

Religion in the News

Bureau serves separatist churches

By Denis M'Passou

Twelve years ago, perhaps one quarter of the professing Christians in South Africa were not recognized as Christians by the South African Government. They belonged to African-led churches, the "separatist" or "independent" churches, and their numbers ran into millions.

The government did not recognize these separatist churches because most of them had no written doctrines, constitutions or articles of faith. The government's recognition of an association or church - from which followed such things as grants of land for building churches - required the church or association to submit a constitution. The leaders of the separatist churches were not worried about the situation. "Who cares whether we are recognized as Christian churches or not?" they would say. "We are Christians, and the only recognition we want is from God, not government."

That was the situation when, in 1960, Dr. Gabellah came to the scene.

Born at Ntshabizinduna, near Bulawayo in Rhodesia, Dr. Elliot M. Gabellah was the first son of a Church of Christ pastor. When studying for a doctor of divinity degree at the University of Indiana in the U.S., he was asked to write a thesis on comparative religions in South Africa. He was faced with a problem by unrecognized separatist churches. Where was he going to place them? Were they Christian churches or not?

In 1960 he applied for permission to conduct extensive research in the unrecognized African Churches in the whole of South Africa. What started as part of a study for his D.D. degree turned out to be a lifetime work - for he is still doing research today as director of the Bureau of African Churches Information and Research Institute.

Dr. Gabellah discovered that in most of the unrecognized churches the leaders had more control over their members than in "European-led" recognized denominations where the African minister was regarded as the mis-



Dr. Gabellah, with a nurse, at work in his homeopathic surgery in Bulawayo.

sonary's "good boy". The minister or bishop was a born leader of his people, who got to his office not through training and appointment, but through innate qualities.

Dr. Gabellah found that, though they had no written creeds and dogmas, these separatist teachings were based on the Bible. Their belief in the Bible and Jesus Christ as the son of God was unquestionable. Their differences were not on what the Bible said, but on which tribal beliefs and customs should be incorporated in the church.

Beliefs in ancestral spirits, the sacredness of certain animals and the witchdoctor's place in the church are found in some of these churches. A Zulu-led church does not agree with a Swazi-led church, though they both teach the same Christian message, because Zulus and Swazis have different tribal beliefs. This explains why membership in these separatist churches is determined by tribe.

Dr. Gabellah was convinced that if tribal beliefs were removed from the separatist churches, they could be as good or better than the recognized churches. But where would come the money to educate two and one-half million people? There was only one source - from the people themselves.

With the help of Rev. L. Mncube of the South African Methodist Church, Dr. Gabellah set up the bureau. With an aim of training leaders of these churches and uniting them, he traveled all over South Africa campaigning for the membership of the bureau. At first the separatists were suspicious, but slowly they trusted Gabellah and by 1963 the bureau had over 2,000 member churches. Research was conducted in the member-

churches and those who taught recognizable Christianity were promptly recommended to the government for recognition. Soon the government used the bureau report in making a decision.

In South Africa, every African must carry a pass which explains where he lives, who employs him and where he originally came from. It was difficult for pastors and teachers of unrecognized churches to say they were employed by their churches, since as far as the government was concerned, these churches did not exist. So they joined the bureau in order to be recognized.

To give the separatist leaders proper training, a theological school was necessary so the bureau built Christ the King Theological School in Durban, with Gabellah as its first principal. Besides offering residential pastoral and theological courses, the school also has correspondence courses. The correspondence courses are more popular because most separatist leaders are part-time church people who do secular work for a living. There are 800 students taking correspondence courses this year.

As the separatist leaders learned, they found they did not differ so much. Many separatist churches voluntarily merged to form bigger churches. In July 1967, 10 separatist denominations with a total membership of over 7,000 formed one church in Pretoria. The new church was named Inyanda, a Zulu word meaning "a bundle". Bundling ten churches together was a remarkable achievement for the bureau.

To show appreciation for what the bureau was doing, the South African Government gave about \$6,500 to build a church building for Inyanda (Please turn to pg. 8, col. 1)

Lutheran churches install minister

The Rev. Paul W. Eriks will be installed as the newest staff person for the cluster of Lutheran Church in America congregations in northeast Portland, at Messiah Lutheran Church, 4735 N. Commercial Avenue, Sunday, August 6, 1972, at 7:30 p.m. Mr. Eriks will be the Pastor of Messiah Church and specialize in youth and parish education concerns for the cluster congregations which include Augustana, Messiah and Redeemer Lutheran Churches.

The services of installation for Pastor Eriks will also include the rededication of present cluster staff and the installation of the newly elected cluster board made up of lay persons from each of the three congregations. The Rev. Dr. A.G. Fjellman, President of the Pacific Northwest Synod, Lutheran Church in America, and the Rev. Kenneth Johnson, Assistant to the President for the Southern District will officiate.

Eriks comes to the cluster position from his participation in the Portland Christian Campus Ministry at Koinonia House of Portland State University as the Lutheran Campus Pastor. Prior to that he was Director of "The Place", a drop-in center for youth sponsored jointly by the Northwest Seattle Lutheran in Seattle. He received a Master of Education degree

from the University of Washington in 1969.

The installation service culminates an afternoon of celebration for the three congregations of the cluster. A progressive dinner which begins at Redeemer Church, NE 20th and Killingsworth, at 5:00 p.m. also begins the worship service which is "progressive" as well. The Rev. Warner Jessen, Pastor of Redeemer Church, will lead the prayer and praise segment of the service there. The dinner continues at Augustana Church, NE 15th and Knott, at 6:00 p.m. where the Reverend Eugene Kindschuh, Pastor of Augustana Church will lead the Reading and Preaching of the word portions of the service. At this stop Dr. Fjellman will preach the sermon for the evening. Both dinner and worship service conclude at Messiah Church, N. Commercial near Alberta, at 7:30 p.m. with the services of installation and the dessert following. Busses will be provided to transport people from one church building to the next.

The cluster, underwritten in part by the Board of American Missions, L.C.A., sees as its basic task the development of community oriented ministry in the Model Cities area of Portland through cooperative programming and shared staff.

Dual purpose

By Chuck Singleton

"... making my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose." Phil. 2:2.

The story is told of "Cool Breeze", the super hip young brother on Front Street. It seems that one of the local churches had caught fire during a riot and "Breeze" stood watching it burn. The minister walked over to "Breeze" and said, "Young man, you've never been to my church before have you?" "Breeze" countered, "Dig, your church ain't never been on fire before."

Many of us church-goers are wondering where the Cool Breezes are on Sunday mornings. And the answer is they're looking for the fire.

When the fire of spiritual power burns in the hearts of church people we won't be able to handle the overflow of young converts.

Jesus said, "I am come to cast fire upon the earth; and how I wish it were already kindled." (Luke 12:49)

When a church depends upon ice cream socials, tea parties, and chicken fries for its existence, it will become as cold as the ice cream, as weak as the tea, and as dead as the chicken.

The questioning "now" generation, not yet having become a part of the traditional church program, drop off like flies when they become aware of a lack of spiritual power.

Today many church leaders make attempts to attract the youth with non-spiritual, secular programs and have found no great increase in church attendance. But when the emphasis is placed on the dynamics of the Christ-filled life, many churches are not only finding the quality lives among its young, but also the quantity youth.

Just as the baby is attracted by the fire that burns, youth will be attracted by the spiritual fire that purifies.

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All things new in 1972

Book review: Our Racist Presidents

By Lenwood G. Davis

Melvin Steinfield. "OUR RACIST PRESIDENTS", San Ramon, California: Consensus Publishers, Inc. 1972. 304 pp.

This book includes forty-one documents concerning the actions and attitudes of selected Presidents who have generally been considered the most popular or influential: George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Andrew Jackson, Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Franklin Roosevelt, and Richard Nixon. The thesis of this work is that, virtually every American President, including those we glorify most, has been a racist. Some of the documents are

original source material and some are interpretations of primary sources by scholars and historians. There are nine chapters with an introduction to each by the author.

OUR RACIST PRESIDENTS gives examples of racism on the part of some Presidents and illustrates how historical evidence can no longer be ignored: Washington's slaveholding, slave-selling and exclusion at first of Blacks as volunteers in the Revolutionary army; Jefferson's clearly stated beliefs in the inferiority of Black people; Jackson's defiance of the Supreme Court in driving the Cherokees from their ancestral lands; Lincoln's statements against Black voting, jury, office-holding rights, delay of emancipation until two years after the beginning of the Civil War, refusal at first to allow Blacks to serve in the Union army and letting Blacks serve at lower pay than their white counterparts; Theodore Roosevelt's view that Blacks as a group were inferior to the white race, his abandonment of his fight for Blacks' rights and that only one percent should be permitted to vote; in Wilson's administration whereby segregation was initiated in the Post Office, Treasury and Navy departments as well as Wilson stoutly defending this policy to Black leaders; Franklin Roosevelt's authorization of the evacuation of 110,000 West Coast Japanese-Americans is one of the most flagrant acts of trampling on the civil liberties of a large group of Americans - an act rooted in racism; and Nixon's denouncing approach to the enforcement of civil rights laws, his "Southern Strategy" which is dedicated to resisting America's movement toward equal rights for all its citizens, his recommendation of an acknowledged racist for the Supreme Court and in general his perpetuation of institutional racism.

There are also several short documents on President Andrew Johnson and on his reservations about equality; Presidents Cleveland and McKinley and how they ignored racism as a problem; and how McKinley justifies atrocities against Orientals. In words as well as deeds, over and over again, American Presidents have reflected the racist attitudes of the society from which they came. Not only were they racist

against blacks, whites, browns and reds, but also yellow peoples.

The title, OUR RACIST PRESIDENTS is eye catching, however, it is misleading. A more concise title would be "Selected Documents of Racist Presidents." Even though the author pointed out that he was only selecting "those generally considered the most popular or influential," perhaps, he should have been more selective and included other Presidents. The book does, however, present some documents that are not generally known to the layman such as "Washington Perpetuates the Myth of the Happy Slave," "Jefferson Specifies Points of Black Inferiority," "An Indian Chief tells His Side of Genocide." Even though these and other documents have been known for many years, they were not made available to the general public.

The greatest asset of OUR RACIST PRESIDENTS is that Melvin Steinfield has tried to expose these sacred heroes of American mythology for what they really were - racists - and he presents documentary proof to support his assertions. Professor Steinfield has another message for the reader and America when he declares: "As we move into the 1970's, perhaps, we may be able to destroy the racial myths that surround the Presidency. But for that to occur, America's presidential contenders must speak with a firm, consistent voice on behalf of enlightened change. And, upon their election, America's presidents of the 1970's must begin to keep the American promise. The reservoir of second chance is nearly empty."

Zest of Life

By Carnegie "Happy" Pullen

Adventures Beyond The Imagination of Men. If adventuresome, confident, vigorous and ambitious youth would walk in the way of godly obedience of Christ they could accomplish grand, glorious, heavenly feats scarcely imagined by men.

Idealistic young men by the billions have risked their lives in battles, in strange and haz-

ardous adventures seeking gold, fame, fortune or some great victory in life.

Such great feats, no matter how astonishing or brilliant, no matter what great fame or fortune they have brought, have only led to old age, disillusionment, defeat, unhappiness, suffering and death, proving that the greatest of such endeavors and ventures were vain and futile failures.

What is the greatest goal of all striving? What is the ultimate achievement of all adventures and ambitious striving?

It is the attainment of the mastery, heavenly immortal life in the body in this world, with infinite freedom and heavenly ecstasy, eternal youthfulness and joy unspeakable and full of glory; with immunity from aging, disease, mishap, disaster, infirmity, disability and death; free from the limitations of the physical earth, from the entangling web of circumstance; from injury by bomb, bullet, battle or catastrophe.

Where is the evidence and the promise of such unimaginable attainments, the assurance of the success of such great ventures? It is in the demonstrations, the miracles, the eye-witness accounts of Christ's mastery over storms, the vengeance of mobs, the rage of the money-changers, the snares and vigilance of spies and armed soldiers. It was only when Christ willingly put off His immunity which perfect godly obedience gave Him,

that He could be taken by the servants of the High Priest.

Jesus said, "Every one that is perfect shall be as his Master." And, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.... And greater works than these shall ye do." (John 14:12). If we are truly Christians we must believe this; and by progressive degrees of obedience we can prove these things for ourselves. Christ both healed the blind and raised the dead to life again and commanded His disciples to do likewise.

Jesus said, "There be some standing here, who shall never taste death, till they see the Son of man coming in His Kingdom." Matt. 16:28. Christ has promised those who believe in Him enough to do what He said to do: "These signs shall follow them that believe." Mark 16:17. Many of these signs have followed them that believed and obeyed only partially.

"He that overcometh shall inherit all things." Rev. 21:7. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne." Rev. 3:21.

The persistent and documented legend of the "Wandering Jew," and the wide acceptance among spiritual people that the Elder John, the writer of the Gospel Book of John, is immortal and still alive upon the earth, but generally kept from the views of crass reporters and from scheming men giving support to the words of the Gospel.



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