

If none of these ideas achieves anything, the Catholic Church, and some of the others, won't have very long to live. Either it has to be pushed into a 'revolution' by the radical groups — and soon, (in which case the old people will leave — and this is highly, highly, highly unlikely) — or the people interested in being part of a new society will drop out completely. The latter is already happening and the present self-satisfied situation

will probably shortly bring about groups of people wanting to create a new, meaningful interpretation of the liberation that Christianity brings — outside of any Church.

They will be able, by their example, and not by rules and threats of hell-fire-and-damnation, to spread their love-message to the rest of the people who want it.

MORE NEWS FROM S.W.A.

(Newsletter from the Diocese of Damaraland, Windhoek. 2 February, 1972.)

The permit issued to the Bishop of Damaraland, the Right Reverend Colin O'Brien Winter, by the Department of Bantu Affairs in Windhoek 28th January was withdrawn by the Magistrate in Ondangua, Mr. van Niekerk, on Monday morning 31st January in Ondangua. In an interview with Mr. Pieterse the newly appointed Chief Bantu Affairs Commissioner for South West Africa, Bishop Winter was informed that this action was taken on instructions from Pretoria. The Bishop was further told that he may apply again for a permit to enter Ovamboland, but that the application, in his opinion, was not likely to be granted.

Bishop Winter, whose permit was valid until the end of 1972, went to Ovamboland to consult with and minister to the African clergy and the white staff at St. Mary's Mission Odibo. This is in the area where the incidents between the South African Police and the Ovambo have taken place. While he was at the Mission, where the morale of the staff was high, it was reported to him that four people had been killed in a clash with the police, and that reprisals were being taken by the Ovambos on those suspected of summoning the police, and that one sub-headman had been wounded and his wife hacked to death.

INCREASING VIOLENCE

The Bishop then went to Ondangua to see the leader of the strikers, Mr. Johannes Nangutuuala. He told Mr. Nangutuuala that he backed his demands for the abolition of contract labour and for better conditions and wages for the workers. He added however that he abhorred the increasing violence on both sides. Mr. Nangutuuala agreed and asked that the church leaders in Ovamboland issue a statement calling for a peaceful settlement.

The Bishop also met with the mother of a prisoner on Robben Island and was told that the Ondangua Magistrate had refused her permission to visit her son. He was later told that the Magistrate had also refused the nephew of another detainee permission to see his uncle. He was informed that Robben Island authorities had raised no objection to the trips.

On Monday 31st January the Bishop went to see Mr. van Niekerk, the magistrate to ascertain the truth of these allegations. Mr. van Niekerk was surprised to see the Bishop and immediately demanded to see his permit. After inspection he handed it back to him. Asked whether he had refused permission for the two Robben Island visits, Mr. van Niekerk replied, "It may be". The Bishop said that he had told the two persons to apply once again, and that he would pay all expenses involved.

The Bishop further added that if, as he believed, this was in accordance with current South African law, he would regard a further refusal by the magistrate in a serious light and would then force action by bringing the matter to the notice of Parliament and the United Nations.

BISHOP'S STATEMENT

Bishop Winter later issued a statement which reads as follows:

"This action on the part of the South African authorities is the culmination of what I consider to be a deliberate attempt to curb and weaken the ministry of the Anglican Church. Since I became Bishop seventeen (17) permits have so far been refused by the South African authorities. The present action is a deliberate one in cutting me off from the pastoral care of fifty thousand black Anglicans and those missionaries and other church leaders who serve them. The reasons for this are obvious.

"I have refused to accept the ideology of apartheid and have been outspoken about the suffering it is causing to the thousands in this land who are daily afflicted by it. I have chosen to act as the spokesman of those who are denied basic human rights and this the government will neither tolerate nor allow.

"I believe the present situation in Ovamboland is critical and deteriorating daily. The government blames the missionaries for the present unrest and refuses to see that the Africans themselves are rejecting the contract labour system. The Church has a vital part to play in finding a solution. I have called for a dialogue between the government and the Church and the government and strike leaders. None has been forthcoming.

"There is a break down in human relations in Ovamboland which is critical and the government reports that things in Ovamboland are calm are false.

"The strikers hold a meeting. The police arrive in force to smash it. There is shooting – people are hurt or killed. The Africans retaliate by burning down the kraal or killing the person they think has informed on them," is how one African described it to me.

GOVERNMENT REFUSES TO MEET STRIKE LEADERS

"Here obviously is a case for the government to initiate talks with the strike leaders. So far they refuse to meet

FROM THE RAND DAILY MAIL

OVAMBOS' LOT: EMPLOYERS WERE 'NOT INTERESTED'

WINDHOEK.—The trial of 12 men on charges arising from last year's Ovambo workers' strike, resumed in the Windhoek Regional Court yesterday.

The 12 are charged with using threats to incite other workers to break their contracts, inciting other workers to break their contracts, and breaking their own service contracts.

Employers of the accused gave evidence. The defence advocate, Mr. Brian O'Linn, asked each of the witnesses if they had taken any interest in the personal circumstances, previous experience, or education of their employees.

They replied that they had not taken any interest.

Mr. Gideon Kotze, a paymaster of E. Lofrenz and Co., said that one of the accused, Mr. Wilho Vulika, had been employed by his company.

His wages were R8 a fortnight, but if he came for a second contract period he would have been paid R15 a fortnight.

with them, but how else can a peaceful settlement be arrived at. The result is bitterness and rising dissatisfaction.

"South Africa is unable to contemplate a change in the system of apartheid and its concomitant laws which the Africans reject. Its only answer so far is the dismissal of missionaries and violence to those who oppose it. For my own part I shall continue to speak out whenever conscience, compassion or truth demand it."

Mr. O'Linn asked if Mr. Kotze was aware that the accused had passed Std. 5 and that he had previously earned R37 a month when employed by the blood transfusion service.

Mr. Kotze was not aware of it.

Mr. Vulika had been fired for asking for an increase in wages.

GASP

Another witness was employed by Mr. Frans Voigts of M. Pupkewitz and Co. He knew another accused, Mr. Laserus Shikongo who had been employed as a general labourer.

There was a gasp in the courtroom when it was revealed that his wages were R1,54 per week. This was the minimum wage of 26½c a shift allowed by the contract.

Mr. Voigts said he had also taken no interest in the personal circumstances, previous experience or education of the Ovambo employees.

A number of other employers gave evidence. A detective then gave evidence of a meeting held in Katutura on December 12, the day before the strike.

(Feb. 15, 1972)

(After REALITY went to print, Bishop Winter, Mr. David de Beer and Father Stephen Hayes were served with orders declaring them prohibited persons from the whole territory of S.W.A. (Namibia). They have been ordered to leave by March 4, 1972).

- N.B.**
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