

Relocation & Reconciliation

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The fact that the ~~idea~~<sup>theme</sup> of reconciliation has been included in a conference on resettlement / relocation is a clear sign of the presence of tension, conflict, friction & subsequent alienation between different groups or communities. It presupposes conflicting views & outlooks on issues deeply affecting the lives of people - and whenever such differences arise which lead to serious division and dissension the Christian community has a moral duty to bring about reconciliation between the groups & communities concerned.

But in order to effect reconciliation one has to ~~to~~ face honestly & fearlessly the situation which has led to tension & alienation as well as the root causes, the basic reasons which led to such division & alienation. Concern, good-will, prayer & commitment are all necessary attitudes and actions which Christians have to display in order to bring about reconciliation but they are not sufficient to achieve meaningful & lasting reconciliation. A frank and fearless action to determine the <sup>fundamental</sup> ~~main~~ facts & forces which led to the feelings of anger, bitterness or hostility <sup>pains</sup> forms to the prerequisite to all effective reconciliation.

"Shame!"

→ Young German  
Teenager  
Why did you allow this?

Let us now look at the main ~~problems~~ <sup>issues</sup> we have to face in bringing about reconciliation:

1. Ignorance of policy & practice: One is constantly shocked & surprised at the frightening ignorance amongst whites of the policy of resettlement/relocation and the terrible effects this are having on the people and the communities concerned. I remember so well the reaction of <sup>dubious</sup> anger and hostility approx 15 years ago when Dr. Cosmas Desmond published his book: The Discarded People focussing the attention on Homehill and other areas. It is now 1984 and still we are faced with this shocking ignorance on the part of the vast majority of white people regarding the issue of relocation & resettlement. Some are ignorant because they do not know - others are ignorant because they do not want to know, and these others form the majority of whites. Amongst Blacks there is also ignorance - not of the fact that relocations are taking place but of the full extent and the political motivation behind the policy. There is no need to tell the black community anything about the fact of removals and the suffering it is causing - their need is to grasp the full and damaging effects these removals have on themselves & their community.

## 2. Disregard for violations of basic human values.

Another problem which makes it increasingly difficult to effect reconciliation is the ~~disregard~~ <sup>apparent</sup> disregard for basic Christian <sup>values</sup> ~~values~~ generally accepted legal rights by the authorities enforcing these removals. We have heard this morning how serious this policy & practice of removals ~~is~~ is in conflict with the concept of law and human rights and the sanctity of family life, ~~the~~ ~~physic~~ <sup>physical</sup> and how serious the threat is which it constitutes to the physical and mental health of millions of people. And yet it seems that all these facts and concepts do not really penetrate the idea curtain of a policy which is being <sup>enforced</sup> ~~continued~~ with a  ruthless determination, a total disregard for suffering, and with a blatant ~~blatant~~ <sup>blatant</sup> justification; Blacks have asked and continue to ask in amazement & confusion: How is it possible that people who claim to uphold western standards of justice and christian values of love and concern could so blatantly <sup>structurally</sup> ~~blatantly~~ <sup>work-</sup> late these values and standards, cause so much injustice and suffering - and still remain largely indifferent & callous? Is there any sense in trying to bring such people to repentance and reconciliation?

### 3. Fundamental difference in perception and approach:

But perhaps the most serious <sup>obstacle</sup> ~~struggling~~ block in effecting understanding and reconciliation is the fundamental difference in perception between the authorities on the one hand (reflecting the feelings of the large majority of whites) and the black community on the other hand. The basic assumption of the white community is that when people of such widely differing cultural, social, economic and religious values find themselves living next to and amongst each other, it can only lead to hatred, misunderstanding, conflict and bloodshed. The solution therefore lies in total separation as far as possible to ensure a peaceful co-existence and stability. That is why the blacks should be consolidated in their own homelands, lose their S.A. citizenship and be allowed to come to "S.A." purely as ~~migrants~~ citizens of another country, as migrant workers or as contract workers. The final solution -

→ Divorce change, divorce mission, divorce mandate

The black community, on the other hand, views the issue just the opposite way. They say that S.A. belongs to us all, black & white, that the idea of homelands, of national or independent states is a political trick of the whites to obtain & retain political or economic control & domination and that the maintenance of this system requires all the unjust laws of influx control, pass laws, group areas act etc.

Here we are dealing with the heart of the matter - especially as Christians perceive it. If we probe these two conflicting views to their <sup>logic roots</sup> ~~logical conclusions~~ it reflects two world views, two theol. perceptions:

Those who claim that people of widely differing languages, cultures, customs, classes should be separated to be able to live in peace are in fact denying the reconciling power of Christ and his death on the Cross. It challenges and rejects the central truth of Ephesians 2 vs 11-16 - "He has broken down the enmity which stood like a dividing wall between them". The policy of relocation and resettlement thereby becomes a denial of the heart of the Gospel and in order to justify it morally, white Christians are using all kinds of specious arguments to justify their unchristian and inhuman behaviour. That is why for the welfare of all of us, black & white, especially for us as black & white Christians, apartheid should be seen and exposed as a heinous, as a fundamental denial of the Gospel

John Hamala

~~2. Fundamental difference in perception and judgment:~~

4. Steps toward Reconciliation

the

4.1 - No reconciliation without prior confrontation

4.2 - Information toward re-education

- parents, congregations, youth groups

~~4.2~~

women's groups

- films, videos, dramas, slide shows

- personal contacts - personal effort - Drugs

4.3 - Churches: Confessing communities

reply toward church →