel obliged to act as the voice of the under privileged, the poor and those who do not have the opportunity to defend their rights.

7. The Churches’ concern for the State of the Nation and its human development gives us furthermore the occasion to present general principles concerning life in society. Hence, we propose to deal with questions concerning the relationship of Church and State, work and ownership, national solidarity, materialism and ideology, democracy and participation, and finally public opinion and the media. These and similar issues must be taken into account if we wish our Country to develop in a really human and Christian way.

8. In this letter, we are finally responding to the call of His Excellency the President who asked the Churches to contribute more resolutely to the economic welfare of Zambia. Dr Kaunda asked us to pray for the economic

recovery of the Nation, to tackle the problem of economic morality, and to make practical suggestions in these fields. As Church leaders, we have now taken up the challenge. We come forward with our point of view in addition to suggestions on certain issues.

9. We are not professional economists. It is not our intention to enter into discussion on the technicalities of problems, which are beyond our competence. And yet, we feel we must speak. It is our duty to look at certain economic policies and practices from a Christian perspective.

10. The various themes of *Christian Liberation, Justice and Development* overlap and are complementary. For example, the call for the renewed commitment of Christians to liberation, justice and development is at the same time a call for a deepening of their mission and an answer to the challenge of Dr. Kaunda. Similarly, the presentation of the biblical teaching on justice and of the understanding of the relationship between Church and State ultimately gives the Church the right to speak as an independent voice. The introductory chapter on *Today's Reality* is a prerequisite leading to the rest of the document. It enables us to throw the light of the Scriptures on the present situation. It is also a basis for the formulation of practical suggestions. In our perspective on integral human development, the sections on participation, democracy, human rights and public opinion complete what we wish to be said about economic development.

## TODAY'S REALITY

### Strength and Achievement of *Zambian Humanism*

11. On October 24th 1964, we won political freedom. A new future lay ahead of us. Since then, we have achieved much and we can rightly be proud of the many successes we have had in the field of education, health, agriculture, transport, industry and security. We can also be proud of our record with regard to human rights and freedom, National unity and stability, and our role in international policies. These successes have come from the efforts made by the people of Zambia to live *Zambian Humanism*, in the home, the fields, the office, the factory, the mines, the classroom the hospital - indeed, everywhere throughout the Country.

12. *Zambian Humanism* has been welcome by the Churches for many reasons.<sup>28</sup> It has its roots in our traditional values. It has helped the *Zambian* people to rediscover their identity. It is person - centred but not materialistic. It fits our idea of development as being progress from what is less human to what is more human.

---

28 cf. *Marxist, Humanism and Christianity*: A letter from the leaders of the Christian Churches in Zambia to all their members about Scientific Socialism. Lusaka, 1979, no. 5, pp. 3 -4 no 11, p. 10.

cf. also: A letter from the leaders of the Church in Zambia to their members about the President's seminar on Humanism and Development. Lusaka, 1982, no. 10.3, p.2.

13. *Zambian Humanism* aims to free people from all forms of exploitation and to fulfil human needs. It is committed to the promotion of brotherly love, solidarity, equality and justice. Its socialist orientation is based on an understanding of the person as being moral, spiritual and religious. It stresses the dignity of the human person putting great emphasis on the importance of participation and of people sharing and working together. Such an outlook and approach to life is in harmony with Christian teaching.

14. The philosophy and ideology of *Zambian Humanism* has given the Church the chance to work together with the Party and its Government for the development of the Nation. We must not, however, sit back and seem satisfied, for the aims of *Zambian Humanism* have not yet been fully achieved. In many areas of our social, economic and political life, there are wide gaps between the ideals and their implementation, between what is intended to be for the best and what is actually done in practice.

15. While acknowledging the very grave social, economic and moral crisis that threatens our society, we nevertheless remain convinced that the opportunity to attain the ideals of *Zambian Humanism* is still within our reach.

#### **Socioeconomic and Moral Crisis**

16. Many people living in inactive rural areas and shanty towns are badly fed, poorly housed, illiterate and lacking minimum educational, medical and/or other requirements. Their material living conditions are so bad that a high proportion of our fellow citizens are unable to live a moral, dignified and responsible life. Increasing numbers of children suffer from malnutrition and many of them are unable to attend school.

17. The standard of living of the majority of Zambians has dropped dramatically over the last 10-15 years.<sup>29</sup> Recent measures such as the decontrol of prices, removal of most subsidies, the increase of interest rates and the auctioning of the dollar have resulted in phenomenal price increases in basic commodities such as cooking oil, soap, sugar and other essential items.<sup>30</sup>

18. The wages of agricultural and industrial workers, domestic servants and other employees often remain unjustly low. The income of most families is not sufficient to ensure a decent livelihood. The poor are getting poorer.

19. Large numbers of town dwellers are unemployed and many Zambians without work are even worse off than those who are paid too little for their work or produce. In such circumstances, many take up ways of living, which reduce them to a level not worthy of human beings - stealing, prostitution, black marketeering and other crimes of degrading activities.

20. School leavers and the youth in general give cause for alarm. Many of them feel that they have been abandoned by their society, which is unable to meet their expectations for further education, a secure job or a decent life. They have lost hope for the future.

---

<sup>29</sup> According to a recent study, real per capita income of Zambians has declined by 60% since 1974. Moreover, "incomes have remained very unequal and in fact the distribution of incomes has become more unequal." cf. Situation analysis of children and women in Zambia, GRZ/UNICEF, Lusaka, 1986, 12.1, p. 47 and 11.20, p. 40.

<sup>30</sup> Between August 1984 and march 1986, the cost of living went up by 53%. This includes a 25% increase between 8/10/85 and 17/3/86. cf. Price Watch, supplement of *Daily Mail*, Lusaka, 9.4.86, p. 7.

21. Women are in a specially difficult and insecure position as the burden of looking after their families becomes heavier and heavier. In particular, we note with anxiety the increasing number of single parents in our society. Thus, women who head households must bear the burden of working and providing for their families without easy access to job, to land and to credit.

22. The traditional system of the extended family has done much to ensure the distribution of wealth and the protection of weaker members of society. Yet it is not without its difficulties in the modern economy as it strives to function in the urban situation of town dwellers loaded with excessive number of unproductive dependants. Often a family with only one working person is asked to support far too many dependants who, in town cannot contribute to their upkeep. Such a situation leads to a parasitic form of living.

23. The ordinary person, meanwhile, sees the rich getting richer. The socioeconomic structure of our society is such that there is an acute disparity in our levels of income and opportunities. Over a period of twenty years, many of the rich have attained a standard of living that does not correspond with just, human and Christian development.

24. A quasi-official study carried out a few years ago estimated that the richest 5% of the population of Zambia received over 35% of the total National income whereas the poorest 60% received little more than half of this amount.<sup>31</sup> The average income of the richest 2% of all

---

31 cf. Zambia: Basic needs in an Economy under pressure, ILO, 1981, II. p.28.

households was 25 times that of the poorest 50%.<sup>32</sup> Another study has pointed out that through salary increments and compensations, commonly known as fringe benefits or allowances, the best paid have been able to maintain their high standards of living and to avoid many of the effects of the present crisis.<sup>33</sup> Generally speaking, the urban upper classes and many members of the business community are increasingly accumulating wealth.

25. Our problem indeed is not only of a socioeconomic nature; it is a moral one as well. Too few people are genuinely concerned for the welfare and interests of Zambia as a whole. Cases of corruption, drug trafficking, embezzlement and misuse of public funds and property appear regularly in the media. Lack of interest and hard work, inefficiency and poor planning often result in serious shortages and breakdowns in basic services such as health, transport, education, security or water supply.

26. Nepotism, tribalism and favouritism are common. Also widespread is overcharging as, for example, in excessive rents resulting in unjust profits. Exploitative money lending (e.g. Lundalunda, Kaloba) is inhuman, immoral and unchristian. The extension of big farms often leads to the small farmer being deprived of his traditional land rights. Large-scale commercial poaching endangers the future of our wildlife and of our tourist industry. Superstition and witchcraft also hinder true human development and cause disunity in the National community.

---

<sup>32</sup> Ibid. I, p.7.

<sup>33</sup> cf. T.R. Valentine, "Income Distribution issues in a structurally dependent economy: an analysis of growing inequality in Zambia" in Manuscript report: *The Zambian Economy*, IDRC, May 1985, pp. 209-236, especially pp.210-211, 215, 221-222.

**Root Causes and Signs of Hope**

27. We perceive the ultimate cause of our problems and troubles to be rooted in sin which is alienation from God and from one another. Sin has personal and social dimensions. Hence, individual Zambians or sections of the community are held responsible for their lack of commitment to work, morality and justice. However, the more immediate causes and implications of the present crisis are much wider. They are rooted in our history and in some of our policies. They result from the international situation and from decisions for which we ourselves must accept responsibility.

28. It is our duty to outline some of the basic facts and trends contributing to the present crisis and to the increased hardships endured by the majority of our fellow citizens. We should also discern the signs of hope and acknowledge the value of the recent efforts made by the Party and its Government to redress the situation.

29. With regard to our colonial past, we have inherited a distorted and unbalanced economy characterized by over-reliance on the mining industry, under-development of the rural sector, and concentration of resources and development in a very limited area.

30. For many years, we have been at the mercy of unreliable trading relations, which dominate the present international economic order. We have been affected by forces, which are beyond our control. Mention can be made of the decrease in the price of our diminishing copper reserves and the rising cost of oil and of other imported goods and raw materials which are necessary to sustain the activity of our industry. Although many of our present economic problems are due to the scarcity and high cost of foreign exchange, we must be careful, however, not to use this as a scapegoat.

31. The fruits of social and economic progress made in the years, which followed independence, have not been adequately shared with the majority of rural inhabitants nor reinvested for the development of their areas.

32. For many years the rural-urban gap has been widening in terms of income, wages and terms of trade as well as in the distribution of social amenities such as health-care, transport and recreational facilities.<sup>34</sup> The results, for which we are to blame, are well known: disproportionate growth of towns and increased urbanisation on the one hand, many years of almost regular decrease and stagnation of agricultural production on the other.

33. Even though much progress has recently been made in the production of maize, the Nation still faces tremendous problems with respect to the distribution of agricultural inputs and the collection, transport and marketing of crops. We are saddened by the all too frequent reports of the loss of uncollected foodstuffs and of their deterioration in storage.

34. In order to effect sound agricultural and rural development, adapted techniques, coherent policies and efficient implementation are required. We welcome the renewed commitment of the Party and its Government to comprehensive agricultural development.<sup>35</sup> We note in particular the increase in producers' prices, the develop

---

34 More recent studies do not provide comprehensive statistical evidence but stress the importance of the rural/urban dichotomy: "The overall picture that emerges is fairly clear. In terms of income, employment opportunities as well as indicators of infra structural and other services, the five predominantly rural provinces - Luapula, Northern, North Western, Eastern and Western bear the brunt of poverty." cf. Situation analysis of children and women in Zambia, GRZ/UNICEF, 1986, 10.10, p. 33.

35 cf. Economic Review and Annual Plan, 1986, NCDP, Lusaka, January 1986, Chapter VII.

ment of storage facilities and the introduction of oxen-training schemes. Substantial progress has also been made in the development of drought resistant crops and in agricultural research in general. We further appreciate His Excellency's decision to take measures enabling people to go back to the land.<sup>36</sup>

35. Serious questions need to be asked concerning excessive emphasis on capital-intensive methods of production. A disproportionate amount of available resources, loans and foreign exchange reserves has been allocated to projects, which have not always been completed. The Country has been impoverished by the wastage of large sums of money on inefficient State-run commercial, agricultural or industrial enterprises by individuals who could not measure up to the good intentions of the Party and its Government.

36. We welcome the corrective measures taken to improve the efficiency of State enterprises. We also note with satisfaction a renewed and salutary emphasis put on the development of family farming, small-scale industries, intermediate technology, personal responsibility, self-reliance, participation and decentralisation. Indeed, many principles outlined in the National Policies for the present decade give individual Zambians and intermediate groups such as the Churches an opportunity to intensify their contribution to National development.<sup>37</sup>

---

<sup>36</sup> cf. Dr. Kaunda, "Address to Mass Rally at Freedom statue" Lusaka, 12.10.85.

<sup>37</sup> cf. The National Policies for the decade 1985-95: The Aims and objectives of the third Phase of the Party Programme. Freedom House, Lusaka, (n.d.), pp. 14-15 and 22-23.

37. We have been living beyond our means, producing too little, consuming too much, and piling up debts, which endanger our freedom and our future. We therefore welcome the decision of the Party and its Government to cut down public spending and to reduce the percentage share of administrative services in the budget<sup>38</sup> The work done by various commissions set up to investigate cases of corruption, trafficking, nepotism or tribalism is also commendable.

38. The problems we face are not entirely new and they are by no means unique to Zambia. Nevertheless, they *are our* problems. They have personal and structural, local and international root causes. At the personal level, both rich and poor are called to a radical change of attitude. At the National level, corrective measures are being taken and we should not lose hope. In spite of this, however, we note that the very methods employed to improve the situation in the long run have brought unprecedented and disproportionate hardships on the majority of the population in the short term. The sufferings of the poor have been exacerbated by the decontrol of prices, the auctioning of the dollar and the greater acceptance of free-market forces as the basis for operating the Zambian economy. All these call for further critical reflection.

---

38 cf. Economic review and Annual Plan, 1986, p. ii, no. 9.

---

**Concern and Commitment of the Churches**

39. In our present situation, there are those who seem little concerned about the exploitation which goes on around them and the subhuman conditions in which so many of our brothers and sisters live. Some have lost faith in Zambia *Humanism* and have adopted a defeatist attitude of cynicism. Others wish to go back to capitalism while others again suggest solutions through theories that are not in agreement with Christianity.<sup>39</sup>

40. The Churches have always been involved in the fields of social welfare, health, education and the promotion of human development. However, it can be argued that their role in the overall development of the Country has been comprehensive enough. Many feel that the determination of the Churches to protect human rights and religious freedom has not always been sensitive enough to the many forms of social and economic exploitation and injustice from which people seek liberation.

41. Notwithstanding whatever judgements may be made with respect to the past, we, the leaders of the Christian community, are encouraged and stimulated by the democratic atmosphere created by the Party and its Government. Our Churches are determined to play their role in helping to overcome the present difficulties and in working towards the attainment of a more just and human society.

42. Our contribution to the solution of the present crisis is offered on three different levels. First, we call our Church members to action. Secondly, we present general principles for social, economic and political development.

---

39 cf. Marxist, Humanism and Christianity, nos. 11-13, pp. 10-12.

Finally, we make suggestions for special areas of concern. As we respond to the demands of the situation, we constantly strive to maintain a positive and constructive attitude as we make our measured contribution towards the development of our Country.

43. The specific response of the Christian Churches to the challenge of today's reality is preceded by a general outline of the Christian mission. Particular reference is later made to the distinct and independent, though complementary, relationship of Church and State to one another.

## **CHURCH AND SOCIETY**

### **Christ, the Kingdom of God and Human Destiny**

44. The Christian Church is a visible community of believers whose influence is destined to spread to all places throughout the world. It is also a reality, which is not material but rather spiritual and religious. Its growth is realised as it responds to the needs of people throughout the world in joy as well as in suffering. However, it will only be perfected at the end of the world when Christ will come again - when men and women, and indeed the entire universe, will be created anew (cf. Col. 3:4; Rm. 8:21). All things, including the material world, will then be restored in Christ.

45. The Christian Church is based on the twofold law of love of God and of one's neighbour (cf. Lk. 10:25-28; Jn. 13:34). Jesus emphasised that those who belong to his kingdom must let their love of God be seen by the way they behave towards those in need. This must be expressed in very practical ways such as feeding the hungry, visiting the sick, and clothing the naked (cf. Mt. 25:35-46; Lk. 10:29-37).

Jesus came to free people both spiritually and socially (cf. Lk. 4:18-19). Christians are therefore called to be the light of the world and the salt of the earth (cf. Mt. 5:13-14). God's kingdom is one in which people are called to live just and morally good lives (cf. Mt., 5:6, 6:33).

46. The followers of Christ are those whose lives reflect his life and teaching in their relationship with their fellow men and women as well as with their Creator. This involves a lived commitment to justice and mercy as well as a consciousness of God's presence in their daily life. For Christians, the death of Christ is the beginning of a new life (cf. Rom. 4:25; 6:4-6). It is a guarantee and promise of a future life beyond time and history (cf. 1 Jn 3:2; Phil. 3:20-21). However, proclaiming the Good News and the following of Christ in words is not complete if not expressed in action on a day to day basis in one's personal and social life.

47. Christians are called upon to involve themselves in the transformation of this world. Purely human development, however, is not the same thing as the growth of God's kingdom. On the one hand, the kingdom of God is meant to permeate society in order to transform its structures (cf. Mt. 13:33). On the other hand, Christ's kingdom is not of this world and does not correspond to a political kingdom (cf. Jn. 18:36). Jesus also emphasized that Christians should give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belong to God (cf. Mt. 22:21). He refused to be made a king of this world (cf. Jn. 6:15).

48. The New Testament demands the same high standards of social justice that are found in the old Testament prophets (cf. Mt. 23:23; Jm. 5:4). Jesus was the defender of the poor and the oppressed. He was on the side of those living on the margins of society (cf. Mt. 25:31-36). He built

upon the tradition of the prophets and developed a critical attitude towards the civil and religious authorities of his time, an attitude that finally led to his death (cf. Mt. 26:2-4; Jn. 11:46-53; Acts 4:25-27).

49. The Disciples of Christ strive to follow his teaching and his example. Since its origin, and in spite of the failings of many of its members, the Church has constantly cared for the relief and defence of the poor and underprivileged. By its teaching and its work, the Church is also involved in socioeconomic and political development.

#### **Origins, Legitimacy and Limits of Political Power**

50. In any society, properly founded authority is required to guide people's energies towards the common good. Those in positions of political power are expected to plan, to stimulate, and to legislate for the benefit of all. Consequently every person would be given a reasonable opportunity to grow physically, intellectually, morally, spiritually and religiously so as to achieve complete human fulfilment.

51. God is the ruler of all the earth. Christians therefore believe that he is the ultimate source of authority. Hence, St Paul can write that there is no authority except from God (cf. Rm. 13:1). Authority is given in a world created by God, infected by sin and saved by Christ. The State thus derives its authority from God in and through the social nature of human beings as created by Him. Authority takes its dignity and binding force from the moral make-up of people as intended by God.

52. Nevertheless, both the political structure and the appointment of rulers are left to the free choice of citizens. Thus, in today's democratic States, authority also comes from the people who have the power to elect those in

positions of leadership. Power is thus entrusted to such leaders to be used for others. The Scriptures appropriately remind us that power is service (cf. Mk. 10:45).

53. Citizens for their part are obliged to obey their rightly elected leaders provided that the latter use their power in a morally acceptable way and keep their eyes upon the common good. Whereas citizens may stand up for their rights when leaders abuse their power, they may not refrain from giving or doing what is reasonably asked of them for the good of the Country.

#### **Church and State**

54. The work and activity of the Churches is different from that of the State. While Church and State depend on each other in many ways, nevertheless the two are quite distinct and independent of each other. They have their own particular missions to perform for the total human development of the Nation. It is thus important that the autonomy of each be fully recognised and accepted.

55. It is the State's right and duty to enact laws and to enforce them, to define policies and to see to their implementation. On the other hand, the Churches are aware of how Gospel values should be lived in the various fields of social activity. They thus have a mandate to explain moral principles and to make judgements on economic and political matters whenever human rights, social justice or people's eternal salvation require it. In this way, they strive to influence both the formulation and implementation of the laws and policies of the Nation.

56. The mission of the Churches is religious but, for Christians, religion is not merely a private or spiritual matter reduced to acts of evangelical piety or ritual. Indeed, from this religious mission comes a light, an

insight and an energy which contribute greatly to the development of human societies. The Churches have vision of the individual dignity of men and women and of the Christian society and of shared interests on social justice. They have their own understanding of the role of public authorities and of the responsibilities of individuals in the process of nation building. They also appreciate the importance of good relationships and collaboration between the Churches and the State for the well being of the Nation. However, they are not tied to any one political system.

57. By preaching the truth of the Gospel, by shedding light on all areas of human activity, and by promoting justice and freedom, the Churches strive to guard the supreme value of every human being. They encourage free and responsible living but they do not have a ready-made model of social, economic or political development to offer. They do not have any blueprint for the ideal or fully perfect system in political and economic life. In practice, the same Christian faith can lead to a variety of concrete options and commitments. However, there are some forms of development, liberation and humanism, which do not reflect Christian teaching.

### **The Challenge of the Present Crisis**

58. All political and economic systems embody values and goals for human development. However, they also have their weaknesses, limitations and dangers. Frequently, the practical implementation of political and economic programmes is far different from theoretical framework or stated ideals.

59. Since independence, His Excellency, President Kaunda, the Party and its Government have encouraged

the Churches to help in building a truly humanist society. We have indeed been loyal in our collaboration with the State especially in the fields of health, education and rural development.

60. We are grateful for the freedom of action and expression that we have continued to enjoy since 1964. This has been a true application of the principles outlined in *Humanism, Part II* that says "Religion must continue to play an important part in our National life. We need religious leaders to give us guidelines" (p. 118).

61. The leadership of the Nation has now acknowledged the very grave socio-economic crisis that we are facing. Measures designed to initiate a process of recovery have been taken. At the same time, during the prayer week for the economic recovery of our Country, the Churches were called upon to intensify their contribution to national development. We have been asked to strengthen the economic morality of the Nation and to put forward suggestions for economic welfare.<sup>40</sup>

62. This encouragement, along with the freedom of religion we have continually enjoyed, increases our determination to be more involved in the development of our Country and of its entire people. We aim to do this not just by elucidating general principles or Christian teaching with respect to the local situation but also by concrete actions.

---

<sup>40</sup> cf. Introductory remarks by His Excellency President Kaunda to the meeting of principal leaders of Church organisations in Zambia held at State House, Thursday 31st October, 1985.

cf. also: Concluding remarks by His Excellency the President at the all Churches services to end the prayer week for the economic welfare of Zambia, Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Sunday, 17th November, 1985.

## CHRISTIAN COMMITMENT OF LIBERATION, JUSTICE AND DEVELOPMENT

### Christ: the One Who Loves, Saves and Liberates

63. Christ preached and lived a life of love and service (cf. Mt. 22:34-40). Following the prophets, he called people to a change of heart and to conversion (cf. Mk. 1:15). He rightly applied to himself the words of the prophet Isaiah: *"The spirit of the Lord is upon me because He has chosen me to bring the Good News to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free the oppressed and announce that the time has come when the Lord will save his people"* (Lk. 4:18-19).

64. Christ thus came to liberate people from the slavery of selfishness, domination and hatred, from the power of sin and, ultimately, from everything that oppresses them.

65. We know from our Christian experience that sin enslaves people. It disfigures the beauty and harmony of God's creation and sets people against Him. It destroys one's harmony with oneself, with other people and with everything else in the universe (cf. Gen. 3:16-24). It destroys good relationships in the community and blocks the path to total human fulfilment.

66. The goal of Christ's work is to free us from bondage to sin (cf. Jn. 8:31-34). Christian liberation filters down to all areas of human life whether political, economic, social or cultural. It puts us on good terms once again with God, with each other, and with the whole universe (cf. Col. 1:20; 2 Cor. 5:18; Rom. 8:18-21). It is a process by which men and women are guided by God's power and Spirit to remove the obstacles which prevent them from being really human and Christian.

**Charitable Works, Mercy and Relief**

67. Following the example of Christ and the teaching of the Scriptures, true believers have always shown love and practical concern for those in need, for the poor, the hungry, the sick, the homeless, the unclothed, the handicapped, prisoners and refugees. This is a form of practical commitment to the poor and needy to which the Christian Churches will always be bound.

68. In the present period of increased hardships and misery, we urgently appeal to all Christians and to all men and women of good will to intensify their commitment to works of mercy, compassion, love and concern for those in need.

69. "If a man who was rich enough in this world's goods saw that one of his brothers was in need but closed his heart to him, how could the love of God be living in him?" (1 Jn. 3:17).

**Inner Righteousness and Commitment to Justice**

70. The teaching of Jesus Christ is the fulfilment of the teaching of the prophets. The Scriptures emphasise that the holy men of God had a special concern for the weak, the defenceless, the poor, widows, and orphans (cf. Amos 2:7a; 4:1; Is. 10:2; Jer. 5:28). They raised their voices against social injustice and corruption (Amos 2:6-8; Hos. 4:1-3). They became angry because most of the people ignored God's law (cf. Jer. 7:1-15).

71. They lashed out at big landowners and defended small farmers (cf. Mic. 2:1-11). They attacked the rich people of the towns, corrupt traders, civil servants and judges (cf. Amos 3:9-10; 4:1-3; 8:4-6; Hos. 12:8-9; Is. 1:21-28; 5:2-3; 10:1-4). They also denounced the pharisaism and hypo-

crisis of those who took part in religious services, which linked holiness with injustice (cf. Amos 5:21-27).

72. Justice must reign in our society and each person's rights must be respected. Justice begins at home and Christians themselves must be the first to give witness. This calls for continual self-examination and conversion. The follower of Christ must therefore take the necessary steps to dissociate themselves from the many unfair, unjust and corrupt practices, which are rampant in our society today.

73. It is necessary for Christians to deepen their knowledge of the Bible's teaching on justice and social matters. They should apply this teaching to their personal and social lives. In the analysis of local problems they should throw the light of the Gospel on their findings and devise practical ways of implementing the subsequent call to action in local situations.<sup>41</sup>

74. It is not only individual Christians but also congregations, communities and other Church organisations that we call upon to examine carefully their attitudes and actions with regard to areas such as the following: corruption and nepotism, wages and conditions of workers, the accumulation and use of wealth, lifestyle, fair and unfair profit, money lending and similar areas. Where these do not measure up to scriptural standards, immediate steps should be taken to act more justly. Only thus can we demonstrate that we as Christians are determined to live rightly in our personal lives, our families and our communities.

---

41 cf. A call to Action, ZEC, EFZ, pp. 5-6. This pamphlet is a companion to the present letter. It spells out further some of its practical implications.

**Community Action and Socioeconomic Development**

75. In spite of deficiencies in the work of Christian missionaries during the colonial era in Africa, we should not underestimate their many positive achievements. Some areas that bear particular mention are health, trade skill training, formal education, rural development and spiritual care. Missionaries laid a foundation of practical concern for the daily needs of our people. They contributed to liberation from sickness, poverty, hunger, ignorance and superstition as well as to the promotion of science and technology. They prepared us to act responsibly and to develop our Country.

76. The Churches today work together with the Party and its Government in providing the social services needed by the Country especially in health and education. And yet, despite the fact that the Churches run homecraft centres, trade-skill training schemes, small-scale industries, agricultural and other development projects, it remains true that the majority of Christian communities are not yet systematically involved in socioeconomic development. In view of the tremendous potential for mobilization which the Churches possess in this field, we therefore intend to intensify our efforts here.

77. We encourage all Christians to be more thoroughly involved in community activities providing for the basic necessities of life and enabling men and women to be more productive.<sup>42</sup>

78. For our part, we intend to present shortly to our congregations a systematic outline of the theoretical basis for liberation and integral development. We also recommend that programmes of education for development should be intensified.

---

42 Ibid., pp.7-9.

**Social-political Involvement**

79. The liberation of the Israelites from Egypt was an act of God bringing salvation to a world troubled by sin (cf. Is. 51:10). God revealed himself in history as the one who freed the oppressed and defended the poor (cf. Dt. 24:17-18). This religious and political liberation of the Israelites has given courage and inspiration to many oppressed people in Africa and in other parts of the world.

80. In recent years, Christians have not only spoken out with courage on numerous occasions on issues of justice and peace. They have also involved themselves personally in the political struggle for justice and in the process of liberation from all sorts of oppression. Many Christians in Zambia have also taken part in the liberation struggle, which led to independence. Since 1964, however, the Zambian Churches have not spoken out with a united voice on national issues concerning social justice, economic development and political life.

81. Situations of exploitation and liberation, oppression and freedom, injustice and justice are not just the outcome of the personal decisions and actions of individual men and women. Like sin and salvation, under development and socioeconomic development, involve a collective dimension. They are part and parcel of national and international socio-political systems and result from particular policies and their implementation. For these reasons, as the leaders of the Churches in Zambia, we wish to suggest to the Nation some basic Christian principles, which may guide reflection on economic, social and political issues. In this way, we would hope to contribute towards the richer understanding and more fruitful practice of *Zambian Humanism*.

## **GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR SOCIAL-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### **God's Creation, Basic Needs and Work**

82. Human beings, created in the likeness of God, are the crowns of creation. Our Christian mission demands, therefore, that we give ourselves to the task of restoring the beauty and harmony of God's creation. Whatever our past and present difficulties, constraints or failures, we must never lose hope. We must continually remind ourselves of God's plan and will, namely, the building of a genuine human society, a society that takes every possible step to ensure that all of its people receive food, shelter, clothing, education and health care.

83. Work is essential if people are to achieve these goals. It is through their work that people can develop themselves and carry out God's plan for them (cf. Gen. 1:28). Indeed, it is only by living in a responsible and well ordered way that human beings can succeed in controlling the direction in which they are moving. By organising their social and economic lives effectively, they play an active part in shaping their destiny and strive to grow to full human dignity and maturity.

### **Jesus the Worker, Exploitation and Unemployment**

84. The right to work is a basic human right. The Scriptures underline the dignity of human work and castigate laziness and idleness (cf. Pro. 13:4; 26:14; 31:27, 1 Thes. 4:11; II Thes. 3:9-11). Jesus Christ worked. He was a craftsman like Joseph (cf. Mk. 6:3). The Churches thus agree with *Zambian Humanism* in giving work an important place at the centre of human existence.

85. In the present period of economic crisis, we remind

our fellow citizens of the necessity of hard work, honesty, dedication and initiative. Many of our brothers and sisters have remained poor because they have been too easily contented with the little they have. Some have become poorer because of their own indulgence in laziness, licentiousness and the excessive consumption of alcoholic drink. Others have been crippled by the fear of witchcraft or the abuse of the extended family system.

86. These and other such forms of behaviour, however, should not blind the Nation to the existence of current practices involving the exploitation of workers and peasants. All workers have the right to receive a just wage. The Churches therefore reject any situation, which involves the demeaning exploitation of workers through low wages, and poor working conditions in which basic social security is lacking.

87. God calls all men and women to be his co-workers. According to his plan for the active involvement of mankind in his creative work, human beings are called to subdue the universe and use its potential for his glory and their own benefit (cf. Gen. 1:26-28). The effect of unemployment is degrading and the making of work available for the healthy and the able is most important. Moreover special attention should be given to the provision of work for the disabled who also require adapted working conditions and the possibility of promotion.

88. Guidelines towards a solution to the present crisis are to be found in the promotion of social justice on the one hand and in the development of production on the other. Thus public and private investment in profitable and efficient employment-generating ventures is required. It is the duty of the State to monitor this process so as to ensure that the capital available locally or internationally is used for the benefit of the Nation. Both the exploitation of workers

and various forms of inefficiency should be avoided. Moreover, individuals and various non-Governmental organisations need to do their part. Through self-employment, community projects and job creation, they must strive to remove unemployment.

### **Practical and Philosophical Materialism**

89. Basic material and social needs should be given priority in development programmes. Nevertheless “man cannot live on bread alone” (Lk. 4:4). The Christian understanding of human activity includes the worship of, and submission to God as an essential requirement for human fulfilment (cf. Dt. 8:3). Hence, Christianity quite clearly cannot agree with the philosophical or theoretical materialism of atheistic and anti-religious ideologies. Furthermore, Christians reject the practical materialism of capitalism when it puts financial gain and material growth above everything else in human development.

90. Christians insist that human beings are more important than capital. Work involves far more than the mere accumulation of money. Economic growth must always remain subject to moral values and human development.

91. Christianity does not condone laziness and inefficiency. It is true that some achieve a comfortable standard of living through sheer hard work. However, many others have become rich through malpractices, the use of corrupt means and the exploitation of their fellow human beings. There is a vast and critical difference between the possessions of riches legitimately or illegitimately obtained, just as there is between the possession and use of riches. It is ever the Church’s duty to reiterate Christ’s warning to the wealthy and the powerful in particular that a growing greed for material things renders people slaves to selfishness. It also blinds them to the

gospel values of simplicity, poverty (as distinct from destitution), justice, detachment, sharing and honesty (cf. Mt. 6:19-34; Mk. 10:22).

92. A critical re-evaluation of the life-style and neo-colonial mentality of the elite in our Country is urgently called for. Their privileges and lavish spending in the spheres of health services, education, civil and domestic functions, and such like areas, is a matter of serious concern. So also is their extravagant purchase of luxury items.

#### **Scriptural Teaching on Property**

93. In God's plan, the earth and all it contains is intended for the use of all human beings. Each person, therefore, has the right to find in the world what is necessary in order to live a happy and decent human life. The Scriptures say that a person has a right to own property, a right that is protected by the moral law (cf. Ex. 20:17). Nevertheless, this right is not an absolute one. People are reminded that only God is the absolute owner of everything (cf. Lev. 25:23, Mt. 26:28-33).

94. The prophets publicly defend the rights of the poor and the oppressed and warned about the improper, unjust and selfish use of property. Special arrangements, indeed, had been made to help the poor as for example, by wiping out their debts in the Sabbath year (cf. Dt. 15:1ff), by forbidding the harvesting of the borders of fields and gleanings (cf. Lev. 19:9ff.), and by a ban on the taking of interest (cf. Ex 22:25).

95. Jesus warned of the dangers of being rich (cf. Mt. 19:23). He blessed the poor (cf. Lk 6:20). He directed us to use material things in a responsible way (cf. Mt. 25:14-46). He taught us how to be God's children by using and

sharing things in a way that helps others as well as ourselves (cf. Lk. 16:9; 19:8).

### **The Acts of the Apostles**

96. In the cultural tradition of many African peoples, land belonged to the community; some of the early Christians held their goods in common (cf. Acts 2:44; 4:32). Others sold part of their property and gave the proceeds to the needy (cf. Acts 2:45; 4:32-37). They made this choice so that they might live the command of Jesus to love God and their fellow men and women, and to prepare themselves for the coming of God's kingdom.

97. The sharing of goods in the Acts of the Apostles had not been demanded of all by Jesus. While taking for granted the owning of property, he had warned against its improper use. The unique experience of the Church in Jerusalem was voluntary, restricted to some groups, and short-lived. It was not based on a communal organisation of production.

98. On the other hand, this sharing of goods in common is an important sign of brotherhood, concern for others, solidarity and communion. It has inspired religious communities, social movements and some socialist ideals and experiments down through the ages.

### **Common Ownership and Private Property**

99. In the modern world, many are attracted by the generous ideals of common ownership. Others realise that it becomes necessary when private ownership gives such power to some that it becomes harmful to the community in general. When the common good is ignored, ownership of property can result in greed and exploitation. For these reasons, we see the value of those social policies that lead to the

control by the State of the major means of production and distribution.

100. However, the Churches also realise that socialist ideals of common ownership are difficult to implement in practice. State ownership can easily lead to inefficiency, wastage, the shortage of consumer goods and essential commodities, laziness and even overcharging and exploitation by those in administration. These features alert people to the weaknesses and limitations of State capitalism. Close supervision, improved managerial skills and balanced political education are therefore critically needed as a remedy.

101. During the last few years, measures have been taken to improve the performance and relevance of parastatal organisations. Greater accountability is now required in their management. Loss-making companies have been urged to cease being a burden to the Nation and to start making a reasonable profit. Political education seminars outline the ideals of the social perspective which should inspire them. These measures are a step in the right direction. They should enable State-owned companies to continue improving the services that they give to the Nation.

102. We believe that the right to individual ownership of property which provides for a certain necessary independence and incentive should not be systematically suppressed. However, as this right is not absolute, it must take its proper place in God's plan for all created things. Hence although everybody has the right to own some private property as a legitimate requirement for personal growth, no one is justified in keeping what he does not need when others lack basic necessities. Neither has a property owner any right to exploit the labour of others. Thus, while the right to own private property needs to be

controlled so as to prevent abuses, it should not, hereby on this account, be absorbed by the State.

103. The State works best when it continues to encourage both personal and community initiatives provided that they contribute to the common good. This balance between State intervention and non-Governmental initiatives is found in various types of mixed economies.

#### **Traditional Solidarity and Christian Fulfilment**

104. Christianity teaches that human societies are formed so that by sharing resources fairly and equitably, individuals may be able to develop their talents for the benefit of themselves, their families and the wider community. This requires that individuals respect others and fulfil their obligations towards them. All are accordingly enabled to live free and responsible lives in accordance with their talents and abilities. Provision, of course, needs to be made for those who, for whatever reason, are incapable of adequately caring for themselves.

105. In spite of many weaknesses and limitations, our traditional society (sometimes referred to as a "*communaucracy*") supplies a concrete example of people who live together in mutual relationship of give and take. Within the framework of the extended family, the village and tribe, people are accustomed to exercise in mutual fashion their human rights and duties. Sharing and consideration for others has always been an integral part of our traditional way of life.

106. Jesus did not limit his teaching to the denunciation of injustices. Like the prophet, he expressed the wish that all people should live as children of the one God who belong to the same family. Jesus prayed that we might all be one as he was one with the Father (cf. Jn. 17:21-22).

God desires that all people be brought together in Christ (cf. Eph. 2:14-18; Gal. 3:28).

### **A Challenge to the Whole Nation**

107. The prophets call us to practice justice in our personal and social lives. St. Paul also reminds us that no one should live for himself only (cf. Rm. 14:7). It is important, therefore, that we do not lose the sense of oneness with our fellow brothers and sisters in the society in which we live. The credibility of *Zambian Humanism*, of the Nation's leadership, and of its relevance to Christianity is at stake.

108. The temptation to think in terms of personal interests is always strong. Experience shows that people appointed to serve the Nation have often failed because they have put personal interest before all else. Other unchristian individualistic tendencies are found among those who act as though the proper outcome of economic development was to enable one social group to pile up wealth for itself at the expense of others.

109. After more than 20 years of Independence, we need to take a closer look at the widening gap, which separates the 'haves' from the 'have-nots'. Economic and social classes thus reflect institutionalised injustices. Moreover, the programmes and reforms, which are necessary to rescue the Country from the present economic crisis, should take into account the requirements of National solidarity. Instead of increasing divisions in the Nation between rich and poor, they should aim at a more equal distribution of the national wealth. They should also strive for a more just sharing out of the sacrifices which need to be made. No one sector of the population should be expected to have to bear disproportionate burdens.

### **SUGGESTIONS FOR SPECIAL AREAS OF CONCERN**

110. We are pastors and as such it is not our task to work out detailed technical plans for development. These have to be elaborated by experts in various fields of National life such as economists, politicians, civil servants, businessmen, trade unionists, farmers and others. Indeed, we welcome the increased tendency towards consultation and dialogue, which has recently been initiated.

111. Our responsibility as Church leaders, however, is not limited to the enunciation of general biblical, social and moral principles. Neither is it to be unduly restricted to observations concerning individual Christians or Church organisations. In view of the close contact, which we continually maintain with the people, we believe that we have a significant contribution to make in our own way towards national development.

#### **Rural development and the voiceless small farmers**

112. The decision to increase agricultural production is most welcome (cf. #34 above). However, in the past, efforts have been regularly frustrated by the inefficient manner in which the distribution of agriculture inputs and the collection of crops have been carried out. Even more frustrating has been the scandalous delay in payment for produce. As a result of the recent increase in the price of inputs, most peasant farmers will no longer be able to acquire the seeds, fertilizer and other items necessary for satisfactory production. Commercial farmers and multi-national companies, on the other hand, will be in a better position to secure loans or to invest some of their reserves.

113. The liberalisation of the economy with its increased reliance on free market forces benefits commercial farm-

ers. This process also renders small farmers more vulnerable and puts them in danger of becoming more and more marginalized. While we understand that many subsidies have to be reduced or suppressed in the field of consumption and that higher producer prices will give commercial farmers well-deserved incentives, we feel at the same time that the Church and the Party should more resolutely take up the cause of poor peasants. In particular, special attention should be given to the plight of peasant farmers. Unlike some other sections of the community, these are not protected by pressure groups such as the Commercial Farmers Bureau or Trade Unions

114. The decision to set aside funds enabling peasant farmers to secure interest-free loans is an encouraging step in this direction.<sup>43</sup> Special consideration should also be given to the case of female-headed households, which are so numerous in rural areas.

Generally speaking, we ask a greater proportion of national resources and of available foreign aid might be used to enable small farmers not only to survive but also to produce more and to receive an adequate reward for their labour.

115. The following areas in particular call for special consideration: provision of adequate training facilities for farmers; the granting of subsidies and loans; the more efficient distribution of agricultural inputs; the collecting and marketing of produce; the availability of storage and transport facilities; and payment without undue delay for traditional crops and other agricultural produce. These areas should be constantly reviewed and monitored at local and National level.

---

<sup>43</sup> cf. President K.D. Kaunda, closing Speech to the 21st UNIP National Council, *Times of Zambia*, 1.9.86.

116. In this respect, we feel that there is an urgent need for more coherent and more clear-cut policies with regard to agricultural marketing and credit. The too rapid introduction of new policies creates confusion and can lead to chaos. Moreover, it sometimes happens that new policies are introduced before previous ones have had time to be adequately tested. Systematic efforts need to be made to ensure that the call to go back to the land as well as the pledge to develop the rural areas do not remain empty slogans.

117. The Churches have a wide experience in the field of rural development and they are in close touch with people at the grassroots level. We wish to strengthen our commitment to even greater involvement in the animation of rural projects. Through agriculture projects, credit unions, cooperatives and the animation of various groups (including Youth Movements), we are determined to continue our work of developing the land and making rural life more attractive.

118. The Churches should however, more systematically utilise premises controlled by them for training courses in basic agricultural techniques such as crop rotation or the use of compost manure. The participation of Church leaders in bodies responsible for the planning and monitoring of rural development at local district level should also be increased.

119. In this field, a greater role might also be played by traditional authorities. They could help to mobilise people in their areas, oversee the just allocation of land, and encourage young people to seek for contentment and fulfilment in the rural areas.

120. The Churches are particularly concerned about the problem of the allocation of land. In many areas, it is becoming more and more common for the rich from the

urban areas to obtain leaseholds for very large tracts of land. Local people who have been living in these areas for generation are thus deprived of their traditional land rights. Many Christians are consequently alarmed by the circumstances under which large areas of land are being appropriated by a small minority. At the same time, many of those who wish to go back to rural areas upon retirement (or pruning) find it extremely difficult to acquire title deeds for the small farms they want to establish. We therefore urge that all the economic, human, moral, administrative, legal and political aspects of this relatively new phenomenon be carefully examined.

121. In order to make rural life more worthwhile and more attractive, additional resources should be allocated for the provision of health, education, transport and recreational facilities. A more systematic and committed concern for rural development on the part of all will result in the more effective use of the considerable foreign aid received in the form of grants and loans. It will thus help to liberate the Nation from hunger, poverty, ignorance and disease.

122. The Churches also must assist those who wish to go back to the land. As they have a very efficient national network of communications and are already well established in the rural areas, they are in an especially suitable position to do this. We urge our fellow Christians and Church leaders to find viable ways and means of encouraging and implementing the 'back to the land' programme for development.

#### **Cost Saving Measures and Fringe Benefits**

123. We welcome the long awaited decision to cut down unnecessary Government expenditure and to put more

emphasis on productive jobs (cf. #35-37 above). A certain number of measures have already been taken (or are planned): for example, the pruning of unproductive jobs and the reduction in size of diplomatic missions; the limitation of petrol allowances; the withdrawal of some personal-to-holder vehicles; stricter control in the use of Government transport and suchlike. These and similar measures should be effectively implemented by the Party and its Government as well as by the Churches and the private sector.

124. At the same time, we stress that necessary cost-saving measures cannot be taken or implemented indiscriminately. Sustained efforts need to be made in order to minimize the hardships resulting from unavoidable redundancies.

125. On the question of redundancies, we do not believe that the only alternative to low wages must always be the laying off of workers. While this solution does undoubtedly enable employers in some cases to raise or maintain the salaries of those who remain in employment, it does not rule out other viable solutions. These latter should focus on areas such as profit margins, wage structures, excessive fringe benefits, managerial efficiency and overall productivity.

126. We therefore ask for a continuous review of questions concerning wage structure, increments, taxes, loans, allowances and fringe benefits. In such areas guidelines need to be given by the State. However, the responsibility for finding a satisfactory solution does not rest with the Party and its Government alone. Workers and employers must be involved in the necessary bargaining process.

127. In this regard we welcome the outcome of recent

negotiations resulting in a 25% salary increment to low-paid workers in the following areas: civil servants, local Government, teaching service, police and prison service and non-civil service Government employees. We also welcome the announcement that workers in the high-income bracket will only receive a one per cent increase.<sup>44</sup> This is indeed a step towards the achievement of greater national solidarity and the implementation of social justice.

128. The corresponding negotiations on conditions of service raise the question of tax-free allowances given to a privileged minority. These include subsistence allowance within and outside the Country, upset allowance, entertainment allowance and water and electricity allowance, in addition to the numerous allowances given to those in Foreign Service. In the past, very substantial increases of various allowances have significantly contributed to the widening of the gap between the rich and the poor.<sup>45</sup> Hence, another systematic increase of these benefits would now undermine the progressive nature of the recent wage increments.

129. Generally speaking, care should always be taken that cost saving measures remain credible. The removal of one set of privileges should not be rendered meaningless through replacement by compensatory privileges. For example, many people have expressed concern over the conditions in which some Government vehicles have in recent times been sold to their users.

---

44 cf. Times of Zambia, 31.12.1986. A further increase of 25% is foreseen for the period November 1, 1987 to October 31, 1988.<sup>45</sup>

45 cf. note no. 7 above for the 1964 - 1984 period. cf. also: Summary of the main recommendations of the Administrative Committee of Inquiry into the Salaries, Salary Structures and Conditions of Service. Government paper no. 1, Lusaka, 1985, nos. 40, 41, 42, 51, 52 pp. 9-15; nos. 105 -114 pp. 27-32.

130. We recommend that a poverty datum line be determined which will help to draw concrete guidelines for action. Although we realise that the sudden or indiscriminate introduction of such a datum line could result in many redundancies, we feel nevertheless that, in many instances, it would help those who are able to afford to do so to adjust the salaries of their workers and employees. Similarly, greater use should be made of the observation of the Consumers' Protective Association and of studies conducted by the Price and Income Commission.

131. As it is an essential dimension of the Church's mission to uphold the rights and interest of the underprivileged, we shall give our full support to measures designed to reduce the gap between the rich and the poor and to alleviate the hardships of low-income groups.

#### **Corruption, Trafficking, Law and Order**

132. We welcome the commendable job done by various committees/commissions of inquiry set up to monitor Government expenditure and stamp out corruption and other forms of malpractice such as drug trafficking, tribalism, overspending or embezzlement of public funds. Indeed, we consider the existence of such bodies as one of the signs of hope mentioned at the beginning of this letter.

133. At the same time, we deplore the fact that criminal cases frequently appear not to be followed up with sufficient speed and determination and culprits go unpunished. We therefore ask for even closer supervision and for the establishment of a more effective and more efficient system of punishment for culprits and defaulters.

134. In the sphere of law and order, the dedication, morale and efficiency of the police force need to be strengthened. Furthermore, the police require adequate

material means in order to carry out their work effectively. The role of the vigilantes has now been defined<sup>46</sup> but the complementary role of the paramilitary and party militants should be more clearly spelt out. This is essential if inefficiency and disorder on the one hand and unnecessary harassment of the public on the other are to be ruled out.

### **Free-market Forces and Subsidies**

135. Free market forces, competition, and the law of supply and demand can play a positive role both in encouraging initiative and in reducing laziness and inefficiency. However, there is a limit to the role they should play because they can become a source of injustice and exploitation if the weak remain at the mercy of the strong and unscrupulous. For these reasons both the advantages and disadvantages of the decontrol of prices, the removal of the subsidies and the auctioning of foreign exchange need to be periodically and critically re-examined.

136. We welcome the recent decision to maintain subsidies on both mealie-meal and breakfast meal. While the solution is not immediately clear, we also feel the urgent need to continually focus on the necessity of stabilizing the prices of other essential commodities. Such a measure is called for in order to call a halt to a process resulting in the increased and steady impoverishment of so many who now so often live in misery.

137. Strict measures need to be taken to ensure that our meagre foreign exchange resources are used for the real

---

46 cf. "The Zambia Police (Vigilantes) Regulations" 1986. Statutory Instrument No. 122 of 1986.

benefit of the Country as a whole. A considerable part is understandably required for the importation of the raw materials and equipment necessary to sustain our industry and to provide employment. We urge that the present system, which enables businessmen to enrich themselves quickly through the importation of consumers' goods and other expensive luxury items, be revised in such a way that the Government may be guaranteed a fair share of the profit. The firm implementation of some of the resolutions proposed by the Tariffs Commission will go a long way towards fulfilling these goals.

### **Education, Health and Population**

138. Since Independence, the Party and its Government have been putting continual emphasis on the development of social services in the Country. Between 1964 and 1984, the number of pupils in primary and secondary schools rose from 378,417 to 1,260,610 and from 13,853 to 125,811 respectively.<sup>47</sup>

139. A great deal has been achieved in the health sector. The number of health centres and clinics doubled between 1964 and 1972 when it reached 595.<sup>48</sup> By 1984, there were 841 health centres and clinics in our Country. In the same year, the total number of in-patient beds and cots for hospitals and health centres reached a total of 21,668.<sup>49</sup>

---

47 cf. The Provision of Education for all. Towards the implementation of Zambia's Education Reforms under demographic and economic constraints. UNZA, 1986, appendices A10 and A30. Between 1964 and 1978, enrolment in primary, secondary and technical schools has increased by 155,520 and 338 per cent respectively. cf. Zambia: basic need, ILO, 1981, pp.110, 8.53. The same trend had been maintained in recent years.

48 cf. Narrowing the gaps, ILO, 1977, p. 180.

49 cf. Zambia in figures 1986, CSO, Lusaka.

140. Our population has grown significantly in the past twenty years. It has jumped from 3,490,170 in 1963 to 5,661,801 in 1980.<sup>50</sup> With a current population of roughly 6,725, 300, it is estimated that by the year 2,000, our total will have exceeded eleven million.<sup>51</sup> By that time, almost half of our population will be under the age of 15.<sup>52</sup>

141. The combined results of the deterioration of our economic situation on the one hand, and of demographic growth on the other, are well known. Our school system is under very serious strain and the situation is not likely to improve in the next few years. Similarly, our present medical system is unable to keep in step with the needs of our rapidly increasing population.

142. The Churches strongly support the ideals of participation and self-reliance. Indeed, we are very impressed by developments, which are taking place in this respect. Accordingly, we ask Christian communities and associations to become more systematically involved in the building of self-help schools, clinics and rural health centres.

143. Church schools and hospitals in Zambia have always performed a very commendable work for the service of the whole community. Presently, however, they are labouring under considerable strain and difficulty. We therefore ask that they be given a fair share of our limited national resources so that they may be enabled to continue their work for the Nation.

144. In certain circumstances, and under conditions, which would have to be negotiated in each case, some of

---

50 cf. 1980 Population Census of Zambia, CSO, Lusaka, Vol. III, table 2.6, p.

51 cf. *Ibid.*, table 4, p. 59

52 cf. *Ibid.*, no.5.1.1, p. 59.

our Churches would be willing to undertake the running of more schools or health institutions. At the same time, we note that not all schools in the Country are run successfully. Hence we ask that the relevance, efficiency and honesty of private schools be monitored. It may well be that certain schools may at times require some help and assistance from the Government.

145. The gravity of the present situation has rightly led the Nation to reconsider not only the volume of services which need to be provided in the fields of health and education, but also their quality and general orientation. We therefore welcome the spirit of the education reforms and the insistence of primary health care. We also agree with the more urgent need to give basic primary education to all rather than to open more secondary schools.

146. The practical orientation given to the school syllabus enables students to prepare themselves for life. On the one hand, they are taught basic skills; on the other, they are given a chance to produce their own food and to help in maintaining their own schools. Production units should cover a wide range of activities in areas such as agriculture, poultry, and fish ponds. They should also focus on small-scale industries such as soap making, sewing and carpentry. The latter will be very beneficial in the urban context in particular where it is difficult to find land for food production. Regular maintenance work should also be part of school activities.

147. The introduction of fees in schools and hospitals should be gradual and all aspects of the question should be seriously considered. The need of the school and the cost of educating each child must be carefully weighed against the concrete situation of the families. The new boost given to production units should help to alleviate

the burden imposed on poor and large families, especially in rural areas.

148 We wish to emphasize that Church schools must take active steps to move towards self-sufficiency in order to avoid restricting their services to the privileged. It is also imperative to pursue the proposed idea of setting up a system of bursaries or to introduce exemption from (or reduction of) fees for those of meagre income. Church and other private schemes should complement measures taken by the Government.

149. In view of the economic situation and a rapidly increasing population, we accept the necessity of moderating population growth. We congratulate the Party and its Government for addressing themselves to these issues.

150. On the other hand, we emphasise that the moral law and the freedom of parents and families must be respected in this area. For us, "family planning", sex education and population policy does not mean the provision of contraceptives to adolescents and unmarried people. Such programmes should help families to act responsibly and to bear whatever number of children they, and society at large, can reasonably hope to rear. As for adolescents, they should be made aware of the demographic problems facing the Country. They should not, however, merely be taught the practice of contraception in order to avoid pregnancy.<sup>53</sup> We further reiterate our absolute opposition to the crime of abortion.

---

53 cf. Statement by the Catholic Bishops on Population Policy and Population Education, Lusaka, January, 1986.

## **HUMANISM AND PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY**

### **Dynamic Role of the State**

151. The Churches acknowledge that planning and coordination by the central Government are absolutely necessary. However, they do not recommend collectivism or centralism. This is why we welcome the emphasis laid by the Party and its Government on cooperatives, industrial participatory democracy, decentralisation, community self-reliance, and efforts to give individuals and local communities more responsible control over their own development. In this way, a greater number of individuals and intermediate groups have the opportunity to use their initiative and to exercise their personal responsibility. The weaknesses of common ownership and State Capitalism are reduced to a minimum.

152. With respect to the general welfare of society as a whole, we understand the role of the State as something positive, dynamic and necessary without becoming unreasonably obtrusive or heavy-handed. And yet, we consider as very important the principle that work which can be done by lesser bodies or by individuals should not be unduly taken over by the higher and larger community such as the State or central Government.

### **Democracy and Participation**

153. While the State has the authority to make final decisions, the people themselves have both the right and the duty to share in that authority. Hence it is important that people be given both the opportunity and the education to take an active and responsible part in political life freely and without undue pressure.

154. Participation in political life is deeply rooted in our

traditional culture. Our ancestors considered it both a right and a duty of everyone to take part in the life of the community. Hence, values, which have been handed down from the past, must be carefully examined and meaningfully expressed in ways that are relevant to people today. In all spheres of human life, there should be a process of give and take, of acceptance and rejection, of compromise and agreement. In this way, the best ideas gain ground and a general consensus leading to common action becomes possible.

#### **Various Levels of Participation**

155. Whereas political system may differ, active participation and responsible involvement of as many as possible should be encouraged in every possible way. In Zambia's One Party political system, the democratic process takes place within the Party itself from the section level right up to the Central Committee and the National Council. Thus ideals of decentralisation and of participatory democracy give Party members the real opportunity of sharing in both the development and implementation of the National Philosophy and Ideology of Zambian Humanism.

156. Taking political life seriously at different levels-local, National and international - affirms the right and the duty of each person to play a responsible part in the development of the community. The Zambian Churches praise and value all those who genuinely and honestly give themselves to serving others in political life.

157. On the other hand, we are saddened by the political apathy of the majority of our Nation. For this reason, we strongly encourage all Christians, and indeed all Zambians, to involve themselves more actively in the political life of the Country.

158. In view of the principle mentioned earlier that larger bodies should not unduly control what smaller bodies can do, we emphasise the need for regular consultations between the Party and its Government on the one hand and the rest of the National community on the other. Such consultations are necessary to complete the democratic process-taking place within the Party.

159. Families, parents teachers associations, trade unions, traditional rulers, Churches and other intermediary groups or voluntary associations have much to offer towards the development of the Country. Consultations and discussions give such groups the opportunity to contribute to National development. They also minimize any possible tendency within the Party to suppress constructive opposition by demanding total allegiance from the citizens or by unduly voting candidates for election. In spite of the tensions, which sometimes result from such discussions, the positive value of constructive criticism should not be underestimated.

160. The part that citizens play in public life entails far more than the mere casting of votes. They should not stand aloof from the problems facing the Nation. They should rather make use of every opportunity to contribute to the building up of the Country. In this way, they restrict the power of the State by constantly influencing the decisions of the Government. It is very important that citizens in their political life should be able to act in a spirit of confidence and not out of fear of intimidation.

### **Political and Legal Structures**

161 We believe that the Country and its people will develop in a human and Christian way when laws are in accordance with the moral order and suited to the overall

level of political and social development. The need for legislative, judicial, and executive functions to be independent of each other should not be forgotten. An independent judiciary, a responsible freedom of the press and of the mass media, the free nomination and election of leaders - these, in addition to a basic guarantee given by the parliamentary system and by the Republic Constitution, should be maintained at all costs.

### **Fundamental Human Rights and Duties**

162. Men and women have been created in the image and likeness of God (cf. Gen. 1:26-27). Thus they have God-given rights such as the right to life, the right to whatever is needed for decent living, the right to education, the right to work and the right to human development. Each one has furthermore, the right to be shown respect by others, the right to express his or her opinion without undue hindrance, the right to practice religion privately and publicly, the right to own some property, the right to belong to and to form associations and organisations, the right to take part in public life, and the right to protection by the law.

163. Basic human rights are enshrined in the Constitution of Zambia, which also spells out the practical manner in which they should be exercised.<sup>54</sup> Since these rights are based on the nature and dignity of the human person and have been given by God to all citizens, they should be respected and promoted by the State which is responsible for the common good and for each of those under its care.

164 Recognising our rights requires that we also acknowledge and respect the rights of others. Hence, we

---

<sup>54</sup> cf. Constitution of Zambia, Chapter I of The Laws of Zambia, article 13-31, pp. 19-39

also have duties and obligations to others as members of our society. Whereas individual freedom and initiative need to be encouraged and protected, care must be taken to ensure that the requirements of social justice for the common welfare of the Nation are not ignored.

165. While the Christian Churches endeavour to protect the rights of every person, they cannot accept an understanding of human freedom that is without limit. Hence they cannot endorse systems that either exaggerate the freedom of the individual or unduly restrict it. It is for this reason that the Churches in Zambia have rejected both Scientific Socialism and exploitative capitalism in favour of *Zambian Humanism*.<sup>55</sup>

#### **F. Importance of Politics and of Political Education**

166. In our traditional society, people were prepared step by step to take part in the life of the community. Initiation ceremonies existed to form the characters of young people and to instruct them in the traditions, rules, custom, and values of their society. In this way people were systematically introduced to political life.

167. In our society today, a clear vision of National problems and policies is urgently required of all. Humanist political education strives to explain the basic principles of organisation in our society. Different aspects of the philosophy and ideology of *Zambian Humanism*, including the religious dimension, are analysed and discussed.

Furthermore, citizens and Party members are made aware of internal and external challenges and danger facing the Nation.

---

<sup>55</sup> cf. *Marxism, Humanism and Christianity*, no. 6, "capitalism rejected", pp.4-5.

168. Political Education should spell out the fundamental rights of the human person and warn against various forms of social injustice and exploitation. It should focus on the evils of an unjust distribution of wealth in society and on the dehumanising effect of practices such as smuggling, laziness, immorality, dishonesty and corruption. It should make clear the crippling effect of a top-heavy and inefficient administrative structure.

169. The part played by the United National Independence Party in National building is most important. Its aims, methods, organisation and activities should be carefully explained. In accordance with the principles of Participatory Democracy, political education should also clarify the manner in which trade unions, professional associations, traditional authorities, Churches and other intermediary bodies are called upon to play their part in the running of National affairs.

### **G. Zambian Humanism, Christianity and Ideologies.**

170. Socialist policies strive to eliminate from society the exploitation of one person by another. They aim at a fair sharing of power, wealth, knowledge and opportunity. They focus on the fulfilment of the basic needs and hopes of each person. The Churches are fully in accordance with such policies.

171. It has been decided that the philosophy and ideology of Zambian Humanism should become a lived reality in Zambia through African Democratic Socialism within the framework of the One Party State. Careful planning and common ownership of the large means of production and distribution are an integral part of this process.

172. As leaders of the Zambian Churches, we in the course of this letter have made known some of our views

---

on social justice, common ownership, the role of the State and democracy. We have also given our qualified support to *Zambian Humanism*. Many of its socialist and heartfelt human hopes are deeply Christian and can be supported by anyone who is a follower of Christ. *Zambian Humanism* thus fits in well with the Christian faith although not being equated with it.

173. Political education is different from religious education although it may at times overlap with moral and religious teaching passed on by families. In its approach to history, economics and social sciences, some of its teaching corresponds with the Christian understanding of these areas. For this reason, regular meetings with parents and with other groups in the community are recommended in order that possible tensions or misunderstandings may be avoided.

174. Genuine political education differs from ideological indoctrination. The latter results in making things too simple in addition to presenting only one angle of a particular doctrine or theory. For this reason, the Churches value a comparative study of *Zambian Humanism* with other ideological theories such as *Capitalism* and *Scientific Socialism*. The positive and negative aspects of each system should be fairly presented in so far as no system can claim to be perfect. Such a comparative analysis, however, will hardly be possible if the core of the Party and of political educators is sent to communist countries only for training. In consequence, most of them may find themselves teaching basically *scientific socialism* (i.e. Marxist - Leninism) with only a superficial skin of *Zambian Humanism*.

175. Whereas the Churches do not fail to appreciate many of the religious values and beliefs of our traditional heritage, nevertheless they make a critical discernment.

We thus reject superstitious beliefs such as those associated with witchcraft, sorcery and magic without failing at the same time to be aware of the oppressive conditions which make such beliefs and practices necessary. We firmly uphold the value of science and technology, which are so necessary for human and for National development. However we cannot agree with those who strive to equate religion with superstition and who claim that science and religion are incompatible.

176. Atheistic doctrines fail both to take into account and to satisfy many fundamental questions and aspirations of the human person on ultimate issues. They are contrary to that belief in God which is a fundamental and generally much appreciated ingredient of our culture.

177. We cannot, therefore, approve of the teaching of any form of political philosophy, which, like Scientific Socialism, aims to undermine belief in God and which actively, and designedly threatens the practice and survival of people's religions.

## **PUBLIC OPINION AND THE MASS MEDIA**

### **Importance of Public Opinion**

178. In order to guarantee the participation of citizens in the life of society, freedom to express and to compare different views is necessary. Exercise of the rights both to inform and to be informed is essential. In this way, a society is able to choose the path of development most suitable to itself and to alter its course when necessary.

179. In a democratic society, the press, radio and television give a wide sector of the population the opportunity to exchange ideas. By presenting a fuller background to events, people are in a better position to appreciate the problems of society in order to work towards their solution.

The views of those in authority as well as the views of individuals, of groups and of associations, should be put forward in a constructive manner. The public at large should not be considered as merely passive recipients but should be encouraged to make their views known and discussed.

**Responsible Freedom of the Press and of the Mass Media**

180. Journalists and broadcasters have a difficult and responsible role to play in society. They must try to uncover the truth and pass it on to others. While the news should appear fresh and interesting, the temptation to make it sensational in such a way that it becomes distorted, exaggerated, unfair or taken out of context should be avoided.

181. Obstacles presented by censorship and by those interested in concealing the truth should be carefully examined. Truth should be the basis of progress because of its liberating effect. On the other hand, the right to information needs to be reconciled with the genuine requirements of the common good. It must also take into account other rights such as the right to privacy and the right to professional secrecy.

**Professional Association and Civil Authority**

182. As with lawyers, doctors or teachers, journalists and broadcasters also are entitled to form their own associations. Professional associations such as the Press Association of Zambia thus draw up codes of ethics, offer guidance to their members, and protect them against undue outside interference. Their role is to find ways and means of improving communications.

183. The people of Zambia are attached to that freedom of conscience, of expression and of association which has been encouraged by His Excellency the President and which they have enjoyed since Independence. The Party

and its Government are therefore urged to maintain these rights and to protect the media from excessive economic, political or ideological pressures.

184. The legitimate autonomy of professional associations should be encouraged and should be protected by law. If advisory boards or councils need to be established to supervise the media, the initiative to form them should come from professional associations. They should by law, be representative of all shades of opinion within the community. Moreover, religious liberty in the use of the media should continue to be guaranteed.

## **CONCLUSION**

185. During the preparation of this letter, we have asked for the Lord's guidance so that we might be able to reflect on the local situation in the light of the radical message of the Scriptures.

186. In our deliberations, we have endeavoured to comment constructively on the various causes, dimensions and consequences of the present crisis. We have noted the positive achievements in the Country up to the present along with some encouraging signs of hope for the future. We have not, however, been silent on what we believe to be failures and shortcomings with regard to present policies and their implementation. We have also put forward certain suggestions and proposals in our desire to help to remedy the present situation.

187. Guided by our human and Christian experience and stimulated by the call of His Excellency, the President, we have tried to go beyond moral indignation or the mere enunciation of biblical or theological principles. Consequently, we have called our brothers and sisters to action.

We have looked critically at precise issues such as rural development, income distribution and subsidies.

188. Although comprehensive, the treatment given to issues in this letter is not and cannot be exhaustive. Indeed some issues have been deliberately omitted. For instance, we have not dealt with international issues such as the role of the International Monetary Fund, Third World debts or the need for a new international economic order. Neither have we touched on such important areas of national concern as family life, sexual promiscuity or criminality. We hope to discuss these in future documents.

189. Jesus asked of his Father on behalf of his disciples: "I do not pray that you take them out of the world but that you take them from evil" (Jn. 17:15)

190. Our Christian brothers and sisters should not wait passively for more directives from the Churches or for more handouts from the Government. God calls his children to be the agents of their own development. They ought to work together with non-Christians and non-believers for the betterment of the world in which we all live. They should take initiatives in their professional and political, local and National, civil and religious organisations. All programmes designed to increase production, to reduce inequalities and to free people from various servitudes and slaveries aim at rendering this world a more human place for the greater glory of God. We would like Zambia to become a Country where technology is at the service of all people, where economic growth goes hand-in-hand with social justice and human progress, and where men and women embrace the higher values of love and friendship, self-sacrifice, prayer, sharing and fellowship with God.

191. There is a time for keeping silent and a time for speaking (Qo. 3:7). As Church leaders, we have felt compelled to speak

out at this particular time on issues of crucial importance for National development. Although we are fully aware that it is easier to pull down than to build up, we have tried to balance our criticism with Christian realism. We have spoken, not from the outside but from within the very core of our own society. We have felt its heartbeat and the anguish and pain experienced by so many in this time of hardship. We have spoken out of concern for the suffering of the silent majority. We do not claim to have supplied clear-cut answers to highly complex problems. We have, however, focussed upon both salutary and harmful aspects and effects of current policy measures. Given the harsh reality of the present situation, we have not written in a spirit of naive optimism. Nevertheless, we remain firm in our spirit of Christian hope for the future.

192. We consider ourselves to be engaged in a common struggle with our National leaders and so we confidently say, 'Let us move forward together!' The Spirit of Christ urges us. The future of our Nation depends on our response to the present. Let us grasp it firmly in the arms of justice and fairness to all.

MAY THE ALMIGHTY FATHER GIVE US THE COURAGE  
AND THE STRENGTH TO FACE OUR RESPONSIBILITIES  
AND TO GIVE OURSELVES GENEROUSLY TO THE  
BUILDING OF OUR NATION.

Signed:

Philip Simuchoba,	<b>Chairman, for Christian Council of Zambia.</b>
James Spaita,	<b>Chairman, for Zambia Episcopal Conference.</b>
James Hess,	<b>Chairman, for the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia.</b>

February 1987 - Lusaka

**CHOOSE TO LIVE**  
**REFLECTIONS ON THE AIDS CRISIS**  
**From the Christian Churches in Zambia**  
**January 1988**



*CHOOSE TO LIVE is a response of the Zambian Churches to the AIDS crisis in the Country, which was then just manifesting its devastating effects. It is addressed to Christians and non-Christians. The document identifies AIDS as a world-wide problem in which Zambia has its share. The document gives scientific facts about AIDS and how it is transmitted.*

*It identifies promiscuity as the chief cause of the rapid spread of AIDS in Zambia. This promiscuity has been due to social change and fostered by outside influences that teach that love can be separated from married love. It calls for the recognition that sexual activity has its only true place in marriage between married people. The document first of all gives the Christian attitude towards AIDS and then gives suggestions for combating the disease.*

*Concerning Christian attitude, it emphasises chastity before and during marriage. It further recommends that people should manifest responsible sexual behaviour by avoiding promiscuity. For those already infected the document urges them not to infect others. It further recommends them to go on living fully and taking extra precautions against diseases of any kind. Even when they are sick and faced with death their life in the context of the Cross and Resurrection of Jesus Christ and the Christian understanding of suffering still has meaning and value. It calls for the education of young people and those who depend on them about AIDS. It urges all Christians to show Christian love to those suffering from AIDS.*

*The document states that AIDS is a problem for the whole community and therefore public authorities and every social force must be harnessed solution. It warns that condoms are not safe because they are known to have a high failure rate in pregnancy. Therefore advising the use of condoms gives people a false sense of security and encourages them to continue conducting themselves in ways that they might otherwise have abandoned.*

*Finally the document reflects on AIDS as a sign of the times a call on people to reflect on human love and sex, its meaning and place in our lives, and to ask how it can be restored as a loving and life-giving force instead of being seen as a source of selfish gratification and becoming the means through which the human race may yet destroy itself.*

*As regards suggestions for action it calls for the education of people about the nature of AIDS, how it is contracted and how it can be avoided. Special attention must be paid to youth. The document further urges the proper treatment of AIDS victims, taking care of them preferably in families where the local community can be involved. They should not be isolated but be given medical, moral and spiritual support. Giving prostitutes*

---

*occupations that will enable them to support themselves in an honest way should help them to rehabilitate themselves. Dependants of AIDS victims should be cared for by society by the provision of foster homes or institutions. The medical profession is encouraged to maintain their morale in despite of witnessing the death of many of their patients because of AIDS. The document appeals for respect for the unborn even if there is AIDS. Abortion is not allowed. Furthermore, it is probable that one in four babies born to HIV infected mothers will be free of the disease. Finally, the document recommends HIV tests for those contemplating marriage.*

### INTRODUCTION

1. Because of the new disease called AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) our human race is now facing a catastrophe whose dimensions have still to be measured.

2. Like every Country in the world, Zambia has its share of Aids. His Excellency the President has said in a press Conference that "Aids could wipe us out".<sup>56</sup> A member of the Central Committee is reported to have said that we may be left with old people too frail to till the land and children without parents to fend for them in the towns.<sup>57</sup>

3. These may be the worst possible descriptions of the future. That they are possible is confirmed by experience at Church medical centres in many parts of our Country where increasing numbers of patients are found to be suffering from Aids. What we read about other countries may

---

56 BBC TV programme (Televised Press Conference)

57 *Sunday Times of Zambia*, 12 July 1987

also happen here. It has been reported from another African Country that one-quarter of the inhabitants of one village have died from Aids since the first case was reported in 1983.<sup>58</sup>

4. The disease could overwhelm our health care system and cause it to break down. A similar fear has been expressed in developed countries like the United States and Great Britain.<sup>59</sup>

5. While hoping that our fate will not be as bad as this, it seems prudent to prepare ourselves spiritually, psychologically and materially for the worst, while taking steps to prevent the damage from spreading farther. That is why we thought it would be well to explain with the help of medical experts what AIDS is (Part II), to make some comments on our situation from the a Christian point of view (Part III), and to suggest what might be done by individuals and society (Part IV).

6. We address ourselves, in the first place to all who bear the name of Christian and then to those who do not share our faith but have the welfare of our people at heart.

#### **THE FACTS ABOUT AIDS**

7. *(The Section has been prepared with the advice of Professor Anne Bayley and Dr. Benjamin Nkowane of the University Teaching Hospital, and Dr. Mona Tyndall, a former Consultant there). Our aim here is first to provide the basic facts about AIDS as information for Church leaders who must all be concerned to prevent the spread of this killer disease.*

---

58 Sunday Times of Zambia, 19 July 1987

59 Letter from the 3rd International Symposium on Human Sexuality to the Surgeon General of the USA (Mexico City, May 1987) par. 11

**What is AIDS?**

8. "AIDS" is a medical condition in which the human body's immune or body defence system is destroyed. Because this system is weakened and later destroyed, people with AIDS are unable to fight off illnesses that attack them. Infections caused by germs that are normally not dangerous to humans cause serious illnesses to persons whose body defences are weak.

**What Causes the Destruction of the Body's Defence?**

9. The body defences are destroyed by the "Human Immuno-Deficiency Virus", abbreviated as HIV. The virus is a small organism that can only be seen under strong microscopes. It enters a person's blood stream and settles in certain of the white blood cells (also called lymphocytes among which are the T-cells) that are responsible for the body defence system. When the virus enters these protective cells it grows and multiplies, and eventually destroys them. The viruses, now numerous, move out of the destroyed cells and infect other protective cells. As time passes, more and more of the protective cells are destroyed. Once someone is infected with the virus, it is believed that they will remain infected for as long as they live.

**What Illness Do Infected People Get?**

10. The illness infected people get will depend very much on the extent to which their body defences are destroyed. Most infected people feel and appear perfectly healthy for a time and will not think of seeing a doctor. For example, out of 100 persons, who are infected with the virus almost 80 to 90 will be in apparently good health. The remaining 10 to 20 persons will have some complaint that will require a doctor's attention. Those whose body defences are severely damaged will soon show signs of AIDS.

11. The group of people with HIV infection form a pyramid. At the base are normal looking but infected individuals. At the top are those who have developed AIDS and are very sick. It is believed that all those at the base of the pyramid will eventually move to the top. The time taken for this progress varies from individual to individual and can range from 6 months in babies to 5 years and possibly longer in adults. However, it is probably just a matter of time before every infected person develops AIDS.

#### **How Does A Person Get Infected with HIV?**

12. Since the virus is only found in the protective cells or lymphocytes, all that is required is activity that transfers body fluids with infected cells from one person to another. Body fluids that have an abundance of these cells include blood, semen and vaginal secretions. The virus has also been shown to survive in saliva, tears and urine. However, very little is there so that they do not transmit it.

13. Therefore, HIV virus can be caught in only four ways:-

- i) Sexual intercourse with an infected person.
- ii) Transfer of infected blood.
- iii) A pregnant woman can pass the infection to the child in her womb.
- iv) Through use of needle and other objects used by an infected person.

14. The most common way by far in Zambia for passing the HIV virus is sexual intercourse, when it can pass from man to woman or woman to man. The husband and wife who come together as virgins and stay completely faithful to each other for the whole of their lives cannot get HIV through sex. But people who do not stick to one partner who also sticks to them are at risk. The more sexual part-

ners they have, the more likely they are to be infected. Persons having sex with people they do not know run a special risk. Today it is particularly true that “if you are having sex with someone, you are also having sex with all his or her sexual partners of the last five years or so”.

15. Receiving infected blood or blood products. This can occur if someone receives blood that has not been checked for HIV. Today, blood used in Zambian hospitals is tested and only blood that is free of HIV is given to patients.

16. Transfer of infected blood can also occur through sharing or reuse of contaminated needles, syringes, scalpels, razors or other skin-piercing instruments. Of particular importance in our community is the practice of scarification as practised by traditional healers who may sometimes use the same razor for more than one client without disinfecting the blade. Blood on the razor can thus be transferred to another person.

17. If a woman infected with HIV becomes pregnant, she can pass it to her baby before birth. In addition, an infected woman who becomes pregnant risks developing the disease faster than she would if she had not become pregnant.

18. Normal everyday contact with an infected person is perfectly safe. The virus is not passed through touching or shaking hands, or by sharing cups, glasses, cutlery, food, clothes and toilet seats. Blood-sucking insects such as mosquitoes or bedbugs cannot transmit it. Neither is it spread through water, air or human excrement. HIV can only be caught from an infected person through sexual contact or contaminated blood.

### **Do Condoms Protect?**

19. It is said that condoms, if used properly, reduce the risk of one sexual partner infecting the other with HIV.

This method, however, has been shown to have a high failure rate. In a study of 12 couples, one of whom was infected with HIV and who continued intercourse-using condoms; one healthy partner in every four contracted the virus.<sup>60</sup>

### **Is there treatment or cure for AIDS?**

20. To date, there is neither treatment nor cure for AIDS. This is so because we have no way of restoring the individual's body defences when they have been destroyed. There is also no vaccine to protect someone from getting infected. The only certain way to escape AIDS today is to avoid sexual contact with infected people and not to receive blood from them.

#### **In Summary**

- i) AIDS is fatal disease. Every infected person is likely to die prematurely.
- ii) AIDS is for the most part a sexually transmitted disease. Those who already have another STD are more liable to contract it in sexual intercourse.
- iii) Unlike most diseases we know, apparently healthy persons can transmit the infection to others without knowing it. Infected persons can continue to spread the virus to sexual partners for many years, since the great majority of persons with HIV look and feel quite normal. There is no sign by which they themselves or anybody else can know they are infected except a blood test.
- iv) Anybody who is sexually active but who is not faithful to one equally faithful partner is at risk of getting the infection.

---

<sup>60</sup> Margaret Fische and others, University of Miami, School of Medicine. Report in the journal of the *American Medical Association*, February 1987, and *The New Scientist*, 19th February 1987, p. 12

- v) Some changes in behaviour are called for:
- vi) Sexual freedom must give way to fidelity.
- vii) Anyone with HIV can postpone the development of AIDS by not contracting another STD and by healthy living.
- viii) Women with HIV should not become pregnant.
- ix) Therefore any woman who wants to have a family today has to be sure not to get HIV and to marry an equally healthy husband.

## COMMENTS ON THE PRESENT SITUATION

### Causes

#### Why AIDS is Spreading

21. In Zambia AIDS is transmitted chiefly by sexual intercourse. 95% of those who are infected have become so by a sexual encounter with another infected person. Sadly, this has happened to innocent persons as a result of the infidelity of a spouse who has brought the HIV home from an infected partner in adultery. We emphasise sexual transmission since medical precautions can be taken against the other less frequent means of getting AIDS, whereas sexual behaviour depends on the decision of individuals.

#### Promiscuity

22. The chief cause of the rapid spread of AIDS among us is the increasing loosening of sexual behaviour in our society. This has largely been a result of the social change which has gone on since independence.

23. At the same time sexual disorder has been fostered by outside influences. Imported books, magazines, films and songs often teach that sex can be separated from married love. According to a false philosophy spread

through the mass media, sex can be enjoyed as a right by unmarried persons of any age provided it is made "safe" by taking measures to prevent conception.<sup>61</sup> This philosophy has resulted in the distribution of contraceptives to all comers through some Government clinics (in spite of official policy to the contrary), to youth in some educational institutions such as the University of Zambia, and by private organisations. It has infused the thinking of those who in recent years have been shaping our population policies and is found in the conclusion of the National Seminar on Population and Development Policy.<sup>62</sup>

## **CHRISTIAN ATTITUDE**

### **Chastity**

24. We have always maintained that sexual activity has its only true place in marriage between married people. Basing our teaching on the Bible and Christian tradition, which on this point only clarifies what the Author of nature has written in the human heart. It now turns out that this morality is also the highest wisdom for our times.

### **Responsible Sexual Behaviour**

25. The first thing we need to understand is that since AIDS cannot be cured it must be avoided. Each one can and should resolve not to get AIDS themselves. This means remaining chaste before marriage, making sure one's prospective marriage partner is free from HIV and never engaging in sexual intercourse with anybody else. Those

---

61 Cf. The International Planned Parenthood Federation's "Policy on Meeting the Needs of Youth" and "The Right to Family Planning".

62 9-11 December, 1985. Recommendation 6 b: Unmarried persons should have access to counselling and family planning services.

who have unfortunately been infected with the HIV virus must be careful not to give it to others and should abstain from sexual intercourse, realising that this now risks death for their partner. The case of married people one of whom has caught HIV is difficult and calls for serious dialogue between them. We recommend that they too, should abstain from sex for the sake of the healthy partner and their children.

26. In a word, what is needed today is responsible sexual living.

#### **Education of the young**

27. Parents and others in charge of young people must educate those who depend on them about AIDS. For this it will be necessary to overcome certain traditional reticences. If parents do not find themselves able to undertake this education themselves, they should at least see that others who are qualified and trusted talk to their children.

#### **Behaviour towards AIDS sufferers**

28. Those who have got HIV, whether they are already sick or not, deserve all our Christian love and the message of hope based on the resurrection of the Lord. Let us put aside all fear that we ourselves can contract AIDS from ordinary social life, since AIDS cannot be caught from another person by living with them in the same house, by sharing food, drink or eating utensils, by shaking hands or any kind of normal contact.

29. AIDS sufferers should not be avoided. Neither are they to be condemned and rejected even if their life illness seems to be a result of their own fault. None of us is without sin nor entitled to throw stones.<sup>63</sup>

---

63 John 8:7

30. We must aim to promote community acceptance of those who are suffering from AIDS and to improve the physical, emotional and spiritual quality of their lives up to the end.

#### **Infected persons**

31. While they are otherwise well, HIV infected persons should go on living fully and taking the extra precautions against diseases of any kind which their medical advisers will recommend to them. Even when they are sick and faced with death their life in the context of the cross and resurrection of Christ and the Christian understanding of suffering still has meaning and value. They may be encouraged to live creatively and, as "wounded healers", to show others how to avoid contracting the disease or how to live with meaning if they have got it. For many AIDS victims their fate will be an opportunity to make a fresh start in life, to reflect on its true meaning and to follow new values. With the hope of eternal life they will understand that death is not the ultimate disaster. They may indeed end their lives even more successfully than if they had never become sick in this way.

#### **Public Authorities**

32. It will help to bring about the profound changes in attitude and conduct which this hour demands if public authorities tell the facts about AIDS to the people, not only the medical facts, but also its extent in our Country. If our house is in danger of being destroyed by fire it is not alarmist to shout "Fire, Fire!" As a society we need to accept that we have a major problem in our midst that may destroy our whole way of life. Otherwise we will never take appropriate measures to cope with it.

### **A Problem for the Whole Community**

33. Since AIDS threatens our economic base and social structures it is a problem of the whole community and every social force must be harnessed for its solution. There is already an AIDS Surveillance Committee, which needs our support. The Churches are ready to do their part not only by moral guidance and spiritual help but also in material ways, as they already do in sectors such as Health, Education and Development. We would be happy to receive more requests for collaboration from those on whom the burden of this problem rests.

### **Condoms not Safe**

34. We will not collaborate in the promotion of condoms as a possible safeguard against contracting AIDS. Condoms are known to have a very high failure rate in preventing pregnancy. As a protection against AIDS they are even less effective and those who use them in circumstances where they are exposed to HIV are at high risk of contracting this deadly disease.

35. Giving condoms even to the unmarried is immoral because it condones promiscuity and results in more of the very conduct which today it is necessary above all else to discourage. Even if condoms reduce the risk of contracting AIDS in single actions, when used on a large scale they are likely to increase the incidence of the disease, because the number of acts by which it is spread will be greatly multiplied. What might be a safeguard in particular cases thus becomes a hazard to public health when adopted on a large scale. Advertising condoms gives people a false sense of security and encourages them to continue conduct they might otherwise have abandoned. The result is more AIDS, the very opposite of what is needed.

36. In this respect we find the otherwise excellent booklets produced by the Health Education of the Ministry of Health for schools<sup>64</sup> and others<sup>65</sup> highly misleading. We do not think that parents wish their children to be introduced to condoms in this way and believe we are speaking for all of them when we say these publications should be amended.

**What is the Meaning of this "Sign of the Times"?**

37. We may admit that in many cases AIDS is the result of moral fault, without falling into an over-simple view that the epidemic is a direct intervention by God into human history to punish us for sin committed. We must rather recognise a revolt of nature against being abused and ask ourselves what God its Author is saying to us through this plague which in His Providence he has allowed to afflict us. It cannot take us long to discover a call to reflect on human love and sex, its meaning and place in our lives, and to ask how it can be restored as a loving and life-giving force instead of being seen as a source of selfish gratification and becoming the means through which the human race may yet destroy itself.

38. Faithful to Christ and his Gospel the Churches have always taught that sexual intercourse ought to be the expression of that love which can exist only between two persons who have committed themselves to each other in marriage. It is the principal means of fostering that love and of bonding husband and wife together inseparably, especially when it is fruitful and results in a new life.

---

<sup>64</sup> AIDS Information for Secondary Schools, 2nd-edition. Published by the Health Education Unit of the Ministry of Health.

<sup>65</sup> "Bwino" special Position Paper, No. 6

39. This is a time to rediscover the mystery, meaning and beauty of sexual love, when it is no longer used as a plaything but according to God's plan as an expression of married love and the means of bringing new life to birth. Just as the abuse of this gift in promiscuous extra-marital intercourse led to a lack of seriousness about sex and narrowed the basis for relationships between men and women, so the restraints imposed by AIDS may recall us to true morality and enable us to discover other ways in which men and women can relate and express friendship and love for one another.

40. We may find in this crisis an invitation to re-explore the whole field of relationships between men and women. In recent years these have improved as women have asserted their own value. But at the same time they have also been destroyed by undue concentration on genital sexuality. Perhaps a new reflection on what the Gospels tell us about the relations of Jesus with women will reveal new possibilities for joyful and creative partnership between the sexes.

41. Christian morality and sound medicine now coincide to urge that the only appropriate conduct for our times is chastity before marriage and fidelity to one partner during it. That such a way of life is possible we know from many examples, especially when we rely on the power of Jesus and the Holy Spirit who dwells in us.

### **SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTION**

#### **Education**

42. The basic need is to educate our people about the nature of AIDS, how it is contracted and how it should be avoided. This is above all an education to chastity. The In-School Population Education Programme of the Ministry of General Education and Culture now needs to

aim more at encouraging the young to healthy sexual living than at preparing them to have smaller families in the future. Boys and girls must be shown how to relate to each other with a respect that will preclude sex before marriage. To be "sexually active" must not be treated as normal for them.

43. Programmes for old and young alike will include reflections on human love and marriage and the place of sex in them as in life as a whole. Parents and others in charge of children will need help in passing the message on to the young.

44. Special training will be needed for pastoral workers and others who have to counsel AIDS victims and their families.

45. Although drug abuse is by comparison not a problem in our society, it exists with all its tragic moral, personal, family and social consequences, to which the spread of AIDS now has to be added, because even non-injectable drugs lead to promiscuity. And educational programmes need to take these facts into account.

### **Youth**

46. For the youths it will not be enough just to warn them against certain dangers and call for better sexual behaviour. AIDS adds a new dimension to the youth problem, which has been with us for too long and should spur us to renewed efforts for the training and employment of youth. In addition we aim at a renewal of our cultural life so that young people may find new and healthy ways of enjoying themselves.

47. Dealing with the young, we may recognise the influence of peer groups on their members and try to turn it to

good account. Young people may be asked to encourage one another in sexual abstinence. One way of doing this could be youth groups who identifying themselves by wearing a badge after the manner in which the Pioneers strengthen each other's resolve not to drink alcohol.

### **Public policy**

48. The change of heart and activity, which is called for, must be reflected also in our public policy. It would be contradictory at the same time to call for an end to sexual licence and to permit in our midst things that encourage it.

49. The spread of suggestive and pornographic publications and films, which are an incitement to sexual activity, needs to be checked. Authors and artists should be encouraged to fill the gap with sound but entertaining productions.

50. We find the indiscriminate advertising and the so-called "community based distribution" of contraceptives even to the unmarried, to be out of tune with the needs of our times.

51. The effect of AIDS on our population has not been taken into account in preparing the population policy, which is said to be ready for promulgation. The activities and plans of the Population Units in various Ministries also need to be studied and re-evaluated in the context of AIDS. The same is true of the help offered by international and National bodies concerned with family planning and population assistance.

### **Treatment of AIDS Victims**

52. We turn now to the treatment of AIDS victims. Since AIDS cannot be transmitted in the ordinary course of family

life, those who suffer from it are best looked after in their homes, not only to relieve the strain on our hospitals, but also because they are likely to be best cared for there.

53. In fact not all families may be able to provide for their sick members, especially in the later stages of the disease. We foresee the need to open hospices to receive AIDS victims, not to isolate them, but to give them better medical, moral and spiritual support. These should be small-scale and decentralised so that relatives and the local community may be involved. We hope they would be manned to a large extent by volunteers, which will present a challenge to our religious groups and communities.

#### **Prostitutes**

54. Prostitutes, who are at once the ones most exposed to contracting HIV and important spreaders of it, will require special attention so that they may be rehabilitated and helped to return to a normal life. This will include providing them with occupations that will enable them to support themselves in an honest way. If they become terminally ill they will be entitled to the same attention and compassion as other patients.

#### **Dependants**

55. Many will be deprived of the care of those who should look after them, whether they be orphans who have lost their parents or old people whose grown children have died, because AIDS will ravage adults especially between twenty and forty years of age.

56. We may foresee the need to provide foster homes or institutions in which they can be looked after. The Department of Social Welfare, the Department for the Child and the Child Care and Adoption Society would do well to reflect on this issue.

### **Medical Professionals**

57. Medical Professionals are encouraged in their difficult task chiefly by seeing the sick recover. They will deserve our particular sympathy when, despite their best efforts, many of their patients are doomed to die. We ask them to maintain their morale and not abandon their work in a spirit of hopelessness. The medical art finds its meaning also in the relief of suffering and the care of the terminally ill. The existence of AIDS will face them with difficult ethical questions such as who should be given priority in treatment and in the use of scarce medicines and drugs. We pledge them our support and prayer in trying to solve these dilemmas.

### **Respect for Life**

58. An Assistant Director of Medical Services is reported to have said that pregnant women will be tested for HIV and if they are found zero-positive a termination of their pregnancy (that is, an abortion) will be recommended.<sup>66</sup> Since from its conception the unborn child is as much a human being as it will be after birth, the logic of this step leads inevitably to solving the AIDS problem by killing off all those who are infected with HIV. This would extend even to people who are only suspected of infection, since it is probable that one in four babies born to HIV infected mothers will be free of the disease.

Aborting these children means killing the healthy because they might be sick. It will also add to the suffering of mothers who feel guilty (perhaps without reason) at

---

<sup>66</sup> *Times of Zambia, 13th August, 1987*

having given HIV to their child the further guilt of having destroyed it. Let no one deny the reality of post-abortion guilt and depression. The woman is also deprived of the joys of motherhood which she may experience even in nursing a sick and dying child, especially when she is fortified by knowing that even if she loses her baby she can as a Christian look forward to being with it again in eternal life. There must surely be a more human solution than abortion to the problem posed by the HIV-infected expectant mother.

59. We implore doctors to observe the first rule of their profession - to do no harm and not to turn to the abortion of unborn children who may be at risk from HIV or to euthanasia for the hopelessly ill, either to lighten their own burden or in response to requests from patients. The Lord God is Master of human life and the command not to kill <sup>67</sup> applies to the unborn and the sick equally with the born and the healthy. In this context we are conscious that some patients may be tempted to suicide and we recommend our counsellors and pastoral workers to study how to deal with them.

### **Blood Donors**

60. The medical services are already short of blood for transfusions, because some of the blood donated has to be rejected and other would-be donors do not come forward for fear that tests reveal that they are HIV-positive. Hence there is need for new donors. We recommend to all who are conscious that there has been nothing in their life, which could have exposed them to the HIV virus to be generous in coming forward to give their blood.

---

<sup>67</sup> Exodus 20:14

### **Engaged and Married Couples**

61. We have never insisted that couples who are contemplating marriage should have an HIV test. However, we recommend them to do so, in a spirit of mutual confidence. If they are free from the disease, this will give their marriage a strong foundation. If one or both of them turn out to be infected, then they will engage in a dialogue about their proposed marriage, being in full possession of the facts. They should know that they are liable to pass the HIV virus to the other partner, that a woman who is HIV positive places herself at risk of developing AIDS by becoming pregnant, that her children may be born with the virus.

### **Prayer**

62. Finally, we must pray. Each one needs to beg the strength to lead a moral life. We need to ask for a change of heart and conduct in our society and the whole world. We must intercede for the sick and dying that God may come to their help and prepare them to enter the New Jerusalem where there will be no more death, mourning or sadness.<sup>68</sup> There are many passages in the Bible, which tell us that in response to the prayer and repentance of His people, God has turned away the danger that threatened them. The Lord's arm is not shortened in our day. If we return to Him with all our hearts He will certainly come to rescue us from our plight.<sup>69</sup>

---

68 Revelation 21:14

69 1 Samuel 7:3

## V. CONCLUSION

63. Many of our Statements may seem startling and some of our proposals radical. But we are in a new situation, which calls for new conduct. Let us not try to put new wine into old skins.<sup>70</sup> To day we have "life and prosperity, death and disaster" set before us.<sup>71</sup> Let us choose to live.

Signed:

†Medardo Joseph Mazombwe

Philip Simuchoba

Rev. Joseph Imakando

**Bishop of Chipata,  
Zambia Episcopal Conference  
General Secretary,  
Christian Council Of Zambia  
General Secretary,  
Evangelical Fellowship Of  
Zambia**

January 1988

---

<sup>70</sup> Matthew 9:17

<sup>71</sup> Deuteronomy 30:15

---

**GROWING TOGETHER IN CHRIST, OUR HOPE**  
**A Pastoral Letter of the Catholic Bishops of Zambia**  
**Announcing the Papal Visit and Centenary**  
**Celebrations**

*The papal visit to Zambia in 1989 was seen as a providential time to begin the preparations for the Centenary of Christianity in Zambia in 1991. This letter is addressed to all Catholics, other believers and people of good will. It first of all announces the impending papal visit to Zambia and urges all to see this visit as an event of deep religious significance and hopes that it will enhance the awareness of Christ in Zambia. It urges all to prepare for this event, spiritually and materially.*

To All Christ's Faithful and Believers in God

To All men and women of Good will

Greetings!

1. It is our pleasant duty, as good pastors of the Catholic Church, to inform you officially of the forthcoming pastoral visit to Zambia by our Chief Shepherd, His Holiness, Pope John Paul II.

2. The Holy Father arrives in Zambia on Tuesday the 2nd of May 1989, landing at the Lusaka International Airport at 14.45 hours and leaves for Malawi on Thursday, 4th May 1989, at 13.00 hours. During his stay in Zambia, the Holy Father will visit Lusaka and Kitwe, but he comes to visit the Church in Zambia as a whole. Indeed, we hope that all people of Zambia irrespective of difference in faith, will see his presence among us as an event of deep religious significance. The news of his coming gives us great joy which we want to share with all our fellow Country men, Catholics and non Catholics alike.

3. It is also an honour to our people and Government. His Excellency, Dr Kenneth David Kaunda, President of the Republic of Zambia, whom we have already informed has acknowledged this.

4. We are confident that the people and the Government of Zambia will do everything possible to make this papal visit an outstanding one and one of the memorable events that will be narrated by generations to come. For our part we shall make all possible efforts to make the successor of Peter manifest to all the people of Zambia. Confidence, pride and love will push us to work hard preparing for this great event.

5. The presence of the Holy Father should enhance the awareness we have of Christ in our midst since he is the Vicar of Christ on earth. His visit will be pastoral because he comes as pastor of the Universal Church to show his care for his flock to foster our spiritual growth. We should, therefore, prepare ourselves spiritually as well as materially.

6. The basis of our spiritual preparations will be to see Christ coming to visit us in the person of His Vicar. He invites us on this occasion to reflect on what it means to be Christian and Catholic. As Catholics, we are Christians with very deep roots in the past, in the time of Jesus Christ himself and the founding of the Church.

7. The Pope is the successor of Peter whom Christ appointed to shepherd His lambs and His Sheep (John 21:15-17). In this pastoral visit, obedient to the Lord's word spoken to Peter, he comes to confirm his brethren in their faith (Luke 22:32).

8. For our spiritual preparation we have chosen the theme of "Hope", as the Psalmist says: "He is happy whose hope is in the Lord, His God" (Ps 146:5-6). This theme is connected

with the one already chosen for the centenary celebration of our Church, "Growing together in Christ, our hope, as truly African Christians in our families and Small Christian Communities."

### **Zambia Celebrates 100 Years Of Christianity**

9. The pastoral visit of the Holy Father coincides with the beginning of our preparations for the celebration of the first 100 years of the foundation of the Catholic Church in Zambia in 1891. Our centenary celebrations will, therefore, take place in 1991. But our preparations for this big event begin in January 1989.

10. During our preparation for the Centenary Celebrations, it is right and proper that we reflect together, as people of God, on what it means to be a Catholic and to grow to maturity together. We may ask ourselves what we have been, what we are and what we want to be in the years to come. We embark on this task with hope that God will do even more among us in the future than He has done in the past, thus the choice of the theme of "hope".

11. The visit of the Holy Father is also an opportunity to renew our contact with Christ in the Eucharist which is the centre of our Christian life and in the other Sacraments which draw their efficacy from it and offer us a chance of encountering Christ in profound ways at key times our lives.

12. By bringing the universal Church among us, he puts us in touch with our great tradition of prayer which offers us a variety of spiritualities for a consecrated life and invites us into the unity and fellowship of the body of Christ and those believers all over the world who worship the Lord through the Church's Liturgy.

13. As the Head of the college of Bishops, the shepherd in the midst of his sheep brings together, in all their

lawful diversity, Christians of every tribe and tongue and people and Nation (Apoc. 5:9).

14. As we prepare the pastoral visit of the Holy Father to our Country, we are reminded to see Christ in the poor and the suffering. We can ask ourselves how much we have done for the poor and suffering in our Country. As an aid to preparing ourselves spiritually for this papal visit we will send you early next year (1989) some material that is being made ready as we write.

15. In the meantime let us begin praying in our homes and parishes that the visit of the Holy Father may remind us how good God has been to us in so many ways and that the Papal visit may be a source of blessing to our Church and our Country. He gives us life and enables us to be born again (John 3) through Jesus Christ the founder of his Church. He provides Shepherds who do God's work. This should also be a time for renewal, for learning a little more deeply about our faith, its history and what our responsibilities are before God. Let us question ourselves: Who is Jesus for us? Are we on the side of God or not? Do we pray deeply or is it just words? Is the Sacrament of reconciliation a meeting with Christ, our Shepherd, who is merciful and takes care of us and loves us and heals us?

#### **Material Preparation**

16. We have no doubt that the arrival of the Holy Father will be welcomed by all, without distinction of race or creed.

17. We are also sure that the Holy Father will be enthusiastic at His welcome by the Government authorities, clergy and the faithful of Zambia. However, we must not leave you in doubt: the visit of the Holy Father will cost us money, since he comes as our Guest and at our invitation.

18. A financial Committee has been set up to coordinate the details of the contribution of each parish throughout Zambia for this visit. This committee will need all the help it can get from all of you. We fully appreciate the severe economic difficulties we are going through; nevertheless we are asking you to contribute generously. May we appeal to those who will be approached, for particular services and help, to respond with the same generosity they have shown in the past.

19. May the Holy Spirit inspire us all as we commit ourselves anew to the task of building God's Kingdom in our Country. May God's love abide with us in our families and in our Small Christian Communities as we strive to grow together in Christ, our Hope, as African Christians.

**The Catholic Bishops of Zambia**

Bishop M.J. Mazombwe	Bishop of Chipata, Chairman
Archbishop E.W. Mutale	Archbishop of Kasama., Vice Chairman
Archbishop A. Mung'andu	Archbishop of Lusaka
Bishop J. Corboy, S.J	Bishop of Monze
Bishop D.H. de Jong	Bishop of Ndola
Bishop J. Spaita	Bishop of Mansa
Bishop S.A. Potani, OFMConv.,	Bishop of Solwezi
Bishop R. Mpezele	Bishop of Livingstone
Bishop T.G. Mpundu	Bishop of Mbala-Mpika

**1988, Lusaka**

## **ECONOMICS, POLITICS AND JUSTICE PASTORAL STATEMENT OF THE CATHOLIC BISHOPS OF ZAMBIA**

**23rd July 1990**

*June 1990 was a tumultuous time in Zambia, with a week of deadly riots sparked off by increases in the price of mealie-meal followed by an attempted military coup. The Catholic Bishops responded with a sharp letter identifying the suffering of the poor as the occasion of the turmoil and the lack of accountability of the Government as the root cause of the problems. The letter recognises that the Government has been pressured by the international banks for some harsh economic reforms but it asks very hard questions about issues such as corruption, the apathy of civil officials, priorities for spending of scarce foreign exchange, etc. The growing gap between rich and poor is seen as the most serious threat to national peace and unity. Moreover, the letter challenges the ambiguous relationship between Party and Government and asks just how representative of the people the Government really is. It endorses the proposed referendum on a multi-party system but does not take sides on how Christians should vote (distinct from the pro-multi-party position taken by the Kenyan Bishops just a few weeks earlier).*

### **Introduction**

1. The past several weeks have been a time of extreme national crisis involving great suffering for many of the families of our Country. We wish to express our profound sympathy to the families of those who were killed or injured in the recent riots - ordinary citizens, young people, shopkeepers, police, soldiers - and we offer urgent prayers for reconciliation. We acknowledge the deep suffering of so many, especially the very poor who face the rising cost of the basic necessities of life, and we

wish to offer our compassionate assistance in whatever way we can. We also understand and share the anxiety of our national leaders in their search for justice and peace in our land. We therefore offer these reflections as a contribution to the current national dialogue concerning the future we face together.

2. However, at this critical time our study and responsibility as moral leaders oblige us to do more than express sympathy and compassion. We also feel compelled to speak out on behalf of the poor in particular for the cause of justice. We are mindful of the words of our Lord who warned us that we will all be judged in accordance with our behaviour towards the needy: "As long as you did it to one of these least of mine, you did it to me."<sup>72</sup>

### **The Position Of The Church On Politics**

3. Although our reflections will necessarily bear upon the current political debate, we wish to make it clear at the outset that we speak as religious pastors and not as politicians, as preachers of the Gospel and not as proponents of political systems. It is not the role of the Church to make decisions concerning the type of political system to be adopted by any nation. However, the Church insists that it "has the right to pass moral judgements, even on matters touching the political order, whenever basic personal rights... make such judgements necessary."<sup>73</sup> Our concern,

---

<sup>72</sup> Matthew 25:40

<sup>73</sup> *Vatican II*, "Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World," No. 76

therefore, in the current critical situation in our Country is to reflect and comment upon the manner in which the rights of our people are being affected under our present political system.

#### **Complexity Of The Problem**

4. It seems to us that the current National crisis is extremely complex. The economic difficulties faced by so many with increasing hardship each day reveal to us deeper political problems related to the decision-making process and the democratic participation of the people themselves. These problems in turn reveal profound moral challenges, which are set before all of citizens, leaders and us alike. Let us look at each of these in turn and at the relationship between them. We then propose to offer some specific recommendations for action in the near future.

#### **Zambia's Positive Achievements**

5. Although we have witnessed recent tragic events, these should not be allowed to distract us from acknowledging with gratitude what have been the achievements of the Zambian people through the Government in our 26 years of independence. Zambia has achieved a degree of unity, peace and stability, which is unique in Africa and respected throughout the world. Valiant efforts have been made to extend education and medical benefits to all of the people along with agricultural and development programmes. Moreover, Zambia has been a beacon of hope for those displaced from their homelands by the cruelty of violence and oppression. The Church wishes to positively acknowledge the accomplishments achieved by the Party and Government.

### **The Economic Crisis**

6. Today, however, the Nation faces new and rapidly increasing challenges. It would be very easy to explain away the recent civic turmoil in terms of actions by irresponsible members of our Nation or of outside forces hostile to the best interests of Zambia. Certainly there were some troublemakers involved in recent riots who exploited the breakdown of law and order. We deplore the suffering and loss of life inflicted upon the innocent, and the senseless destruction of property.

7. We feel, however, that the recent turmoil is more accurately seen as the explosive expression of an anger and frustration which has been growing in intensity among the majority of people over a long period of time. In the exercise of our own pastoral care, we bishops have heard and felt the cries of our people. This anger and frustration has been brought to a head with the sudden and drastic rise in the price of mealie meal, the staple food of most of our people.

8. It is clear that there is need for serious restructuring of our national economy in order that we may more efficiently and justly utilize our rich human and natural resources, the gift of our Creator to all of us. The Party and Government are at this time clearly working under certain pressures from the international banks to take serious steps to remedy our economic problems.

9. What is not clear, however, is why a decision of such major importance - the raising of the price of a basic commodity - should have been imposed upon the people without any public discussion and in a way, which placed an intolerable burden upon those already struggling to survive. It is not only the health but also the very lives of so many people, especially children that have now been put at

risk through the threat of malnourishment. We must honestly state that the delayed decision to assist people through an increase in the coupon system gives little hope of alleviation because of a well-known past record of bureaucratic delays, ineffective implementation, and abuse by the unscrupulous.

### **Questions Raised**

10. Many people throughout the Country have for some time been asking very disturbing questions concerning the management of our economy. These questions are also ours.

- Why does our economic system seem to work for the benefit of the rich and powerful at the expense of the poor and helpless?
- Why are there delays year in and year out, in providing agricultural inputs, in collecting the produce of our hard-working farmers, in paying them in time?
- Why are there so many instances of corruption, theft, property damage, failure of services, apathy of civil officials, etc.?
- Why is it that so many projects and programmes are begun and left unfinished?
- On the basis what criteria is foreign exchange allocated? For instance, why is foreign exchange readily available for some projects (e.g., the importation of cars for Party officials, the provision of funds for overseas travel) and not for others (e.g., the improvement in health and education services, the maintenance of roads and the provision of employment opportunities.)?

11. Let us emphasise that these are not the questions of malcontents and subversives. They are the queries of honest and dedicated citizens who are losing or already have lost confidence in the operation of our economy. Indeed, these and many similar questions are being asked daily by some national leaders in addresses to Party followers throughout the Country.

12. We share with the Party and Government the concern over the threat to national peace and stability from tribal conflict. Nevertheless, we believe that a far more serious and more divisive threat, and one which crosses tribal barriers, has emerged in recent years. This is the ever widening gap between the privileged and powerful rich and the deprived and helpless poor. We believe that the lack of accountability in the working of our present political system has led to an increase in this gap. By accountability we mean the duty of officials to explain adequately to the public how decisions are made and carried out, how funds are received and spent, and how programmes are evaluated in terms of their stated purpose.

#### **The Political Situation**

13. At the root of our economic problems, therefore, there seems to be this lack of accountability to the people as a whole. The manner in which the poor have been expected to bear the burden of our economic restructuring programme raises questions about democratic procedures and political systems. Once again, these are not the questions of malcontents, criminals or foreign enemies. They are the questions of people who read and take seriously the inspiring words to be found in the Preamble to our National Constitution which affirm the democratic foundations of our way of governing:

Proceeding from the base that all men (and women) have the right freely to determine and build their own political, economic and social system by ways and means of their own free choice; determined to ensure the rights of all men (and women) to participate fully and without hindrance in the affairs of their own Government and in shaping the destiny of their own Motherland.<sup>74</sup>

14. The ever-increased alienation of the people from the Party and Government is a fact that can only be ignored to the detriment of present and future national peace and stability.

#### **Questions Raised**

15. In view of this alienation, questions such as the following must be addressed honestly and courageously.

- To what extent is our participatory democracy a reality in deed and not just in words?
- Has the process of decentralisation in practice strengthened the control of the Party rather than increased the active involvement of the people?
- Why have we experienced such widespread apathy among citizens in registering, voting and taking an active part in the political process, apathy repeatedly denounced by Party officials?
- Why are the findings of so many established Commissions of Inquiry not made known publicly?
- What precisely is the relationship between the Party and the Government, e.g., between Party finances and Government finances?
- Is the Government in practice free to represent the people or does it represent the Party?

---

<sup>74</sup> *Constitution of Zambia, Preamble*

16. To speak of the Party as supreme is a very misleading slogan for only the people are supreme. Any political system, whether it be single party or multi-party, is only the instrument of the people. This means in practice that political stability cannot be achieved unless the people themselves are involved on a continual basis in the decision-making process. Humanism II very appropriately states: "Humanists believe that political stability can only come about if there is a full and unfettered system of participatory democracy both in theory as well as in practice."<sup>75</sup>

#### **The 17th October 1990 Referendum**

17. It is because of questions such as these that a National debate has emerged over the future of our one-party system. The Church welcomes the holding of a National referendum on this issue and commends the Electoral Commission for the steps taken to ensure a free and open debate.

18. The fact that other countries, including many in Africa, which had adopted the one-party system have themselves been re-examining their effectiveness and reforming their structures prompts discussions here in Zambia also. Although we should not give way to the pressure of outside events and influences, neither should we allow such pressure to become an excuse for failing to carry out the process of self-criticism and restructuring which we find necessary.

19. It is clear that there is not one "ideal" political system. No system has ever succeeded in fully protecting and promoting the rights of its entire people and in completely realising the goal of a just and equitable society.

---

<sup>75</sup> Kenneth Kaunda, *Humanism in Zambia and a Guide to Its Implementation: Part II*, xv.

Both one-party and multi-party systems have their strengths and weaknesses. It is to be expected that these will emerge more clearly in the public exchange, which will take place before the Referendum on 17th October 1990.

### **The Church's Stance**

20. From the point of view of the Church, the crucial question to be answered at this particular time in Zambia's history is: what political arrangement is most capable of realising Humanism's twofold goals (a) participatory democracy and (b) a more equitable distribution of goods and services among all of the people? The Church has already expressed its commitment to work towards the achievement of both these goals.<sup>76</sup>

21. We intend in the near future to address more fully these various social, economic and political issues in a Pastoral Letter reflecting on the Church's role as we enter into our second century of evangelisation - sharing the Good News - here in Zambia. For the moment, however, we wish to urge that the following positive points be implemented in order to ensure that the National referendum takes place within a context of peace, justice and fair play.

### **Recommendations For Public Action**

a) During the period before the holding of the referendum, we urge that special attention be taken in practice to prevent any form of intimidation, violence, character assassination or pressure upon Government employees; the inherent dignity of individual voters should be respected by all.

---

76 *"Christian Liberation, Justice and Development,"* 1987 Pastoral Statement of the Christian Council of Zambia, Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia, and Zambia Episcopal Conference.