

# Resistance to and Acquiescence in Apartheid



St. Paul's Theological College, Grahamstown, 1965-92



HENRY MBAYA

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*Henry Mbaya*  
Stellenbosch 2018



#### About the author

Dr. Henry Mbaya is Associate Professor in Missiology at Stellenbosch University. He graduated from the former University of Natal, the University of KwaZulu-Natal and Rhodes University. He is an Anglican priest and currently serves in the Anglican Diocese of False Bay. He recently authored *The Making of an African Clergy in the Anglican Church in Malawi: 1898-1996*.

# Foreword

*Thabo Makgoba, Archbishop of Cape Town*

In a foreword to Henry Mbaya's recent study of the growth of locally-born ministers of the Anglican Church in Malawi, I appealed for more scholarship like it, noting that the enormous contemporary challenges facing the Church in Southern Africa had resulted in the writing of our history taking a back seat.

So I am pleased that Henry himself has taken up the challenge and delivered this extensively researched history of the struggles of the old St. Paul's College, Grahamstown, to transform itself from a racially segregated institution that prepared only White students for ordination, to one which more closely reflected the Church it was meant to serve.

Through archival research and interviews, he has not only produced a detailed study of St. Paul's from the 1950s to the early 1990s, but he has given valuable pointers to more research that he believes could enrich the story. Suffice it to say, in just about every aspect of our common life as a Church in South Africa, our attempts at transformation were characterised by failure as well as success, and Henry has demonstrated this admirably.

As it turned out, and appropriately, it took the closure of both St. Paul's and St. Bede's College in Mthatha, and their amalgamation with St. Peter's College (formerly of Johannesburg, Alice and Edendale) and le Lapa le Jesu in Lesotho, to create a single, united, non-racial College of the Transfiguration (COTT).

Is it too much to hope that one day we will see published a history of theological education as a whole through the life of our Province, beginning with the formation of St. Bede's in 1879, including all the colleges, and ending with an assessment of the achievements of the early years of COTT?

*The Most Revd. Thabo Makgoba  
Archbishop and Metropolitan  
7 July 2016*

# Abbreviations

<b>ANC</b>	African National Congress
<b>Ansoc</b>	Anglican Society
<b>ASATI</b>	Association of South African Tertiary Institutions
<b>ASF</b>	Anglican Students Federation
<b>BCM</b>	Black Consciousness Movement
<b>BOSS</b>	Bureau of State Security
<b>CI</b>	Christian Institute
<b>COSAS</b>	Congress of South African Students
<b>COTT</b>	College of the Transfiguration
<b>CPSA</b>	Church of the Province of Southern Africa
<b>DRC</b>	Dutch Reformed Church
<b>Fedsem</b>	Federal (Theological) Seminary
<b>GADRA</b>	Grahamstown District Relief Association
<b>ICT</b>	Institute for Contextual Theology
<b>IDASA</b>	Institute for Democratic Alternatives in South Africa
<b>LIC</b>	Low Intensity Conflict
<b>NUSAS</b>	National Union of South African Students
<b>PCR</b>	Programme to Combat Racism
<b>PSC</b>	Provincial Standing Committee
<b>SACC</b>	South African Council of Churches
<b>SACLA</b>	South African Christian Leadership Assembly
<b>SACOS</b>	South African Council of Sport
<b>SASO</b>	South African Students Organisation
<b>SPCK</b>	Society for the Propagation of the Christian Knowledge
<b>SPROCAS</b>	Study Project of Christianity in Apartheid South Africa
<b>UCM</b>	Universities Christian Movement
<b>UDF</b>	United Democratic Front
<b>USPG</b>	United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel
<b>UWL</b>	University of Witwatersrand Library
<b>WCC</b>	World Council of Churches

# Introduction

*Resistance to and Acquiescence in Apartheid: St. Paul's Theological College, Grahamstown, 1965-92* is an historical account of a major Provincial Anglican theological college, St. Paul's Theological College.<sup>1</sup> The College was based in Grahamstown, South Africa, during the era of colonialism, and later apartheid in the years 1902 to 1992. As the title indicates, it highlights the College's two contrasting responses to apartheid: the one positive and the other negative.

The book tries to show that there were many instances when the College (and the leadership) sought to resist some forms of apartheid policy and practices. Equally, there were also times when the College seemed to yield to these. The reality, however, was that the College's response to the challenge of apartheid was not a simple matter. Sometimes the line between resistance and acquiescence seemed very thin.

This book seeks to respond to the questions: How did St. Paul's College live through the apartheid era in the years 1965 to 1992? In what ways did apartheid impact on the College? How did the various role players in the College or those associated with it respond to these challenges?

## Archival documents

In seeking to answer these questions, this book constructs a narrative out of various sources. One of these is the documented information of the Anglican Church deposited in the Historical Papers section of the Research Archives of the William Cullen Library at the University of the Witwatersrand (UWL) in Johannesburg. Among these sources is the College logbook.

## College logbook

To some degree this source of information is unique. It derives from the narratives recorded by the College logbook scribes over the years. According to Leslie Adriaanse, a former student of St. Paul's College (1983-1985), himself one time a logbook scribe, the scribe used to be appointed by the Warden on the recommendation of the outgoing scribe. His duty, so Adriaanse recalled, was to record personal stories of students, and some events that took place in and outside the College that affected the College.<sup>2</sup> Sometimes the scribe recorded these with some humour and wit. The fact that these recordings were not subjected to audit or were checked by the authorities does not render them less valuable historical documents. In many instances, the logbook narratives shed some light on important contemporary events and issues in the life of the College.

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<sup>1</sup> Hereinafter, St. Paul's College.

<sup>2</sup> Personal communication with the author, 12 January 2018.

## Oral interviews

This book has also extensively utilised oral source information of 43 interviews (and a few questionnaires) conducted with some former students and members of staff of St. Paul's College. Stories from interviews are intended to give a voice to various people about their own experiences of apartheid during their time of theological training. Enabling them to relate their experiences was intended to foster some sort of healing of memories during the traumatic period of apartheid. I have tried my best to give a fair representation to the racial and gender composition of the College, although tracing Black African female former students of St. Paul's College has been unsuccessful.

The inspiration to embark on this project was partly prompted in 2012 by my reading of Philippe Denis and Graham Duncan's book, *The Native School that Caused all the Trouble*,<sup>3</sup> a story of the Federal Theological Seminary (Fedsem) in Alice, and later on at Imbali in Edendale, Pietermaritzburg. After reading that book, I could not but ask myself: To what extent was St. Paul's College in Grahamstown politically engaged or not politically engaged? In what ways did the College try to resist apartheid?

Likewise, the motivation to research St. Paul's College also rose partly out of my own reflection on an institution that shaped others and my own theological training in the late 1980s. In this respect, this is merely an attempt to write the history of a very important theological institution in the Anglican Church in Southern Africa.

Flora Keshgegian noted: "All history is a construction."<sup>4</sup> The stories that the informants give are not intended to tell *the* 'truth' about what *actually happened*. Rather, they convey an approximation of what and how it took place. As Keshgegian further noted: "Historical meaning is not fixed."<sup>5</sup> As recollections and reflections, the stories, which form the bulk of the narrative, are essentially interpretations of what happened. In some instances, what the informants say is supported by and elucidated by archival documents. I have also used secondary sources on various aspects of the socio-political and religious history of South Africa and the Anglican Church.

But the book is more than just a history of the College. It is a story that gives insight into the various struggles that related to socio-economic, cultural and political issues as the College sought to respond to the challenge of apartheid. These struggles or tensions, by groups or individuals, derived from different perceptions and interpretation of issues related to apartheid. Fundamentally, these tensions and conflicts derived from a religious ideology and outlook that projected reality into binaries – the 'sacred' versus the 'secular', 'religion' as opposed to 'politics', or 'church' versus 'state'.

The year 1965 is particularly significant as the year when apartheid was being entrenched. It was also a golden era of the Ecumenical Renewal, as well as an era characterised by the 'death of God' debate in the Anglican Church. To some extent, the story of St. Paul's College covered in this period

3 Denis, P. and Duncan, G. *The Native School that Caused all the Trouble*. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2011.

4 Keshgegian, F. *Redeeming Memories*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2000, p. 95.

5 *Ibid.*

is a history of transformation. The book traces the changes that the College went through from 1965 to 1992, the year that the College closed, and gave way to the establishment of the College of the Transfiguration (COTT). These changes entailed racial, cultural, gender and theological perspectives.

Apartheid had many faces to which the College sought to respond. Essentially, this book is about the mission of the Church in theological education in the context of apartheid. Hence, it could also be viewed from the perspective of the following question: What missionary role did St. Paul's College play in the context of apartheid? The mission of the Church and theological education are in fact inseparable, as will become clear throughout this book. This book, however, does not pretend to cover all issues or challenges that the College went through. This would be an almost impossible task to achieve. The book has nonetheless tried to grapple with some of the major ones.

# Chapter 1

## Training Anglicans in the Context of Apartheid 1965-71

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENT THAT WHEREAS in the year of Our Lord One Thousand and Nine Hundred and Two the Bishop of Grahamstown established a residential Theological College for the training of European candidates for the Sacred ministry, and allowed the said College to use, during and his successors pleasure, certain ground in Grahamstown.<sup>1</sup>

Through this proclamation, St. Paul's College was officially established in Grahamstown, South Africa, in 1902. It was exclusively to train male European Anglicans, who responded to a vocation to the priesthood. By then, the Anglican Church in South Africa had made significant inroads in both 'Black' and 'White' communities and had consequently inspired a lot of vocations. Despite this development, overseas mission agencies such as the United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (USPG) and the Society for the Propagation of the Christian Knowledge (SPCK) had not stopped sending missionaries, some of whom were already qualified priests, while others received their training in South Africa and a few were sent to England. The money invested by mission agencies also determined the kind of training that was provided; it had to be an extension, if not a mirror of the training provided to Anglican ordinands in Europe. The staff initially employed to teach there also came directly from Europe. Consequently, the English model was transplanted to South Africa without regard to the marked differences in the two contexts. If anything, one of its unintended consequences was to advance cultural imperialism.

This appears to have been accepted as a divinely ordained order of things until the winds of change began to blow following World War II. By then,<sup>2</sup> the apartheid ideology in South Africa was slowly beginning to crystallise and by the mid-1960s, it had become a political system. Enforced racial segregation, which was one of its cornerstones, challenged the Anglican Church to lay bare its identity and theological foundations. While social stratification was not new in British societies, the fact that apartheid was intended to create a 'pure' White race, as well as to preserve its privileges at the expense of dark-skinned Africans, was an embarrassment to both the Church and the civilised world. However, not all Anglican leaders (who were entirely White) perceived it in the same way. Nor did those who expressed different views agree on how to be Church of God in the apartheid context. Theological education and training was not spared from this controversy. In fact, it could not escape it, because the ambassadors of the Anglican Church and what it stood for were products of its theological education.

1 ACT X, Constitution and Trust Deed of St. Paul's College, AB 2568, B 4, 1983-86 (emphasis in original document), Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

2 The apartheid system was ushered in by the National Party in 1948. Its policies were being constantly perfected and implemented between that time and the mid-1980s when the National Party was forced to water down or scrap some of the policies, starting in Namibia. For the purposes of the book, the period focus is 1965-1971.

It took the wisdom and practice of individuals with a single purpose such as John Suggit to raise questions about the kind of attributes expected of priests who had gone through St. Paul's College training within the very limited space allowed by the apartheid system. However, much as his initiatives may have contributed, they laid a foundation for the accelerated changes that were to take place in the 1970s, imposed from without.

In this chapter, I allow the voices of significant participants and role players at different stages between 1965 and 1971 to take us through the events of the time. As will become clear, this period is not arbitrarily chosen. The rationale is that in 1965, four years after the general election, South Africa entered a new era, one where apartheid policies were being implemented with ruthlessness. This was also a period when political organisations were banned and protest action suppressed. This forced political activists to go underground. South Africa became internationally isolated. More importantly, for the purpose of this study, St. Paul's College also entered a new era: Suggit, a married man, a great scholar, succeeded Canon Norman Blamires, a monk of the Community of the Resurrection.

## The English roots of theological training in the late 19th century in South Africa

St. Paul's College was founded during the colonial era when the Anglican Church, as a legacy of its English roots, related to the South African government as if it were the "State Church" of the nation. Chichele Hewitt, a former student, who succeeded Duncan Buchanan as Warden in 1986, noted that in 1883, Webb, who was translated from Bloemfontein to become Bishop of Grahamstown, brought with him his vision of theological education.<sup>3</sup> Since, as Hewitt says, while in England, Webb had been Vice Principal of Cuddesdon College in Oxford, it is inevitable that he came with some influence of Cuddesdon, which possibly had some bearing on the emerging College. Frank England also noted that it was at this time that Bishop Webb founded the Community of the Resurrection of our Lord.<sup>4</sup> Philip Dixie, a former student of St. Paul's College, writing in 1972 to Duncan Buchanan, said that during his time as a student in 1962, he had heard that the College was modelled on Cuddesdon College, and that it used to make use of the Cuddesdon College's *Office Book*.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, it would appear that since its inception, St. Paul's College shared in the Anglo-Catholic spirituality and traditions that the Anglican Church in South Africa had inherited from the Anglo-Catholic wing of the Church of England in the late 19th century.<sup>6</sup>

Significantly, St. Paul's College similarly came to be shaped by the intellectual roots and ecclesiastical traditions and customs of priestly formation and theological training that lay in 19th-century England

3 Hewitt, C. "A History of St. Paul's College", adapted from a talk to the Grahamstown Historical Society, 10 May 1993, *The College of Transfiguration Journal*, First Anniversary Issue, College of the Transfiguration, Grahamstown, February 1994.

4 England, F. "Tracing Southern African Anglicanism", In: F. England and T. Paterson (eds.), *Bounty in Bondage, The Anglican Church in Southern Africa*. Johannesburg: Raven Press, 1989, p. 24.

5 Philip Dixie, *Doulos* (the College's magazine), 1972, Suggit's library, Silvermine Village, Noordhoek.

6 England, "Tracing Southern African Anglicanism", pp. 21-28.

and perhaps more remotely into the ancient Christian era. Analysing this legacy will, to a degree, help us to better understand the role that the College played during the era of apartheid, in the years between 1965 and 1992.

In his discussion on the nature of theological training in England in the 19th century, Martyn Percy outlined three outstanding features that characterised theological colleges. One of these, according to Percy, stressed the distinct character of the college and the individual (ordinand) as 'set apart' from the rest of society. This view, so he asserted, stressed that "the individual [ordinand] and the institution [are] set apart from their surroundings for deep and rich composition".<sup>7</sup> The system stressed theological training as the process of moulding an ordinand into priestly habits and the traditions of the Church. An ordinand had to see himself as 'separate' from society, and the college existed distinct from society.

John Tomlinson showed that this type of training emphasised the vocational more than the academic dimension of ministry. In this respect, a theological college was construed to be a place where 'men might be "formed" for the ministry'.<sup>8</sup> On the other hand, according to Stuart Mews, this view of training stressed "formation [as] a progressive and subtle journey ... a discipline of prayer is instilled rather than imposed".<sup>9</sup> Mews further described the character of a theological college or non-residential course as a community of fellow learners "to learn how to become the Expounders of the views of the Church and not to explain our own beliefs".<sup>10</sup> In these schemes of training, the Bishop closely controlled what was taught.<sup>11</sup> Stress here is laid on the ordinand conforming to the ecclesiastical status quo, what the Church had always taught. Tomlinson asserted: "Through patronage and social connections, ordination had in some cases been aligned with social status." Furthermore, he argued that "the intention was to create a new kind of a gentleman and ordination was associated with high social status".<sup>12</sup>

Christine Berberch has argued that the concept of the 'gentleman' was very complex.<sup>13</sup> She asserted that it entailed, amongst other issues, a distinct social class in English society, often associated with aristocracy, and that a gentleman was expected to behave and act in a 'respectable' manner.<sup>14</sup> They were expected to retain 'respectability' and act in 'moderation' in society.<sup>15</sup> Similarly, Roy Yates argued that

7 Martyn Percy. "Sacred Sagacity: Formation and Training for Ministry in a Church of England Seminary", [www.anglicantheologicalreview.org/static/pdf/articles/percy\\_90.2.pdf](http://www.anglicantheologicalreview.org/static/pdf/articles/percy_90.2.pdf) [accessed 1 April 2016].

8 An Innovation in Nineteenth-Century Theological Training: The Lichfield Probationers' Scheme, <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=rft&AN=ATLA0001552059&site=ehost-live&scope=site> [accessed 1 April 2016].

9 "Clergymen, Gentlemen and Men: World War I and the Requirements, Recruitment, and Training of the Anglican Ministry", [www.jstor.org/stable/24012959](http://www.jstor.org/stable/24012959) [accessed 1 April 2016].

10 *Ibid.*

11 *Ibid.*

12 "An Innovation in Nineteenth-Century Theological Training: The Lichfield, Probationer's Scheme", <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=rft&AN=ATLA0001552059&site=ehost-live&scope=site> [accessed 1 April 2016].

13 "The Image of the English Gentleman in Twentieth-Century Literature", Hampshire: Ashgate, 2007, <https://www.routledge.com/products/9780754661269> [accessed 1 April 2016].

14 *Ibid.*

15 *Ibid.*

the intention was to develop a kind of a “gentle clergyman” who was “set apart from the rest of mankind by a distinct style of life”.<sup>16</sup> More significantly, Yates noted that this kind of training fostered a kind of clergyman who had “little awareness of the conditions of poverty” and “nothing to disturb the existing social order”. In short, this mode of training was essentially conservative. It stressed the preservation of the ecclesiastical, social and political order, where the ordinands had very little connection with society, possibly the consequence of a view that tended to foster the notion that the clergy (ordinands) were a class distinct from society. As will become evident later, to some degree, and from different dimensions, these features were also present in the life of St. Paul’s College.

Michael Nuttall identified another strand of the English ecclesiastical tradition that came to shape theological training in South Africa. In his article, “Theological Training in a Historical Perspective”, Nuttall traced English traditions that came to define and shape theological training in South Africa at the turn of the 20th century. Central to this was the concept and tradition of the “Bishop’s *familia*”.<sup>17</sup> Nuttall highlighted the paternal role of the Bishop in fostering, nurturing vocations and the training of the ordinands. Nuttall puts it in this way: “[T]hose [ordinands] who came into the Bishop’s *familia* for education and training were adopted by him as spiritual sons, whom he was obliged thenceforth not only to educate, but also to feed and clothe and maintain, in return for which, the trainees were bound to serve the diocese”.<sup>18</sup> The actual training of the ordinands in England, as was to be the case in South Africa, so Nuttall noted, was essentially the responsibility of a diocesan Bishop.<sup>19</sup> According to Nuttall, the Bishop took his ordinands as his “sons” into his “family”, and the latter related to the Bishop as his “father”.<sup>20</sup> This issue and its implications will be elaborated further in Chapter 3.

Likewise, speaking directly into the South African context, M.P. Moila, a Lutheran Theologian, argued that the “English-Speaking Churches”,<sup>21</sup> including the Anglican Church and its theological institutions, in this particular case St. Paul’s College, was ‘invaded’ by a liberal political ideology. Moila indicates that it was a theology that espoused White supremacy, which demonised almost everything African, and treated an African in the spirit of paternalism. According to Moila:

Liberal theologians find it very difficult to accept other ways of doing theology, because they believe that there is only one way of doing theology. For them the task of theology is to examine the documents of the past with as much scholarship and detachment as possible. As a result, they regard willingness to dialogue with the context in which theology is being done as a distraction from

16 “Communication, Leeds Clergy School, 1876-1925”, <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=89630756&site=ehost-live&scope=site> [accessed 1 April 2016].

17 Nuttall, M. “Theological Training in a Historical Perspective”, *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*, No. 18, March 1977, pp. 32-47.

18 *Ibid.*

19 *Ibid.*

20 *Ibid.*

21 The term is used by James Cochrane to refer especially to the Anglican and Methodist Churches. See *Servants of Power, The Role of the English-Speaking Churches in South Africa 1903-1930*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1987.

the theological task. They are concerned above all with the interpretation of the Bible. They aim at discovering the truth not by living it but by studying it.<sup>22</sup>

In other words, for Moila, this form of theology was more preoccupied with the pursuit of intellectual knowledge than with practical issues affecting society. Thus, conducted in the 'ivory towers', it would appear that this approach to theology bore very little relevance to the contextual issues of the day. Having said this, Moila went on to argue that in "theological seminaries and university department of theology ... the syllabi tend to be Western in orientation". He concluded by asserting: "[T]hey [could not] get rid of ... this type of theology [which] is learnt through indoctrination and drilling".<sup>23</sup>

One tradition that the College appeared to have inherited, which in fact was the general attitude of the Anglican hierarchy in Southern Africa, was the tendency to associate the priesthood and ministry with masculinity. It was a distinctive feature of the Anglo-Catholic spirituality and tradition of that period. As noted earlier on, some of the Wardens, such as Blamires, were celibate. Archbishop Geoffrey Clayton, himself celibate, in the 1950s was known to have "despised" women.<sup>24</sup> It is from this perspective that the College's attitude towards women will have to be viewed. Thus, writing in 1994, Hewitt outlined the tradition that had come to define the orientation of the College until the late 1970s, as follows:

I have not attempted to establish the exact sequence of events regarding the question of married students at college, but the story is rather amusing. For most of the history of College, it was a place for single students, and married students had to be apart from their wives. There came a time, so the story goes, when wives were allowed to live in Port Elizabeth, and then separately in Grahamstown. Either [Norman] Blamires or Suggit allowed the transition to married families on the campus, by saying that students had to stay single only for the first term in college. Apparently husbands were allowed to go home and sleep with their wives on Wednesdays and Sundays, and you can imagine the comments! A story, is told too, of a student who wanted his girlfriend to hear his first sermon, and as women were not allowed in the chapel, he smuggled her under the altar, as there was a large frontal behind which she could hide. I remember Duncan [Buchanan] saying to me that John Suggit was the one who took the College out of the 19th century.<sup>25</sup>

For years, single students living in residence had inherently been part of the College's identity. Undoubtedly, this tradition had been influenced by some of the founding fathers, who were celibate, as well as some of the celibate Bishops. However, from the story told by Hewitt, one gets the impression that wives (or women) were seen like distractors – who would draw away the focus of the students from their studies. However, the story highlights the changing traditions and image of the College in the 1960s. As a married man himself, Suggit was more open to family life of a student. Certainly he had started bringing in changes that would be accelerated later on during the time of his successor, Duncan Buchanan, from 1976.

22 Moila, P. "Invasion of Theological Thinking by Political Ideologies in South Africa", *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*, No. 75, June 1991, pp. 25-36.

23 *Ibid.*

24 Paton, A. *Apartheid and the Archbishop, The Life and Times of Geoffrey Clayton*. Cape Town: David Philip, 1973, p. 81.

25 Hewitt, "A History of St. Paul's College".

## “Coloured” ordinands barred from St. Paul’s College

The very same year that Suggit became Warden, Robert Selby Taylor also became Archbishop of Cape Town. Taylor took over the leadership of the Anglican Church, which since the time of Clayton and his predecessors, right back to Robert Gray, was essentially politically conservative. In his book, *Servants of Power: The Role of the English-Speaking Churches in South Africa 1903-1930*, James Cochrane has shown that in the period between 1903 and 1930, in its attitude towards the plight of the oppressed Black majority, the Anglican Church took a position that tried to avoid bringing it into confrontation with the state.<sup>26</sup> He has demonstrated that, “amidst internal conflicts, contradictions, crises and controversies”,<sup>27</sup> the Anglican Church acquiesced in, and buttressed the political status quo.<sup>28</sup>

With regard specifically to St. Paul’s College, Cochrane’s thesis can be illustrated by an incident that involved Mr. L. Zeeman, a “Coloured” person who aspired and desired to study at St. Paul’s College. The steady rising numbers of “Coloured” men from the Cape offering themselves for training to the ordained ministry posed a challenge to the Church leadership, who, in conformity to the country’s laws, had designated St. Paul’s College as a “Whites only” institution. On 18 January 1910, Archbishop William Marlborough Carter wrote to the Warden of St. Paul’s College, asking if he could take in Mr. Zeeman, son of a catechist in the Diocese of Cape Town, to train as an ordinand.<sup>29</sup> He asserted: “[I]f at the present time a Coloured man had been admitted to St. Paul’s Hostel, he would have done real harm to the Hostel itself.”<sup>30</sup> He went on to say: “The opinion of the Bishops of the Province ... [was that it was] too much of a risk to take a Coloured man into the hostel which trained Whites.”<sup>31</sup>

The refusal to admit Zeeman into the College provoked a protest from some of the clergy in the Diocese of Cape Town, including the Dean of the Cathedral, to the Bishops of the Province. These members of the clergy charged: “[W]e believe that to erect a colour or race bar, which must disqualify a candidate from admission to the Provincial Theological College whatever his personal qualifications, is contrary to the spirit and practice of the Christian Religion.” Racial segregation existed in the very ‘house of God’!<sup>32</sup>

In response, the Bishops asserted that St. Paul’s Hostel was not the only college recognised in this Province for the training of candidates for Holy Orders. They then went further to justify the existence of the three colleges, St. Augustine’s for “Coloured” people, St. Peter’s for Black people and St. Paul’s for White people. In their view, separation was justifiable “on the principle that the Church must take into account differences of temperament, intellectual capacity, and social status” of different races so as to guard the “unity of the Church”.<sup>33</sup> The rationale differed very little from the premises on which apartheid was based.

26 James Cochrane, *J. Servants of Power, The Role of the English-Speaking Churches in South Africa 1903-1930*, p. 145.

27 *Ibid.*

28 *Ibid.*

29 See Letter, 18 January 1910, Archbishop of Cape Town to the Warden of St. Augustine, Zonnebloem. AB 1363, S21 (file 1), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, 1910-60, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

30 *Ibid.*

31 *Ibid.*

32 *Ibid.*

33 *Ibid.*

Similarly, in his *Between the Two Fires: The Anglican Church and apartheid: 1948-1957*,<sup>34</sup> Michael Worsnip has shown that in the period 1940s to late 1950s, the stance of the Anglican Church with regard to racial segregation, coined as “apartheid”, was essentially conservative. It took a position that appeared to legitimise apartheid. The Nationalist apartheid policy of racial separation that came in 1948 merely consolidated racial segregation under the British colonial era. Legitimated by an aberration (distortion) of Calvinist theology, the Afrikaner nationalist government presented itself as a “Christian government”.<sup>35</sup>

In spite of the fact that it was not the Church Established by Law in South Africa, in its dealing with the State, the Anglican Church displayed an ‘establishment attitude’.<sup>36</sup> “This [served] to make the Church less courageous in its opposition, less rigorous in its protest and less potent in its rejection of government ideology than it might perhaps have otherwise been”.<sup>37</sup> The role of the Church in society was to preserve the *status quo*.

The conservative character of the Anglican Church may be substantiated by the attitude of the Church leadership towards an incident involving another “Coloured” man, who had studied at the college, but it happened that he went ‘unnoticed’. Writing on 5 November 1940, Archibald Cullen, Bishop of Grahamstown, reminded the Archbishop of Cape Town (John Darbyshire) that “sometime back a Coloured man was admitted as a student at St. Paul’s in ignorance ... [as] the authorities thought him to be of pure European parentage until his own relatives began to make representations on the subject”.<sup>38</sup> No more information about this man has been available to me. He looked very fair. His admission was “accidental”. In the view of the authorities, he was not meant to be there. The episode entails a subtle subversion of the system, precisely because the “Coloured” man actually knew that he was “Coloured”, and therefore barred from training at St. Paul’s College, but ‘pretended’ that he was not “Coloured”. Instead, he ‘played’ White.

The conservative character of the Church leadership during this period has also been highlighted by the actions of two Anglican Black leaders. In the same year, as a result of frustrations in the White-led dominated Church, H.M. Maimane and James Calata put forward to the Provincial Synod of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa, a resolution for consideration of the establishment of an “African Branch of the Catholic Church” as they felt that the talents and gifts of Black leaders were not given due recognition.<sup>39</sup>

Meanwhile, the year 1945 marked a landmark in the history of the College. According to the Bishop of Grahamstown, Robert Selby Taylor, the resolution of the “Provincial Synod of 1945 pp 50, 51 ... [laid it] down that the Episcopal Synod is asked to consider the joint education of European and Non-European

34 Worsnip, M. *Between The Two Fires: The Anglican Church and Apartheid: 1948-1957*. Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press, 1991.

35 *Ibid.*, Chapter 3.

36 *Ibid.*, p. 12.

37 *Ibid.*, p. 13.

38 See Letter, 5 November 1940, AB 1363, S 21 (file 1), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, 1910-60, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

39 Goedhals, M. “From Paternalism to Partnership”, In: F. England and T. Paterson (eds.), *Bounty in Bondage, The Anglican Church in Southern Africa*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1989, p. 117.

candidates in cases where this would be of special advantage".<sup>40</sup> This "special advantage" was never specified. In spite of this resolution, in 1946, the Warden of St. Paul's College and the visitor, the Bishop of Grahamstown, objected to the Archbishop of Cape Town (Darbyshire)'s idea to send a Mr. Sylvester, a "Coloured" ordinand, to St. Paul's College on two grounds, one of which was that he was "not of outstanding intellectual power".<sup>41</sup>

Since coming to power in 1948, the new Nationalist Afrikaner government, seeking further to subjugate the Black people, crafted a version of the theology of the election and the covenant, and projected itself as the bearer of "Christian civilisation".<sup>42</sup> In its programmes, it adopted Western Christian symbols and themes. With massive and continuous propaganda machinery, it appeared to make the large White section of the population believe that the policy of racial segregation was a "civilised" policy through which Black people and White people could co-exist in harmony. Like other English-Speaking Churches, the Anglican Church, and its White membership in particular, embraced the new political dispensation and ideology. Cochrane has shown that much like the government itself and other English-speaking churches, since the colonial era, the Anglican Church had also always proclaimed that it was an agent of a "civilising mission" to the "natives".<sup>43</sup>

## A new era and a new vision – the Wardenship of John Suggit

Ecclesiastically, in contrast to the 1950s and 1960s, South Africa had entered a new epoch, an era of ecumenical optimism. Theologically, to a degree, it was seemingly an era of uncertainty characterised in England by the 'death of God debate', whose air St. Paul's College could not entirely escape breathing. In this context, Suggit started his Wardenship at St. Paul's College.

Suggit was born in England and acquired his theological degrees at Oxford University. He was nicknamed "Fronnie", the wise man, by his students. He was a dispatch messenger during World War II. Like many churchmen and ex-service men, he joined the Church and trained in the classics, Latin and Greek. Hewitt described Suggit as follows:

He too was held in high regard and past students have many stories about him. Nicknamed "Fronnie", from the Greek word, phronimos, meaning wise, John [Suggit] was not only a New Testament scholar who went on to become professor in that discipline at Rhodes University until 1989, but someone scholarly across the board and in all disciplines. He is well known [in the manner in] which he could read Greek, and it was unwise at Synod to ask John if you could share his bible, because it would never be in English.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>40</sup> See Letter, 11 December 1946, AB 1363, S 21 (file 1), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, 1910-60. Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> Mofokeng, T. "The Cross in the Search for True Humanity: Theological Challenges Facing South Africa", *Journal of Black Theology*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 1989, pp. 38-51.

<sup>43</sup> Cochrane, *Servants of Power*, Chapter 6.

<sup>44</sup> Hewitt, "A History of St. Paul's College".

At heart, he was a broadminded, a traditional Anglican theologian and a great liturgist. At St. Paul's College, Suggit was to stress academic rigour and scholarship. This method not only tended to relativise Biblical theology, but also fostered a view where the socio-political reality was perceived in relative terms. It was an approach that operated on the premise that to know the "objective" truth was (is) almost impossible; an exercise in futility, given that the truth is "relative". Fairly conservative, too highly intellectual, and somewhat idealistic, perfectionistic, sophisticated and slippery, it was an approach that saw "both sides of an argument". Suggit hated what the apartheid government was doing. However, he stood for openness. He seemed to allow people to express their own views. It was also an approach that was sometimes riddled with tensions, and bordered on contradictions in the apartheid context between 1965 and 1976.

When Suggit became Warden, he appointed Buchanan as Sub-warden, an appointment Suggit heralded as "a new breaking ground ... [that Buchanan was] a priest whose sympathy with much modern theology [showed] him to be 'with it'".<sup>45</sup> It would appear that Suggit contrasted himself with Buchanan, who he saw as "in tune with the new kind of theology" that started to emerge in the 1970s. Hewitt noted that "the sixties ... [was] a difficult period in the church – a fairly academic period which involved the 'God is dead debate'".<sup>46</sup> There was uneasiness about the new theology of the death of God, which was also starting to emerge at St. Paul's College.

In the same year, however, Suggit gave insight into the character of the College. He noted that, as it had been for years, St. Paul's College was still semi-monastic, "[where] women (wives) were not allowed ... except on very special occasions such as Easter day and the Leaver's dinner".<sup>47</sup> As noted earlier on, this attitude towards women had been part of the College for some years; women were not considered as central as men were with regard to ministry. The College tended to perpetuate the attitude that the priesthood was a male vocation in which women had very little or no role at all to play.

It is also important to note that Suggit became Warden in the aftermath of the Sharpeville massacre, which had occurred on 1 March 1960. Following the massacre of 69 people prompted by the Pass Law protests, Black political organisations such as the African National Congress and the Pan African Congress were banned, resulting in the arrests of Black leaders, while others were going underground and into exile.<sup>48</sup> The ensuing problem of the race crisis prompted the World Council of Churches (WCC) to hold an ecumenical consultation on race relations at Cottesloe, in which the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) representatives participated.<sup>49</sup> Amongst other issues, divisions over the statement of affirming racial equality led to the withdrawal of the DRC from the South African Council of Churches (SACC) and the formation of the Christian Institute (CI) by Beyers Naudé.<sup>50</sup>

45 Warden's Letter, *Doulos*, 9 November 1965, Suggit's library, Silvermine Village, Noordhoek.

46 Hewitt, "A History of St. Paul's College".

47 Warden's Letter, *Doulos*, December 1965, Suggit's library, Silvermine Village, Noordhoek.

48 De Gruchy, J. *The Church Struggle in South Africa*. Grand Rapids, M.I.: William Eerdmans, 1979, pp. 62-63.

49 *Ibid.*, p. 63.

50 *Ibid.*, pp. 103-106.

John de Gruchy has described that year as “critical for the church in South Africa and as well as South Africa as a whole”.<sup>51</sup> The Consultation had alienated the DRC from the SACC regarding their approach to the race issue. The same year heralded a significant breakthrough in the College. Two first Black students, Wandile Francis Khuse<sup>52</sup> of the Diocese of Johannesburg (originally from Transkei) and Vincent Crutse of the Diocese of Kimberley and Kuruman, even before a government permit was approved, were admitted into the College on 13 February 1960. Khuse already had obtained a B.A. from Fort Hare University.<sup>53</sup> After the training of these students, this ‘experiment’ was not to be repeated until the late 1970s. It is an issue that would need further research.

Meanwhile, the year 1963 turned out to be a very significant landmark for the Anglican Church in South Africa. The Church’s participation at the Anglican Conference in Toronto that year had brought it into the global Anglican stream, which had started to view mission as “Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence”.<sup>54</sup> The significance of the Toronto conference, according to Peter Lee, lay in the fact that it was “a system of evaluation, mission and mutual support in the Anglican Communion”.<sup>55</sup> Mission was understood as no longer exclusively what the European (and North American) Churches were doing to others. The erstwhile mission churches in Africa and elsewhere were considered as ‘equal’ ‘partners’ and ‘participants’ in mission.

In the interim, from 1965, when he took over as Warden, Suggit had noted that the numbers of students had been declining and this trend continued for the next ten years up to 1975. The crisis in vocations, so Suggit seemed to think, “perhaps ... went together with a loss of nerve on the part of the [Church of the Province]”.<sup>56</sup> Speaking to me, Suggit recalled that during his tenure as Warden, the College was also going through some financial difficulties.<sup>57</sup> Politically, this was also a period of uncertainty for the Church. At the height of its power in the 1960s, as Bob Clarke noted, the policies of the National Party seemed to have no limit to the extent to which they “interfered with people’s lives”.<sup>58</sup> For instance, writing to Archbishop Jooste de Blank on 20 March 1965, Bishop Alphaeus Zulu gave insight into the hostile attitude of government towards its critics. Part of his letter read: “The apartheid policy of the government seems to make people disinclined to put their heads into the lion’s mouth.”<sup>59</sup> However, according to Michael Worsnip, a former Anglican priest, African National Congress political activist

51 *Ibid.*, p. 136.

52 Telephone interview with Wandile Khuse, 31 May 2014. Wandile Khuse said that initially the Church Authorities sent them to the College without having first obtained a government permit and only applied afterwards. However, Khuse recalled that by the time the permit was approved, the two students had almost finished their two years theological training. Khuse recalled that during their two years’ study, he and Crutse had a very good time with fellow White students, playing hockey together.

53 St. Paul’s Historical Notes, AB 2568, A 1, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

54 Goedhals, “From Partnership to Partnership”, p. 122.

55 Lee, P. *Courage and Compromise: Anglicans in Johannesburg 1864-1999: A Divided Church Seeking Integrity*. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2005, p. 282.

56 Warden’s Letter, *Doulos*, 1975, Suggit’s library, Silvermine Village, Noordhoek.

57 Interview with John Suggit, 19 November 2014, Silvermine Village, Noordhoek.

58 Clarke, B. *Anglicans Against Apartheid, 1936-1996*. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2008, p. 221.

59 See Letter, Zulu to De Blank, 20 March 1965, AB 2925, Z 1, Diocese of Zululand, Zulu, Bishop, Alphaeus. Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

and a theologian, Zulu, himself was deeply conservative. Not only was Zulu associated with Iviyo, subsequently he also aligned himself with the Inkatha Freedom Party and Zulu self-determination in the Home Land politics.<sup>60</sup> At this time, some events taking place at Rhodes University would affect some students of St. Paul's College.

On Friday, 2 September 1965, the College logbook scribe recorded that a few students went to Rhodes University to hear part of the Symposium on the subject of "'Human Rights': [whose] speakers were Prof. Danie Oosthuizen and Archbishop Denis Hurley, R.C. of Durban". As if to "brighten" the day, following the addresses that the students had heard, the scribe went on to report that "at Compline the Sub-warden (Buchanan) gave a good address on the subject of Joy (and Happiness)".<sup>61</sup> It is significant that following what could have been uncomfortable experience for some students, Buchanan's address centred on the subject of "joy and happiness" and would seem to have brought another dimension to what the students had heard during the day.

In that year, a well-known English missiologist, M.A.C Warren, visited the Diocese of Grahamstown, where he gave a lecture. Some of St. Paul's College students had attended the address. In his review of Warren's address during Warren's visit to the Diocese of Grahamstown, however, Godfrey Blackwell, (a college member of staff), noted that with the title of his address, "Interpreting the Cross", Warren dwelt on issues of interpersonal relationships, human suffering, and the great and impersonal power structures of today, which characterised the issues that the country faced. In conclusion, according to Blackwell, Warren asserted that "for modern man 'God is dead': this explains the futility of the lives of many people".<sup>62</sup> In the light of Blackwell's report, it would seem strange if issues relating to apartheid would not have been raised or mooted. The issue of the cross and "impersonal power structures of today" emphasised the issue of the meaning of life in the context of apartheid. In this respect, the issues of suffering under apartheid would have been fore-grounded.

In the interim, on 6 September 1966, the Prime Minister, Hendrik Verwoerd, was assassinated. The logbook scribe noted that "today, too, saw the assassination of the Prime Minister, Dr. H.F. Verwoerd", and further noted that "[t]he overall feeling amongst Paulines (St. Paul's students) was one of great shock". He went on to assert that "the next day [the college] had started off with a Requiem Mass, at which [they] were able to remember Dr. Verwoerd".<sup>63</sup> Holding a Requiem Mass for Dr. Verwoerd suggests the College's high respect for those in authority. In the Roman Catholic Church or Anglo-Catholic stream of the Anglican Church, a Requiem Mass is normally said for the repose of the soul of a 'faithful' member of the Church. It denotes an act of 'fellowship' with the deceased. Verwoerd was a Calvinist, who could never have subscribed to the theology of the 'sacrifice of the Mass'. Evidently, the Requiem Mass was said precisely because Verwoerd was the head of state.

60 "Iviyo la Bafakazi", Michael Worsnip Research Papers, loaned to the author.

61 Logbook, C 1.9, St. Paul's Theological College, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

62 *Doulos*, 1966, AB 2568, A 3, 1964-74, St. Paul's Theological College, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

63 Logbook, C 1.9, St. Paul's Theological College, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

Verwoerd was succeeded by John Vorster. Bob Clarke noted that Vorster subsequently made extensive use of the laws that Verwoerd had enacted in 1963. These permitted detentions without trial for the first 90 days, and later 180 days. “[Vorster] tightened security further by enacting the Terrorism Act of 1967 and bringing into being the Bureau of State Security (BOSS).”<sup>64</sup> In 1967, the College logbook scribe noted that “following the restrictions imposed on and banning of Dr. Raymond (“Bill”) Hoffenberg, and his prohibition from continuing at UCT Medical School, and widespread protest in the country on Monday night (21 August) the College unanimously recorded its protest, which (was) being made through NUSAS [National Union of South African Students].”<sup>65</sup> As internal strife and clamp down on political dissent mounted, there was also an increased international isolation of South Africa. Rodney Davenport and Christopher Saunders noted: “As political confrontation developed between South Africa and the outside world during the premiership of Verwoerd and Vorster, so there grew up a parallel threat of economic confrontation, as part of an international bid to force South Africa to change policies.”<sup>66</sup>

In associating with NUSAS though, the College starkly distinguished itself from the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM),<sup>67</sup> which espoused a philosophy that promoted Black Consciousness and Black identity. BCM operated in the Black tertiary institutions. Mabogo P. More has traced the origins of Black Consciousness in South Africa to the anti-Black experience of Black students, which led them to form the South African Students Organisation (SASO), a cradle of the Black Convention Movement, and also to their alienated experience of Black people within the White-dominated NUSAS and the wider society.<sup>68</sup> Barney Pityana, an Anglican priest, then in the 1970s, an associate of Steve Biko, defined the nature of Black Consciousness as follows: “[It] advocated Black solidarity. [It sought] to break through the iron cage of tribalism, and race enclaves imposed by apartheid. Rather it was vital that we advocate solidarity among the oppressed, and to give meaning to the experience that defined ‘blackness’.” In this respect, the advocates of Black Consciousness were re-affirming age-old African values of human respect and human dignity. While apartheid alienated and dehumanised Blacks from one another, Black consciousness sought to achieve the very opposite. It was an ideology and practice that strike at the core of apartheid. Black unity and solidarity posed a great threat to the stability of the apartheid state. And so Pityana finally concludes: “The effect of this was that black people could begin to respect themselves, trust one another, be mutually dependent, and develop a common grammar of understanding, analysis, and meaning.”<sup>69</sup> Under the leadership of Steven Biko, SASO developed. Much later, Allan Boesak’s *Farewell to Innocence* gave a further impetus to the movement.

<sup>64</sup> Clarke, *Anglicans Against Apartheid*, p. 221.

<sup>65</sup> Logbook, C 1.9, 1966-69, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>66</sup> Davenport, R. and Saunders, C. *South Africa, A Modern History*. Fifth edition. London: MacMillan Press Ltd., 2000, pp. 533-534.

<sup>67</sup> Informal telephone conversation with McGlory Speckman, 7 January 2016. Speckman drew the author’s attention to the fact that BCM was a later development. According to Speckman, Black Consciousness was a philosophy which only much later developed as a Movement.

<sup>68</sup> More, M.P. “The Intellectual Foundations of the Black Consciousness Movement”, In: P. Vale, L. Hamilton and E.H. Prinsloo, *Intellectual Traditions in South Africa*. Pietermaritzburg: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2014, pp. 173-196.

<sup>69</sup> Personal communication with Barney Pityana, 18 January 2018.

The BCM sought to affirm the very Black identity that their White oppressors loathed. The movement stressed Black experience, identity and pride. "Black Consciousness as Black political thought is part of a long line of black activism and philosophical tradition dating back to the advent of African slavery, anti-Black racism and colonialism in Africa and the modern world."<sup>70</sup> These movements ran parallel with the Negritude Movement in France and the American civil rights movement. Black Consciousness emerged amongst South African Black seminarians in the 1970s.<sup>71</sup>

The Universities Christian Movement (UCM), formed in 1967, under the leadership of Basil Moore, a Methodist Minister, was a cradle of Black Theology and the BCM. It ran programmes like "Essays in Black Theology", through which it popularised Black Theology. Through these programmes, the churches themselves were exposed to Black Theology in a way then had simply not been before. It was the split of the South African Students Organisation (SASO) from the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS), however, that led to the most palpable origins of the BCM. It is pretty queer to note that according to Philippe Denis and Graham Duncan, St. Paul's College was one of the theological institutions listed in the UCM directory.<sup>72</sup>

### Relations with St. Peter's, Fedsem

For St. Paul's College, under Suggit, in the 1960s and throughout the late 1970s, the issue of exploring collaboration with Rhodes University dominated the agenda. Suggit desired and envisaged a scheme where St. Paul's College students would also benefit from doing some studies at Rhodes University, while at the same time retaining some sort of independence. It was a debate that would go on for a decade.<sup>73</sup> The Bishops seemed reticent to foster closer ties with Rhodes University, probably because they not only feared losing control of the content of theological education, but also of the spirit of freedom of expression, which could threaten their own positions of authority. This form of education would be contrary to the traditional approach, which inculcates obedience and loyalty to episcopal authority. While St. Paul's College's proximity to Rhodes University and its relationship with the Divinity Department would affect its life in several ways, however, it was its relationship with St. Peter's College, Fedsem, through mutual exchange visits, which would awaken the socio-political consciousness of some of St. Paul's College students more remarkably in the ensuing years.

The Federal Theological Seminary (Fedsem) had been relocated to Alice, from Johannesburg in 1963.<sup>74</sup> In Grahamstown, St. Paul's College was 104 kilometres to Alice. In contrast to St. Paul's College, which was erected on the site that the Group Areas Act designated for Whites only, Denis and Duncan noted a special arrangement with the government providing a designated land at Alice gave way for the erection of an inter-racial and ecumenical seminary, of which St. Peter's College was a constituent

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>72</sup> Denis and Duncan, *The Native School that Caused all the Trouble*, p. 83.

<sup>73</sup> See Letter, Burnett to Buchanan, 3 November 1975; Suggit to Burnett, 12 December 1975, AB 1363, S 21 (file 7), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, 1974-75, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>74</sup> Clarke, *Anglicans Against Apartheid*, p. 209.

member.<sup>75</sup> Secondly, the government's granting of a blanket permit for the "Coloureds" to study for an indefinite period along with Black and Indian students, allowed Fedsem to function as a multiracial and multi-ethnic community.<sup>76</sup>

As early as December 1965, the College's magazine, *Doulos*, announced: "For the first time we met with St. Peter's in an all-day sports match"<sup>77</sup> and "Now what about St. Bede's?". "We second this motion ... [F]or the past few years, St. Peter's, one of the four colleges comprising the federal Seminary at Alice, have exchanged three students for about a week."<sup>78</sup> For Suggit, the College's exchange of students was a way in which it sought to witness fellowship and unity in Christ that transcended racial boundaries.<sup>79</sup>

In 1966, the logbook scribe noted that "a motion which sparked off differences of opinion was of the question of whether the students of the College should send a donation towards the Federal Seminary Appeal. Bruce Bridgewood thought it wrong in principle that ... needy Paulines be asked to contribute to the needy Fedsem. Carl Garner (a member of college staff) argued from Paul's missionary journey collecting funds for the Jerusalem Church. Eric Pike's motion that we send the Trinity Sunday Collection and not the Chapel funds was passed."<sup>80</sup>

In 1967, *Doulos* reported that three students from St. Peter's, Alice – Arthur Mabija, Lucas Sentsho and Julian Titus – "swopped colleges with Ewart Collett, Cliff Horsman and Alan Radcliffe for a few days. It is a pleasure to have such contact with St. Peter's – what a pity it couldn't have been for longer".<sup>81</sup>

St. Paul's College relationship with outside communities was just one dimension of its existence, however, more immediately, it was its relationship with the local community that defined another aspect of its mission.

### Outreach in the community

During one of the interviews with Suggit, he recalled that one of his lasting memories of his time at St. Paul's College was the College outreach in the Black community.<sup>82</sup> The College saw its ministry in the form of solidarity with the hungry by sending food parcels that had been bought by money meant to buy a lunch, which was then skipped on Friday. On 18 February 1966, the College logbook scribe noted that:

At the Common Room meeting last Saturday evening the College once again voted for skipping lunch each Friday, so that some families in the location might be fed on that day. To identify ourselves more closely with these who hunger, it is suggested that we keep a strict fast until Supper time – and yet, how tasty that little sardine looks, what? Well, this is then the time to see how strong our moral fibre

<sup>75</sup> Denis and Duncan, *The Native School that Caused all the Trouble*, pp. 55-58.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 58-60.

<sup>77</sup> *Doulos*, December 1968, Suggit's library, Silvermine Village, Noordhoek.

<sup>78</sup> *Doulos*, December 1965, Suggit's library, Silvermine Village, Noordhoek.

<sup>79</sup> Interview with John Suggit, 19 November 2014, Silvermine Village, Noordhoek.

<sup>80</sup> Logbook, AB 2568, C 1, 1966-69, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>81</sup> *Doulos*, December 1967, Suggit's library, Silvermine Village, Noordhoek.

<sup>82</sup> Interview with John Suggit, 19 November 2014, Silvermine Village, Noordhoek.

is ... said one who was to endure tantalizing temptations, yet overcome them because of His love for God, "he who is faithful on little things will be faithful in more matters as well".<sup>83</sup>

The reference to the sardine and the temptations illustrates the oblivion that White people were living in. In fact, in this passage, there is "a golden" feel about the way in which it is reported "and yet how tasty that little sardine looks, what?" That the logbook scribe commented it was "a moral dilemma" for the College is significant. Handing food parcels to the poor, apartheid-brutalised people was a way in which the College expressed 'charity'. To 'sympathise' with the victims of apartheid is one thing, to robustly engage with the real issues is another. It was a form of charity bordering on paternalism. It was the kind of spirit and attitude that appeased the conscience of the White College as it functioned as a White institution and responsive to the White constituency. Underlying this was a patronising attitude towards Black people, who were in desperate need as a result of the deprivations of the policy and practice of apartheid.

There was very little contact between the College community and the Black communities in Grahamstown. Eric Pike (future Suffragan Bishop of Grahamstown and Diocesan Bishop of Port Elizabeth), was a student in the years 1966 to 1968. He remembered that the existence of the cinema that barred Black people in Grahamstown was always a source of division in the Common room amongst students during his time.<sup>84</sup> There were some White students who, in solidarity with Black people, never went to the cinema on Wednesday evening, while others did not mind using the facilities at all.<sup>85</sup> Yet it would seem that the issues that affected relations between White and Black people were regularly raised in the College by various ecumenical guests.

One important ecumenical guest visiting the College during this time was Beyers Naudé, head of the Christian Institute in the Transvaal. The logbook scribe recorded:

[P]reaching at [Evensong] service, Dr. Naudé talked about the Lordship of Christ. He asserted that the Church was split between those who accepted three interpretations of this:

1. Restricting the Lordship to personal salvation. Personal moral life involving family, and church life.
2. Those who in addition see social implications but withdraw at the point these cause strife within and friction with the world without the Church.
3. Those who see Christ as Lord and all life, or no Lord at all, who see political, social economic implications and accept them in spite of possibility of error and the conflict it will cause.<sup>86</sup>

Then the scribe wrote a side note, saying "[Naudé's address] content was fine, but his DRC histrionics and rhetoric were not suitable for English-speaking people".<sup>87</sup> As will be seen in what follows, Dr. Naudé

<sup>83</sup> Logbook, 18 February 1966, AB 2568, C 1.8, "A Moral dilemma", Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>84</sup> Telephone interview with Eric Pike, 30 May 2014.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>86</sup> Logbook, AB 2568, C 1.9, 1966-69, St. Paul's Theological College, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*

spoke within the St. Paul's College context, where there was a division in perceptions towards socio-political issues in society between those who advocated the so-called "pure" Gospel over and against the so-called "impure" Gospel.

### Race relations and common witness

Pike recalled that Burnett, who at that time was involved in ecumenical circles, could have visited St. Paul's College. He reminisced that "there was a growing awareness, awakening out of slumber through those three years". Yet, for Pike the most significant and memorable event in his life while at St. Paul's College was when he said he went to Rhodes University Great Hall to hear Dr. Beyers Naudé. He reminisced that:

I can remember being deeply impressed by his courageous stand against apartheid and a phrase which he used has remained with me until today. "To become a disciple is to enrol in Christ's school of suffering." Why it stuck with me was because I could see that in his own life. Beyers Naudé was, for me, a true disciple of our Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>88</sup>

Precisely because he opposed the policies and practices of apartheid, Naudé had been ostracised by his own Afrikaner people. In his life, he had come to embody the sufferings of the majority of the Black people, which, for Pike, was the suffering of Christ. Naudé's suffering appealed to Pike as true discipleship that he admired – almost seeing himself as falling short of that.

However, Pike confided that in spite of having grown up in the Church of Scotland premises in the Xhosa community in the Eastern Cape, and being fluent in IsiXhosa, he admitted that his background had not prepared him enough to alert and awaken him to the social consciousness of the realities of apartheid that he was being exposed to in the College in those years.<sup>89</sup> McGlory Speckman, currently an Anglican priest and an academic, was an associate of Steve Biko in the 1970s. He commented that Pike's experience "was true of many White South Africans" then in South Africa.<sup>90</sup> Another commentator asserted, however, that "in many ways Pike's experience was not typical of a White South African". Growing up in a rural context and having access to an indigenous language was not a common White South African experience. It was easy to "appreciate" others' culture, as long as they did not affect one's comfort and pleasure.<sup>91</sup> Yet Pike said that it was during his visits to St. Peter's College (and students coming to St. Paul's College) on a couple of exchanges, which had made him realise significantly the injustices of apartheid. He particularly recalled Ezra Tisani (then a student at St. Peters.) making an impression on him.<sup>92</sup>

<sup>88</sup> Telephone interview with Eric Pike, 30 May 2014.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>90</sup> Telephone conversation with McGlory Speckman, 10 December 2015.

<sup>91</sup> Insight from Michael Worsnip, 10 December 2015.

<sup>92</sup> Telephone Interview with Eric Pike, 30 May 2014.

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It seems rather ironic that in spite of the fact that the life of the Black people remained marginal to the White College, in 1965, a beautiful crucifix, crafted by a partially blind Black South African sculptor, Job Kekana, was installed in the College Chapel. Kekana, born in Polokwane (then Pietersburg), had been educated and trained by the Community of the Resurrection Fathers and his work was inspired by a Community of the Resurrection nun. It is symbolic that the artwork of a Black man, who represented the people on the periphery of apartheid South Africa, came to occupy the most sacred and central space in the life of the College. The crucifix had been carved from a wood of Jacaranda tree.<sup>93</sup> One wonders whether the White students were aware of the history of the crucifix. Had they been informed? If they had been aware, would it have mattered?

Meanwhile, in 1968, the issue of race relations seemingly featured in the College. In his Warden's Letter that year, Suggit reported that St. Paul's College students participated in a seminar on the sociological and psychological causes of racial prejudice based on M. Banton's book, *Race Relations*. In the aftermath, Suggit wrote in the Warden's Letter that the seminar:

Made it clear that racial prejudice is such an irrational attitude, conditioned often by factors beyond a man's control, that rational argument and appeal cannot break it down. Perhaps the Christian can best commend his gospel by his life and actions, not only towards other races, but also those who through environmental and other factors cannot accept our way of looking at things.<sup>94</sup>

Suggit seemed to argue that racial prejudice was unreasonable precisely because it could not be justified on the reasonable grounds of human nature, conduct and behaviour. In other words, for Suggit it would appear that rationally racial prejudice made no sense at all, as it was conditioned by forces that in no way were reasonable in terms of the law of human nature. Suggit seemed to always view issues within the broader framework. This becomes even much clearer when in the same letter asserted that, "important though our attitudes to race relations are, we must never think that some particular policy towards the settlement of our troubles and divisions is necessarily the answer of the gospels".<sup>95</sup>

Suggit sounds rather ambivalent on the role that the Gospel played vis-à-vis race issues and government policy. He seemed to imply that there was a divide, on one hand between the issues of race relations (politics) and policy, and on the other, the imperatives of the Gospel. This view regarding the cause of racism and Suggit's perspective on racial issues vis-à-vis the Gospel was an aspect of the dominant theological outlook in the Church, which played out at St. Paul's. More significantly, it was a view that seemed to rationalise the existence of racial differentiation in South Africa.

In was in the same context that Dr. Edgar Brookes, a member of the Liberal Party, was reported to have visited the College. Brooks was an Anglican layman, elected by the "Natives" of Natal to represent them as their Senator in Parliament<sup>96</sup> and was actively involved in the affairs of St. Paul's College. He had visited the College in 1968. According to Suggit, he had reminded the College that "liberalism,

<sup>93</sup> Logbook, AB 2568, C 1.6, 1960-62, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>94</sup> *Doulos*, December 1968, Suggit's library, Silvermine Village, Noordhoek.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>96</sup> Clarke, *Anglicans Against Apartheid*, p. 7.

like patriotism, is not enough".<sup>97</sup> In other words, Brookes was challenging the students that overcoming racial problems required more will and more sacrifice than being merely loyalty to the country or trying to being 'charitable' or 'nice' to the Black people. It was a cause that needed more sacrifice than what they were prepared to offer. Pike recalled Dr. Brookes visiting St. Paul's College, but said that his lecture "didn't make an impact on him nearly as much as it ought to". In the same Warden's Letter, Suggit further asserted:

The Church may never be a means to achieve political end. Its sole end is to declare that God is king and ruler of this universe, and therefore its purpose is to bring all men to find their unity in him. In South Africa, in particular, we have a double task in our strivings towards unity – unity with other churches and unity across colour barrier. Both are equally important: ecumenism is essential to the Church if it is to bear witness to the truth: but this ecumenism needs to issue in a real unity, and there can be no real unity without a common and radical renewal of commitment on the part of every Christian to Christ.<sup>98</sup>

Suggit seemed to espouse a theological view that fell into the trap of trying to create a divide or dualism of opposites: "sacred versus secular; prayer versus politics". This theological position, according to Worsnip, was apartheid ideologically skewed. It was a theology that fed into what came to be known as 'state theology', behind which lay an ideology that advocated the separation of 'religion' and 'politics'. It was a kind of religious ideology (state theology) that by implication tended to legitimise the state.<sup>99</sup> Suggit articulates a theology that was prevalent in the Anglican Church of the time.

These developments were taking place in the rapidly changing socio-political context. In 1968, the Christian Council of South Africa transformed itself to become the South African Council of Churches (SACC) with the Bishop of Bloemfontein, Bill Burnett, as its General Secretary. The transformation of the SACC brought about the repositioning of their agenda. To a certain degree, it was an agenda that reflected the active involvement of the WCC. It was the time when the SACC started to be responsive to the WCC. The repositioned SACC came with the agenda of race relations. During his years working with the SACC, Burnett took part in formulating policies and making pronouncements that were critical of the government policy of apartheid.<sup>100</sup> As will be shown later, some scholars noted that this period of his life contrasted with his later years from 1972 onward, when he believed that he had gone through an experience of the Holy Spirit.

Meanwhile, "in response to the government's policies especially ... socio-economic engineering, trying to push Blacks out of industrial areas into rural wastes, and with increasingly raw oppression of black

97 "The City of God and the Politics of Crisis", *Doulos*, December 1968, Suggit's library, Silvermine Village, Noordhoek.

98 *Doulos*, December 1968, Suggit's library, Silvermine Village, Noordhoek.

99 Worsnip, M. and Van der Water, D. (eds.). *We Shall Overcome, A spirituality of Liberation*. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 1991, p. 39.

100 De Gruchy, *The Church Struggle in South Africa*, pp. 118, 142.

dissent”,<sup>101</sup> the SACC widely disseminated its *Message to the People of South Africa*.<sup>102</sup> John de Gruchy noted the significance of the message:

The *Message* attempted to show how apartheid and separate development are contrary to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Taking it as its starting-point the conviction that, in Christ, God had reconciled the world to himself and therefore made reconciliation between people both possible and essential to the Christian faith, the message proceeded to draw out the implications of this atoning work of Christ in terms of South African society. It first of all made clear that “excluding barriers of ancestry, race, nationality, language and culture have no rightful place in the inclusive Christian brotherhood of Christian disciples”. The main burden of the *Message* was that this unity within the church could not be divorced from what was happening in society itself: “A thorough policy of racial separation must ultimately require that the Church should cease to be the Church.”<sup>103</sup>

South Africa was increasingly becoming a police state, with mounting repression against the Anglican Church of South Africa.<sup>104</sup> The Criminal Procedure Act had been enacted in 1965<sup>105</sup> and the Immorality Amendment Act in 1968.<sup>106</sup> It was in this context that a student, Anthony Gregorowski, reflected on the issues of race and legislation in the form of a poem. Writing in December 1968, he captured what he experienced as the pain of racial separation and the folly of legislation at this time. He asserted:

Grey is a blending of black and white, but it is a colour of its own – it is not “neither here nor there” it is grey, it is harmonious. Grey stone, grey ashes, grey skies. It is a serious colour ... music, too, is written for its beauty. Piano music can be described as grey, mixing loud and soft, black notes with white notes, black keys with white keys ... for all who want it. Now legislate! rule that all the white keys are to be separated from the black ... Those that have ears to hear – let them hear.<sup>107</sup>

Gregorowski was advocating for the need of racial integration. In other words, he was making the point that Whites were incomplete without Black people, and vice versa. They needed each other. Racial integration was not the sign of weakness as the apartheid state seemed to proclaim, rather it was a sign of strength. In his view racial harmony was more wholesome than racial division. Like other students, Gregorowski could also have been influenced by the SACC’s debate on race relations, issues covered in its Study Project of Christianity in Apartheid South Africa (SPROCAS) documents. Racial co-existence was at the top of the agenda.

One dimension that characteristically defined the identity of St. Paul’s College at this time was its European connections. In June 1968, Suggit reported on his overseas visit. He asserted that “on the whole the general pattern of theological training” in the Provincial College in Edinburgh, Church of Scotland “was similar to that which now [prevailed] at St. Paul’s”.<sup>108</sup> Thus, it would seem that in

<sup>101</sup> Lee, *Compromise and Courage*, p. 292.

<sup>102</sup> Clarke, *Anglicans Against Apartheid*, p. 221.

<sup>103</sup> De Gruchy, *The Church Struggle in South Africa*, p. 119.

<sup>104</sup> Clarke, *Anglicans Against Apartheid*, Chapter 9.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 238.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 239.

<sup>107</sup> *Doulos*, December 1968, Suggit’s library, Silvermine Village, Noordhoek.

<sup>108</sup> Warden’s Letter, *Doulos*, June 1968, Suggit’s library, Silvermine Village, Noordhoek.

the 1960s and 1970s, it was particularly its European ethos and traditions that seemed to define the College. In 1968, the logbook scribe noted that:

In view of the Warden's trip to England, where he visited many English Theological Colleges... most of us have waited with bated breath to hear what innovations his trip might bring to St. Paul's. Most of us were relieved to find that the changes have been for the better, and that the Warden still intends to obey the rubrics (properly interpreted).<sup>109</sup>

Suggit's overseas trip raised expectations that would bring in some changes in the life of the college that were in keeping with developments there. One aspect of its life that seemed to be held in common with institutions overseas was its "semi-monastic" tradition. Thus, in 1968 Suggit noted that:

On the face of it St. Paul's College is an all-male establishment; semi-monastic and all that. However, the feminine hand is not far absent from even these hallowed precincts, I am glad to say. This year there are a large number of married men in College – nearly half of the total number of students, in fact – and it is the wives of these men who have formed into an active, outgoing group known as the Wives of St. Paul's, or, affectionately, the WOSPS' (wives of St. Paul's) evening meeting.<sup>110</sup>

St. Paul's College "semi-monastic" tradition defined its character and influenced its mode of theological training. It was a tradition that it shared with its sister colleges of St. Bede's College and St. Peter's College. This tradition tended to stress the "sacred" as opposed to the "secular/carnal" or "worldly" dimension of life, an attitude which was more evident in the College's attitude towards women and particularly wives. It was a view that had emanated from a theology in Medieval Europe where women tended to be associated with the "sin" of Eve, who was blamed to have caused Adam to "Fall". Furthermore, it was also a view that appeared to undermine the dignity of women. Although an important part of the College, wives remained on the margins of the male-dominated life of the college. This episode must be viewed within the context of another development that seemed to have affected the College.

In 1968 the government threatened not to renew the visa of Robert Mize, Bishop of Damaraland, to return to South West Africa (Namibia) after attending the Lambeth Conference in London. That year, the Anglican Church newspaper, *Seek*, carried an article with a headline: "Strong protest by church – Anglican Bishop of Damaraland must go" in which Archbishop Robert Selby Taylor was reported to have protested against the government's threat. The story elicited the following comment from the College scribe:

I shall begin by recording another example of unwarranted interference in church matters. Those who know Bishop Mize record their deep regard for him and for his ideals. As a result of the refusal to renew his permit, the diocese of Damaraland will be without a Bishop. We all share in our country's shame and pray for the clergy and people of Damaraland at this time.<sup>111</sup>

It cannot be ascertained how and to what extent sentiments like this was a reflection of the whole college. The Church was primarily concerned with preserving its own structures, rather than getting

<sup>109</sup> Logbook, C 1.9, 1966-69, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>110</sup> "Introducing the Wosps", *Doulos*, December 1968, Suggit's library, Silvermine Village, Noordhoek.

<sup>111</sup> Logbook, AB 2568, C 1.9, 1966-69, St. Paul's Theological College, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

involved in the very difficult and risky socio-political issues as they emerged in society. Nonetheless, it highlights the extent to which issues relating to apartheid, the state and the Church did not leave St. Paul's College entirely unaffected. Yet in spite of the Church's protest against injustice in the public sphere, its own structures reflected aspects of those injustices. It is this story to which we must now turn.

### **Economic "discrimination"?**

In 1969, the students and staff of the three Anglican colleges, St. Paul's College, St. Bede's College, and St. Peter's College, were critical of the discrepancies in allowances that the (the Anglican Church) dioceses gave to their White and Black ordinands in the various colleges. The petitioners alleged that White ordinands received much more than their Black counterparts. Hence, discussions were conducted at each of the colleges on what they perceived as 'economic apartheid', and they resolved to send a memorandum to the Archbishop and the Bishops of the Province to address the matter. The petitioners started by asserting that:

This memorandum is written on behalf of the Principals of the three Theological Colleges and the request of all the student bodies thereof. Discussions have taken place at all three Colleges: there has been correspondence between the Colleges as a result of which practical suggestions have come (especially from St. Bede's), which are incorporated in the memorandum. Two of the College student bodies have passed resolutions, which are appended to this memorandum.

They further stated:

That this Common Room, learning of the apparent disparity in some dioceses between the Personal and Book Allowances paid to white and non-white ordination candidates, expresses dismay at this, and supports the Principals at Theological Colleges in their request to the Bishops to remove such disparity as soon as possible.

The core of their criticism stated:

Distress and resentment has been caused by the discovery that certain dioceses are paying their ordination candidates different personal allowances according to the College at which they reside, and this in practice means there is discrimination on a racial (white and non-white) basis. For instance, one diocese pays its white candidates R150 p.a. and its non-white R50; another pays its white candidates R120 and its non-white R48; another, R100 and R50 respectively. (All the figures quoted are supplied by the Warden of St. Paul's and Principal of St. Peter's, and they apply to personal allowances only, i.e. they do not include travel and book allowances; also no reference is made here to family allowances). As far as can be ascertained, from these allowances the same needs have to be met equally by all students.

They went on to conclude:

There is thus apparently an 'apartheid' situation existing at the heart of our Church life which is causing shame, distress and resentment. Nevertheless, the problem is not a simple one, because of the wide disparity of resources between the Dioceses which the Colleges serve. In any College community there is a danger of creating division through the candidates from certain dioceses having a larger allowance than those from others ... It must further be pointed out that this 'economic

discrimination' between wealthy and less wealthy does exist at St. Paul's, where there are at least two dioceses who are paying their candidates the same allowances as their brethren at St. Bede's and St. Peter's receive, viz. R48 p.a. ...

For these students, the Church mirrored apartheid structures and therefore, needed to put its own house in order. One of the pillars of apartheid was economic disparity and the Church reflected this in its structures. In conclusion, the students asserted:

It is the general feeling of both staff and students of all three Colleges that, whatever reasons may have existed in the past for differentiation in the scale of personal allowances, the over-riding need now is to move towards an equal rate for all students regardless of race, college or diocese. There is considerable intercourse between the students of all the three Colleges, both in mutual visits and in attendance at the same conferences. Memorandum to the Abp. and Bps. Of the Province concerning Personal Allowances Paid By Dioceses to Ordinands at Theological Colleges, Signed by A. Stubbs.<sup>112</sup>

That the students drew up the memorandum a year after the SACC's the *Message to the People of South Africa* would appear to show the impact of the message on the society. Even though St. Paul's College did not have Black or "Coloured" students at that stage, nonetheless, the fact that some St. Paul's College students knew that their fellow Black students at St. Bede's College and St. Peter's College, coming from the same Diocese, were receiving much less was a cause of concern to the students. Yet it is also striking to note that the presenters of the memorandum used the 'apartheid language' of 'non-Whites and Whites', suggesting that unconsciously the language of their "oppressors" had become part of their vocabulary, which suggest that they themselves were embedded in the system.

That year, Paul VI visited Africa and urged the White Roman Catholic Bishops to Africanise the African Church. On 23 November 1970, five South African Black Roman Catholic Clergy published a "manifesto". They charged that there was discrimination in the Church and called for greater participation in the life of the Church.<sup>113</sup> Racism was not only experienced in Anglican theological institutions. In his study of the training of the Black clergy in the Roman Catholic Church under apartheid in South Africa in the period between 1898 and 1976, George Mukuka highlighted racist attitudes and practices that the clergy encountered from the White clergy. He asserted that in spite of sharing the same training and ordination as their White counterparts, the Black clergy were treated "like glorified altar boys".<sup>114</sup> The Black clergy were not accorded the same status and dignity as their fellow White brothers. Nonetheless, the students' petition on the 'economic discrimination' has also to be viewed in the broader context of the 1968 *Message to the people of South Africa* an attempt to re-order race relations.

<sup>112</sup> Memo, 22 October 1969, AB 1363, S 21 (file 6), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, St. Paul's College, 1969-73, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>113</sup> Elphick, R. and Davenport, T.R.H. *Christianity in South Africa: A political, Social and Cultural History*. Oxford: James Currey, 1997, pp. 208-209.

<sup>114</sup> George Mukuka, quoting the *Rand Daily Mail* of 23 January 1970 in *The Other Side of the Story*, Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2008. p. 179.

## Renewal and social engagement

The late 1960s and 1970s was a period characterised by the spirit of renewal in church and society. "Renewal" was a buzz word. Following the demise of colonialism, the emergence of the independent states, Africa, South Africa not in the least, entered the era of 'renewal' across the socio-political arena of the 1970s. It would appear that for some people, however, the renewal had nothing to do with the socio-political struggles of the day, or the two tended to be incompatible. Writing in the *Collegē's Doulos* in July 1970, Suggit was critical of the debate on the renewal of liturgy and doctrine that seemed to separate these issues from engagement with the socio-political context in society. He asserted that:

The real renewal of the Church is to be found in the renewal of the life and commitment of its members, both clergy and laity. The disquiet felt by many Christians in the face of the apparent apathy of the Church towards injustice is reflected in an article by a student in this issue of *Doulos*. The Church is, of course, in a *communio peccatorum* as well as a *communio sanctorum* – a fellowship of sinners as well as of saints –, and it would be wrong to measure the success of God's plans for this world by the failure of his Church. But nevertheless the worst sin of all is the complacency which denies the love, the AGAPE, which ought to mark out the follower of Christ. Those who think that all is well in this land could well read (Cosmas) Desmond's *The Discarded People* (Christian Institute, Braamfontein, 1970) ... it is a vivid and horrifying description of the consequences of the implementation of the policy of apartheid.<sup>115</sup>

There is a ring of sophistication to Suggit's argument and reflections on the doctrine of the Church and its implications for the contextual issues of the day. Suggit seems to argue that apathy towards injustice was the denial of the very essence of what the Church is, a fellowship centred on love and fellowship (*koinonia*), which defined what being a Christian is. Yet, for him the Church's failure was not in any way a reflection on God's mission in the world.

Suggit experienced a sense of resignation that gripped many White members of the Church towards the issues of social injustice. In his view, it was at variance with the conception of the Church as symbolised by the Eucharistic fellowship. He just could not understand the level to which institutional racism had invaded the Church itself. In the same magazine, Suggit referred to an article written by his student, Brian Hill, on the same issue, which highlighted the sense of gravity of the issue and the need to address it urgently.

Hill, a student in the years from 1968 to 1970, wrote an article reflecting on slave trade in the British Empire, its justification and the plight of slaves, and drew striking parallels with apartheid South Africa regarding the plight of Black people. More significantly, he drew attention to the work of the Abolitionists in rousing the national conscience and then finally, challenged his contemporaries: "Perhaps in South Africa we need a Wilberforce to form yet another mighty flow of social reform from the little drops of protest around us".<sup>116</sup>

<sup>115</sup> Warden's Letter, *Doulos*, July 1970, Suggit's library, Silvermine Village, Noordhoek.

<sup>116</sup> Hill, B. "Wilberforce – Conscience of a Nation", *Doulos*, 1970, Suggit's library, Silvermine Village, Noordhoek.

In referring to “the little drops of protest around us”, Hill showed that there was little effective resistance against apartheid. The majority of the White people had more or less accepted the status quo. More than this, they actively supported it. They all went to serve in the army.<sup>117</sup> It would appear that this position would be confirmed by a Mr. Van Wyk of the South African Institute of Race Relations. During his visit to St. Paul’s in 1970, he explained the role of South African Institute of Race Relations and pointed out that in comparison to the other churches, the Anglican Church did “not have a record to be proud of” in the field of race relations.<sup>118</sup> This would suggest that there is some widening of the fact that the Anglican Church was not actively involved in bridging gaps across races.

Nonetheless, in the same edition of *Doulos*, even more critical than Hill, Michael Keep,<sup>119</sup> a student in the years 1970s, summarised the Church and the attitude of the White people within it to apartheid in great detail. Keep was born in England in 1945, where he had faced considerable personal challenges relating to family from a very young age. He came to South Africa as a young child. After doing various jobs, including being an ambulance driver in KwaZulu-Natal, he went on to St. Paul’s College to pursue a Diploma in Theology and a BA at Rhodes in systematic theology. While rector of the Parish of Mooi River, Natal, he completed his Honours Degree in Theology. From 1976, he served as a Chaplain of St. Andrews School for 37 years, until his retirement and death in 2010.<sup>120</sup> In *Doulos*, he accused the White section of the Church (and by implication St. Paul’s College) of silent complicity with the oppression of the Black majority. Much more detailed than Suggit’s, it is a comprehensive survey of the situation at the time. It reveals the critical developments that were defining the moments of South Africans. He asserted:

The results of the recent elections have shown that conditions in this country are going to be worse, despite the optimists who see the United Party gains as a swing to the left. The fact remains that for the next five years we are stuck (with the approval of 1/16th of the population of this land) with the National Party policies of oppression and inhumanity, the blatant denial of the Gospel.<sup>121</sup>

In Keep’s view, voting the National Party into power conflicted with the Gospel, precisely because the National Party’s supreme agenda was the entrenchment of apartheid. Keep saw the danger looming in the very near future, the radicalisation of Black politics and in reaction, the intransience of the apartheid state. He noted: “There is little doubt in my own mind at least, that things will eventually find expression in violence and bloodshed. Time is too short – very short. It may be too late already. No people can be oppressed, as they are in this country, forever, without a back-lash.” Keep’s statement was fairly prophetic and very unusual.

117 See, for instance, letters from Bishops Timothy Bavin, 3 March 1981, Duncan Buchanan, 28 January 1980, and Peter Lee, 21 May 1982, to Worsnip on Conscientious Objection, loaned to the author.

118 College logbook “Talk” reads: “On Tuesday 13 October 1970 Mr. Van Wyk visited the college”, AB 2568, C 1.10, St. Paul’s Theological College, 1969-76, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

119 Keep’s wife, Carol Keep, says her late husband had 11 out of 15 Diploma distinctions at St. Paul’s College. Telephone conversation 2 April 2016.

120 Personal communication with Carol Keep, 6 April 2016.

121 *Doulos*, July 1970, Suggit’s library, Silvermine Village, Noordhoek.

In 1970, when Keep made this prophetic statement, it was only six years before the Soweto Uprising, and seven years before the death of Steve Bantu Biko, the episodes which were to mark South African socio-political landscapes. Then finally, in a stinging attack and an indictment to the Church, he drew parallels between this situation and that of Nazi Germany. He charged:

And time and experience have shown that this backlash is in direct proportion to oppression. If this is so, then we Whites are in for a torrid time here. Not because we actually support the injustices perpetrated in the name of Western Civilisation, but because we do not actually oppose them; not because we specifically agree with Government action, but because we do not specifically DISAGREE with it ... By our silence, we make ourselves one with the oppressor; by our silence, we condemn 900 000 men, women and children to resettlement camps, those ill-disguised shades of the German concentration camps; by our silence we subject men and women to the iniquitous practice of 'interrogation' by that 'patriotic' band of broeders called S.B.; by our silence we allow men and women to be detained at the State President's pleasure without trial in all flagrant denial of the Rule of Law. Oh, yes. We stand condemned ... May God forgive us for what we have done.<sup>122</sup>

Keep's insightful and penetrating analysis reflects his awareness of the dangers of an autocratic state and apartheid ideology that seemed to have won many White people to its system of apartheid to the extent that they therefore were complicit with the oppression and violation of human rights. It is important to note that he mentions the lack of commitment of the Church to take a similar role as the confessing Church in Nazi Germany. It would seem that by comparing Nazi Germany to apartheid South Africa, Keep was not only highlighting the challenge that the Church faced but, more critically, the heart of the matter was: What was the role of the Church in such circumstances?

It is almost as if Suggit sought to address the same issue, but this time in the personal circumstances that affected one of his former students, Robert Mercer, at the time he was the rector of St. Mary's Parish in Stellenbosch (subsequently Bishop of Bulawayo). Writing in *Doulos* in November 1970, Suggit reflected on the theme of *The Mission of the Church* and its implications in the socio-political context of the period. He asserted:

The mission of the church needs constantly to be re-examined. What is our aim, and how are we to achieve it? We may neither get so involved in the service of the sanctuary as to forget our service to our brethren, nor may we be so involved in politics, in the practical business of living in POLIS, a community, and in applying the faith by which he lives to the lives of all those among whom he lives. For it is in such circumstances that he becomes a witness, a martyr (in the original sense of the word) to Christ. The priest cannot avoid the task of helping those to whom he ministers understand the way they are to live as witnesses of Christ. It was just this, so it would seem to me, that Robert Mercer, a former member of this College, was trying to do when he was encouraging his parishioners to think of the reasons which lay the WCC decision which so many naturally deplore. We deplore even more the action taken by the government against this priest, and his colleague, and we wish to assure him of our prayers in his new situation and our support as we ourselves determine always to be faithful witness to our Lord who has called us to live as citizens of heaven and citizens of the world.<sup>123</sup>

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>123</sup> *Doulos*, November 1970, Suggit's library, Silvermine Village, Noordhoek.

In the aftermath of the Anglican Church's decision to endorse the WCC's Programme to Combat Racism, like many other clergy, Robert Mercer had to explain to his parishioners why the church had taken such a radical step. It was an act that earned the Church ire amongst some of its more affluent and politically conservative sections. G.L. Hunter captured the atmosphere in which Robert Mercer and his colleague [university chaplain, Bernard Chamberlain] were deported as "a sense of fear: BJ Vorster's deportation of two 'pestilent priests'."<sup>124</sup>

Mercer and Chamberlain's deportation took place in the following context. In 1970, following its 1968 Uppsala Missionary Conference, where it confessed that it had done "too little too late" to eliminate racism in the world, the WCC's established its Programme to Combat Racism (PCR). It was a Special Fund "to support organisations that combat racism, rather than the welfare organisations that alleviate the effects of racism".<sup>125</sup> It is noteworthy that this was also the year that the Anglican Church took the momentous resolution to "open [St. Paul's College] doors to all races and also expanded to accommodate the wives and children of married students".<sup>126</sup>

In spite of this positive development, however, the Church would start implementing the resolution only six years later. From 1970 to 1975, the Anglican Church experienced intensive attacks from the government. The Church was so pre-occupied with defending itself that little time was left for it to deal with domestic issues. Its tacit support of the PCR provoked the wrath of the government that saw the Church as its foe. "The Church is experiencing persecution", Archbishop Selby Taylor wrote in *Seek*, "It may be we shall be subject to an intensification of these attacks both on individuals and on the corporate life of the Church. Persecution is hard to bear, but as long as the Church remains faithful, it can in the end bring only blessings."<sup>127</sup> The persecution of its high profile clergy followed shortly after. Besides Mercer and Chamberlain, and as will be noted later in Chapter 2, French-Beytagh<sup>128</sup> and others became victims of government persecution.

However, in the 1970s, government enforced racial separation in the life of the Church always tended to undermine the Church's mission for fellowship and unity. Writing in July 1971, with regard to St. Paul's College relationship with St. Bede's College and St. Peter's College, Suggit argued that:

The unity of the Church in this country especially means unity amongst Christians of all races, and we have all benefitted as a result of visits between St. Peter's, St. Bede's and ourselves. But important though these are, they are a poor substitute for an integrated training and community life which the mission of the Church really demands if it is to be effective in this multi-racial country.<sup>129</sup>

<sup>124</sup> A paper compiled by G.L. Hunter in December 2001 of two CR Fathers at Stellenbosch, Robert Mercer and Bernard Chamberlain, AB 2944, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>125</sup> Villa-Vicencio, C. *Trapped in Apartheid: A socio-theological history of the English-Speaking Churches*. New York, Maryknoll: Orbis, 1988, p. 109.

<sup>126</sup> Historical notes, AB 2568, A 1, St. Paul's Theological College, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>127</sup> Clarke, *Anglicans Against Apartheid*, p. 256.

<sup>128</sup> The author follows the convention where the surname starts with a small letter "f" in the autobiography.

<sup>129</sup> *Doulos*, July 1971, Suggit's library, Silvermine Village, Noordhoek.

In the 1970s, Suggit asserted that the mission of the Church entailed breaking down “enforced [racial] separation” in theological education. According to Suggit, one aspect entailed reaching out to the sister colleges of St. Bede’s and St. Peter’s. These visits, which sought to bridge racial gaps, however, were always under the watchful eyes of the Security Branch. Writing his Warden’s Letter in the 1970 *Doulos*, Suggit reported that during St. Paul’s College students’ visit to St. Bede’s College that year for sporting events, the students experienced “a real sense of unity in encounters with the Special Branch”.<sup>130</sup> The logbook scribe indicated: “Some 18 students went on a visit to St. Bede’s to play sport. We had a wonderful time playing tennis in the morning which we won. Our afternoon football march had to be cancelled ... was stopped by the Special Branch who threatened to prosecute as interracial sport is illegal.”<sup>131</sup> In apartheid South Africa, Security Police surveillance constituted an integral part of the government’s *modus operandi* to control Church and other institutions through intimidation.

Meanwhile, in 1970 St. Paul’s College admitted its first female student, Sister Virginia CR, who *Doulos* expected would “make a real contribution” and heralded a sign of change of times in a college that hitherto had been male-dominated.<sup>132</sup> Even more critical, however, was the issue of relationships amongst churches, a theme that dominated the churches’ agenda in the 1970s. Thus, writing in *Doulos* in November 1970, Suggit asserted that:

The organic unity of the Church is a subject which is now being viewed with some doubt; even by those involved in the ecumenical movement ... There is a remarkable growth in understanding now between evangelicals and catholics (to use two labels which ought really to be complimentary rather than mutually exclusive), and we are experiencing some of the results of this at St. Paul’s.<sup>133</sup>

In the 1970s, overcoming denominational barriers, and church sectarianism, was seen as an important initiative towards normalising race relations in society. Thus, fellowship and unity transcending apartheid-imposed divisions was seen as an important strategy towards the struggle against apartheid. Commenting on the current debate on whether the Church must involve itself in changing society or not, Suggit articulated the dominant position that most people took at the time. He stated that:

It seems to me an inevitable consequence of our faith that the duty of the Church and of every Christian is to try to bring about such changes in society as will enable men really to be able to respond to the love of God and to live their life in God’s world as his servants, and to help them express that unity among men which is declared in the person of Christ ... Those who wish to preserve the status quo [and] are anxious that the church as its ministers should preach “the pure gospel”.

He went further to argue that:

For if the members of the church were really to take their faith seriously, the power of Christ could transform human relationships in this land. This is presumably the aim of the Provincial plan to

<sup>130</sup> *Doulos*, November 1970, Suggit’s library, Silvermine Village, Noordhoek.

<sup>131</sup> Logbook (note by JP Lund), C 1.10, 1969-76, St. Paul’s Theological College, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>132</sup> *Doulos*, November 1970, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>133</sup> Warden’s Letter, *Doulos*, November 1970, Suggit’s library, Silvermine Village, Noordhoek.

combat racism in the Church. Its success will depend on our understanding of God's relation to his world, and the Church's task in it.<sup>134</sup>

It would appear that the view that the Church must not meddle in politics was dominant in some quarters of the country. Early in 1971, the State President, Mr. John Vorster stated: "I am not aware that the present regulations bring about a serious or any setback to the church's work in as much as it cannot possibly ever affect any minister who confines himself to the word of God and the gospel."<sup>135</sup>

Charles van Heerden was a student in the years 1971 to 1973. According to Van Heerden, in his approach to theological issues, Suggit was very theoretical rather than practical. He and other lectures never made direct connections with the issues in the country.<sup>136</sup> However, another commentator recalled that in those years, "Suggit did what others, Bishops included, failed to do by regularly visiting political activists, Barney Pityana and Speckman, in jail although he was not a chaplain".<sup>137</sup> Suggit insisted on well-grounded Biblical arguments, as he did with the Kairos Document. He always tried to view all sides of the argument. For instance, writing in 1971, he argued for and against taking a position for the Church's active involvement in society<sup>138</sup> against the background of the government, and again when he expressed criticism of Liberation Theology.

### Exposure to outside influences

One prominent aspect of College life that seemed to define its character in the late 1960s and 1970s was the exposure to outside influences. The College was visited fairly regularly by high profile guest speakers or preachers. In 1971, four years after SPROCAS, which had been initiated by Dr. Beyers Naudé and Bishop Bill Burnett,<sup>139</sup> Suggit drew attention to SPROCAS literature that dealt with issues of the church and society published by the Christian Institute and the South African Council of Churches (SACC), which he said was a compliment to the lectures by the Archbishop of Canterbury and Cardinal L.J. Suenens, *The Future of the Christian Church*. More importantly, Suggit noted that:

SPROCAS papers laid bare the situation in our country, and produce recommendations for a change of direction. We cannot bear Christian witness without knowing both the facts of the situation and the implications of the gospel which we preach. So I commend both these publications to you.<sup>140</sup>

SPROCAS was a follow-up to the *Message to the People of South Africa*, which had been published in 1968.<sup>141</sup> It was sponsored by the Christian Institute and the SACC as a study and action programme for Christians following up on the message to the people of South Africa. It began with a series of study papers on the anatomy of apartheid, South African minorities, directions of change in South African

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>135</sup> Clarke, *Anglicans Against Apartheid*, p. 254.

<sup>136</sup> Interview with Charles van Heerden and Howard Bradshaw, 20 December 2013, Cathedral of the Holy Nativity, Pietermaritzburg.

<sup>137</sup> McGlory Speckman, personal communication with the author, 15 March 2016.

<sup>138</sup> Warden's Letter, *Doulos*, 1971, Suggit's library, Silvermine Village, Noordhoek.

<sup>139</sup> Clarke, *Anglicans Against Apartheid*, pp. 302-303.

<sup>140</sup> Warden's Letter, *Doulos*, 1971, Suggit's library, Silvermine Village, Noordhoek.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 221.

politics, some implications of inequality and education beyond apartheid.<sup>142</sup> It was intended to provide an alternate socio-economic and political framework to apartheid.<sup>143</sup> The document was disseminated in the context of the increasing brutality of apartheid and victimisation of clergy and the WCC Program to Combat Racism.<sup>144</sup> In Suggit's approach, consideration of 'facts' or evidence rather than emotions played a critical role as a premise on which a decision to act had to be made. However, sometimes this approach was problematic because 'facts' could be elusive.

During this time, however, perhaps to strengthen his argument further, Suggit highlighted the issue by relating it to the Archbishop of Canterbury's class book *The Christian Priest Today*. He asserted:

We in SA need more help in the application of the Gospel to the situation in which we find ourselves. Some such help is found in the SPROCAS Reports and other SPROCAS publications. All these provide the necessary background material for our ministry in South Africa. Perhaps the report, "Apartheid and the Church", is most relevant: even if you are unable to read others, do not miss this.<sup>145</sup>

The fact that Suggit repeated the same issue suggests, on the one hand, the prevailing apathy of the Church to engage robustly with the socio-political issues, and the urgency of the matter on the other hand. The quest for an alternative society included the desire for racially integrated theological training and the need to transform the racial diversity of St. Paul's College by bringing in "Coloured" students. One year after the Anglican Church had declared that St. Paul's College was open to all races, on 1 November 1971, Suggit shared his vision of St. Paul's College with Archbishop Robert Selby Taylor. He stated:

As I have been considering the future of St. Paul's College, and the ways in which it can best serve the Church today, I have been led to think again of the possibility of the training of coloured ordinands in conjunction with whites at St. Paul's College. I know that we would not be allowed to do this in a direct sort of way. But it might be possible to acquire property for a residence for coloured students in the Grahamstown coloured township. Perhaps this could be given a name, thus making it out as a separate institution, with its own (Coloured?) warden. But though it might be in name and in law a separate institution the whole object would be to make provision for students from this institution and St. Paul's sharing in common lectures, either at the new institution or (more likely) at St. Paul's, and to share in common meals and other activities ... I believe that I mentioned this to you some time ago, if it should seem that coloured students would one day be barred from Alice. No doubt the scheme bristles with legal difficulties. But I think it may be worth pursuing, especially as there is a general tendency to think of the future of the coloureds as being more closely tied up with that of the whites ... it would be a great enrichment of the training of our men here if they could have more contact with their coloured brethren. The scheme would necessarily involve the purchase of a kombi or two for the transport of students.<sup>146</sup>

<sup>142</sup> Lee, *Courage and Compromise*, p. 312.

<sup>143</sup> Clarke, *Anglicans Against Apartheid*, pp. 254, 306.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, Chapter 10.

<sup>145</sup> *Doulos*, October 1971, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>146</sup> Memo, AB 1363, S 21 (file 6), Archbishop of Cape Town St. Paul's Theological College, 1969-73, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

Suggit was not proposing racial integration, but rather racial co-existence, where White students trained alongside their “Coloured”<sup>147</sup> brethren. It was a scheme that would be on a similar pattern as state “separate” development, where White and “Coloured” students co-existed. Yet it was a ‘breath of fresh air’ under the apartheid limitations in those years. Nonetheless, although interested in the idea, the Bishops were reticent to implement such a vision, as they deemed that the time had not yet come for such a change. Even this conservative approach was seen as radical! In response, Selby Taylor stated:

I told the Bishops in Episcopal Synod about the contents of this subject. They were very interested in your suggestion and saw no objection to it in principle but it was felt that it was premature to give it any detailed consideration. We will however watch developments with interest and keep your suggestion in mind.<sup>148</sup>

The Bishops were cautious and hesitant to move. It is also important to note that the issue of Coloured students’ training at St. Paul’s College was due to their uncertain future in Alice as a result of the Homeland politics in Ciskei.<sup>149</sup> However, Suggit recalled that Bishop Alphaeus Zulu was hesitant about the idea of getting Black students to train with White students, precisely on the grounds that Zulu argued that they had a poor standard of education. Underlying Zulu’s argument is the assumption that apartheid had disadvantaged Black students to the extent that they could not operate academically as equals with the White students in the same College. Bishop Zulu was a highly esteemed leader whose opinion or advice on Black people was highly regarded by the White leadership in the Anglican Church.<sup>150</sup>

Suggit’s vision for racial integration ought to be viewed within the social and religious outlook of the time. Besides the Cottesloe Consultation, John de Gruchy also noted that the Programme to Combat Racism (PCR) of the World Council of Churches (WCC) was another critical issue that affected the churches and South African society in the years between 1960 and 1971.<sup>151</sup> Through the PCR, the WCC made financial support available to the liberation movements in Southern Africa, a resolution that turned out controversial and even divisive in the ranks of the member churches of the SACC.<sup>152</sup>

Mandy Goedhals identified South African liberalism as both a weakness and a strength that affected the Church’s mission in the first half of the 20th century. In the spirit of South African liberalism, she argued, even though the Church stood for the ideal of non-racial justice and proclaimed racial equality, it gave in to the practices of racial segregation and sometimes even actively promoted these practices. In her own words, she asserted that “[t]he church attempted to mitigate social and economic hardships and emphasised freedom of expression, and the importance of the individual. But like the liberals, the Church succumbed to the ideology of segregation, and in practice supported the maintenance of white power, although adhering to the ideal of non-racial justice”.<sup>153</sup>

<sup>147</sup> That is, students of mixed White and Black African race.

<sup>148</sup> See Letter, Taylor to Suggit, 17 November 1971, AB 1363, S 21 (file 6), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, St. Paul’s Theological College, 1969-73. Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>150</sup> Interview with John Suggit, 19 November 2014, Silvermine Village, Noordhoek.

<sup>151</sup> De Gruchy, *The Church Struggle in South Africa*, p. 136.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>153</sup> Goedhals, “From Paternalism to Partnership?” pp. 121, 104-126.

Owen Franklin was a student in the years 1971 to 1973. Commenting on the exchange programme of St. Paul's College with other colleges, Franklin, recalled that John Suggit "made it quite clear that the law of the land said Black students could not come and stay overnight [in the college] but he was willing to break the law and so those students from the other colleges had to spend a week in the college, and nobody broadcasted this in Grahamstown". According to Franklin, St. Paul's College students were enriched by the visiting students.<sup>154</sup> In his view, the exchange had a missionary obligation – the crossing of the frontiers of racial and cultural boundaries to enhance a united church, which called for an integrated training. Suggit expressed his views in the following manner:

The Unity of the Church in this country especially means unity among Christians of all races, and we have all benefitted as a result of visit between St. Peter's, St. Bede's and ourselves. But important though these are, they are a poor substitute for an integrated training and community life which the mission of the Church really demands if it is to be effective in this multi-racial country.<sup>155</sup>

The division of the Anglican Church reflected itself in its structures; the manner it had allowed itself to run its theological colleges along apartheid lines. It was this that undermined its mission to the world. Effective witness to a multiracial country required an integrated racial training, which was hampered by the entrenched racial segregation imposed by apartheid. The visits were seen as a means to bridging the racial gaps imposed by apartheid.

### Inter-Seminary networks

Besides contacts with St. Bede's College and St. Peter's College, St. Paul's College was involved in a cluster of Inter-Seminary networks. David Bannerman (future Bishop of Highveld) was a student from 1970 to 1972, and in 1971, was a senior student.<sup>156</sup> He reported that there had been inter-Seminary meetings in Lesotho for seminarians in 1971. He said that Anglicans, Presbyterians, Catholics, Moravians, and Congregationalists came to live together as Christians in Lesotho, Botswana and Swaziland, lectured to by ecumenical clergy. Desmond Tutu spoke on "Spirituality and the Married man", while Bro Henry spoke on "Spirituality and the Single man", and Dr. Ulrich Lockmann on "Spirituality and the Community".<sup>157</sup> St. Paul's College also belonged to a cluster of inter-Seminary networks, such as ASATI, Inter-Seminary.

In all of these "religious" organisations, St. Paul's College was an active and prominent member. However, it would appear that when it came to participate in "politically" inclined organisations such as NUSAS, the College was rather reticent. In the June 1971 edition of *Doulos*, it was reported that:

Nusas [NUSAS] and St. Paul's enjoy a sympathetic relationship. We are regarded as a branch of Nusas. It has been agreed that, because of the fullness of College life, St. Paul's students are unable to play an active part within the Nusas organisation, but college members are sympathetic to the ideals of

<sup>154</sup> Interview with Owen Franklin, 13 June 2014, Melville, Johannesburg.

<sup>155</sup> Warden's Letter, *Doulos*, June 1971, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>156</sup> A student leader also known as Head Student. Interview with David Bannerman, 23 January 2014, Diocesan offices, Highveld.

<sup>157</sup> *Doulos*, 1971, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

Nusas, and we support the aim of Nusas. Nusas speakers are welcome at the College and we appreciate the informal gatherings held with Mr. Clive Keegan, Mr. Barry Streak and Mr. Tim Jones.<sup>158</sup>

It is noteworthy that St. Paul's College did not take a clear stand on NUSAS. It is interesting that the College justified its non-involvement in NUSAS on the grounds that its life was full. Seemingly, this became an excuse for not engaging in the national issues. It sought to play it safe; it could not be actively seen to be associated with an organisation that appeared to be at variance with the government's ideology. By implication, St. Paul's College refused to actively participate in the political activities of NUSAS. Underlying St. Paul's College's resolution lay a much deeper issue – a spirituality that tended to draw sharp distinctions between religion and politics, sacred and secular.

This kind of religious ideology conveniently played into the hands of the government, who tried to confine the churches' activities to the "spiritual" realm. It was part of the church culture and symbols that the state used to legitimise its own ideology of apartheid. Worsnip argued that "the church operates largely, though not exclusively, in the ideological terrain. It tries to provide its adherents with a comprehensive set of symbols and practices which attempt to make sense of the total life process".<sup>159</sup> Charles van Heerden further noted that during his time at St. Paul's, the College never sympathised with the aims of NUSAS.<sup>160</sup>

### Symbols of apartheid

Nonetheless, in spite of its apparent half-hearted commitment to NUSAS, time and again St. Paul's College became a 'site of ideological struggle' and contradictions that tended to hold opposing ideologies. Sometimes, these also entailed national symbols. The year 1971 saw the South African government celebrating the 10th anniversary of the Republic. Celebrations were held throughout the country. Franklin recalled that he questioned, what [was] there for Black South Africans to celebrate? He said that he drew up an article and had it signed by members of staff and students, and of the 24 students, all of them did (except one or two who were uncritical of the apartheid system). He recalled that it was published in the *Daily Dispatch* and probably the *Port Elizabeth Herald*.<sup>161</sup> A document in the Historical Department of the William Cullen's library at Witwatersrand University supports Franklin's claim. Titled, "Nothing to celebrate", the petition raised many questions:

What is there for Africans to celebrate? The indignity of reference books? Their loss of rights in urban areas? The instability of family life? The comforts of resettlement camps? The expense of poor education? Persistent unemployment and inadequate wages? Parliament without power? What is there for Indians to celebrate? Group Areas and loss of livelihood? Restrictions on travel? Disparity of professional salaries? What is there for Coloured people to celebrate? The cost of commuting? Job reservation? Exclusion from the opera? The uprooting of communities? A caricature of a representative council? The callousness of race classification? What is there for Chinese to celebrate?

<sup>158</sup> Doulos, June 1971, Suggit's library, Silvermine Village, Noordhoek.

<sup>159</sup> Worsnip, M. "Situating Spirituality within the Struggle", p. 36.

<sup>160</sup> Interview with Charles van Heerden and Howard Bradshaw, 20 December 2013, Cathedral of the Holy Nativity, Pietermaritzburg.

<sup>161</sup> Interview with Owen Franklin, 13 June 2014, Melville, Johannesburg.

The honorary status of the Japanese? What is there for Whites to celebrate? Our plenty in the midst of poverty? Our splendid isolation? Our free school books? The Bureau for State Security? Our disproportionate expenditure on defence? What is there for all South Africans to celebrate? The divisions of our alienated society? Our prison population, our crime, divorce and suicide rates? Our road deaths? Our executions? The erosion of the rule of law? Our hope for the future?<sup>162</sup>

The significance of the petition lay in the fact that it attributed all social evils to the system of apartheid. On the other hand, the weakness of the petition lay therein that it did not clearly spell out the extent to which these social evils affected the lives of the people. Speaking to this author on 13 June 2014, Franklin reminisced that the students' action grew out of "their understanding of the Old Testament and the Prophets studies and led to [them] that South Africa was hugely unjust and to be opposed to apartheid was not just political but thoroughly Biblical".<sup>163</sup> It would seem that the group of students who signed the petition were those that proclaimed that only the "pure Gospel" must be preached, or claimed that "there was no other Gospel", the story with which we conclude this chapter.

### "No other Gospel"

Franklin and other students' reaction to the impact of apartheid on Black people was merely one isolated episode in the 1970s. The opposite reaction to this stance, however, took the form of those who asserted that there was "no other Gospel", the kind of spirituality and view that tended to oppose those who sought to reflect and critically apply some Biblical imperatives, notably Liberation Theology, on the political issues that arose from the context of apartheid. Suggit gave insight into the prevailing dominant White attitude towards the socio-political issues of the day. He asserted that there were "[t]hose [students/people who wished] to preserve the status quo [and] are anxious that the church as its ministers should preach 'the pure gospel'".<sup>164</sup> Suggit was critical of this group. He noted: "For if the members of the church were really to take their faith seriously, the power of Christ could transform human relationships in this world."<sup>165</sup> Although not wrong, Suggit's theoretical response was also not helpful. He tended to over-estimate the importance of the institution of the Church in the lives of human beings. There was a complete lack of structural analysis.

According to Suggit, those who insisted on preaching the "pure Gospel" or "no other Gospel", were on the opposite side of those who were open to involvement in society.<sup>166</sup> He recalled that the former group was bigger than the latter. That there were more students who insisted on "pure Gospel" than those who advocated engagement with societal issues could suggest that those responsible for selecting students tended to favour this group of ordinands to St. Paul's College above others. The division between those who advocated for the so-called "pure gospel" and those who believed that the gospel had socio-economic and political imperatives in their lives, shows that St. Paul's College was a site of a broader ideological struggle.

<sup>162</sup> Logbook, AB 2568, C 1.10, 1969-76, signed by 24 members of St. Paul's College and ten members of Livingstone House, Rhodes University, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>163</sup> Interview with Owen Franklin, 13 June 2014, Melville, Johannesburg.

<sup>164</sup> Warden's Letter, *Doulos*, 1971, Suggit's library, Silvermine Village, Noordhoek.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>166</sup> Interview with John Suggit, 19 November 2014, Silvermine Village, Noordhoek.

The apparent division was part of a broader Western Christian tradition that categorised life between 'sacred' and 'profane'. In South Africa, the apartheid state fostered and tended to promote this partisan position that 'politics' was a secular domain, opposed to the 'sacred' domain. The latter was associated with the 'pure' gospel. Thus, whether wittingly or unwittingly, this group tended to support the state ideology of apartheid. One way in which the College saw itself as "identifying" with some of the poor in the community was by donating to the Grahamstown District Relief Association (GADRA) savings accrued from abstaining from lunch and as desserts.<sup>167</sup> The mission of the Church entailed both the *profession* of faith and *living* the faith, or profession and "praxis"; the two informed and complemented each other. For Suggit, the proclamation of the gospel could not be separated from the engagement with the issues and structures of society. Human relationships needed transformation inspired by the Christian faith.

## Conclusion

This chapter located St. Paul's College within its socio-political, theological and religious milieu. It highlighted various socio-political and religious currents that affected St. Paul's College during its first ten years from 1965. More immediately, it highlighted the dominant ecumenical agenda of the SACC on race relations, the calls for social renewal and social engagement. It has been shown that in this context, the Church, and by extension St. Paul's College, were being challenged to respond to a certain degree. The Church seemed ineffective to respond more successfully, precisely because racial attitudes and discriminatory structures existed within its very structures. In the College, Suggit's responses to some of these challenges appeared too theoretical to make any difference. In light of this synopsis, we now turn to Chapter 2, where we will consider the College in the period between 1972 and 1975 as a site of struggle of various theological and religious streams.

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<sup>167</sup> Logbook, AB 2568, C 1.10, 1971, 1969-76, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

## Chapter 2

### Conflicting Theological, Ideological and Spiritual Orientations? 1972-75

This chapter will seek to highlight the tensions that emanated from differences with regard to various theological and spiritual and ideological orientations in response to the challenge of apartheid at St. Paul's College in the years between 1972 and 1975. As will soon become evident, these related to theological and religious approaches that various role players pursued. Amongst them were the Charismatic Renewal and Evangelical Spirituality, the South African Council of Churches' (SACC) insights and initiatives for the moral and social renewal of society, ecumenical relationships and 'Anglo-Catholic' spirituality and theology. However, these religious and theological orientations will not be discussed in isolation from one another, but their interaction throughout the period under discussion will rather be shown. They are the 'lenses' through which the story will be told. One of the first movements that impacted on St. Paul's College during this time was the Charismatic Renewal.

### The modern Charismatic Renewal

As a global phenomenon, the Charismatic Renewal traces its roots to the Pentecostal Movement in Topeka, Kansas in 1901 and internationally in Azusa Street, Los Angeles in 1906.<sup>1</sup> Peter Hocken noted: "Most of these 'tongues-speakers' were driven out of their churches, though one or two early Pentecostal leaders remained in the denominations, though with increasing difficulty and diminishing impact."<sup>2</sup> The origins of the Charismatic Renewal in the historic churches are linked to Van Nuys, California in the United States of America (USA), however, where an Episcopal rector, Dennis Burnett, and some of his parishioners are said to have undergone the experience.<sup>3</sup> From there, it spread out to other churches in the USA.<sup>4</sup> In South Africa it emerged in an attempt to revitalise mainline churches at a time when English-speaking Churches began preaching the "social gospel". Its rise was associated with the ecumenical efforts amongst Anglicans, Roman Catholics, Methodists, Baptists, and Dutch Reformed Christians.<sup>5</sup> They ranged "from those involved in ecumenical endeavour and more progressive in their theology and politics to those who are fundamentalist and eschew cooperation with Churches of other convictions".<sup>6</sup>

1 Hocken, P. "A Survey of the Worldwide Charismatic Movement", In: A Bittlinger (ed.), *The Church is Charismatic*. Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1981, p. 117.

2 *Ibid.*

3 *Ibid.*

4 *Ibid.*

5 Thompson, G. "'Transported Away': The Spirituality and Piety of Charismatic Christianity in South Africa", 1976-1994, *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*, No. 118, 2004, pp. 128-145.

6 Elphick and Davenport, *Christianity in South Africa*, p. 166.

## The Charismatic Renewal in the College

Bill Burnett, translated<sup>7</sup> from Bloemfontein, became Bishop of Grahamstown in December 1969. This marked an important landmark in the history of the Anglican Church in South Africa. Burnett had received his training at St. Paul's College in the 1940s. He was the first South African-born White Bishop in the Anglican Church. In the Charismatic Renewal movement, Burnett and other Bishops emerged to play a critical role in the Anglican Church. Of particular interest to this study is how these Bishops now began to wield the influence of the Charismatic Renewal over the students at St. Paul's College and later on (as will be discussed in Chapters 3 and 4), Burnett's role in the ordination selection conference<sup>8</sup> when he was Archbishop of Cape Town. Thus, as it will become evident later, the Bishops' role became critical in shaping the style of leadership, and the 'theological' and 'political' orientation of students undergoing the processes of theological training, who would subsequently take up leadership positions in the Church.

In his book, *By My Spirit, Renewal in the worldwide Anglican Church*, Burnett compared his experience of renewal to the Early Church's experience on the day of Pentecost. He said: "This is what I knew with a shattering clarity, when Jesus baptised me in the Spirit of His own initiative in 1972 in the chapel of my episcopal residence in Grahamstown, South Africa."<sup>9</sup> More significantly, the logbook scribe shares with us how the experiences of Burnett and other leaders started to affect the College. On 20 May 1972, he wrote:

Bishop Burnett, Mike Nuttall and Peter Campbell told ... us about their experiences of the gift of talking in tongues. For those of us who last year heard Peter speak on the movement of the Spirit in Queenstown there was nothing new, though we were all particularly interested to have first-hand information on the recent experiences by Mike and the Bishop. Most of us had heard of the goings on in Grahamstown. Nothing frightful was related and some of us gathered for more prayers after the meeting closed at 10.30 pm ... The second meeting went into the small hours and was an extraordinary experience. Your LBS (LogBook Reporter) (Mid night reporter) was there on the spot as usual and can report that unitive prayer resulted in an extraordinary sense of fellowship and community ... The prayers were led by Peter [Campbell] and Mike [Nuttall] who praised God in tongues ... This was neither an alarming or distracting phenomenon at all, and the rest of us suffered no sense of exclusion or inferiority because we were not able to do likewise. Since the meeting, corridor chatter touches on references to emotionalism, *koinonia*, sore knees and some obscure phrase – 'sock it to me'. For the record, this phrase (borrowed from Springbok Radio) was contributed and caused much mirth after the group had just thanked God for our funny Church.<sup>10</sup>

Thus, through the personal experience of Burnett, Nuttall, and Campbell, St. Paul's College now came to be exposed to the Charismatic Renewal. In the light of the statement by the logbook scribe, it can be

7 An Ecclesiastical term in the Anglican Church meaning "transfer".

8 Ordination selection conference is a Diocesan structure, normally headed by a Diocesan Bishop that selects men and women to a theological college for theological training.

9 Burnett, B. *By My Spirit, Renewal in the worldwide Anglican Church*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1988, p. 8.

10 Logbook, AB 2568, C 1.10, 1969-76, St. Paul's Theological College, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

surmised that the renewal had generally made its considerable impact on St. Paul's College. Certainly for these students, according to the scribe, the Charismatic Renewal was a positive experience.

Michael Nuttall (future Bishop of Natal) was a student in 1963-1964. He was a lecturer at Rhodes University (1969-74) and at the same time he was a part-time tutor at St. Paul's College. He described his experience of the Charismatic Renewal as follows:

The Charismatic Renewal came our way, as Anglicans, in Grahamstown early in the 70s, primarily as a result of Bishop Bill Burnett's dramatic personal experience, while at prayer, which altered his life and outlook very considerably. I was a young priest, with my wife Dorrie, in a small house group to which the Burnetts and two other couples belonged. Our group must have been the first one, I think, that Bishop Bill informed of his experience in the chapel in his home. That got me implicated and I did my best to be alongside him, because he asked for support in his newfound Spirit-filled life and ministry. Then there came the day in April 1972, during Morning Prayer alone in my study at home, when I found myself also having a new experience of God's love, manifested in a quiet outpouring of prayer in tongues.<sup>11</sup>

It is clear that the influence of Burnett was pivotal to the spread of the Renewal. For the renewal to spread, Burnett needed people who would share his own experience, his vision. He needed supporters. Issues of power relations surfaced. Burnett was a Bishop, his 'subordinates', the clergy, such as Nuttall, felt obliged to lend support to the Bishop. In supporting Burnett in the renewal, Nuttall affirmed Burnett's ministry, vice versa. Precisely through sharing Burnett's own experience with others, it affected them. They 'were caught up'. Nuttall went on to state how it affected the College. He asserted that:

The movement had an undoubted spiritual infectiousness about it, and in no time the life of St. Paul's College was caught in it as well, partly because of ordinands being sent to the College and partly because of staff involvement, led initially by the Revd. Carl Garner. The threefold staff team at the College was a God-given gift, I think, at that particular time, because Duncan Buchanan (the Warden) and his two colleagues, Carl Garner and Philip Le Feuvre, represented respectively a liberal, Anglo-Catholic and evangelical outlook in combination: Anglican spirituality at its best, you could say. Now the charismatic dimension was thrown into the melting pot and they all adapted to it willingly and even enthusiastically.<sup>12</sup>

One hallmark that characterised and distinguished those who encountered the Charismatic Renewal was a personal awareness of God's presence. The renewal was "infectious" precisely because it was psychological as some people were well disposed to it. It is striking that this spirituality seemed to have co-existed with the formalism associated with Anglo-Catholic spirituality and that it seemed to have held the College together. However, precisely because of the stress on personal experience of God, sometimes the Charismatic Renewal appeared to be individualistic in character. To other people, it was precisely this seemingly individualistic orientation that was problematic.

<sup>11</sup> Michael Nuttall, personal communication with the author, 22 January 2018.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

While Suggit welcomed the renewal, he seemed to suggest that there were others in the movement who did not want to acknowledge other forms of the experience of God. Writing on 12 June 1972, Suggit was very clear on how the Charismatic spirituality had impacted, he asserted that:

The College has not been unaffected by experiences of the power of the Holy Spirit, often referred to as Pentecostal. I am myself delighted that several of our members have experienced the Spirit's power and activity in this way. We do indeed need in our weakness the assurance of the strength of God. But such manifestations of the Holy Spirit are not the only ways in which God is pleased to work. In this experience, which many throughout the Church are enjoying, the awareness of God's presence must never lead us to deny his presence in others who have different experiences.<sup>13</sup>

It is evident that this had become a point of tension between the two groups. There were those who had undergone the renewal and were now starting to deny that those who had not gone through it had equally genuine Christian experience. Considering themselves special, the Charismatics tended to look down upon others. As mentioned earlier, it is quite striking that the scribe portrayed the experience in a very positive light and in a manner that was critical of some perceptions and criticisms – that the experience marginalised others.

In this context, Suggit's Biblical scholarship also continued to impact on the College. The logbook scribe gave insight into the rhythm and ethos of the College. The recorder captured the impact of the Charismatic Renewal alongside the academic scholarship of Suggit. Styled on the Book of Revelation by St. John, the Divine, under the title, "A Revelation from (Suggit) St. John a Divine", he wrote:

To the Cherub of the chapel I write: "I remember you from days long gone; the fractions streak that was even then in you, and your Disputations about this and that. Yet, I always have loved you with tenderness, for in those days you showed greatness, ... [and] showed great promise in Greek. Yet, now I feel you have assisted the Acting Angel<sup>14</sup> in his loathness of Voluntarism and even shut all the chapel windows. I must charge you to stop the rumour that I have taken to dancing around the altar whilst chanting in tongues." Even whilst this [remarkable phenomenon]<sup>15</sup> ... was being analysed and subjected to the most stringent tests of redaction criticism to establish authority, *sitz im Leben*, Scribal interpolation, and thorny problem of destination – other currents were discernible in the College – one bright student (who will remain nameless) – he suggested that the examinations be written in tongues, particularly N.T. subjects, and the chaplain can interpret them as he marks them.<sup>16</sup>

Suggit's scholarly and intellectual astuteness had considerably impacted on the College, but so did the Charismatic Renewal. The observation with regard to 'dancing around the altar while chanting in tongues' suggest that those involved in the renewal somehow broke free from a rigid style of worship often associated with the set liturgy. They experienced 'freedom' in the Spirit. Yet it is also important to note some sort of underlying tension that seemed to prevail between what some students claimed

<sup>13</sup> A Postscript to the Warden's Letter, *Doulos* (the College's magazine), 12 June 1972.

<sup>14</sup> That is, the Acting Warden.

<sup>15</sup> Author unable to decipher handwriting in original manuscript.

<sup>16</sup> Logbook, 1 June 1972, 1969-76, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

was their experience of the Holy Spirit and the imperatives of engaging in academic work. Jonathan Draper and Gerald West concluded: "For many, if not most, of those touched by the 'Charismatic Renewal', their new-found faith involved also the adoption of a pietistic or even fundamentalist position with regard to the Bible. A strong anti-intellectual strand in the movement questioned the value of the academic study of theology."<sup>17</sup>

Perhaps what Torquil Paterson, then a lecturer at St. Paul's College, would write in 1989 might not be irrelevant for St. Paul's College (and the Church) during this period. At the core of its worship was the Eucharistic tradition, which ideologically in bondage, spiritualised the Eucharistic celebration by tending to emphasise the resurrection, and consequently, was removed from the realities of the cross.<sup>18</sup> This Eucharistic tradition was unable to inspire the College (and the Church) to engage more meaningfully with the pain and suffering of the Black people inflicted by the apartheid state.<sup>19</sup> It offered solace in the risen and glorified Christ, and not in the wounded, crucified and rejected Christ.

On the other hand, for Suggit, the relationship between the Church and the Holy Spirit with regard to the Church's mission in society was complex precisely because of the 'sinful' nature of humankind. He outlined his insights in a paper, "The Holy Spirit and We Resolved ..." (Acts 15:28), and stated:

The relation, therefore, between the members of the church and the Holy Spirit is of considerable complex, and may be regarded as in some ways analogous to the relationship between the two natures of Christ, which received its classical definition in the term *communicatio idiomatum* (literally, a sharing of characteristics). Certainly, the relationship between the Spirit and the church is by no means the same as that between the two natures of Christ. In Christ the unity is between God as he is and a man as he is called to be, the created Adam, truly in the image of God. In the case of the church, though, it is the Spirit of God who gives life to the church and its members individually and corporately, its members are still sinful, far from the perfection which by God's grace they are called to attain ... So although the church is right to hold that its decisions are those of the Spirit, it must be continually prepared to check them by the light of its understanding of the gospel in the context of each succeeding generation.<sup>20</sup>

The significance of Suggit's argument was his assertion that in spite of its claim to possess the Holy Spirit, the Church needed constantly to humble itself by subjecting its claims to the scrutiny of the authority of Church tradition valid in all generations. Suggit's argument becomes critical in the context where some of those who claimed to have the experience of the Charismatic Renewal seemed to see themselves as superior to others. Thus, at the zenith of its power, the renewal tended to be divisive between the people who claimed to have gone through its experience and those who had not, with the former almost denying any other genuine experience outside the renewal.

17 Draper, J. and West, G. "Anglicans and scripture in South Africa", In: F. England and T. Paterson, (eds.), *Bounty in Bondage*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1989, p. 36.

18 Paterson, T. "A Liturgy for Liberation", In: F. England and T. Paterson, (eds.), *Bounty in Bondage*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1989.

19 *Ibid.*

20 Suggit, J. "The Holy Spirit and We Resolved ... (Acts 15:28)", *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*, No. 79, June 1992, pp. 38-48.

Viewed more critically, however, it would seem that there were also differences between those who had experienced the Charismatic Renewal and those who had not, with regard to perceptions or attitudes towards socio-political issues. Franklin recalled his personal experience regarding this issue during his time as a student in the years 1971 to 1973. He said that, "the names that come to mind in terms of renewal were Peter Campbell in Queenstown, Ivan Weiss. So began these weekly meetings at Bishop's house". He asserted:

In some ways the Charismatic Renewal diverted some Anglicans from the political issues. The dominant issue was: Am I filled in tongues? ... There were others in the renewal like Ivan Thom ... who were politically involved ... who became a conscientious objector ... There were many who felt that the Renewal had changed emphasis ... Bill Burnett did shift the focus from political.<sup>21</sup>

Ian Darby, a priest in the Diocese of Natal, was not a student of St. Paul's College. However, he said he was closely associated with the College's life.<sup>22</sup> He went further than confirming Franklin's view. He said Nuttall was sympathetic to the Charismatic Renewal but became disillusioned with it after Bill Burnett's retirement, especially as it was openly anti-Desmond Tutu.<sup>23</sup>

Perhaps being aware of these perceptions, Nuttall has recently written to try to in a way reconcile the positions of Burnett and Tutu. He asserted: "Both men had become, in their different ways, somewhat uncomfortable people to have around. They were changing our complacency, in church and state. One was a prophet to the Church, challenging us eagerly to receive into our life all the resources available from a living God. The other was a prophet to society, summoning us to embrace justice and peace, speaking out and acting against injustice in the form of racial discrimination and oppression."<sup>24</sup>

Nonetheless, it is quite significant to note that with the retirement of Burnett, and much later with the 'accession' of Tutu, theological orientation now started to swing towards Tutu's 'theological perspective'. This would suggest that the style of leadership of the incumbent Archbishop, his 'theological' or political 'orientation' at a given time, influence the Church he leads in the particular period. John Allen noted that Burnett's involvement in the Renewal went along with his negative attitude towards Liberation Theology that advocated the eradication of apartheid. Burnett was "suspicious of Liberation Theology", so Allen noted, "[and that] in time he would liken it to the theology that justified apartheid". Allen said that "according to a note of his [Burnett's] meeting with Tutu", Burnett had asked Tutu: "Is liberation what the Churches can and should do, for in the final analysis it will be political pressures and/or guns that decide the issue, unless the whites change."<sup>25</sup>

21 Interview with Owen Franklin, 13 June 2014, Melville, Johannesburg.

22 Telephone interview with Ian Darby, 8 March 2014.

23 *Ibid.*

24 Nuttall, M. *A Voice within the Church and Society, A personal Anthology*. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2015, p. 89.

25 Allen, J. *Rabble-Rouser for Peace, the Authorised Bibliography for Desmond Tutu*. London, Sydney, Auckland, Johannesburg: Free Press, 2006, p.165.

Burnett is said to have asserted: "Liberation Theology, just like the theology underlying apartheid, led people to place their hope of salvation in a political manifesto instead of in the redeeming work of Jesus."<sup>26</sup> In South Africa, Liberation Theology advocated social justice. Just as Suggit was critical of the conservative theological trajectory that Liberation Theology operated from, Burnett was critical of the notion of justice, a critical element of the proponents of Liberation Theology, as too legalistic, narrow and "dubious" as "an unattainable ideology".<sup>27</sup>

Burnett seemed to view the Charismatic Renewal as a movement that was free from the constraints of apartheid. He affirmed: "It is the righteousness of Jesus, who has fulfilled the law, which must govern our law-making process as it is filtered as much as may be into the many and various structures of society."<sup>28</sup> Yet, even the makers of the law understood themselves to be "Christians". It was the tendency of the Charismatic Renewal to stress individual spiritual experience almost at the expense of the "collective", which appeared to project itself as at variance with the Black majority's struggle against apartheid. The Black majority mobilised numbers to undermine apartheid, and stressed collective action, while the renewal appeared to stress the individual's experience as being more important. Tending to stress "other worldly" experience while disdaining the here and now, the renewal was fundamentally dualistic.

Differences in perceptions and attitudes with regard to social political issues transcended religious groups within denominations such as the Anglican Church, however. It reflected perceptions within the broader ecumenical family. Elphick and Davenport argue: "The polarizations which had developed in the 1970s and 1980s indicated the extent to which the English-speaking Churches were divided within themselves by different perceptions of social reality and different understandings of the task of the church in society."<sup>29</sup>

It also ought to be noted that the impetus of the Charismatic Renewal in the 1970s occurred in the context where the Church was struggling with another critical question: the relevance of the Christian ministry and in particular, the role of clergy. Debates surrounding issues such as "the death of God" or "honest to God" typified this challenge. In South Africa, this intellectual context was perhaps best characterised by Trevor Verry's book, *The Vanishing Clergyman*. These issues impacted on St. Paul's College, as Buchanan perceived. Writing to a former student of the College, Philip Dixie, Buchanan noted:

We are in a state of flux affecting the whole church and not simply the Anglican section of it. But we are not sitting idly by. Much of our time here is taken up with the problems facing the contemporary world and the theological response to it. And we have made radical changes in the syllabus of the diploma in order to try and take these things very much seriously.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 265.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17.

<sup>28</sup> Burnett, *By My Spirit, Renewal in the worldwide Anglican Church*, p. 18.

<sup>29</sup> Elphick and Davenport, *Christianity in South Africa*, p. 167.

<sup>30</sup> See Letter to Philip Dixie, *Doulos*, 1972, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

Writing to this author in 2011, Buchanan further asserted: "The College had exposed the students to the current theological debates such as 'God is dead', biblical criticism, liturgical reform."<sup>31</sup> If the College did take contemporary theological issues such 'death of God debate' seriously as Buchanan states, it would appear that it failed to seriously engage theologically with the issue of homosexuality.

## The Charismatic Renewal and homosexuality

In the late 1970s, one area in which the Charismatic Renewal impacted on the College, related to the attitude of some staff members and students towards homosexuality. Nicholas Southey, a gay Anglican ordinand of the Diocese of Johannesburg, not a student of St. Paul's College, but of Rhodes University, gave insight into this issue.<sup>32</sup> He tells about experiences in his life in Grahamstown that considerably shaped his vocation.

Southey and Neil,<sup>33</sup> a friend, and a fellow student, were leaders of the Anglican Society (Ansoc) at Rhodes University. They had a relationship. According to Southey, Neil contacted a well-known and reputed priest with a 'healing' ministry on the staff of St. Paul's College. Southey said that the priest directly attributed the problems in Ansoc (and the Church) to the "personal behaviour" of the two student leaders.<sup>34</sup>

According to Southey, the priest had assigned John,<sup>35</sup> a student at the College, to attend to them. Southey related some of his experience as follows. He said that, considering homosexuality as sin, and therefore homosexuals needing "healing", they went through counselling sessions, and even explored the gift of speaking in tongues, the failure of which was attributed to "those who continue to harbour sin within them".<sup>36</sup>

Southey went further to say that on discovering that John had been reporting "the counselling sessions to the College authorities", he "felt betrayed, little more than a guinea-pig in the hands of manipulative individuals bent on asserting their own agendas".<sup>37</sup> The final episode, Southey said, was that he had been in a relationship with Malcom,<sup>38</sup> a student of St. Paul's College. According to Southey, a certain student was "expelled from the College after allegedly becoming too close to a 17-year-old boy; this episode merely intensified the strategy, the only way to ensure that Malcom would end his training successfully".<sup>39</sup>

31 Response to a Questionnaire, 12 June 2011. See Henry Mbaya, "The Contribution of the Anglican Church to Theological Education in Southern Africa: The Case of St. Paul's Theological College, Grahamstown", In: I. Phiri and D. Werner (eds.), *Handbook of Theological Education in Africa*. Oxford: Regnum, 2013, pp. 979-989.

32 Southey, N. "Confessions of a gay ordinand: a personal history", In: P. Germond and S. de Gruchy (eds.), *Aliens in the household of God*. Cape Town & Johannesburg: David Philip, 1997, Chapter 9.

33 Southey has not given Neil's surname.

34 Southey, "Confessions of a gay ordinand: a personal history", p. 48.

35 Southey has not given John's surname.

36 Southey, "Confessions of a gay ordinand: a personal history", p. 49.

37 *Ibid.*

38 Southey has not given Malcom's surname.

39 Southey, "Confessions of a gay ordinand: a personal history", p. 52.

The College's judgemental attitude towards homosexuals reflects a general hostile, and almost adversarial attitude of the Church leadership and theological tutors. This attitude was evidenced in the report, sanctioned by the Archbishop of Cape Town at the end of 1977, "to determine a Christian understanding of homosexuality particularly pertaining to the ordained ministry".<sup>40</sup> The issue of homosexuality, however, must be considered within the broader context of what it meant to be human.

## Humanness versus racism

In March 1972, Fr. Edmund Hill O.P., a Roman Catholic priest, was invited to St. Paul's College to address the students on the topic, "On the Importance of Being Human". As part of his address he focused on the race issue in South Africa. He asserted:

Another problem, absolutely crucial for us here, is that of ecumenism, i.e. the quest for genuine unity in love and brotherhood, between Black and White within our Churches; a problem of which most White Christians in this country are scarcely aware; of which practically all articulate Black Christians, and especially clergymen, are acutely aware, and which if not honestly and bravely and immediately faced by Church authorities, is very likely to paralyse and kill our Churches in this country and the Christianity they represent. But again I do not want to talk about this problem, because I do not really feel competent to do so. In order to do so, I would really have to be a Black man, at any rate at this particular juncture.<sup>41</sup>

Essentially, Hill was speaking about the division between White and Black people in churches caused by racism entrenched by the apartheid ideology, which in his view was contrary to the ecumenical spirit of love and brotherhood in Christ. White Christians, brainwashed by apartheid propaganda, were oblivious to Black people's estrangement. Hill went on to highlight the ideological of apartheid and, by extension, colonialism:

White society, in so far as it is convention bound – and that is pretty far, I think – takes it for granted that the only valid way of being human is White, the so-called 'Western' way. Liberally interpreted, the convention allows that non-Whites may learn this way, and so graduate to authentic humanity. Crabbedly interpreted it doesn't really even allow this. But in neither case it is not allowed that Africans and other Blacks may have ways of being human quite as authentic as the western way, from which Whites might profitably learn. Such a conventional attitude not only de-humanises the Blacks (at least in the eyes of White) – the ones it really and inwardly dehumanises at the core of their being and becoming is the Whites themselves.<sup>42</sup>

Hill struck at the core of Western racist ideology and agenda. Apartheid, like colonialism, undermined Christian fellowship between White and Black people within the churches precisely because racism was antithetical to the teaching of the Church that proclaimed unity in Christ. This ideology portrayed White people as the bearers and benefactors of a superior civilisation. The coloniser or the missionary tended to think that by the design of 'providence', Europeans had the right to impart the ideology of

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 54.

<sup>41</sup> Fr. Hill, E. "On the importance of Being Human", *Doulos*, March 1972, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*

racial supremacy on Africans.<sup>43</sup> Assumptions held by White people that they and their value systems were superior to the “Other” and their effort to impose them on Black people was the cause for tension and conflict. Even though the system sought to impose White values on Black people, it also tended to constrain Black people from fully entering it. Consequently, it tended to deny Black people their humanity. On the other hand, by denying Black people their humanity, the system also dehumanised White people. Apartheid was a system that was riddled with internal contradictions.

In the 1970s, steeped in its White culture and traditions, St. Paul’s College was reluctant to open itself more fully to the experiences of Black people. The College existed as an Island. The following episode will illustrate the extent to which the College isolated itself from experiencing more fully life in the Black context. On 12 August 1973, St. Paul’s College students joined St. Philip’s congregation in a Eucharistic worship service in the Black Township. The logbook scribe expressed the view that it was “one way through which St. Pauls thought it could express its solidarity with the suffering black majority”.<sup>44</sup> The recorder went further to say that “the Rector, Fr. John Qobo, in welcoming us, hoped that this would be but the beginning of contact between our two communities”.<sup>45</sup> Qobo’s remark suggests the existence of a big gap between the township and the College, which Qobo desired to be filled. In other words, hitherto there had been very little contact between the two communities.

However, St. Paul’s College considered that one way of expressing solidarity with the suffering Black majority and fostering racial harmony was to “pray” for them. The logbook scribe noted that “the College decided to keep these 24 hour vigils ... (on 30/31 October 1973) as in the past years. In the past years there were some ‘slips’ – like who forgot to wake James Oulds at 4.00 am?”<sup>46</sup> Another way, so the College logbook scribe noted, involved some members joining: “The Parish of St. Philips in a service of corporate worship with racial harmony as the theme.”<sup>47</sup>

It was during this period that Leslie Stradling, the Bishop of Johannesburg, noted that racism was very much entrenched in the Anglican Church. He asserted that “many Anglicans scarcely realise that there is a problem here, or if they do so, they see no urgency about it”.<sup>48</sup> If the Anglican Church did not see that there was a race problem, then that would suggest that the extent to which the Church had become integrated in the political status quo and St. Paul’s College was part of that order. Yet, the interview that Stradling had with Michael Worsnip suggests that Stradling was politically conservative. He seemed to not see the problem with violence in the townships perpetrated by apartheid machinery, but was horrified with the violence of the African National Congress.<sup>49</sup> Similarly, in Worsnip’s interview with Fr. Trevor Huddleston on 24 May 1984, Huddleston stressed that the Church was very conservative; it was unwilling to take on the government on racism.<sup>50</sup>

43 Cochrane, *Servants of Power*, Chapter 2, pp. 16-20 and Chapter 6.

44 Logbook, AB 2568, C 1.10, 1969-76, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

45 *Ibid.*

46 *Ibid.*

47 *Ibid.*

48 *Ibid.*

49 Interview, Worsnip with Stradling, 1 October 1984, Kalk Bay, AB 2261, A 5a, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

50 Interview, Worsnip with Trevor Huddleston, 24 May 1984, London. Document loaned to the author by Michael Worsnip.

## Theology/spirituality versus social engagement

In his recollections, Van Heerden attributed St. Paul's College's non-engagement with political issues in Grahamstown to its ethos and theological orientation. He recalled:

Socio-political issues were (sort of) raised in the Common Room but the College never took a position to engage with these issues in community life and even very little of this was reflected in the lectures ... No connection was made between theology and the situation on the ground ... No attempts were made to relate Biblical texts to the socio-political issues on the implications on the ground. It was a very theoretical academic training. Students were not exposed to cross-cultural or inter-cultural studies. Rather, the stress was on 'English-import theology', emphasis was on German theologians' emphasis on Form Criticism, *Sitz en Leben*, such as Von Rad ... It was [a theology] that was preparing [us] for a colonial church ... [The students] were not 'politically conscientised' ... Somehow a need was felt to establish some contact with the township ... We were living in a closed bubble, in a comfort zone.<sup>51</sup>

In Van Heerden's view, two issues stood out, namely, that students were largely exposed to a European-oriented theology, which had very little bearing on the socio-political issues of the day, and that theological training did not expose the White students to Black cultures or contexts as a preparation for their future ministry in a multicultural context of South Africa. In other words, for Van Heerden a gap existed between life at St. Paul's College and what was happening in the Black community. Today, reflecting on that episode of his life, Van Heerden, venting his frustration, asserted that his time at St. Paul's College had been "a waste of time". He went further to assert that it was only after his theological training, while working in the Diocese of Natal that he came to understand and experience the socio-political issues as these affected Black people. He was "politically conscientised".<sup>52</sup>

Howard Bradshaw was a student in the years 1973 to 1975. Similarly, in giving his testimony, Bradshaw, tried to account for the reasons why St. Paul's College was not so much involved in socio-political issues in the 1970s. In his view there were two reasons, which he outlined as follows: St. Paul's College was "semi-monastic in ethos; its life was strictly regulated by the rhythm of prayer life (offices)".<sup>53</sup> Then secondly, in his view, St. Paul's College was too much "caught up in Anglo-Catholic spirituality ... very much concerned with such issues as how many Hail Marys one said or how one's chasuble looked".<sup>54</sup> He said there was a clear divide between the Anglo-Catholics and the Charismatics, the latter branded as the Prots (Protestants).<sup>55</sup> This was a context that defined the lengths and breadth of their small world. So, in light of this view, it would seem that spiritually the College was inward-looking.

While we concede that the influence of Anglo-Catholic spirituality played an important role at St. Paul's College, there is also another side to this form of spirituality viewed from a broader perspective, however. In Britain, Anglo-Catholic spirituality was very much at the cutting edge of socio-economic and political reform under the leadership of Charles Gore. There Paul Elmen denoted that "the Anglo-Catholic,

51 Interview with Charles van Heerden and Howard Bradshaw, 20 December 2013, Cathedral of the Holy Nativity, Pietermaritzburg.

52 *Ibid.*

53 *Ibid.*

54 *Ibid.*

55 *Ibid.*

Charles Gore, thought it obvious that social justice was not an adventitious addition to the gospel, but was its essential element". For Gore, less concern or no interest with everything that concerned human life was actually the denial of the incarnation. Elmen asserted that "[Gore] thought that *Catholicism* should be defined as the religious term for *brotherhood*".<sup>56</sup>

Further, according to Howard Bradshaw, there was also the issue of age; students at St. Paul's College "were much older than those at Rhodes University".<sup>57</sup> Bradshaw went further to argue that "there was no truth to the claim or the view or perception that those caught up in the Charismatic Renewal were apolitical".<sup>58</sup> He said that he himself had come to St. Paul's College under its influence.<sup>59</sup> Bradshaw, who was then much younger than other students at St. Paul's College, said that he was regularly involved with Rhodes Anglican Society (Ansoc), which was more open to engaging with political issues.<sup>60</sup> Similarly, Franklin seemed to attribute St. Paul's College's outlook on society issues to its "semi-monastic" ethos and traditions. He asserted:

St. Paul's [was] still somewhat monastic. There were some married students living nearby. But largely it was male students whose life revolved around a routine of morning and evening prayer ... although some students resisted some of that and urged that wives be invited to College. Saturday was a working day of obligation; then people said we should be involved with our families ... [Conditions were] reviewed and relaxed. I fitted happily in that life style. Sometimes meetings in the Common Room would be stormy on issues of not taking families seriously ... [There were] personality clashes ... different personalities brushing each other ... [It was argued] that the College [must not just be regarded] ... as made of male students only.<sup>61</sup>

Male-centred training seemed to trivialise the role that the wives and family could play alongside their spouses in ministry. This mode of Anglo-Catholicism seemed closely identifiable with masculinity. It was a perspective that was in keeping with the Anglo-Catholic tradition as was then experienced at St. Paul's College. Underlying this view, however, lay the presumption that men were more important than women in the ministry. Likewise, reflecting on this period, Bannerman attributed St. Paul's College inability to engage more fully in the socio-political life in the community in Grahamstown partly to the manner in which he said the College operated and was structured. Thus, responding to the question, "Did St. Paul's College engage in socio-political issues during your time in the 1970s?", he said:

I think it was because life [at St. Paul's] in a sense was monastic, and controlled; there wasn't that much engagement with either the university or with the township. I am trying to think whether there were any activities; I don't think St. Paul's was involved, may be some individuals; I don't recall St. Paul's being involved. The college was not actively engaged in the life of the community, it was

56 Elmen, P. "Anglican Morality", In: S. Sykes and J. Booty (eds.), *The Study of Anglicanism*. London: SPCK/ Fortress Press, 1988, pp.325-338 (emphasis in original).

57 Interview with Charles van Heerden and Howard Bradshaw, 20 December 2013, Cathedral of the Holy Nativity, Pietermaritzburg.

58 *Ibid.*

59 *Ibid.*

60 *Ibid.*

61 Interview with Owen Franklin, 13 June 2013, Melville, Johannesburg.

[rather monastic-like], very self-contained, and your whole life was around the offices, Morning and Evening Prayer; that was the life as it was then; there wasn't that much time left for anything else ... We were very much an isolated community ... Our life was fairly isolated ... Charles [van Heerden] was one of those more engaging, and out-going. Towards the end of my time, Archbishop Bill Burnett was coming to speak about his experience of the Holy Spirit.<sup>62</sup>

Thus, from different perspectives, Bradshaw, Franklin, Van Heerden, and Bannerman highlighted the impact of the Anglo-Catholic spirituality and ethos on St. Paul's College in the 1970s. It seems that as it was experienced at St. Paul's College, this spirituality was inward-oriented. It tended to view life in the categorisation of 'sacred' versus 'secular'; 'spiritual' versus the 'flesh'. For instance, Bannerman recalled that during the time of the Wardenship of Norman Blamires, wives of students (women) were barred from living in or visiting Grahamstown!<sup>63</sup> Likewise, Di Buchanan recalled that during the time of Suggit, wives (women) could come to the College only on certain days and Buchanan changed that.<sup>64</sup>

At its core, the ethos of this spirituality thus differed very little from the Charismatic Renewal, which essentially was conservative. Both tended to stress individual 'spiritual experience'; the "heavenly" in contrast to the "earthly" experience. Yet, it was in contrast to the Anglo-Catholic social activism as characterised in the English colleges. More significantly, it was an orientation that seemed to accord with the exaltation by politicians like Prime Minister Vorster that the Church concentrates on its spiritual role and not political matters.<sup>65</sup>

It is quite ironic that the same mode of spirituality that seemed to inspire Trevor Huddleston, Leo Latimer Rakale, Raymond Raines, Timothy Stanton, and others of the Community of the Resurrection to engage in political activism, appeared not to inspire the same confidence in some students of St. Paul's College. St. Peter's College, Fedsem, also of the Anglo-Catholic mode, led by the Fathers of the Community of the Resurrection, however, was not impervious to the racial politics from which largely Black South Africans were suffering daily.<sup>66</sup> Students and staff interfaced and interrogated socio-political issues.<sup>67</sup> How can the two contrasting positions be explained?

A possible explanation is that the issue was not so much with the Anglo-Catholic spirituality or Charismatic spirituality; rather it had to do with the socio-cultural and political backgrounds of the individual White students and perhaps the members of staff. This had more influence on their outlook to society than just the spirituality of the students at St. Paul's College during their three years of training. However, Bannerman portrayed what he viewed as the complexity of the context in which divisions over perceptions, and approach towards societal issues played a part. He recalled:

62 Interview with David Bannerman, 23 January 2014, Diocesan offices, Highveld, Johannesburg.

63 *Ibid.*

64 Interview with Di Buchanan, 12 June 2014, Newtown, Johannesburg.

65 De Gruchy, J. and De Gruchy, S. *The Church Struggle in South Africa*. 25th Anniversary Edition. London: SCM Press, 2004, p. 116.

66 Personal communication with Austen Jackson, 15 October 2015.

67 *Ibid.*

Fundamentally, there were tensions between the Conservative Evangelicals and some Conservative High Churchmen. We had students like David de Beer, Robert Perks, the Liberals in the Catholic camp [High Church], and the Conservatives ... [There were] people who came from a very Low Church tradition, such as John Fisher, who would not light candles on the altar, a tradition [he derided] as "popery". [Then there were those who were concerned with the "pure Gospel, no other Gospel". I remembered someone coming, [Bill] Chalmers, he represented the Conservative position of the "pure Gospel, no other Gospel"; and some of the more liberal students, who advocated engagement with social issues. [And then there were others] ... who didn't want to discuss [socio-political issues] because they did not want to be drawn in ... It was a hot house. [Besides, intellectually, your theology was [also] de-constructed, and then [to be] re-constructed. [We were] also exposed to Existential Theology, Process Theology and to such readings as the Secular City. Then [we had] "Pure Theology" (people) versus people who wanted Liberation Theology ... One of the issues in my time was the 'death of God'. In these discussions in the college, people took positions on the basis of their theological and cultural background.<sup>68</sup>

Just like Van Heerden, Bannerman's reflections suggested that one of the critical issues that St. Paul's College faced was the domination of a theology from the Northern Hemisphere. It was a theology that seemed not to engage the students on the issues that related to the experiences of Black people under apartheid. The reader ought to be reminded that these developments were taking place at a time when Black people were trying to relate theology to Black identity, and make sense of their suffering, and engage in political struggle. It was also the time when the Federal Seminary at Alice was developing a Black Theology and also started to reflect on Liberation Theology. In contrast to St. Paul's College, Rhodes University exposed its students to Latin American Liberation Theology, such as Paulo Freire, and South African Allan Boesak.<sup>69</sup> Bannerman went further to narrate the extent to which some lectures wrestled with socio-political issues. He said:

Duncan Buchanan focused on some of these issues in his lecturing. Funny, as he was known as the shrewd funny boss ... Canon Suggit, he engaged with the issues, but he is very academic, that's him, he is rooted in the Greek and the NT, he sees a big picture.<sup>70</sup>

In other words, according to Bannerman, it would seem that Suggit analysed and reflected on the contemporary issues with such scholarly insights that consequently appeared to put them in a broader perspective. However, a broader perspective of things could inspire very few students to take a deliberate stance to confront the evils of apartheid. It would appear then that though populist and revolutionary, it was a theology that never disturbed the political status quo.

## Some students' activism

In this very same context, however, some students of St. Paul's College were occasionally drawn to politically-oriented activities at Rhodes University. Bradshaw recalled that "[the influence] of the Anglican [Ansoc and Chaplaincy] at Rhodes University was infinitely greater than at St. Paul's". Reflecting on

<sup>68</sup> Interview with David Bannerman, 23 January 2014, Diocesan offices, Highveld.

<sup>69</sup> Insight from Michael Worsnip who was a student at Rhodes University in the late 1970s.

<sup>70</sup> Interview with David Bannerman, 23 January 2014, Diocesan offices, Highveld.

his experiences then, Bradshaw said that these organisations had such a profound effect on him that at one time “it got him almost into trouble with the College”. He recalled that one Friday evening, he was chosen to play the game of a “cellular”.<sup>71</sup> In that position, he said, he took the role of a “monk” – with the responsibility for the College meals in the dining-room, to open and close the dining-room. To “compel” his fellow students to attend a talk (of a political nature) at Rhodes University, to which St. Paul’s College students had been invited, he said he “locked up the dining-room – only later to be overruled by the majority”.<sup>72</sup>

The College’s lack of political engagement at this time is illustrated by its attitude towards the arrest and banning of Sabelo Ntwasa. Ntwasa was an Anglican ordinand at St. Peter’s College, Fedsem in Alice, a leading figure in the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM), and the Travelling Secretary for Universities Christian Movement (UCM). He was well known to most students of St. Paul’s College through the regular College’s exchange visits with St. Peter’s College. He was arrested on 22 May 1972 by the Special Police Branch.<sup>73</sup> On the day of his arrest, the logbook scribe noted that the College marked his arrest with intercessions.<sup>74</sup> While praying for Ntwasa was certainly appropriate, nonetheless, the apartheid authorities would never have considered such acts as worthy of taking notice. For the College, it was safer praying than issuing a statement, or staging a protest march which would have drawn it into confrontation with the authorities. However, the College’s attitude towards political issues starkly contrasted with the political consciousness of some students and staff of Rhodes University.

In June 1972, there occurred a mass protest at Rhodes University. Peter Gunning was a student in the years 1972 to 1974. He recalled that the protest had to do with the government rescinding of an appointment of a White theology lecturer.<sup>75</sup> Peter Gunning and Charles van Heerden recalled that they joined in the protest. It is said that following the protest they and many students were locked up by the Security Police. Responding to this incident on 12 June 1972, Suggit asserted:

It would be right to express the disquiet which students and staff alike feel about the recent clashes between students and the authorities. It is a testimony to the integrity of today’s students that they are ready to protest against injustice suffered by students of other races, and the reaction of the government provides a sorry commentary on life in this Christian land. The Church’s task is to proclaim the reconciliation effected by Christ. The situation today both in South Africa and elsewhere clearly demonstrates the necessity of this task. It may be that the Holy Spirit, both through his action in individuals and in his leading the churches to unity, is equipping us to perform it more effectively.<sup>76</sup>

71 Interview with Charles van Heerden and Howard Bradshaw, 20 December 2013, Cathedral of the Holy Nativity, Pietermaritzburg.

72 *Ibid.*

73 Logbook, AB 2568, C.1.10, 1969-76, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

74 *Ibid.*

75 Interview with Peter Gunning, 19 December 2013, King Shaka Airport, Durban. See also Logbook, AB 2568, C 1.10, 1969-76, excerpt from *The Crozier*, a newspaper of the Dioceses of Grahamstown and Port Elizabeth, June 1972, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL. Attempts to identify the name of the lecturer have so far proved unsuccessful.

76 A Postscript to the Warden’s Letter, 12 June 1972, *Doulos*, Suggit’s library, Silvermine Village, Noordhoek.

Gunning recalled that many Rhodes students, including his sister-in-law, were locked up for forty-eight hours. As a Head Sacristan, he remembered that he had to borrow Chapel collection to bail out his sister-in-law, which his father-in-law subsequently paid back.<sup>77</sup> The *Eastern Cape Port Herald* newspaper covered the incident when it occurred on 8 June 1972. The correspondent reported that:

Three hundred and twenty-seven people, most of them students, two members of the public and some staff members [of Rhodes University] were arrested on Tuesday morning. One hundred and fourteen of those arrested paid admissions of guilt of R20 each on Monday night after police had photographed and fingerprinted all those arrested ... All were charged under a regulation that they did "wilfully and unlawfully organise, promote or control or take an active part in a procession demonstration of a gathering without having obtained permission from the local authority to do so", as required by this regulation.<sup>78</sup>

A side comment by the logbook scribe noted that "our own Pat Taylor and Malcolm Ellis decided to get dressed up and go down to the demonstration", while another read: "They were bailed out ... by David Hamer [a member of staff], cost R20 each."<sup>79</sup> It is very significant that only very few of St. Paul's College students were involved in the protest. It suggests the extent to which the College operated seemed to be a closed community. However, St. Paul's College was not completely unaffected by rumours or perceptions regarding its role within the wider society.

## Religious conservatism versus social engagement

On 17 September 1972, an Anglican parishioner from Plettenberg Bay, Mrs. Joan Fiske, wrote to Archbishop Selby Taylor, reporting what she said she had overheard from a College Housekeeper during her visit to her. Mrs. Fiske quoted the College Housekeeper as follows:

1. At gatherings at St. Paul's Theological College, when African students have been invited to attend, presumably on some Conference or discussion seminary, that the African students have been allowed to thrust forward their right arm and fist in presumably an African salute, and cry 'RAPE, ARSON & TERRORISM' ...
2. That certain students there have vowed that they will get this Government out by any means whatsoever that they can employ.
3. That money is being sent, by underhand methods, such as diamonds, to support the World Council of Churches in their avocation of terrorism ... this same lady, with her newly acquired husband ... stated that Ffrench-Beytock (i.e. fFrench-Beytagh) SHOULD HAVE BEEN HUNG ...

This author has not found archival or oral evidence that might support Mrs. Fiske's claims.

Mrs. Fiske went on to say:

It might be a good idea to look into some of the activities at St. Paul's Theological College – because it seems THERE MUST BE SOME REASON for this lady making these statements, however wild and

<sup>77</sup> Interview with Peter Gunning, 19 December 2013, King Shaka Airport, Durban.

<sup>78</sup> Logbook, AB 2568, C 1.10, 1972, St. Paul's Theological College, 1969-72, *The Crozier*, a newspaper of the Dioceses of Grahamstown and Port Elizabeth, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*

outrageous they may be. There must SURELY have been some happenings there that have caused her to say these things ... I certainly hope it is not true that the Church is using illegal ways of sending money over to the World Council of Churches, or making payment by any means of subterfuge, unbeknown to the laity.<sup>80</sup>

Despite the fact that the allegations involving St. Paul's College were strongly refuted by Suggit as having no basis, the issues raised nonetheless shed light on the attitude of some politically conservative White members towards the Anglican Church's protests against apartheid. Bob Clarke made the following comments about the PCR:

The idea that donations to church collections were going to be used to support "freedom fighters" or "terrorists" provoked a hysterical response from many white lay Anglicans. It became common for each new announcement of PCR grants to be accompanied by anonymous letters to the South African newspapers signed "ex-Anglican" threatening to withhold donations. Some white Parish Councils earnestly debated the issue and made similar threats to their diocesan treasurers. Parish clergy in white parishes were constantly having to justify their Bishop's stance simply to maintain the importance of not withdrawing from membership of the World Council as the Afrikaans churches had done in 1961.<sup>81</sup>

In this particular case, Archbishop Taylor found himself in a similar situation as the one that Clarke described. Mrs. Fiske wrote a follow-up letter to the Archbishop and said:

Dear Sir, I posted a letter to you last night, and this is a 'follow-up'. I apologise for the business paper on which it was written but I simply could not find anything suitable to type with last night! – AND, I just wanted the letter posted in case I was approached to keep my mouth shut, as I really felt you SHOULD know. However, as I have not been approached by this lady to apologise even for any over-statement she may have made, to me it rather infers she is prepared to stand by her statement she may have made, to me it rather infers she is prepared to stand by her statements in regard to St. Paul's Theological College.<sup>82</sup>

Mrs. Fiske seemed sure that her writing to the Archbishop had been inspired by Divine Providence. Hence, she went further to state:

The prayer for this week, in the Bible Reading Fellowship (of which I am a participant) is: 'O God, help us to see in the decisions we shall have to make this week, the difference between love as the guiding principle and rigid legalism'. When I asked the Lord to give me a Bible passage last night, as to whether to send this letter or not, I opened my Bible at Deuteronomy 21:10-15. The principle behind this passage will be readily apparent to you. This lady was, or still is, a member of the Anglican Church. She mentioned that she had given, some time back R400 towards the renewing of the floor in the Cathedral against beetle, but added she would not give a further penny to Anglican funds.<sup>83</sup>

80 See Letter, Mrs. Joan Fiske to Archbishop Selby Taylor, 17 September 1972, AB 1363, S 21 (file 6), CPISA, Archbishop of Cape Town, St. Paul's Theological College, 1969-73 (emphasis in original document), Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

81 Clarke, *Anglicans Against Apartheid*, p. 291.

82 See Letter, Mrs. Joan Fiske to Archbishop Selby Taylor, 17 September 1972, AB 1363, S 21 (file 6), CPISA, Archbishop of Cape Town, St. Paul's Theological College, 1969-73 (emphasis in original document), Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

83 *Ibid.*

Now the crunch of the matter:

I am now cancelling my stop-order here to the Anglican Church, until I hear from you on the matters numerated in my last letter. In the 10 a.m. service over the radio this morning, which has been taking place while I write this, the Bible reading was Luke 4:16-24, particularly verse 24. I hope you will not, therefore, ignore my letters. Incidentally, this morning's service was given by the Very Revd. K.C. Oram, Dean of Grahamstown.<sup>84</sup>

Essentially, Mrs. Fiske put an ultimatum to the Archbishop, using money and 'God' in an attempt to 'bully' him and the Anglican Church to desist from supporting the SACC, which she considered to be the 'enemy' of the South African government.

Throughout the 1970s, the association of the Anglican Church with the World Council of Churches (WCC) through its involvement with the SACC impacted on its life. More particularly, its tacit support for the liberation movements by endorsing the Programme to Combat Racism (PCR) of the WCC became controversial especially amongst its White conservative members. Indirectly, St. Paul's College was affected.

Mrs. Fiske's letter to the Archbishop made reference to Gonville fFrench-Beytagh, the Dean of St. Mary's Cathedral, Johannesburg. fFrench-Beytagh was a former student of the College from 1936 to 1938. During his time as a student, fFrench-Beytagh described the dominant rigid Anglo-Catholic spirituality, which was in tension with Evangelical spirituality.<sup>85</sup> He described his feelings when he came to St. Paul's College: "And now I was stuck behind the four walls of a theological college in a quiet academic cathedral city which seemed to be utterly remote from life."<sup>86</sup>

He was arrested and charged under the Terrorism Act on 10 June 1971.<sup>87</sup> The trial lasted two and half months from 2 August to 15 October 1971. In his interview with Michael Worsnip, fFrench-Beytagh said that what angered the government was that he had been sourcing money from overseas, which he was using to support families of political detainees and also paid for the lawyers of the detainees. In his words, he said that the Prime Minister had declared that it was "a criminal offence to accept any money from overseas".<sup>88</sup> He was sentenced on 1 November 1971 to five years' imprisonment. Chief Justice, Mr. Ogilvie Thompson, and two judges of Appeal acquitted him on 14 April 1972. The Dean immediately resigned and returned to England.<sup>89</sup> In the aftermath of the acquittal in 1972, Suggit wrote:

We rejoice with Canon fFrench-Beytagh, a former member of the College, over the upholding of his appeal against his conviction. The Church of the Province owes much to him for his courageous witness against injustice and on behalf of those in need. We assure him of our continued prayers.<sup>90</sup>

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>85</sup> fFrench-Beytagh, G.A. *Encountering Darkness*. London: Collins, 1973, p. 44.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 45.

<sup>87</sup> Clarke, *Anglicans Against Apartheid*, p. 260.

<sup>88</sup> Interview, Michael Worsnip with Gonville fFrench-Beytagh, 25 April 1984, AB 2261, A 1, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>89</sup> Lee, *Compromise and Courage*, pp. 301-314.

<sup>90</sup> Warden's Letter, *Doulos*, 1972, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

Suggit's statement is fairly remarkable, given the context. On behalf of the College, he seemed to endorse and applaud French-Beytagh's challenge of the injustice perpetrated against Black people. Gunning recalled how the trial affected him during his time in the college.<sup>91</sup> The trial of French-Beytagh had demonstrated the extent to which the apartheid government went to persecute the Church. The state's harassment of French-Beytagh reflected a general atmosphere of mistrust between the Church and state, but also amongst the races. In this context, some quarters in the Church talked about the need for 'racial harmony', that is, 'reconciliation' between White and Black people. It was also the period and context in which Suggit observed that the College experienced an appallingly low number of students due to a "loss of nerve on the part of the church to proclaim the sovereignty of God over all creation and a failure to live in the power of the Holy Spirit".<sup>92</sup> It would appear that Suggit was critical of the Church, which in his view, seemed to be politically and spiritually paralysed. Through the persecution and harassment of its clergy by the apartheid security apparatus, the Church seemed to lose its nerves.

## The appointment of Mbali 1973-74

In 1973, however, the issue of the significance of power and identity in South Africa was highlighted with regard to the appointment of Escourt Zolile Mbali as a tutor of St. Paul's College. Precisely because of the symbolic significance of this appointment in the Anglican Church, this story deserves to be narrated at length.

In his Warden's letter of November 1972, Suggit announced that David Hamer, the Chaplain, would be leaving the College and that he was appointing Mbali in his place. This is how he made the announcement:

[Hamer's] successor is to be Escourt [Zolile] Mbali,<sup>93</sup> a priest at present in the Diocese of Natal. Escourt will be an assistant priest at St. Philip's Church, Grahamstown, and Chaplain at the College. After training at Fort Hare and at St. Bede's he went to Oxford, where he read theology. He comes, therefore, with the necessary qualifications to bring a new dimension into the life of the college.<sup>94</sup>

Mbali's appointment was very significant. The uniqueness of the appointment of Mbali can be seen in the way Suggit had to consult more widely. Writing to the Archbishop of Cape Town, Robert Selby Taylor, on 19 June 1972, Suggit stated:

I have now heard from all concerned and I have appointed, subject to your consent, the Revd. Escourt Mbali as Tutor for 1973. The Bishop of Grahamstown has given his approval verbally. There will be a meeting of the College Council on Monday July 31st to confirm the terms of his appointment, and when sending the notice of meeting I shall give details of the proposed appointment. The Bishop of Natal thinks that Escourt can be released only for 1973. I am, however, seeing him next month, and if it should appear that he might come here for longer, he will presumably be appointed as Chaplain.

91 Interview with Peter Gunning, 19 December 2013, King Shaka Airport, Durban.

92 *Doulos*, 1973, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

93 Hereinafter, Zolile Mbali.

94 Warden's Letter, *Doulos*, November 1972, Suggit's library, Silvermine Village, Noordhoek.

(In this sentence, to avoid ambiguities, I should say that the first third person pronoun refers to the Bishop of Natal, the remainder Escourt). I hope that you will formally agree to his appointment, and so confirm our earlier discussion.<sup>95</sup>

While this excerpt of the letter seems to clearly show the role of the Warden in appointing his own member of staff, nonetheless, it would appear that there was some sort of a misunderstanding regarding this between the Warden and the Archbishop. In his letter to the Archbishop's chaplain, John Oliver, Suggit said that "he was under the impression that the Warden was responsible for the appointment of his own staff".<sup>96</sup> Underlying this issue was another one, namely, that of the power relations between the two.

During his research on Desmond Tutu's biography, John Allen said he came across some correspondence that related to the issue surrounding Mbali's appointment. He indicated that:

[Desmond] Tutu, then associate director for Africa of the Theological Education Fund, was strongly opposed to Escourt Mbali's appointment at St. Paul's. Tutu felt that students in Mbali's position – whose overseas studies were funded by the TEF – should become role models for, and teach, black ordinands. Instead, Tutu felt, already privileged white students were receiving the benefit of Escourt's studies. I clearly recall reading a letter from a very upset John Suggit, saying he thought he was doing a good thing in appointing a black tutor for St. Paul's. You could see Tutu and Suggit were talking past each other.<sup>97</sup>

The fact that Tutu and Suggit had contrasting views on where Mbali's Oxford education could better serve the Church, shows the great significance of Mbali's achievement in apartheid South Africa. For Tutu, if Mbali were to be in a Black institution, he could inspire many Black students to strive to attain a similar standard of education as his. He could be a beacon of hope for many Black students. For Suggit, Mbali's appointment at St. Paul's College was crucial to break down the barriers of apartheid, but also to enrich White students with the best education that came from a person of another race. Both arguments were valid. However, the challenge was that there were not many of the calibre and stature of Mbali in those days.

Jonathan Draper was a student from June 1974 to 1977, during the time when Mbali was a lecturer at the College in 1974.<sup>98</sup> Speaking to the author on 6 March 2014, he recalled:

It was a pretty radical move that the church took to send a Black chaplain to St. Pauls, which at that stage was all White ... a brave one, a good one but not necessarily a comfortable one for Mbali himself. He had studied in England and he had a White English fiancée ... he left St. Paul's and moved to Botswana to marry his fiancée and they returned to England until the end of apartheid, when the family returned to South Africa to live in Durban.<sup>99</sup>

<sup>95</sup> See Letter, Suggit to Taylor, AB 1363, S 21 (file 6), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, 1969-1973, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>96</sup> See Letter, Suggit to John Oliver, 24 July 1972, AB 1363, S 21 (file 6), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, 1969-1973, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>97</sup> John Allen, personal communication with the author, 26 July 2016.

<sup>98</sup> Jonathan Draper is Emeritus Professor of New Testament at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

<sup>99</sup> Interview with Jonathan Draper, 6 March 2014, Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg.

What made the Church authorities take such a radical step? Howard Bradshaw, Mbali's former student in the years from 1973 to 1975 thought that the appointment of Mbali could have been influenced by the *Challenge Campaign Group*, a Provincial initiative that sought to "de-racialise" the Anglican Church, which was then very strong in Grahamstown.<sup>100</sup> Bradshaw's view is worth considering seriously. Bob Clarke noted that through the influence of the WCC's Programme to Combat Racism (PCR), the Anglican Church started to re-organise its internal life, to de-segregate its internal structures.<sup>101</sup> The initiative operated on the Provincial, Diocesan and parish levels.

Peter Lee noted that "the so-called 'Challenge Groups' had been set up across the province as part of the church's Programme of Human Relations and Reconciliation. It was set up to eliminate 'racial discrimination in the life of the Church' by trying to transform church structures".<sup>102</sup> Pike testified that when he started working in Grahamstown, the Challenge Groups had a lot of influence in enhancing cross-racial life in the diocese of Grahamstown.<sup>103</sup> This is how the provincial Challenge Groups impacted on the life of the province.<sup>104</sup> On Diocesan and parish level, Challenge Groups met to identify how Black members could be more involved in the leadership and the running of the Dioceses and Archdeaconries.<sup>105</sup>

The Church acknowledged that more Black Bishops needed to be elected. The Anglican Church became more receptive to Black voices. Fellowships and encounters across race made it possible for Anglicans to know each other across racial divides.<sup>106</sup> Thus, Mbali's appointment could have fallen in line with the Provincial efforts to transform the structure of St. Paul's College. Malcolm Ellis was one of Mbali's students. He recalled: "I know that Duncan Buchanan in particular felt very strongly about him being with us as a statement on our position."<sup>107</sup>

In his interview with the author, Mbali recalled that he saw his appointment as "a test-case ... a very bold step ... a risk taken by Suggit which he risked alienating the White section of the Anglican Church".<sup>108</sup> Mbali was very conscious that he "was an experiment and [he] sought to rise to the occasion". Speaking to the author in 2012, Suggit said that he believed that at that time Mbali was the best qualified Black priest to take up the position in the College.<sup>109</sup> It is quite an irony that a Black man was appointed in a college whose Constitution had clearly stipulated that the College had been established to train "European males only".

100 Interview with Charles van Heerden and Howard Bradshaw, 20 December 2013, Cathedral of the Holy Nativity, Pietermaritzburg.

101 Clarke, *Anglicans Against Apartheid*, pp. 290-291.

102 Lee, *Courage and Compromise*, p. 327.

103 *Ibid.*

104 *Ibid.*

105 *Ibid.*

106 *Ibid.*

107 Malcom Ellis, personal communication with the author, 21 September 2015.

108 Telephone interview with Zolile Mbali, 6 March 2013.

109 *Ibid.*

## His experiences

When the author asked Mbali whether during his time at St. Paul's College, the College discussed socio-political issues, he said that political issues facing the country were never directly raised.<sup>110</sup> Mbali's remark suggests that St. Paul's College was socially and politically a closed community, which never directly engaged in socio-political issues. Mbali's own personal struggles seemed to reflect the wider struggle in the country and the closed nature of St. Paul's College community. To meet the requirements of the Group Areas Act, which separated Black people from White people, the College arranged that Mbali have a room in the College but then resided in the Black township of Fingo Village at St. Philip's Parish, where he served as an assistant priest.<sup>111</sup> It was out of political expediency that this appears to have been done. The rationale was that if the Security Police asked him where he lived, he would safely tell them that he lived in the township, and therefore could avoid violating the Group Areas Act. Mbali recalled that on most of the occasions when driving from St. Paul's College or going there, he often noticed a police van following him.<sup>112</sup>

In his experience, Mbali recalled students indirectly felt that somehow they were under some sort of surveillance, which he said was in fact a reflection of the national atmosphere. Just as it was during the Synod gatherings in the church, at St. Paul's College one somehow was made aware that one was being watched – and therefore one had to be careful. He said "the name of the game was survival".<sup>113</sup> He said that when he came to the College, he was given the impression that the students, who had been at tertiary institutions, were already politically aware.<sup>114</sup> In other words, it was suggested to him that he didn't have to engage the students on a political level.

Mbali then placed his situation at St. Paul's College in the context of the church. He said that Black clergy avoided raising political issues for fear of being branded 'troublesome', a label that could jeopardise one's prospect of earning promotion. The will to "survive" in church tended also to extend to college life. Mbali was under intense pressure at St. Paul's College. Knowing that he was the test-case of a Black lecturer, he felt that he had to be careful – he had to "succeed". It was in light of this that, in spite of his experience of intimidation by the Security Police, he felt obliged not to make the students aware of what he was experiencing outside College life. He said he felt bound to "protect" the students from his experiences of intimidation.

## Some students' experiences of his teaching and life

Perhaps Bradshaw spoke for most students then. He noted that for most students it was their first experience to relate to a Black man in a much senior authority than them.<sup>115</sup> Similarly, nearly all students

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>115</sup> Interview with Charles van Heerden and Howard Bradshaw, 20 December 2013, Cathedral of the Holy Nativity, Pietermaritzburg; Interview with Peter Gunning, 19 December 2013, King Shaka Airport, Durban; Interview with Jonathan Draper, 6 March 2014, Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg.

that the author interviewed concurred that Mbali was a very bright man who knew his subject very well.<sup>116</sup> Gunning, a student at the time, recalled that he was taught by Mbali, “a Black South African”. He said: “Some students complained about his ‘strange accent’ [while] some students complained that they did not understand his accent, and skipped lectures.”<sup>117</sup> Gunning said he “urged for perseverance” amongst his fellow students. Gunning asserted that for him it “was the most transforming experience”.<sup>118</sup>

Recalling his own experience, Bradshaw said he felt sorry for him to have had to go through the experience. According to Bradshaw, “Suggit believed that Mbali would be accepted purely on the grounds of his Oxford education – as he put it, “Oxford education in a Black skin”.<sup>119</sup> He went on to note that “Mbali suffered greatly ... as [the appointment] was superficial” and that “it was a heavy burden for him, which he had to carry”.<sup>120</sup> Bradshaw further recalled that one day after an incident with a certain student, “Mbali remarked that ‘I am also a human being like you’”.<sup>121</sup> Mbali confirmed this incident.<sup>122</sup>

Draper recalled how the experience of teaching White students seemed to have affected Mbali emotionally. “At times, [Mbali] looked disturbed and going through a personal crisis ... he was a very anxious person, and that seemed to affect his teaching.”<sup>123</sup> Speaking to the researcher on 30 December 2013, Mbali said he was conscious that being the first Black lecturer to be appointed at the College, he had to prove himself, he needed to succeed, to show the way for those who would follow him.<sup>124</sup>

In other words, then, as it is still the case today, Mbali was very much aware that he felt he had to “prove” himself to Whites four times the amount a White person would need to, precisely because in general, White people did not want to want to recognise the contribution of a Black person. White people acted as though they had the power to define the Black person. Mbali was carrying a heavy burden precisely to prove to the White man that as a Black man in South Africa, he was equally capable. On one occasion, the logbook scribe seemed to have captured something of the turmoil that Mbali was going through in his life. He wrote:

Poor Escourt [Mbali] our Chaplain, looking weary, languid and sore distressed! His concern at the state of the Church and of the world is so great that the other day he decided to say for a second time in the same service the prayers for the church.<sup>125</sup>

The logbook remark sounds as a ridicule and disrespectful of Mbali. It is condescending. Mbali related to the author his personal challenges that he faced when teaching the White students. He said he felt

116 Interview with Charles van Heerden and Howard Bradshaw, 20 December 2013, Cathedral of the Holy Nativity, Pietermaritzburg.

117 Telephone interview with Zolile Mbali, 6 March 2013.

118 Interview with Peter Gunning, 19 December 2013, King Shaka Airport, Durban.

119 Interview with Charles van Heerden and Howard Bradshaw, 20 December 2013, Cathedral of the Holy Nativity, Pietermaritzburg.

120 *Ibid.*

121 *Ibid.*

122 Telephone interview with Zolile Mbali, 6 March 2013.

123 Interview with Jonathan Draper, 6 March 2014, Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg.

124 Interview with Zolile Mbali, 30 December 2013, Cape Town.

125 Logbook, AB 2568, C 1.10, 1969-76, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

that some of them resented being taught by a Black lecturer.<sup>126</sup> They did not come to terms with the fact that it was a Black man who was teaching them. Mbali recalled that they somehow communicated indirectly to him that he was just being tolerated and that soon after the exams they would have nothing to do with him.<sup>127</sup> In turn, Mbali would tell them that whoever did not take his lectures seriously would fail the exam on the subject at the end of the year.<sup>128</sup>

It would seem that Suggit and the staff had great confidence in Mbali, to the extent that during their absence in 1974, they left him in charge of the College at a time when he also had to conduct the College retreat. However, it would appear that during that time one student “misbehaved”. Writing to Bill Burnett, Archbishop of Cape Town, on 27 September 1974, Suggit reported that he had suspended this particular student. He said: “I was therefore more than sorry to learn of his behaviour during the College Retreat when Escourt Mbali was in charge of the college, his attitude in my absence was irresponsible, even though in itself his behaviour was not markedly different from other occasions in the past.”<sup>129</sup> In light of the preceding testimonies, it is evident that it was not easy for Mbali to exercise his ministry at St. Paul’s College.

## Mbali’s resignation

Writing to Bill Burnett on 4 October 1974, Suggit announced that, “you will be aware that Escourt Mbali, for various reasons, will be leaving us at the end of this year. I am very sorry about this, but in the circumstances believe that he is doing the right thing”.<sup>130</sup> Speaking to the writer on 30 December 2013, Mbali recalled that he left following a warning by someone closer to him that the Security Police were about to come to arrest him for his involvement in political activities.<sup>131</sup> Commenting on this episode in 2013, Suggit recalled that Mbali subsequently left to work in Botswana, where he married his English wife, Charlotte.<sup>132</sup> Recalling his St. Paul’s College experience as a student on this episode, Gunning said that it was unfortunate that the College did not confide in the students that Mbali’s fiancée was living in Grahamstown.<sup>133</sup> However, writing in his Warden’s Letter about Mbali’s resignation on 9 December 1974, Suggit noted:

He has made a tremendous contribution to our life here, and it says much about himself that he believes that he has been accepted not as a Black man but as a person in Christ by the students and others at St. Paul’s. This is surely the ideal at which we must aim. In apartheid society there is always the difficulty that we are over sensitive to the differences which exist between us as fellow human beings redeemed in Christ.<sup>134</sup>

<sup>126</sup> Interview with Zolile Mbali, 30 December 2013, Cape Town.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>129</sup> See Letter, Suggit to Burnett, AB 1363, S 21 (file 7), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, St. Paul’s Theological College, 1974-75, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>131</sup> Interview with Zolile Mbali, 30 December 2013, Cape Town.

<sup>132</sup> Interview with John Suggit, 24 May 2013, Silvermine Village, Noordhoek.

<sup>133</sup> Interview with Peter Gunning, 19 December 2013, King Shaka Airport, Durban.

<sup>134</sup> Warden’s Letter, *Doulos*, 9 December 1974, Suggit’s library, Silvermine Village, Noordhoek.

Suggit's comments on Mbali's acceptance suggest that Mbali's appointment was meant to prove a point in the Church. It was a courageous appointment, but which was at Mbali's own cost. In the light of the preceding recollections, it is obvious that in spite of the pressure he experienced, in various ways Mbali's brief ministry at St. Paul's College touched the lives of some students. Similarly, it is quite clear that Mbali's brief stay in Grahamstown and St. Paul's College was not an entirely a happy experience. Most of the students he taught had never been exposed to relating to a Black person above the status of a gardener or a maid. Mbali's appointment opened and closed a sad but brave chapter in the history of White and Black relations in the Church. Mbali was an icon of bravery and represented the ability of a Black clergyman in the Anglican Church.

### St. Bede's and St. Peter's Colleges

As part of an ongoing process to cross racial boundaries, Suggit and the staff arranged that, in 1973 during Holy Week, the College would visit St. Peter's College in Alice and St. Bede's College in Mthatha. In the aftermath of the visit, Suggit wrote about the experience in *Doulos* as follows:

Another change concerned Holy Week. Perhaps for the first time ever we spent Holy Week and Easter away from St. Paul's. There were many misgivings when it was first suggested. Half of the College, with the Sub-Warden, spent the time at St. Peter's, Alice, and the other half with the Chaplain and myself, spent the week at St. Bede's, Umtata. In both places friendships were made and renewed and we began to be aware of the frustrations experienced by black members of the Church, and of the need to express more adequately our oneness in Christ.<sup>135</sup>

It has been almost impossible to establish what the "many misgivings" were all about, as most people interviewed seem to have forgotten about this issue. The courageous move by the College to reach out to Black residential colleges of St. Peter's and St. Bede's undermined the barriers imposed by apartheid. While it is possible that St. Paul's College efforts to reach out to St. Bede's College students made an impression on some students, it would appear that the experience made a deep impression on one particular student, Charles van Heerden, who in the aftermath of the visit wrote:

Now is the time; Christ is risen and alive now – so let us bridge the gap and believe that Christ is the King, and the King of all creation. Let us set out to do something about it and establish a multi-racial and even more radical, multi-racial ecumenical college, so as to learn from each other and experience the fullness of creation.<sup>136</sup>

Commenting on this episode in 2013, Van Heerden stated that his then recent visit to the European countries, notably the United States and England, inspired him to reflect critically on the separation of theological training along racial lines. He recalled that he had been overseas where racial integration was almost taken for granted.<sup>137</sup> Back in South Africa, he said he had felt a need for a cross-cultural training, and the need for oneness and integration. He felt that the Church kept apartheid structures of

<sup>135</sup> *Doulos*, 22 May 1973, Suggit's library, Silvermine Village, Noordhoek.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>137</sup> Interview with Charles van Heerden and Howard Bradshaw, 20 December 2013, Cathedral of the Holy Nativity, Pietermaritzburg.

White and Black Colleges. He felt that the two colleges were on different journeys and that there was need for oneness.<sup>138</sup> He was expressing the need for multicultural training in South Africa.<sup>139</sup>

Whereas during his visit to St. Bede's College, Van Heerden had said that he had felt strong feelings for a single multiracial theological college in the Anglican Church, following his visit to St. Peter's College, Fedsem, Franklin recorded a personal cross-racial and gender experience. Franklin had been invited to tea in the home of a Black student, where he went and had tea with his wife as the husband did not join them because he was attending the students' meeting. Through this experience, he wrote a poem which he titled "God's Free-Day". Part of the poem read:

Yesterday for the first time I was alone with a black girl ... Another's wife.  
 She was no less Nosipho – gift – to me: God's gift, a freedom.  
 An hour sped by, the tiny flat so warm ... And intimate with words of personal discovery ...  
 And praise you Lord there was no fear, What if ...? For freedom set us free.<sup>140</sup>

The student was Njongonkulu Ndungane (the future Bishop of Kimberley and Kuruman and Archbishop of Cape Town) and his wife Nosipho Ndungane. Franklin felt liberated to interact with a young Black woman, whom he met for the first time in his life. He had crossed the superficial socio-cultural barriers imposed by the apartheid government. In his experience, fear replaced freedom and looked forward to a distant day in future where racial boundaries will be overcome. Thus, exposure to St. Bede's and St. Peter's Colleges started to challenge the attitude of some St. Paul's College students towards race.

## A mirror of society

The visit of one international guest speaker in 1973, Prof. Eberhardt Bethge, was more significant, however. He had come to lecture on Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Commenting on his lecture, Suggit cautioned:

As we see the situation of the Church in South Africa today it is too easy to understand the general attitude of the Church in Germany under the Nazis. It also became very clear that in spite of similarities there are many differences between our situation and that of the German Churches of Bonhoeffer's day.<sup>141</sup>

Van Heerden was one of the students who attended the lecture. Commenting on the nature of theological engagement and in particular referring to Bethge's lecture, Van Heerden stated:

Bonhoeffer's brother-in-law visited the college ... [He] gave a lecture on Bonhoeffer ... Even though parallels were drawn between Germany and South Africa, however it was theoretical and was never related to the social political situation in South Africa ... There were no social implications, how those would play out on the ground ... the church was a prisoner of its own history.<sup>142</sup>

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>140</sup> Poem in *Doulos*, 28 April 1973, Suggit's library, Silvermine Village, Noordhoek.

<sup>141</sup> *Doulos*, 1973, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>142</sup> Interview with Charles van Heerden and Howard Bradshaw, 20 December 2013, Cathedral of the Holy Nativity, Pietermaritzburg.

He went on to state that, in his view, in contrast to Rhodes University, which was more actively involved, St. Paul's College was "a much closed community, inward-looking [community] which was training priests for the colonial church".<sup>143</sup> However, Worsnip recalled that in his experience at Rhodes University, "very few students and even fewer lecturers were involved in the struggle in any way",<sup>144</sup> which in this respect suggests that students of St. Paul's College merely had the perception that Rhodes University was more radical than St. Paul's College.

These developments were taking place in the context of deteriorating race relations in the country. In that year, a newspaper reporter quoted Archbishop Robert Selby Taylor speaking to the Provincial Synod, condemning "the deliberate disruption of family life at the dictates of an ideology [of apartheid] which must be eradicated by those who have the means and the power to do so".<sup>145</sup> The reporter continued to assert that the Archbishop was "very deeply concerned at the serious deterioration of understanding between Black and White races".<sup>146</sup> This was a period when South Africa was witnessing Black families being forcibly removed from their residential areas – "... stabbings and murders which [were] ... a feature of life of some sections ... [of the] community, ... forms of violence, but so is police brutality".<sup>147</sup> Reminiscing about those days, Franklin noted:

Those were the days of the Christian Institute and Beyers Naudé came to talk at Rhodes Hall. He talked about the ministry of the Christian Institute. He engaged in a debate with a very conservative Anglican, Bill Charmers, who used to broadcast on the radio, [who] was given a lot of government backing. The awareness of the injustices in South Africa was part of us at St. Paul's. That was unavoidable. We recognised that we were living in the white part of Grahamstown rather than the poor areas of Grahamstown, and realised we had opportunities.<sup>148</sup>

Under these circumstances, he asserted that "the students were involved in a range of pastoral activities in the local community. Students were off course involved in various hospitals and nursing homes – GADRA, Fort England Hospital, the Settlers' Hospital, St. Clement's ...".<sup>149</sup>

## The challenge of authority in State and Church

In apartheid South Africa, the issue of 'authority' and 'discipline' loomed large, behind which lay the issue of 'power'. Political, socio-economical or military power affected all South Africans on various levels, but Black South Africans most adversely. Directly and indirectly, the issues relating to authority and power also surfaced in the College daily discourse. On 22 May 1973, Suggit announced:

The college had a termly college meeting, where once again the whole question of authority, discipline and responsibility was discussed. It was marked by a desire to discover the right balance between

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>144</sup> Michael Worsnip, personal communication with the author, 5 March 2015.

<sup>145</sup> Logbook, AB 2568, C1.10, 1973, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>148</sup> Interview with Owen Franklin, 13 June 2014, Melville, Johannesburg.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*

a discipline based on a common consensus and the exercise of authority. There were others who wanted either rule by consensus or rule by imposition from above. The issues, however, like those of the whole of life cannot be defined so sharply.<sup>150</sup>

Suggit's comments suggest the challenges that the College was facing where issues of power were always at the fore. In this respect, behind the issue of 'authority' lay the idea of subjection to the authority of the state and of the Church. Both the state and the Church required its subjects to comply with its authority, to be subservient to its will. This authority was legitimised on that of the Bible. Behind the assumption lay the view that obedience to the Church, by extension the Bible, was synonymous with obedience to the state. The corollary was also true; disobedience to the Church, and by extension, the Bible, was equated with disobedience to the state.

Prayers for the state and the State President as stipulated in the Anglican Prayer Book were said as part of the celebration of the Liturgy.<sup>151</sup> Thus, religious ideology permeated the structures of the College. Suggit put it thus: "The life of the college is these days shaped very considerably by the exchange of views of the whole community – students and staff alike."<sup>152</sup> Suggit's report on the Provincial Synod of 6 December 1973 makes this clear.

Recently returning from the Provincial Synod, he wrote and addressed the College on the situation in the country. He said: "It was encouraging to see the responsibility of the Black representatives [who] were concerned, especially in the early stages of the Synod, ... to stress the frustrations experienced by, and the contributions expected from, Black members of the Church." Suggit went on to assert: "There were times when [he] felt that [the Black representatives] might well have heeded Archbishop [Geoffrey] Clayton's plea: 'Don't let yourself get converted to apartheid'."<sup>153</sup> Suggit further noted: "But this is a difficult plea to make when so much of our White membership either consciously or unconsciously have acquiesced in, if not subscribed to, the ideology of apartheid."<sup>154</sup> Suggit commended the students to read Alan Paton's book and then stated:

Perhaps it can be a reminder that neither a social gospel by itself nor simple devotion to Christ is sufficient. The devotion which we have to our Lord needs to be expressed in the community of faith which we live, and the Christian has the duty of trying to make this community of faith to be as much in accordance with the will of God as is possible.<sup>155</sup>

For Suggit, any partisan approach to either the Gospel or societal issues did not do justice to the complexity of the context. Such an approach was bound not to do justice to the complexity of human conditions. Yet, denominational differences tended to highlight the contrasting or even opposing stances that the churches held with regard to the challenge of apartheid. According to Alan Paton, in the 1950s, Clayton had felt that the difference between on one hand, the English-Speaking Churches,

<sup>150</sup> *Doulos*, 22 May 1973, Historical Papers, Research Archive, UWL.

<sup>151</sup> Charles van Heerden, personal communication with the author, 26 February 2016.

<sup>152</sup> *Doulos*, 22 May 1973, Historical Papers, Research Archive, UWL.

<sup>153</sup> Warden's Letter, *Doulos*, 6 December 1973, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*

Roman Catholic Church and the Dutch Reformed Church on the other, was of theological nature. Suggit differed from Clayton's position. He asserted that in fact, Calvinism had enriched the Anglican Church, but that in his view the problem ran rather deeper; the issue was on what it meant to be human.

In the 1970s, however, Suggit's seemingly broadminded approach to Biblical hermeneutics in the context of the oppressive conditions in apartheid state brought him in tension with the literalist approach espoused by Liberation Theology. In his Warden's Letter of 6 December 1973 he went further to outline the issue of the relationship between practising the Christian faith and intellectual reflection on the faith or intellectual engagement with the faith in the context of apartheid posed a challenge to St. Paul's College in the 1970s.

It would seem that the emergence of Liberation Theology in the 1970s highlighted this challenge much more critically. Writing in relation to the announcement of the appearance of Gustav Gutierrez's *Theology of Liberation*, Suggit asserted that the critical issue that the society faced was "the meaning of theology for our life today ... God's act of love in Jesus Christ and the meaning of this for the present". Besides his commendation of the book to the students (and others) as an example of Christian engagement with society, however, Suggit was critical of the premise for reflection and Christian engagement in Liberation Theology. He asserted:

There is always a danger when we relate theology to the contemporary scene that we manipulate the Christian Gospel to make it fit our own understanding of our political and social ideals. This is the wrong form of the social Gospel. No solution to our problems starts from political premises or from sectional interests can ever reflect the truth of the Gospel message. But no solution in our political and social scene can ever be just if it fails to accord with the Gospel. Our political ideals must not determine and condition the Gospel which we preach: rather, the Gospel which we preach must issue in action in politics and social life as we seek God's grace to help men and society to be changed into pattern which God wills.<sup>156</sup>

It would seem that Suggit always saw issues in a broader perspective. He was against applying the Bible to a context in a literalist way. He was also suspicious of, or uncomfortable with a theology that appeared to advocate a partisan stance. In this context, it is clear that Suggit did not agree with the methodological approach to social analysis as advocated by Gutierrez and others. In his view, a theology of liberation was 'manipulative' and 'sectarian', hence it failed to do justice to the 'whole' Gospel. In this respect, to a degree, as we noted earlier on, with regard to Burnett, Suggit was critical of Liberation Theology just as Burnett was, but for different reasons.

On the other hand, Suggit seemed critical of and even sceptical of the Charismatic experience of which Burnett was an ardent advocate and supporter, precisely because the advocates of the Charismatic Renewal took a literalist stance on Scriptures. Yet, at the height of apartheid and political repression of Black people, it was Liberation Theology and Black Theology that seemed to offer some hope to some Black people. Suggit's attitude towards Liberation Theology contrasted with St. Peter's College, Fedsem, where Liberation Theology was part of the curriculum. In other words, Suggit's broad theological view

<sup>156</sup> Warden's Letter, *Doulos*, 9 December 1974, Suggit's library, Silvermine Village, Noordhoek.

could not be narrow to fit in with the liberationist agenda of Liberation Theology, the political struggle for liberation in South Africa. Nevertheless, Suggit was not alone in his critique of the premises of Liberation Theology. John de Gruchy was also critical of Miguez Bonino's "strategic alliance with Marxism".<sup>157</sup>

The year 1974 turned out to be an important landmark in the life of the Anglican Church in South Africa. That year, Bill Burnett, then Bishop of Grahamstown, became Archbishop of Cape Town.<sup>158</sup> St. Paul's College had, at this time, a record of 27 students.<sup>159</sup>

Meanwhile, 26 November 1974 marked a landmark in the history of the country and also for St. Paul's College. The government expropriated the Federal Seminary at Alice.<sup>160</sup> The logbook College scribe reported the event in the following manner: "In the early part of the term we received news of the expropriation of the Fedsem. At a meeting it was decided that we should go as a college to lend a hand to St. Bede's College as they would be receiving Fedsem."<sup>161</sup> Similarly, Draper recalled his experience thus:

The issue as to how the college was to get involved was hotly debated in the Common Room. It divided and polarised the college as there were many who were angry with the government's action while a few others thought perhaps the government had genuine reasons for closing the college ... [such as Duncan Bell (a Rhodesian), who was the only one who refused to go to St. Bede's. Some of St. Paul's students went to Alice, and were at the closing ceremony ... It was a very moving ceremony. It was also a traumatising experience.<sup>162</sup>

Responding to this episode, in his Warden's Letter of 9 September 1974, Suggit stated that:

Church and State are necessarily interrelated. The expropriation of the Federal Theological Seminary [Fedsem] at Alice by the Government shows this too well. The reason for the expropriation is that the University of Fort Hare, which exists for the good of the Xhosa people, needs more land and buildings to allow it to develop ... It will, however, appear to many people that this action by the Government is an expression of displeasure at the way of life [as it] carried on at the Federal Seminary ... I can, therefore, do nothing more than to deplore the Government action, and to say what a loss it will be to us at St. Paul's if the Seminary has to move away from Alice. Our contact with the Seminary is little enough owing to the distance involved. But students from St. Paul's have always appreciated those contacts which have been possible.<sup>163</sup>

While Suggit did not necessarily buy into the government's reasons for the expropriation of the Seminary and, for him (the College), he condemned it on the basis that the College would miss contact with the Seminary. Seemingly loss of contact with St. Peter's College weighed more than other issues. Writing a

<sup>157</sup> De Gruchy, J. *The Church Struggle in South Africa*. Grand Rapids, M.I.: William Eerdmans, 1979, pp. 210-211.

<sup>158</sup> Clarke, *Anglicans Against Apartheid*, Chapter 11.

<sup>159</sup> Warden's Letter, *Doulos*, 9 December 1974, Historical Papers, Research Archive, UWL.

<sup>160</sup> Clarke, *Anglicans Against Apartheid*, p. 293.

<sup>161</sup> Logbook, AB 2568, C1, 1969-76, St. Paul's Theological College. Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>162</sup> Interview with Jonathan Draper, 6 March 2014, Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg.

<sup>163</sup> Warden's Letter, *Doulos*, 9 September 1974, Suggit's library, Silvermine Village, Noordhoek.

year later in July 1975, in his capacity as Acting Warden, Buchanan was more critical of the government's action than Suggit. He tried to unravel what he saw were the government's ulterior motives. He wrote:

There is no doubt that the whole thing was carefully orchestrated and skilfully planned; and that it was carried out in the most cynical and cold blooded way. The attempts made by the authorities to suggest that it was done for the good of the African peoples scarcely rings true in the light of the upset it has caused many Africans not only in the area but throughout the country. There is little evidence to suggest that the Africans were consulted in the matter, and it seems far more likely that the presence of the Seminary was in a sense a living judgement on the philosophy of education embodied in Fort Hare, and as such had to be removed.<sup>164</sup>

In contrast to Suggit, Buchanan was able to unveil the machinations of the apartheid regime, perpetrated by the regime that the expropriation had been in the good of the local people. The expropriation of the Seminary affected St. Paul's College in many ways. There had been considerable exchange visits between St. Paul's College and St. Peter's College, a constituent college of the Fedsem.

In the same letter, Buchanan stated: "After consultation with the Seminary and St. Bede's authorities, we decided to close the College for a week and go to St. Bede's to help with practical arrangements involved in the move."<sup>165</sup> However, writing in his tribute to Buchanan, Suggit attributed the decision to go to Mthatha to Buchanan. He stated that it was Buchanan who "suggested that the whole college should move to Umtata for a week to help those exiled from St. Peter's College, Fedsem, to be housed temporarily at St. Bede's".<sup>166</sup>

Writing in the same Warden's letter of July 1975, Buchanan highlighted how the closure would affect St. Paul's College:

All this will affect St. Paul's. We cannot remain independent of what is happening at the Seminary. How and in what way we will be affected is difficult to say, but it may well be that we have to move to another centre closer to where the other colleges are, so that we may be able to share in the facilities of any new venture. It might even be necessary for us to go out of existence in favour of something which is genuinely non-racial. Only time and developments will tell, but we must surely not be afraid to look at the possibilities of change, in the attempt to be obedient to the will of God.<sup>167</sup>

Buchanan continued to relate St. Paul's College experience at St. Bede's College regarding the process of the location of Fedsem. He stated:

But what we were able to do was very little when measured against the hardship which these two communities have had to endure. Nevertheless, it was a good visit, in that quite apart from the considerable hard work which we were able to put in, we cemented good friendships with those

<sup>164</sup> Acting Warden's Letter, *Doulos*, 21 July 1975, Suggit's library, Silvermine Village, Noordhoek.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>166</sup> Suggit, J. "An Appreciation", In: D. Buchanan, *Breaking the Mould, Memories of a Bishop*. Cape Town: CPSA, 2013, p. 120.

<sup>167</sup> Acting Warden's Letter, *Doulos*, 21 July 1975, Suggit's library, Silvermine Village, Noordhoek.

of St. Bede's. It was thus good to have a number of them with us during Holy Week, sharing in the wonder and distress of the Passion and Resurrection of Our Lord.<sup>168</sup>

The Seminary represented an alternate educational system to apartheid Bantu Education, which Fort Hare had come to represent. It also represented an alternative social society. The closure of the Seminary was a way in which the government sought to control education as a means to knowledge and power. One of the other effects of the closure was the assessment of the methods of training men for ministry. The meeting had taken place in Johannesburg. In the same Warden's letter of 21 July 1975, Buchanan wrote:

It was quite clear that the majority of the Blacks felt that at this stage it is essential to have a place for full time study, and this was seen against the social and economic background of most of the Blacks in South Africa today. It was also agreed that what is required is a non-racial seminary, where we can grow in mutual love and understanding.<sup>169</sup>

It is significant that the government's action had stimulated energy, with churches desiring a non-racial and ecumenical theological scheme of other colleges where Buchanan envisaged that St. Paul's College could get involved. Draper recalled that his experience of the closure was one of his enduring experiences in 1975. He highlighted it as follows:

We spent at least two weeks laying the concrete, eating, praying and sleeping together with Black seminarians from St. Peter's students and St. Bede's. And so in many ways it was my first experience of that, if you want to put it that way, a kind of non-racial work of the Church crossing the boundaries of apartheid. That was a very significant mark for me in conscientising [me].<sup>170</sup>

For Bradshaw, however, the closure didn't have any impact on St. Paul's College, precisely because the College did not have any close relationship with Fedsem.<sup>171</sup> For Peter Gunning, he said that his visit to St. Peter's College, Alice, exposed him to two dimensions of the life of Black people: firstly, the experience of vigorous African music, dance and worship; and secondly, a first-hand experience of the impact of Black Consciousness Movement on the identity of young African men who now expressed their identity through African names.<sup>172</sup>

The year 1975 saw the introduction of the experimental 'Liturgy 1975' in the Anglican Church in Southern Africa. Suggit reported that the Liturgy 1975 had been used for the first time in the chapel during the last two terms, with the approval of the Bishop.<sup>173</sup> Elphick and Davenport noted that this liturgy reflected the context of the times. "As its general preface indicates, the new prayer book sought to locate liturgy within the context of the southern African crises and to stimulate further development

168 *Ibid.*

169 *Ibid.*

170 Interview with Jonathan Draper, 6 March 2014, Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg.

171 Interview with Charles van Heerden and Howard Bradshaw, 20 December 2013, Cathedral of the Holy Nativity, Pietermaritzburg.

172 Interview with Peter Gunning, 19 December 2013, King Shaka Airport, Durban.

173 Warden's Letter in *Doulos*, 9 December 1974, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

of indigenous forms of worship.<sup>174</sup> However, the year 1975 turned out to be a turning point for the church of the Province precisely because Challenge Groups were set up across the Province as part of the church's Programme of Human Relations and Reconciliation.<sup>175</sup>

## A quest for racial integration

### Permit for "Coloured" students?

The impulses of socio-religious and political renewal which had their roots in the 1960s seemed to crystallise in the late 1970s. To some degree, this manifested itself in the mainline churches in ecumenical and multiracial vision and, approach to theological training. However, at this stage fresh winds had already started blowing, which started to inspire the desire for the racial integration of the College. On 9 October 1975, Archbishop Burnett wrote to John Suggit, stating:

I have six Coloured men accepted as ordinands for next year from this Diocese. Do you think there would be any likelihood of any of them receiving permits to live and study at St. Paul's? Do you think it is worth trying to get such permission? It might be worthwhile experimenting with sending two or three to St. Paul's and the others to the Federal Seminary ... Please let me know what you think about having another try at getting permission for some degree of integration at St. Paul's. It seems to me that the Government might be a little bit more open now than heretofore.<sup>176</sup>

The possibility of sending six "Coloured"<sup>177</sup> men to train in the College in 1976 marked a very significant development. The move could have been inspired by racial openness in the Federal Seminary. It was intended to be experiment, to investigate how the issue of government permit would work. There were also other impulses that seemed to embolden the Anglican Church to move in that direction. Similar developments were taking place in the Roman Catholic Church. In his letter to Archbishop Burnett, Suggit had drawn attention to Rhodes University Vice Chancellor's letter in which the Vice Chancellor had cited the Roman Catholic Church newspaper, *Southern Cross* dated 30 November 1975, where under the headline "White, Black seminarians to study together", the paper correspondent stated:

Four White brothers of the Mariannahill congregation who have been studying for the priesthood at St. John Vianney seminary here will switch to St. Joseph's Oblate Scholasticate in Cedara from the beginning of next term. They are making a move in order to study with their Black and Coloured brothers of the same congregation.<sup>178</sup>

The issue of government permits regarding the study of "Coloured" students at St. Paul's College was critical. It entailed church-state relations at a very basic level. The Church made discreet enquiries behind the scenes with the relevant authorities to ascertain the government's position. It would appear

174 Elphick and Davenport, *Christianity in South Africa*, p. 167. See, *An Anglican Prayer Book, 1989: Church of the Province of Southern Africa*. London: Collins, 1989.

175 Lee, *Compromise and Courage*, p. 327.

176 See Letter, Burnett to Suggit, 9 October 1975, AB 1363, S 21 (file 7), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, St. Paul's Theological College, 1974-75, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

177 That is, of mixed White and Black African race.

178 See Letter, Suggit to Burnett, 9 October 1975, AB 1363, S 21 (file 7), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, St. Paul's College, 1974-75, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

that the Anglican Church was contemplating ignoring the law possibly as a way of 'showing courage'. Could it afford to do that? In reply to Bill Burnett's letter of 9 October 1975, John Suggit stated on 20 October 1975:

I now let you know that [Advocate] George Randell believes that it would be foolhardy to accept such men without obtaining the required permission. When I spoke to him earlier about a similar request from the Bishop of Natal with regard to the possibility of an Indian student studying here, he seemed to encourage me to go forward and to hope that all would be well. But he has now made some discreet enquiries and believes that there might be much harm resulting if we do not get the permission which is required. He believes that this is a matter which should be taken up at the highest level, and that you should direct enquiries through the Provincial Registrar to the proper Government department. Possibly an approach might be made even to the Minister concerned. He seemed to think that it would be very much better to establish a principle of this kind before making individual applications ... Adv. Randell seemed to think that harm might be caused not only to the Principal but to the College and the Church as a whole, and that instead of being courageous we would be rather foolhardy.<sup>179</sup>

So the matter was settled, at least for now. It was too risky not to apply for a government permit for "Coloured" students, as that could lead to confrontation with the government and consequently, harm the Warden, the College and the Church. Towards the end of that year, Buchanan, who had been Sub-warden since 1965, became the Acting Warden. Writing on 24 October 1975 to Archbishop Burnett in response to Suggit's letter to the Rhodes' Vice Chancellor, Prof. Derek Henderson, with regard to the possible collaboration of St. Paul's College with Rhodes University, Buchanan outlined his vision of the College. He proposed fairly radical changes with regard to the orientation of the College. Part of his letter read:

The next point is more fundamental. I believe the time has come for St. Paul's to break many of its images – it must be prepared to be a place of much greater flexibility and movement, a place to encourage the unusual rather than simply to train people in 'Anglican practice', to move from a heavily academic orientation to a very much more theological centre where less "formal" and more "immediate" theology is learned.<sup>180</sup>

One of the enduring images that St. Paul's College carried was its existence as a theological college that trained only 'European male' students. In the context of the ecumenical non-racial theological training at Fedsem, it made St. Paul's College look conspicuously like an institution that seemed to perpetuate apartheid social structures and privileges for White Anglicans. In the context of 1975, the original purpose for which it had established in 1902 to "justify" the training of White male clergy was long past. However, Peter Lee noted that in spite of the call for Africanisation of the episcopate in the 1970s and particularly in 1974, the Anglican Church was essentially very slow to change in bringing in Black leadership. Its structures still reflected those in society.<sup>181</sup>

179 See Letter, Suggit to Burnett, 20 October 1975, AB 1363, S 21 (file 7), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, St. Paul's College, 1974-75, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

180 See Letter, Buchanan to Burnett, 24 October 1975, AB 1363, S 21 (file 7), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, St. Paul's College, 1974-75, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

181 Lee, *Compromise and Courage*, pp. 319-322.

The other image that the College was associated with was its semi-monastic outlook, traditions that seemed to provide little room for married students. Buchanan's reference to the need for 'flexibility' and 'movement' is significant. He made a call in the context of the Charismatic Renewal and at a time when Bill Burnett, who himself was the chief proponent of the Renewal, had just become the Archbishop of Cape Town. Some advocates of the people, who had gone through the Charismatic Renewal, saw the Anglo-Catholic spirituality and 'churchmanship' as too rigid and 'life-less'; hence, in this case, the call for the 'movement' of the Holy Spirit. The Anglo-Catholic spirituality put emphasis on the saying of the Offices, ceremonial and ritual. This was the Anglican practice to which Buchanan referred. It was an important part of its English Catholic heritage.

Until then, it had been a spirituality and churchmanship that had dominated the Anglican Church leadership in the previous years. The final issue that Buchanan raised is similarly significant, a call for a less academic theology. During his tenure of office, Suggit had stressed an academic orientated theology. Now Buchanan was calling for a shift to a less academic, less rigorous approach to theology. This new approach to theology seemed compatible with the temperament of the Charismatic Renewal, which tended to be suspicious and critical of Biblical scholarship. While Buchanan did not discourage Biblical scholarship, however, he did not place intellectual theology at the core of theological training. Rather, stress was placed on the Charismatic experience as the mark of being 'called' to the ordained ministry.

In the 1970s, the Anglican Church was considering the total integration of St. Paul's College, that is, "Coloured", Black and Indian students would train together with their White colleagues. It would appear that the racial history of separation, which bred suspicion between Black and "Coloured" people, seemed to undermine the effort, however. From the letter that Suggit wrote to Burnett, it would seem that there was a strong feeling that the races should live separately. Thus, on 19 December 1975, Suggit wrote to Burnett saying, "although I would welcome coloured students, I suspect it may be unwise at this stage to separate them too much from their black colleagues". He went on to state that "some discreet enquiries [led him] to believe that [the Coloured students] would be branded as 'traitors' by some Black ordinands".<sup>182</sup> The Church was reticent to move, as it was caught up in apartheid mentality. The minutes of a Special Meeting of the College Council on Monday, 1 December 1975, noted:

The Council of St. Paul's College, noting that the Archbishop of Cape Town had applied to the Department of Community Development for permission to enrol Coloured students at St. Paul's College, wholeheartedly expresses its readiness to accept such students of the College, provided that they conform to the standards normally required by the Warden for the admission of students to the College.<sup>183</sup>

It is quite strange that the Church put forward a condition where the students had to conform to the standards stipulated by the Warden, as the students would be sent by the Church itself. The year 1975 ended with Suggit resigning as Warden. He had been Warden for a decade. In my view, Suggit

<sup>182</sup> See Letter, Suggit to Burnett, 19 December 1975, AB 1363, S 21 (file 7), St. Paul's Theological College, Archbishop of Cape Town, 1974-75, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>183</sup> St. Paul's Theological College Council Minutes, December 1975, AB 2568, B 2, 1965-75, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

bequeathed to St. Paul's College a legacy to take Biblical (theological) scholarship seriously. He impressed this on the minds of most of the students who passed through his tenure of office. In his last Warden's Letter that year of 23 April 1975, however, he painted a grim picture of the state of the College. He stated:

This, then, is why I write to you on the eve of my departure: The College has inadequate reserves and cannot stand a deficit by the middle of the year, there may not be money to provide stipends for the staff nor food for the students. The council therefore asked that I should write to the Friends of the College to elicit your help to those whom you minister.<sup>184</sup>

The gloomy picture as painted by Suggit seemed to reflect the state of the Church at the time. In my interview with him, Suggit stated that the College was going through uncertain times where the Church appeared to be losing its nerve.<sup>185</sup> Suggit tempered the gloom with a fairly positive note, however, stating that: "the prospects of the arrival of twenty new students in the new year to bring the number to thirty-two".<sup>186</sup>

## Conclusion

In the years between 1972 and 1975, St. Paul's College became a site of struggle for various streams of theological perspectives and spiritual orientations. These emerged precisely in the course of trying to relate to the challenge of apartheid. Chief amongst these were the contrasting forces that emerged. There was, on the one hand, the Charismatic Renewal (led by Burnett) that was sometimes associated with the "No Other Gospel" movement, people who were less willing to engage with societal issues. On the other hand, there also existed an academic oriented theology, associated with Suggit, whose broad approach to contextual issues, although not unwilling to engage in societal issues, nevertheless never disturbed the status quo.

It was also a context and a period when Suggit introduced a new dimension to race relations in the College. In spite of personal pain that he endured, the appointment of Mbali was significant. It pointed to the future of the possibilities where White and Black people could live together. Indeed, to some measure, Mbali's appointment would seem to be a pointer to a vision of a new racially integrated College. Before he left for the College for Rhodes University, (together with others), Suggit was taking the initiative to bring in racial diversity in the College.

As will be noted in the following chapter, to a degree, the Charismatic Renewal endured and continued to influence the course of direction in the life of the College, albeit in a context that was rapidly changing in the late 1970s. To a certain extent, the year 1975 was the end of an era that, amongst others, had been dominated by Ecumenism. At the same time, the passing of 1975 seemed to hold the promise of the beginning of a new era – the entry of Black students in the College. This is an issue that will be discussed at length in the following chapter.

<sup>184</sup> Warden's Letter, *Doulos*, AB 1363, S 21 (file 7), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, St. Paul's Theological College, 1974-75, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>185</sup> Interview with John Suggit, 19 November 2014, Silvermine Village, Noordhoek.

<sup>186</sup> Warden's Letter, *Doulos*, December 1975, AB 1363, S 21 (file 7), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, St. Paul's Theological College, 1974-75, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

## Chapter 3

## Through the Strong Winds of Change 1976-78

### A Theological College – as Bishop’s *familia*

As noted in Chapter 1, Nuttall argued that the English concept of the “Bishop’s *familia*”, the Bishop’s household, tremendously influenced the model of theological training in South Africa since the time of Bishop Robert Gray. Above anything else, the Bishop’s *familia* was about power relations between a Bishop and his ordinands. A Bishop related to his ordinands as his “sons” (today “daughters” as well) and they related to him as their father (today as mother in God).<sup>1</sup> In this relationship, ordinands looked to the Bishop for his paternal care as the Bishop looked to his sons for loyal service in the Church. Mamphele Ramphele identified ‘Holy Patriarchy’ as the manner in which Church authority relates to the congregation and vice versa, “which is reinforced by male monotheism”.

Rooted in the Old and New Testament Scriptures, Ramphele argued that the notion of ‘Holy Patriarchy’ “has been incorporated into religious ideology on many levels ... it takes its form in many ways”.<sup>2</sup> The Church as an institution has been founded on principles derived out of its historical roots. She asserted: “The Judeo-Christian tradition placed a heavy emphasis on ‘patriarchy’ and the father figure is a central pillar of social organisation.”<sup>3</sup> “This form of social organisation, which the church has embraced, encourages hierarchical relationships by casting the priest in the role of ‘father’ and the congregants in that of ‘children’.”<sup>4</sup> She concludes, indicating: “This symbolism of unequal relations militates against adult to adult communication, and encourages a dependency relationship which conditions the congregants to accept undemocratic practices as inevitable problems of parent-child relationships.”<sup>5</sup> Relationships at St. Paul’s College, as would have been in any theological institution in the Anglican Church, evolved around these ‘structures of authority’.

Nuttall noted that the Bishop’s *familia* was a structure and an ecclesiastical system whose roots lay in Medieval Europe.<sup>6</sup> A very close relationship existed between a theological college and the Cathedral and a university; the Warden of a college was also the Chancellor of the Cathedral.<sup>7</sup> A very similar pattern existed in Grahamstown. Suggit was not only the Warden, but also the Chancellor of the Cathedral,

1 Nuttall, “Theological Training in a Historical Perspective”.

2 Ramphele, M. “On Being Anglican: The Pain and the Privilege”, In: F. England and T. Paterson (eds.), *Bounty in Bondage, The Anglican Church in Southern Africa*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1989, p. 180.

3 *Ibid.*, pp. 188-189.

4 *Ibid.*, p. 189.

5 *Ibid.*

6 Nuttall, “Theological Training in a Historical Perspective”.

7 *Ibid.*

while besides being Warden, Buchanan was also Archdeacon of Albany. As will be elaborated later on, Michael Weeder, a former student, and the present Dean of Cape Town, portrayed the symbolic and symbiotic ideological significance of the interrelationship between St. Paul's College, Rhodes University, the cathedral and the Anglican private schools in Grahamstown, in the context of colonialism and apartheid.

It was in this context that students found themselves relating to the College authority and to one another. The relationship between an ordinand and his/her Bishop informally rested on 'obedience', to which an ordinand would formally pledge himself/herself at ordination in the future. In the College, the Warden exercised the power of Diocesan Bishops by proxy. To some degree, therefore, ordinands ('sons') were (are) expected to relate to the Warden as to their 'Bishop', as their 'father' in the spirit of obedience. Obedience and humility were critical components of theological training. For instance, when he addressed the graduating students at the Award ceremony at St. Paul's College in 1977, Nuttall put this requirement in the following words:

Yet, while this is true, something more – and something *more fundamental* – needs also to be said, and that is that mere learning, no matter how sound, is insufficient for the theologian, whether it has been picked up in university or theological college or the Bishop's household. In the strangest of paradoxes, the theologian is committed to that wisdom in which the wisdom and *cleverness of man* are outstripped by the *foolishness of faith*. He receives his award *not standing, confident of his own wisdom – but kneeling and in the name of the TRINITY*. He cannot do otherwise, because his subject, which is GOD, can be known only in these terms. The graduate in Christian theology recognises his status, *first and foremost, as a child*, and therefore makes room for wonder and a *sense of dependence* at the heart of even the most rigorous intellectual effort.<sup>8</sup>

Nuttall's language is couched in religious ideology. Cochrane asserted: "A particular language shapes the Christian community and thereby establishes its uniqueness."<sup>9</sup> He continued to assert that "the meaningfulness of this language lies only in its integration into the life of the members of the community (by which an inter-subjective sociality of a certain kind is established.)"<sup>10</sup> In this quotation, Nuttall use coded language, in which meaning is embedded in signifiers and figurative speech. It needs to be decoded. The critical issues here are the obligations of 'obedience and loyalty' to God, the Trinity, expected of as an ordinand (clergy). He/she must recognise that he/she is a 'child'. In the Church, whatever education you may have, it is nothing before God and his Church. What is required is a spirit of humility and submission.

The stress here is obedience and loyalty to God. Yet, God has his representatives on earth – the Church and the Bishops. Behind the issue of obedience lay (lies) a much deeper one, namely the 'authority' of the Church. But who constitutes the 'Church' in the Anglican Church other than the Bishops? An ordinand or an ordained person directly or indirectly depends on the 'good will' of the Bishop to provide for her or him. In turn, he or she must reciprocate this relationship with *filial* loyalty, indeed, in some cases with a 'subserving' attitude towards the Bishop. This is not necessarily wrong. This structure

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> Cochrane, *Servants of Power*, p. 229.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

of authority in the Anglican Church, as it is in the Roman Catholic Church, tends to hold the Church together. This has been the case in the Church perhaps since the time of Cyprian of Carthage.

When one is going through theological training in the College, the power behind this 'structure of authority' is not so obvious. It is precisely because authority is not 'imposed' on the ordinands, but rather, as Mews noted, it is 'instilled' through ecclesiastical habits, discipline and customs. Ordinands are socialised rather than 'drilled' into these. It operates on the level of consciousness, of the mind, and perceptions.<sup>11</sup> It is the kind of power that Michel Foucault conceives as pervasive, almost omnipresent, and total.<sup>12</sup> This sort of power is essentially about socialising subjects into behaving in certain ways within the framework, terms and the norms of "contractual" relations. It is "more about habituating relations within local patterns, habits, and ways of speaking".<sup>13</sup>

Power is the source of technical control. This form of power is subtle, and coercive, as it "[obtains] holds upon [the body] at the level of mechanism itself – movements, gestures, attitudes, rapidity ... their internal organisation; constraint bears on the forces rather than on the signs; the only truly important ceremony is that of exercise ... it is exercised according to a codification that partitions as closely as possible time, space, movement".<sup>14</sup> In conclusion, he asserted: "These methods, which made possible the meticulous control of the operations of the body, which assured the constant subjection of its forces on them a relation of docility-utility, might be called 'disciplines'".<sup>15</sup> This power operates in all institutions and the Church is not excluded.

A Bishop had (and has) the power to decide who went and did not go to the seminary. Likewise, an ordinand (was) is expected to conduct himself in terms of the expectations of his Bishop. The structure regulated the manner in which ordinands conducted themselves and their attitude towards the Church authorities. This structure of authority also regulated the manner in which the Archbishop (and Bishops) related to the staff of the College, and vice versa.

The Archbishop (and Bishops) determined what had to be taught in the College, who could be appointed to the staff of the College and upon fulfilling what conditions. In short, it was an intricate web of power relations in which the ordinands and the Church officials were intertwined. The hierarchical structure of authority in the Church, and by extension, the College, was reflected in the rest of the society. In other words, structures of authority in society ran parallel to structures of authority in the Church. For instance, Bannerman recalled that in the 1970s, South Africa was a highly structured society, so was the Anglican Church.<sup>16</sup> In the light of the preceding exposition, we now turn to the matter of the appointment of the successor to Suggit.

11 See, for example, Mews, "Clergymen, Gentlemen and Men: World War 1 and the Requirements, Recruitment, and Training of the Anglican Ministry"; also Tomlinson, "An Innovation in Nineteenth-Century Theological Training: The Lichfield Probationer's Scheme", <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=15648461&site=ehost-live&scope=site>

12 Tran, *J. Foucault and Theology*. New York: T & T Clark International, 2011, pp. 22-23.

13 *Ibid.*

14 Rabinow, P. (ed.), *The Foucault Reader*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1984, p. 181.

15 *Ibid.*

16 Interview with David Bannerman, 23 January 2014, Diocesan office, Highveld.

## Looking for a successor to John Suggit

### The Charismatic Renewal

The Charismatic Renewal had emerged in South Africa in the 1970s. Now in various ways, it continued to impact on the life of churches, including the Anglican Church. St. Paul's College began to reflect this trend. One aspect in which the Charismatic Renewal was to impact on the life of the College was over the issue of the choice of Suggit's successor. The resignation of Suggit had created a considerable gap that was expected to be filled by a suitable candidate. Suggit was a renowned New Testament Greek scholar, and an able administrator. He had been Warden for a decade and before that, the Sub-warden for the same period. Several people put forward names of persons considered to be "ideal" candidates in South Africa and England.

One such candidate who was approached turned out to have unique qualifications was Michael J.D. Carmichael. He declined to take up the position, however, not only because he felt he was too old, but also because he felt that, ironically, his long ministry amongst Black people had such an effect on him that White students would not easily relate to him. In other words, he believed to a degree that his long ministry amongst Blacks had made him too 'Black'. Carmichael had spent most of his time at St. Bede's College in Mthatha, Transkei. One would have thought that being White and with a solid background of working amongst Black people would have stood him in good position as a "bridge" in a College that would train both Black and White students. Carmichael's perception that he would not 'fit in' confirms the thesis of this study that St. Paul's College was too remote from life in the Black society in South Africa.

On 5 March 1976, responding to Peter Hinchliff's letter, of whom Burnett had requested to put his name forward as a candidate to the position of Warden, he described St. Paul's College as "about 80% of the students at present" [being] under the influence of "what is sometimes described as 'charismatic'".<sup>17</sup> Buchanan specifically noted that "that year's intake of 23 students" was "a direct result of the *charismatic movement*". He further asserted: "They were 'Jesus people' rather than 'churchmen'."<sup>18</sup> Similarly, in the same letter, Burnett stressed that "many of them are at St. Paul's because they have experienced a Renewal in the Holy Spirit". In conclusion, he cautioned:

A Warden of St. Paul's who decided that the Renewal is not healthy and needs to be played down could in fact cause a polarisation which could be deeply destructive at a time when the Church needs as never before the renewing power of the Spirit, not only to respond to change, but to help to initiate it in the most creative way possible.<sup>19</sup>

It is clear that Burnett considered experience of the Charismatic Renewal to be a critical qualification for the prospective Warden of the College because many students and many of the other Bishops claimed to have experienced the renewal. As will be noted later, Burnett and other Bishops would play a very

<sup>17</sup> See Letter, Burnett to Hinchliff, 5 March 1976, AB 1363, S 21 (file 8), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, St. Paul's Theological College 1976-78, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>18</sup> Buchanan, *Breaking the Mould, Memories of a Bishop*, p. x (emphasis in original).

<sup>19</sup> See Letter, Burnett to Hinchliff, 5 March 1976, AB 1363, S 21 (file 8), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, St. Paul's Theological College 1976-78, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

important role in ensuring that those who went to the College had go through the Renewal or were at least its sympathisers.

The possible appointment of Roger Ellis illustrates the Archbishop's interest in seeing that the person who had to be appointed needed to have gone through the experience of the Charismatic Renewal. In response to Roger Ellis, writing on 25 February 1976, Burnett stated: "I think you misunderstood my concern that you should at least be able to understand what is happening in the Renewal movement." He went on to assert:

To appoint a Principal to St. Paul's, however, who would unsympathetically hammer the large number of young men who have come to a vocation through the movement of the Holy Spirit would be simply irresponsible if, as I believe, it is a movement of God.<sup>20</sup>

The Archbishop's sentiments suggest that St. Paul's College was being used to some extent to drive an agenda of the Charismatic Renewal for the Anglican Church in South Africa. Precisely because of its Charismatic Renewal experience, the Archbishop saw the College as fulfilling a wider influence in the Anglican Church. It is very significant that the Charismatic Renewal was in the ascendancy during the height of the political tension in South Africa. Their spiritual experience rose during the very time when political oppression against Black people was at its most brutal. It is almost as if faced with the challenges that apartheid posed, some of them found comfort in their Charismatic spirituality. Somehow, their spirituality seemed to give them a sense of meaning and purpose in the context where apartheid seemed to challenge their moral conscience.

To Archbishop Burnett and possibly other Bishops, it was strategic to have a Warden who shared their religious experience at St. Paul's College. Suggit was not a sympathiser, nor was he antagonistic to the movement. In having a Warden who was involved in the Charismatic Renewal, the Archbishop and other leaders would be ensured of their control of St. Paul's College.

Finally, Buchanan was appointed as Warden of St. Paul's College on 21 April 1976.<sup>21</sup> The logbook scribe announced the news of Buchanan's appointment as follows: "The newly appointed Warden of St. Paul's Theological College is the Ven. Duncan Buchanan."<sup>22</sup> Buchanan had himself gone through the Charismatic Renewal experience.<sup>23</sup> He wrote about his experience in a letter to Burnett on 31 December 1975. Part of the letter reads:

I wish we had a chance to share in the wonder of what had happened to us (Di and me) in the power of the Spirit, of the wonder and the working of the Spirit in the College and so much more ... It is strange really, I feel completely free and liberated in the Spirit. I too have seen and been the agent of great miracles of the power of the Spirit, and the healing love of God.<sup>24</sup>

20 See Letter, Burnett to Ellis, 25 February 1976, AB 1363, S21 (file 8), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, St. Paul's Theological College, 1976-78, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

21 *Ibid.*

22 Logbook (newspaper cutting), AB 2568, C 1.11, 1976-78, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

23 See Letter, Buchanan to Burnett, 22 January 1981, AB 1363, S 21 (file 10), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, St. Paul's Theological College, 1980-82, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

24 See Letter, Buchanan to Burnett, 31 December 1975, AB 1363, S 21 (file 8), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, St. Paul's College, 1976-78.

So, Buchanan, just as Burnett, shared the experience of the Charismatic Renewal. In this respect, Buchanan appeared to have been the right person to lead the College during the height of the Renewal in the Anglican Church. His position was crucial to the Anglican Church, precisely to shape and/or reinforce a spirituality of the prospective leaders of the Church. In this respect, his position in the Church was 'powerful'.

In the interim, the departure of Suggit from St. Paul's College to Rhodes University left Buchanan with the liberty to start fashioning the College according to his (and his staff's) vision and principles of what he believed a theological college ought to be. In his letter of 24 October 1975 to Burnett, a year before his appointment, in the context of the question whether the College had to affiliate to Rhodes University, Buchanan had outlined his vision and principles of a theological college as follows:

I draw a distinction between a university and a theological college. The first is committed to the purely academic process – and this is done, whether at a degree or diploma level, on the basis of a fairly fixed form of educational schedule and discipline which is inevitably aimed at intellectual stimulation and indeed satisfaction. The theological college on the other hand is a training college for the ministry. Inevitably this involves as high academic standards as are possible – and the stretching of the mind and imagination as far as possible.<sup>25</sup>

For Buchanan, the university and the theological college operated on very different premises. In his view, the major pre-occupation for the (Rhodes) university (was) is exclusively the development of rational faculties and critical engagement with society. On the other hand, according to Buchanan, in spite of the fact that a theological college can have high academic standards, essentially it has to provide training that fundamentally serves the Church's ministry. In other words, intellectual pursuit has to be subservient to ministerial training. For Buchanan, a theological college was pastorally oriented. He asserted:

[A theological college] involves a good deal more – regular corporate prayer, the problems of leaving together in community, the ideal of living and learning in the Spirit together, the needs for evangelism, a deepening personal commitment and the discipline of relating to both family and college. It involves too the ideals of public training in pastoral skills and the ability to cope with the emotional problems of growth and development in the spiritual and human areas of life. That and more besides.<sup>26</sup>

Finally, even more significant for Buchanan, a theological college needed to be receptive to the workings of the Holy Spirit. He stated:

This means that the need for flexibility, openness to the promptings and leadings of the Spirit, a relative lack of structuring is all essential for a theological college. My own judgement is that a too close association with Rhodes, even with a Course in Pastoral Work now being offered, would force St. Paul's into the sort of straight-jacket which would hinder further growth, rather than promote it.<sup>27</sup>

25 See Letter, Buchanan to Burnett, 24 October 1975, AB 1363, S 21 (file 7), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, 1974-75, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

26 *Ibid.*

27 *Ibid.*

It is very striking that Buchanan associated flexibility with the promptings of the Spirit. Buchanan seems to portray a contrast and tension that prevailed between the academic and the theological pursuit of knowledge; the contrasting premises upon which the two approaches rested. These two went along together and seemed in conflict with rational enquiry. It is important to note that Buchanan was resisting Suggit's vision and scheme to have St. Paul's College to operate under the wings of Rhodes University. This issue ought to be analysed in the context of other developments in the Anglican Church.

At almost the same time, St. Bede's College provided another instance where experience of the Charismatic Renewal became an important qualification through which an appointment to the Principalship was made. Chichele Hewitt noted that Geoffrey Ashby, Bishop of St. John's Diocese, in Mithatha, appointed Wilberforce Nkopo as Principal of St. Bede's Theological College in 1980, who was associated with the Charismatic Renewal.<sup>28</sup> What is implied here is that Nkopo would influence the students to be Charismatic or strengthen those who were already Charismatic.

In other words, this implied that the students would need to reflect a theological outlook or spirituality shared by the Church leadership. In this respect, the theological College was used to perpetuate the ecclesiastical status quo. Thus, the Wardenship of Buchanan marked a significant shift in theological orientation of the College, from stress on intellectualism and scholarship during the time of Suggit to a much less rigorous approach. In 1989, Jonathan Draper and Gerald West commented on the influence of Buchanan's experience of the Charismatic Renewal on the College as follows: "St. Paul's College, under Archdeacon Duncan, now Bishop of Johannesburg, became thoroughly dominated by the 'charismatic renewal', and for a decade New Testament studies at least were directed from a conservative view of the Scriptures."<sup>29</sup>

The scope of this study does not permit detailed discussion on this issue. In an interview to the press, however, Buchanan outlined some aspect of his vision. He stated:

I am excited – and a little nervous. Both the Church and education are at the crossroads. Is the Church prepared to make changes, regardless of opposition from some quarters? Will the Church really integrate and insist on this even when it conflicts with government policy? It is on the answers to these questions that the whole future of theological education hinges. Where is the point of in establishing fully integrated, ecumenical colleges unless the churches are prepared to really get together?<sup>30</sup>

Buchanan's statement is loaded with underlying issues, which need to be unpacked. The Church faced serious questions: the nature of theological training and the need for racial integration. The second issue became more challenging, precisely because it touched on the Church's relationship

28 Hewitt, C. "A History of St. Bede's and St. Paul's", In: J. Suggit and M. Goedhals, *Change and Challenge, Essays in commemorating the 150th Anniversary of the arrival of Robert Gray as First Bishop of Cape Town (20 February 1848)*. Marshalltown: CPISA, 1998, pp. 116-123.

29 Draper, J. and West, G. "Anglicans and scripture in South Africa", In: F. England and T. Paterson (eds.), *Bounty in Bondage*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1989, p. 36.

30 Logbook (newspaper cutting), AB 2568, C 1.1), St. Paul's Theological College, 1976-78, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

with the government. Not only did the Church not have a common mind on these issues, there was also opposition and antagonism within it. Buchanan was referring to a Church that was ecclesiastically and politically very conservative; a Church that Charles Villa-Vicencio described as being 'trapped in apartheid'.<sup>31</sup> Essentially, its ecclesiastical and political conservatism tended to feed each other.

## Opening the door for racial integration

### The Government Residence Permit

The appointment of Buchanan as the new Warden coincided with the initiative to integrate the College racially. A decision had been made to bring in Black students to train with the White students. To do that, the Church needed to secure a government's residence and study permit, a requirement for the Black students stipulated under the apartheid 1955 Group Areas Act. The Act provided for different race groups to reside in government designated areas. Already in 1975, Archbishop Burnett had informed Buchanan that he had six "Coloured" students who he wanted to send to St. Paul's College in 1976. Did the College apply for their permits? This is a very vexed question.

Today, some former students of St. Paul's College and others believe that the Church took a position of 'civil disobedience'. For instance, Hewitt, who was a student in 1977, asserted that "the [College] body [had] reached a decision of defying the law and refusing to apply. The authorities were obviously aware of what was happening, but there were never any prosecutions".<sup>32</sup> On the other hand, when this author asked Philip Le Feuvre whether the College (Buchanan) applied for permits on behalf of the students, he said that "they [students] just came".<sup>33</sup> In his view, the Church took the position that "if the authorities were going to react, we will see ..." and "the authorities never reacted".<sup>34</sup> In view of Le Feuvre's assertion, it would seem that the Church had taken a position of civil disobedience on this matter.

Similarly, Michael Nuttall, who had been a student in 1963 and 1964, recalled that "he fully supported the admission to the College of its first two Black students, whereby St. Paul's had broken the Group Areas Act and drew the attention of the security police to its affairs".<sup>35</sup> According to Draper, the Anglican Church had taken a unilateral decision just to go ahead sending the students and then wait for the government to respond if it wanted to.<sup>36</sup> In his view, the Church never expected the government would take on the Church, as the Church had international links with Overseas Churches, like in Germany.<sup>37</sup>

There is also another perspective, however. In his letter of application for a residence permit to the Department of Community Development, Burnett, the then Archbishop of Cape Town, quoted the

<sup>31</sup> Villa-Vicencio, C. *Trapped in Apartheid: A socio-theological history of the English-Speaking Churches*. MaryKnoll, NY: Orbis, 1988.

<sup>32</sup> Hewitt, "A History of St. Paul's College".

<sup>33</sup> Interview with Philip Le Feuvre, 5 March 2012, Somerset West.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> Response to a Questionnaire, 22 January 2015.

<sup>36</sup> Interview with Draper, 6 March 2014, Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

College Council resolution that stated that the Council had “accepted the presence of Coloured students amongst us”.<sup>38</sup> At the time of writing, the author had not as yet come across the minutes of the College Council concerned. Acceptance of “Coloured students amongst us”, has a certain overtone of “being tolerated”. The idea conveys the view that being resident in the College was a “favour” being accorded to the Black students.

It was against this background that on 10 January 1976, Ivan Weiss, Senior Chaplain to the Archbishop from 1974 to 1980, informed Buchanan that “two Coloured students, Oswald Swarts and Fred Hendricks [had] both been granted permission by the Department of Community Development to attend St. Paul’s College”.<sup>39</sup> It also ought to be noted that Henry Naidoo, an ordinand of Indian background, also entered the College at this time.<sup>40</sup> These students joined 32 White students. In 2015, asked whether the students were aware that a permit had been applied for them, Weiss said: “I can’t tell you that. It was very much apartheid. I think Fred [Hendricks] would have been unhappy to know that he had had a permit but he would rather have gone.”<sup>41</sup>

In applying for the permit, the Archbishop had indicated that these “students would be resident in the college for the period of three years”.<sup>42</sup> On 27 January 1976, Bill Burnett writing to Revd. Roger Ellis of the University of Natal noted: “St. Paul’s is full for the first time.” He went further to assert: “We have also, incidentally, succeeded in securing permits for two Coloured students to be in residence. I hope very much that more will follow.”<sup>43</sup> Michael Nuttall attributed the rise in numbers to the impact of the Charismatic Renewal. He reminisced that:

When I began the testing of a possible vocation at St. Paul’s in 1963, there were only 17 students from all the Southern African dioceses. It was minimalist. With the Charismatic Renewal a decade later, all that changed with the college being flooded with students in a full college and Duncan Buchanan persuading the College Council to purchase or rent nearby houses for married students and their families. He also raised funds for the building of a significant number of new houses belonging to the College on nearby land that was acquired.<sup>44</sup>

In light of Nuttall’s testimony, it would seem that the renewal was a landmark in the life of the College. It had transformed the life of the individuals and also the role of families in the College. The image of the College as semi-monastic was now giving way to a family-like College.

38 See Letter, Bill Burnett, 1 September 1976, AB 1363, S 21 (file 8), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, St. Paul’s Theological College, 1976-78, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

39 See Letter, Weiss to Buchanan, 1 January 1976, AB 1363, S 21 (file 8), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, 1976-78, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

40 Response to a Questionnaire, 5 February 2016.

41 Interview with Ivan Weiss, 25 March 2015, Claremont.

42 See Letter, Weiss to Buchanan, 10 January 1976, AB 1363, S21 (file 8), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, 1976-78, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

43 See Letter, Burnett to Ellis, 27 January 1976, AB 1363, S21 (file 8), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, 1976-78, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

44 Michael Nuttall, personal communication with the author, 22 January 2018.

This development marked a milestone in the history of theological education in the Anglican Church in South Africa. In his letter to John Suggit of 9 October 1975, Archbishop Burnet had said that it “might be worthwhile experimenting with sending two or three [students] to St. Paul’s and the others to the Federal Seminary”.<sup>45</sup> Even though these were two officially Coloured students to enter St. Paul’s College doors in 1976, there had been a case in 1974 of a “Coloured” student who was admitted at St. Paul’s College on the grounds that his family “[had] moved across colour line”<sup>46</sup> and even before 1940.

The episode shows the power of apartheid then in that it created conditions of desperation amongst some people to entice them to take on the identity of a group that the apartheid government privileged. In spite of this development, however, the constitutional requirement of the College “to train European males” still remained intact. Officially, St. Paul’s College still remained a White college with Black students seen as merely studying as “invited” guests.

Racial integration must be seen as part of the vision that had started to emerge way back in 1971 when Suggit made his proposal to Archbishop Selby Taylor, however, or further back, in 1960 when the College had admitted its first Black students, Khuse and Crutse, or still even further back, in 1945. This was also a period when, according to Archbishop Burnett, a Commission was in place to “consider whether or not [they needed to] rethink [the] policy of having three separate theological colleges”. Further, he said there was “talk also about in-service training and training by extension”.<sup>47</sup>

In spite of admitting Black students, St. Paul’s College still lagged behind its sister college of St. Peter’s at the Federal Seminary. St. Peter’s College had admitted Black, “Coloured” and Indian students since its inception in 1963<sup>48</sup> and much later, in the 1980s and 1990s, it also trained a few White students.<sup>49</sup> This might explain why the Church appeared cautious. In that context, a principle would have to be established that would henceforth determine the *modus operandi* and future relations between Church and state on this issue. Consequently, it was left to the office of the Archbishop to obtain the necessarily permits for the students. Implicit in the College Council resolution was the prevailing racial attitude of the time; the “Coloured students” were considered a special category of people that needed to be handled accordingly.

There is also another dimension. The difference between St. Paul’s College and St. Peter’s College is that St. Paul’s College was essentially a White college where White interests needed protecting. St. Paul’s College trained students from the White sections of the Church, members who were politically very conservative and yet generously supported the Anglican Church. The Church could not afford to alienate itself from this powerful constituency. The move towards racial integration of St. Paul’s College, however, ought to be placed in the wider context.

45 See Letter, Burnett to Suggit, 9 October, 1975, AB 1363, S 21 (file 7), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, St. Paul’s College, 1974-75, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

46 See Letter, Taylor to Suggit, 1 October 1973, AB 1363, S 21 (file 6), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, Confidential letter, 1 October 1973, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

47 See Letter, Burnett to Oram, 2 March 1976, AB 1363, S 21 (file 8), Archbishop of Cape Town, St. Paul’s Theological College, 1976-78, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

48 See Denis and Duncan, *The Native School that Caused all the Trouble*, p. 63.

49 *Ibid.*, p. 144.

## The broader context

The introduction of racial diversity in the College and similar accompanying developments constituted part of a broader trend. The 1960s was an era that sought to promote local leadership. “Indigenisation” and “Africanisation” were fashionable concepts, to be “politically correct” one had to “indigenise”. Indeed, they were part of the broader phenomenon, emerging Black Consciousness and Black identity. It needs to be noted, however, that these processes were essentially White-driven, sometimes with White leadership initiating it. It was part of power play: White Bishops portrayed themselves as progressives; that is, as ahead of the State in recognising Black leadership. This was at a time when there was a clarion call in the Black communities for Black leadership.

As Black people served in the subordinate roles learning the ‘ropes of the trade’, the arrangement appeared to justify the prolongation of White leadership and the tutelage of Black leadership. With the appointment of Alphaeus Zulu in 1960 as the Suffragan Bishop of St. John’s, and as Diocesan Bishop of the Diocese of Zululand,<sup>50</sup> the Anglican Church started to Africanise African leadership. Bernard Mkhabela was appointed to Swaziland in 1975, Desmond Tutu (future Archbishop of Cape Town) became the Bishop of Lesotho in 1976,<sup>51</sup> and James Kauluma in Namibia in 1981.<sup>52</sup> In 1976, Tutu was on the College Council, and when he resigned, he was succeeded by a Black priest, John R. Sereleto.

However, it is said that some of these African leaders were appointed precisely because of their disposition to willingly go with the thinking of White leadership.<sup>53</sup> These developments were part of the broader phenomenon, affirmation of Black Consciousness and Black identity. In this respect, to some degree, the sending of Black students into the College designated for White students seemed to affirm the contribution that Black people would make in the Church.

## A review of theological education

### Towards a more racially integrated St. Paul’s College

In the meantime, the Anglican Church started to review the manner in which it trained ordinands. In this regard, the status of St. Paul’s College came into special focus. On 2 March 1976, Archbishop Bill Burnett wrote to Kenneth Oram, the Bishop of Grahamstown, and noted that “the future of our colleges is being considered by a Commission at present, and the relationship between St. Paul’s College and other colleges is in question. The relationship of the College and Rhodes has also to be decided”.<sup>54</sup> Traditionally, the relationship with Rhodes University had always been an important dimension of the existence of St. Paul’s College. Meanwhile, in his letter of 20 April 1976 to Archbishop Burnett, Suggit expressed his desire for a multiracial college. He asserted:

<sup>50</sup> Lee, *Compromise and Courage*, p. 320.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 321.

<sup>53</sup> L. Pato, quoting R. Symon and H. Taylor, “Becoming an African Church”, In: F. England and T. Paterson (eds.), *Bounty in Bondage*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1989, pp. 172-173.

<sup>54</sup> See Letter, Burnett to Oram, 2 March 1976, AB 1363, S 21 (file 8), Archbishop of Cape Town, 1976-78, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

The idea is undoubtedly the establishment of a multi-racial seminary of one kind or another. As long as the ministers of the same are trained separately, our attempts to express our true unity in Christ are going to be found wanting *ab initio*. I am therefore delighted that there are 2 Coloured men at St. Paul's this term: but this is only a token of what our common training should be. I have no doubt that this should be the Church's aim.<sup>55</sup>

Suggit, as well as the Bishops, recognised the great sense of urgency of establishing one multiracial college. Unless that was done, people would still accuse the Church of applying apartheid within its own structures. It was a criticism that affected the Church at its very core.

Nonetheless, that the issue regarding the future of the College had been raised at the Episcopal Synod in Lesotho in 1976, not only suggests the seriousness, but also the urgency with which the Church considered the matter. Meanwhile, Ivan Weiss wrote to Buchanan on 15 June 1976 that the Church:

[g]ave thought to the future of St. Paul's [but then it] came to the conclusion that it would be unwise at this stage to attempt to become more closely related to Rhodes University. I believe the Bishops were more concerned to seek to integrate St. Paul's racially, if possible. For the present, therefore, it does not seem that plans for closer relationship with Rhodes can be pursued.<sup>56</sup>

It would appear that at that stage the Bishops were not satisfied with partial racial integration. They envisaged full racial integration, with Black students taking their place alongside their fellow White and "Coloured" students. However, it would seem that the Bishops were cautious. They needed to 'test the waters' by sending "Coloured" students first, before sending Black students. The possible questions raised would have been: Will Black students be acceptable to both White and "Coloured" students? The caution suggests the extent to which apartheid mentality had a strong hold on the Church and society. Thus, writing to Buchanan on 15 July 1976, Archbishop Burnett said:

The Bishops are anxious to know whether the past students of St. Paul's and present students would be happy to have St. Paul's fully integrated if that is possible. I hope you will be able to canvas opinion and let me know fairly soon what the result is. The Bishops need to know reasonably soon how the theological colleges respond, because we must make plans for our ordinands next year. I may say that both St. Bede's and St. Peter's have voted strongly for as full integration as possible.<sup>57</sup>

The Bishops envisaged the possibility of resentment or perhaps even resistance from White or "Coloured" students with regard to African ordinands joining the College. The feelings or opinions of some of the former students could not be ignored on this issue. These were important precisely because some of their parishes or as individuals were benefactors of the College. Similarly, the views of then current students were important to ensure that Black students would feel "welcome". The hesitation on the part

55 See Letter, Suggit to Burnett, 20 April 1976, AB 1363, S 21 (file 8), Archbishop of Cape Town, 1976-78, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

56 See Letter, Weiss to Buchanan, 15 June 1976, AB 1363, S 21 (file 8), Archbishop of Cape Town, 1976-78, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

57 See Letter, Burnett to Buchanan, 15 July 1976, AB 1363, S 21 (file 8), Archbishop of Cape Town, 1976-78, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

of the Bishops suggests that even though they had the power to make certain important decisions, it was nonetheless the students themselves who also had a voice on such an important matter.

The pressure for integration mounted. It came from inside, as well as outside the Anglican Church. The Anglican Church started looking at itself more critically as some within its ranks began to raise questions as to why it continued to train students along racial lines while other colleges such as Fedsem were racially integrated, albeit on government permits. For instance, in his acceptance letter of 6 October 1976 to be a Black member of the St. Paul's College Council to Kenneth Oram, the Bishop of Grahamstown, James Gawe expressed his wish: "My prayer is one day we shall have one theological college of all races as it is in other countries."<sup>58</sup> Gawe's "prayerful wish" was in fact a covert criticism of the Church that seemed to perpetuate apartheid structures in its ranks. Was the Anglican Church deliberately perpetuating racial segregation in its ranks? Was it also not a waste of resources to operate three colleges along racial lines? The Church was doing some soul searching.

Meanwhile, the Provincial Synod in November 1976 passed a resolution urging the Archbishop to engage the government to allow Anglican Diocesan schools to open the schools to Black pupils, a request which was granted in 1977. For some time, the issue had been part of the hot debate on resolutions on apartheid in the Provincial Synod. The Church was challenged for its failure to admit Black children into its Diocesan Schools. "If you really believe what you are saying why don't you open your schools to coloured and black pupils" came the retort from successive cabinet ministers.<sup>59</sup> In the meantime, the Roman Catholics defied the government. They just went ahead to admit Black children into their White schools.<sup>60</sup>

It is very clear that vigorous debates on this issue were taking place in the White circles in the Church. It is rare that one gets an insider's view in the public domain as to what White people thought about their relationship with Black people. In his Warden Advent letter in 1977, Buchanan reported on the Old Pauline's Union, which had been held in Johannesburg that year. Buchanan said that he had been touched by a criticism that had been made by a member of the Union on race relations. He stated:

I was criticised by one old Pauline after the Johannesburg meeting for not emphasising the need, as we meet the Eighties, for those of us of different colour to overcome our Whiteness or Blackness and find each other in Christ. It is a legitimate criticism and well founded. The final judgement on the church in this country will be the extent to which we can find a near identity and love for each other away from our Whiteness or Blackness and past the barriers made by man which forces us into theological and ecclesiastical laagers, there to seek to defend identity which Christ came to break down and returns to us as we attempt to be obedient to him.<sup>61</sup>

58 See Letter, Gawe to Oram, 6 October 1976, AB 1363, S 21 (file 8), Archbishop of Cape Town, 1976-78, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

59 Clarke, *Anglicans Against Apartheid*, pp. 322-323.

60 *Ibid.*, p. 322.

61 Warden's Advent Letter, 1977, AB 1363, S 21 (file 8), Archbishop of Cape Town, 1976-78, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

In other words, for this old Pauline, as Buchanan also concurred, in the 1980s the Church and its structures such as St. Paul's College were moving too slowly in its transformation. Its structures mirrored that of the apartheid society. It is against this background that we must now turn to another episode in the history of St. Paul's College, the entry of the second group of Black students from Cape Town.

## “Rebellious” Black Cape Town ordinands

In 1977, the College turned 75.<sup>62</sup> It had 54 students. The same year, Philip Le Feuvre (future Bishop of St. Mark, the Evangelist) joined the staff. Prior to coming to St. Paul's College, Le Feuvre had been Chaplain at the University of Cape Town, where he said he had experienced racial issues at first hand.<sup>63</sup> Le Feuvre was an avowed conservative Evangelical. He was almost on the opposite stream of Anglo-Catholic Churchmanship and spirituality of Buchanan and Carl Garner and Ted Celitz. Yet both Buchanan and Le Feuvre were Charismatics.

The year also saw the second group of Black students<sup>64</sup> entering the College. Amongst them were Garth Counsell (future Suffragan Bishop of Cape Town), Raphael Hess (future Bishop of Saldhana Bay) and Courtney Sampson.<sup>65</sup> According to Speckman, this group of students had been very much influenced by the spirit of Black Consciousness,<sup>66</sup> which soon would start affecting the life of the College.

## The government residence permit

According to these Cape Town students, the major challenge that they immediately faced at St. Paul's College was the apartheid Group Areas Act requirement of a government residence permit. For instance, Courtney Sampson expressed his sentiments as follows:

One of the shocking things I discovered when I got there was that the church had applied for a permit. That angered me. It didn't make any sense to me for the church to apply to the government for a permit for a school that belonged to it ... It was really acquiescing and participating in the apartheid system. In the Common Room, I demanded that the permit should be withdrawn. I don't think many students knew what I was talking about. I don't think I had a lot of support from even Black students. There was a deafening silence ... It seemed to me that people had already taken a position that they thought it was unnecessary stirring ... One had the fire of youth on one's side. Philip Le Feuvre seemed to have spoken something in favour of that.<sup>67</sup>

For Sampson, the Church's action evoked anger and provoked shock. Why had the Church acquiesced in apartheid? Why had the Church legitimised racial segregation? Sampson recalled that he had raised this argument and concern during the Common Room discussions. In his view, the issues that

<sup>62</sup> Warden's Advent Letter, 1977, AB 2568, A 3, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>63</sup> Interview with Philip Le Feuvre, 5 March 2012, Somerset West.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>65</sup> Interview with Courtney Sampson, 11 November 2014, Stellenbosch.

<sup>66</sup> Interview with McGlory Speckman, 9 July 2014, Stellenbosch.

<sup>67</sup> Interview with Courtney Sampson, 11 November 2014, Stellenbosch.

he had raised shocked and disturbed other students, as these immediately affected White and Black relationships in the College. These were uncomfortable issues. They directly impinged on personal relations in the College. On the other hand, Counsell recollected that while in Cape Town, as the students were preparing to go to Grahamstown, "it had transpired ... that a government permit had been applied for them by the College and the authorities, but then the students had not been informed about this". "It was an issue that they had discussed while driving to Grahamstown."<sup>68</sup>

Andrew Wyngaardt, another student in the years 1980 to 1982, gave his own testimony. He stated that the students had the impression that somehow a permit had been applied for them "to subscribe to the standards of the apartheid regime in our own country". He recalled that they were not officially told that they were studying under a permit "because [they were] not of the right complexion".<sup>69</sup> Wyngaardt concluded noting that the College's application for a permit "wasn't well accepted by the students" as they "felt that they were being tolerated".<sup>70</sup>

Speaking to the author in 2014, Raphael Hess pointed out that the issue of the government permit was not so clear in his memory. However, he said that he would give what he called "a reflective interpretation" of what the situation was like. He stated that since "the students understood that no permit had been applied for Oswald Swarts and Fred Hendricks and so too it had not been applied for [them]".<sup>71</sup> "[He thought] that while in Cape Town Archbishop Bill Burnett might have spoken about it" but then he had said that they had to go ahead, saying, 'This is the time that we put our money where our mouth is, to be really prophetic'.<sup>72</sup> In other words, for Hess, he (and some other Black students) had the impression that the Church leadership had taken a prophetic role to defy the government on this issue. Hess recounted:

We were politically aware and said no permit for us ... We are not going to come here under a permit ... We would rather stay here under civil disobedience ... The argument would have been "let us be compliant, play it safe and whatever the government ..."<sup>73</sup>

According to Hess, it was precisely because the Cape Town ordinances had been given the impression that they were going to study without a permit that on their way to Grahamstown they discussed how living in the White residential area without a government permit could affect them. Their conversations on the way to Grahamstown appeared to reflect some dis-ease and some fear. Hess indicates that they raised questions such as: "What are we going to do if they are going to arrest us in the College? What are we going to do when they arrest us, with a headline in the newspaper?"<sup>74</sup>

Counsell recalled: "[O]n their arrival, with Fred Hendricks who had been there since the previous year, Sampson, Raphael Hess were upset, and then confronted Fr. Buchanan on the door-step of his house

68 Interview with Garth Counsell, 20 March 2014, Zonnebloem.

69 Interview with Andrew Wyngaardt, 24 March 2014, Kraaifontein.

70 *Ibid.*

71 Interview with Raphael Hess, 27 March 2014, Malmesbury.

72 *Ibid.*

73 *Ibid.*

74 *Ibid.*

on the issue of the permit ... [They asked him why] [the college had] applied for a government permit for them." Counsell said he could "almost remember the words which were said to him":

You are Father Buchanan, we want to know what the story is about us being here under a permit ... because as we have been driving from Cape Town to Grahamstown, that was the major conversation in the car about this permit issue and how we were going to handle it. So it was people like my contemporaries then – now Fr. Courtney Sampson, myself, Raphael Hess, now Bishop of Saldhana Bay, ja and we had Fr. Fred Hendricks who was already there for a year. Duncan Buchanan's response to that was surprise ... and so, he sort of rode the unexpected challenge; and eventually he got us into his house and we talked and then things went off from there. Henceforth, Buchanan would always refer to Cape Town students who challenged him on the issue of the permit as "rebellious".<sup>75</sup>

It would appear that the "challenge" caused Buchanan much pain to the extent that, according to Counsell, "[Buchanan] kept on referreing to the story all the time [they were in the College]" about "the rebellious Cape Town students who had challenged him on the issue of the permit". Counsell concluded that "the issue regarding the permit ... was to play itself out throughout during [their time] of study [1977-79]". As Counsel noted, the issue of the permits symbolised a broader struggle in the life of the students in apartheid South Africa. This is how Counsell put it:

We knew from the outset that our being there was simply not going to be the issue of our training [but] we were always confronted by the issue of the political realities of South Africa ... We were almost unnatural community within the walls of St. Pauls or the perimeter of the campus, there were challenges within the community. We were striving, and people were living what was meant to be a normal community life in an abnormal society ... The moment you stepped out of the door of the College you confronted all the political realities of South Africa.<sup>76</sup>

Counsell asserted that their objection to the permit was on the principle that they did not want to legitimise apartheid by raising them to the status of "honorary Whites".<sup>77</sup> In other words, for Counsell, the issue of permit bordered on the students' dignity. Accepting to live at St. Paul's College under a permit implied collaborating with government. This issue, so Counsell asserted, was to overshadow their time in the College.<sup>78</sup> Counsell also recalled, however, that he saw his (and others) being at St. Paul's College as part of the Church's programme of renewing the spirit within the Church.<sup>79</sup>

## White culture in the College

Alongside the struggle against government permits, the students also had to contend with the issue of White culture in the College. For instance, Sampson asserted:

Everything was White. I was beginning to ask the question because at that time you could only study at an institution designated for White people with a permit. The question was: Was it integration or was it assimilation? For those of us who walked into that environment, we Blacks, saw that all members of

<sup>75</sup> Interview with Garth Counsell, 20 March 2014, Zonnebloem.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*

staff were White; the Warden is White, the majority of students are White, the church was dominated by Whites. And there was obviously a need for us to be heard if there was going to be real integration. We had to battle White hegemony, and ideology, and theologically, so as not to be assimilated.<sup>80</sup>

Sampson raised critical issues: Were Black students being assimilated into White culture? What attempts were being made in the College to facilitate the integration of White and Black cultures? Did the staff and the Church leadership see it as a necessity? The questions that Sampson raises suggest the power implications of White culture and its impact on Black students. For some Black students, such as Sampson, White culture alienated him from integration into the College body. This issue must be put in a broader context.

We noted in Chapter 2, Hill arguing that White people seemed to believe that the only way of being “human” was by embracing European civilisation, that it was the best for Black people and that the latter needed to embrace it. In this respect, quite from a different perspective, Sampson seems to be raising a similar issue. It is quite possible that in the 1970s these issues had never been thought through by the Church leadership when they decided to initiate racial integration in the College. Or it is possible that it never occurred to them that these issues would emerge? An aspect of this issue would also rear its head in 1983 in the form of the necessity for the College to use African languages besides English. To a greater extent, the questions that students like Sampson were raising reflected the impact of the ferment of Black Consciousness and Black identity in the aftermath of the Soweto Rising and the death of Steve Biko. It is this story to which now I turn the attention of the reader.

## The Soweto Uprising and Biko’s death

De Gruchy has highlighted the impact of the Soweto Uprising in numerous ways and on various levels on the South African political landscape.<sup>81</sup> As a symbol of Black power, resistance to and defiance of apartheid, it turned out to be a milestone that charted a new way in which the government started to deal with Black people.<sup>82</sup> On the other hand, for Denis and Duncan, the Soweto Uprising became a watershed moment in the history of South Africa. In the aftermath of this episode, political mobilisation heightened; clergy and adult Christians from across all denominations, which had remained somewhat docile, joined the youth movement in increasing numbers. Prayer meetings and funerals became platforms for political mobilisation. In this context, the “leadership began to challenge the regime openly”.<sup>83</sup> The regime tried to meet this challenge with increasing brutality. This is how Clarke puts it:

We are already living in the midst of undeclared war ... There is a huge military build-up in the “operational area” ... all White young men have to do military service ... The military and economic strength of this country looks sickeningly formidable ... We must expect sophisticated forms of guerrilla war will develop [although] military people are telling the Government and the public that while they will not be defeated by the “terrorists” they cannot win that kind of war.<sup>84</sup>

80 Interview with Courtney Sampson, 11 November 2014, Stellenbosch.

81 De Gruchy, J. *The Church Struggle in South Africa*. Grand Rapids, M.I.: William Eerdmans, 1979, pp. 169-177.

82 *Ibid.*

83 Denis and Duncan, *The Native School that Caused all the Trouble*, p. 83.

84 Clarke, *Anglicans Against Apartheid*, p. 349.

This formed the context in which St. Paul's College was going through critical developments which were to determine its identity and shaped its role for the next decade and a half. Brian Germond (future Bishop of Johannesburg) was a student in the years 1974-76, a Senior Student in 1976, and was also a member of the College Council. This author put to him the following questions: How did St. Paul's respond to the Soweto Uprising? Did it affect the College? He reminisced:

I think [the Soweto Uprising] was a focus of a lot of prayer. I think it was a focus of great deal of discussion, ... I can't remember us discussing in the Common Room ... I don't recall us doing anything that I can remember ..., I think there was a lot of sympathy ... The White society didn't know what was really happening as the society was totally segregated and newspaper were heavily censored ... I knew quite a lot from my brother, a medical doctor, who was working at Baragwaneth hospital. I remember ... [he would] phone me, and each time he did so he was in tears [saying that] almost three people had died on the table whilst [he] was operating ... [It] didn't touch their lives; what they were told was that the communists were stirring up the nice people of Soweto. My brother left the country after that.<sup>85</sup>

Germond's uncertain, indecisive or cautious answer does not help much, except to highlight the fact that his reminiscences of the Uprising did not in any meaningful way impact on the College. The College did not seriously engage with the issues relating to the Uprising. At the most, the College sympathised with the plight of Black people. Germond's recollections seem to suggest that the White students viewed the Uprising as just one amongst Black people's problems. The attitude shows the extent to which the College and, by extension, the White community were far removed from the experiences of the Black community.

It is striking that the "Minutes of the College Council", the governing body of the College, are conspicuously silent on the issue of the Soweto Uprising in 1976, as well as the death of Steve Biko in 1977, episodes whose ramifications spread world over.<sup>86</sup> The same is true of the College's magazine, *Doulos*, which would usually reflect or comment on socio-political issues. Instead, what dominates the Minutes was the issue of a possible collaboration in theological training with Rhodes University. Asked to comment why the minutes of the College Council in the period 1976 to 1977 do not reflect these events that the College could have been aware of, Germond responded in this manner:

My impression is uninformed. [It is] based on one year that I served on the College Council as a Senior Student, and then a couple of subsequent meetings when I went down to the College Council for meetings, sometimes informal meetings ... It was really kind of business as usual ... They talked the curriculum, they talked student numbers, they talked enrolment, they talked problems of the College, they talked finances. The whole meeting seemed to focus on those narrow issues rather than broader issues ... how we respond to geo-political issues in the country? There was very little discussion of any sort [on that score] I can recall.<sup>87</sup>

Germond's recollection that the College Council was disengaged from the political realm is significant. The College Council ignored discussing the issue of Soweto Uprising precisely because the members

<sup>85</sup> Interview with Brian Germond, 6 January 2014, Melville, Johannesburg.

<sup>86</sup> St. Paul's Theological College Council Minutes, AB 2568, B 1-B 5, 1952-1992, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>87</sup> Interview with Brian Germond, 6 January 2015, Melville, Johannesburg.

knew almost nothing about it; hence, they were unaffected. Instead, they concentrated on the issues of finance and others, which seemed to them more urgent. It is also very significant that while Germond knew a lot more from his brother, Colin Germond, it would appear that Brian Germond did not share the information with the rest of the College.

Draper recalled the significance of the era and how it affected him. He recalled that just like the Soweto Uprising of 1976, Biko's death polarised the College, "leading some becoming more entrenched in their conservative views while others more socially engaging".<sup>88</sup> Naidoo recalled some of his experiences as follows: "I was really affected by it since most of the [students] were going around hinting that Steve Biko asked for it ... I took a stand ..."<sup>89</sup> Underlying this thinking lay the idea that the government was justified in killing Biko since he was the trouble maker. Counsell, however, recalled:

When the death of Biko was announced it rippled through the college; it impacted on the Black students more specifically and not exclusively ... His death was reflected in worship [and] ... it was the subject of conversations.<sup>90</sup>

Counsell went on to explain the students' struggles against the permit in the context of Biko's death. He recalled that Biko's death tried to bring into focus and certainly made some, if not all in the College community, become more aware of their activism.<sup>91</sup> Counsell suggested that some of the Black students' objection to the study permit in the College was part of the wider struggle fuelled in the context of the death of Biko.<sup>92</sup> Similarly, Naidoo went on to state: "White students didn't want to be reminded all the time, or for discrimination in the country to be mentioned. They felt that it was our hobby horse each time we mentioned issues."<sup>93</sup> For Naidoo, however, in that context, it was his sermon on Romans 13 in Chapel that provoked strong response from some White students. He said:

[The sermon] was based on Rom.13, where the Christians are called to respect the government. I clearly remember saying that one needs to be careful that we do not interpret this literally, and I asked questions about morality. Is it still binding on us to show respect when a government is oppressive and violently silences people who dare challenge them, like the death of Steve Biko, 1977. Wow!<sup>94</sup>

During apartheid, Romans 13 was the favourite text cited by the supporters of apartheid to legitimise the government. In his sermon, by referring to the killing of Biko by the apartheid state, Naidoo was trying to question the moral legitimacy of the apartheid government. He tried to emasculate it of its moral power. Naidoo portrayed the consequences of the sermon as dramatic:

I had the largest sermon crit. We had some Afrikaans students with us and many Whites attended the sermon crit. They did not like what I said in the sermon and accused me of picking on them.

<sup>88</sup> Interview with Jonathan Draper, 6 March 2014, Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg.

<sup>89</sup> Response to a Questionnaire, 5 February 2016.

<sup>90</sup> Interview with Garth Counsell, 20 March 2014, Zonnebloem.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>93</sup> Response to a Questionnaire, 5 February 2016.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*

However, some of their wives were sympathetic and told me that the fact that so many turned up at the crit shows that they listened. I would like to meet those students today and ask them if they are showing respect to the ANC government. I'm sure many if not all would be preaching the sermon I preached so many years ago. The death of Steve Biko was also another issue. After that I said to the students at a common room meeting that I do not want to talk to any of the whites in college, students and staff.<sup>95</sup>

This quotation seems to suggest that sometimes wives were more open to engaging with political issues than even their husbands. It is significant that Naidoo's sermon led to dissension between him and some of the students, probably because the sermon did not make them feel comfortable. Here was a Black man who dared to challenge the moral legitimacy of the White government to which White students, and perhaps also some members of staff, owed loyalty and allegiance.

The reaction of these White students shows the extent to which the ideology of apartheid was part of their psyche. The staff's response to Naidoo was more interesting. Naidoo's recalled that as a result of this the members of staff wrote a bad Assessment Report on him to his Bishop, threatening that unless he changed he would not be ordained as a priest.<sup>96</sup> He recalled: "This affected my relation with the staff and a few felt that I was a rebel, so much so that the report the warden issued at the end of the year was a negative one calling on my Bishop to remove me from college because they didn't think I was called to the ordained ministry."<sup>97</sup>

To try to grasp something of the significant role that the Assessment Reports played in the life of the students and the College (and by extension Bishops) it is necessary that we use Michel Foucault's lens of power. In Foucauldian terms, "assessment" reports can be viewed as "instruments of surveillance".<sup>98</sup> In this respect, the keeping of records is a means of control, which gives power to those in authority. Citing Foucault, Sharif Shawki asserts: "Just as surveillance is a key component to the establishment of infinite examination, so too is documentation. Documentation puts into writing what surveillance has discovered and, as a result, the individual is captured onto a fixed page."<sup>99</sup>

In this respect, Foucault saw "'a power of writing' [as] [constituting] ... [a] central part in the mechanisms of power ... surveillance worked constantly to discover all pertinent information concerning the individual and the documentation of the findings guaranteed that the knowledge would be readily available for those who had access to it".<sup>100</sup> In this regard, underlying the Assessment Reports lay the episcopal power of control through the College staff. The staff wrote their report on the basis of their very close observation of the student's behaviour, conduct, academic performance, and participation in the life of the College.

<sup>95</sup> Response to a Questionnaire, 5 February 2016.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>98</sup> Sharif Shawki, [http://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1022&context=socanth\\_honproj](http://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1022&context=socanth_honproj) [accessed 12 September 2016].

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*

The reports were means through which the authorities kept a very close eye on the conduct and behaviour of the students. They were also means of controlling the behaviour of students. It was a system of rewards and punishment. Good conduct, viewed as an uncritical attitude towards the authorities in Church (and state) would ensure a good report, opening the door for ordination. The opposite is also true: a critical attitude towards authorities, or 'bad behaviour', could lead to a bad report, which then could close the door for ordination. Some students lived in fear of these "assessments", and were very anxious, and indeed were sometimes angry each time the round came.<sup>101</sup> It ought to be put on record that when this author was a student in the years 1984 to 1987, to their credit, however, the members of staff also gave an opportunity to a student to submit a "self-assessment" report of his/her personality and conduct. It would seem this was an attempt to get the students' views heard as well.<sup>102</sup> Very few Bishops could completely ignore the report from the College (members of staff) when time came to make a decision on ordination.

## The impact of the Soweto Uprising

On the other hand, Draper recalled his experience in the context in which the Soweto Uprising impacted on him. He said that it was during his and Tim Grey's visit as exchange students to the Kweekskool, the Theological Faculty in Stellenbosch, that they experienced the episode. He recalled that they were hosted by a very prominent and devout Afrikaner Mathematics academic. Draper said that it was while [they] were there that he read in the newspapers about the Soweto Uprising on June 16th. It also happened at the time when the Dutch Reformed Synod met and where they witnessed the anger of some Afrikaners.<sup>103</sup>

Draper recalled that there was a big meeting of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches that the brother of the President, Mr. Vorster, was addressing. According to Draper, a full assembly of the Seminary discussed what to do about the Soweto Uprising. Some were saying: "We must take up our arms and fight the communists", while others were saying: "No, this is a catastrophe. We must reach out ...".<sup>104</sup> It was during that time when the Dutch Reformed Church was suspended from World Alliance of Reformed Churches for refusing to condemn apartheid.<sup>105</sup> According to Naidoo, however, it was at this time that the Dutch Reformed Kweekskool refused to send its students to St. Paul's College on an exchange programme as the College had now become multiracial.<sup>106</sup> In other words, the Dutch Reformed Kweekskool found the multiracial character of St. Paul's as an obstacle to their relationship with the College.

101 Personal reminiscences, 1984-1987.

102 *Ibid.*

103 Interview with Jonathan Draper, 6 March 2014, Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg.

104 *Ibid.*

105 *Ibid.*

106 Response to a Questionnaire, 5 February 2016.

## Anglican Students Federation

Draper, however, recalled that in his case the significance of the Soweto Rising was highlighted in the context of the Anglican Students' Federation meeting at Kwa-Nzimela, Zululand. He said he remembered the rage and hurt of Black Anglicans in the aftermath of Buthelezi's *impi* who had beaten up the students at the University of Zululand. The Anglican Students Federation (ASF) had invited Buthelezi and Graham Mackintosh to address the ASF and in his view "it was almost a revolution". For Draper, one of the high points during this time was the Charismatic Renewal experience. This is how he related the rest of the story:

White Anglicans were swept away with the Charismatic Movement ... [We experienced] vibrant worship ... [which] was very much liberating from sort of very formal Anglicanism ... [There was a] feeling that [we] were somehow special ... It was very enthusiastic worship, a sort of revival, Zulu *isivuselelo* ... There was excitement and a feeling that we were special to be a non-racial body in the context where other organisations had split over along racial lines ... and [he] got elected to be the ASF regional coordinator for the Eastern Cape ... When I got back to College, [I] visited Fort Hare. There was sort of some resistance as some students suspected that I was an informer, a member of the Security Police ... They thought I was there [somehow] to take over [leadership].<sup>107</sup>

The newspaper covered the ASF conference that Draper, Le Feuvre and others attended at Kwa-Nzimela. Reporting that event, it said: "The tensions arising out of the Soweto riots and the disturbances on at least two university campuses were not far below surface at the year's Anglican Student's Federation Conference which was held at Kwa-Nzimela, Zululand, at the beginning of July in 1977." The reporter went on to report on how they grappled with some of the issues:

"Accept one another, as Christ has accepted you, to the Glory of God" – all the more significant and relevant to relationships in our country and in the Church ... for many, the conference did take them beyond the confrontation stage to a realistic assessment of things as they are in South Africa, and of the challenge this poses to those who claim to be redeemed in Christ to work out the minutiae of their relationships one with another. What do you do when you meet a brother in Christ who believes in apartheid? How do you resolve the tensions between a young Christian who believes that he is right to defend our borders and another who is considering taking up arms on the other side?<sup>108</sup>

The conference raised the most critical issue that was never faced courageously by Anglicans: How White and Black Anglicans, belonging to the same Church, were on the opposing ends of the ideological divide of apartheid – a situation where the majority of White Anglicans supported apartheid while the majority of Blacks opposed it. This issue demonstrated division in the Anglican Church.

One can also conclude that the fact that the majority of White Anglicans supported apartheid suggests that allegiance to the ideology of apartheid proved more powerful than their allegiance to Christ. Why? It is precisely because for White people apartheid meant socio-economic and political privileges. Yet, some of them actually believed that Christ was on their side.

<sup>107</sup> Interview with Jonathan Draper, 6 March 2014, Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg.

<sup>108</sup> Logbook, AB 2568, C 1.11, 1976-86, St. Paul's Theological College, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

Other students, however, notably Counsell and Draper, recalled that it was their experience of the trial of McGlory Speckman (a close friend of Biko), which also made them even more aware of the critical political situation and the injustices that Black people suffered under apartheid.<sup>109</sup> Speckman confirmed this episode in his life.<sup>110</sup> In contrast to the isolated and sporadic experiences of Biko's death as related by former students of St. Paul's, Worsnip recalled that Rhodes University was in conflagration. There was widespread protest, even amongst the most uninvolved students.<sup>111</sup>

## The "Nomads" – The provincial youth initiative

The Soweto Rising, subsequently followed by Biko's death, formed the context in which the Anglican Church started to renew its youth programmes. Communities and churches seemed to have recognised the vigour of the youths and the creative role that they could now play in society. The youth became at the centre of its programmes.

Draper recalled that in 1977 the Anglican Church took initiative to introduce programmes. These started to transform its internal life, of which the youth came to take the centre stage. One of these programmes was the "Nomads".<sup>112</sup> Lee noted that the Nomads, a national provincial programme, was launched in 1977 at Christ Church in Addington in Durban.<sup>113</sup> According to Draper, "the province launched a non-racial youth leadership training programme for youth, called 'Nomads', out of which fine leaders emerged for the future".<sup>114</sup> He recalled that the Anglican Church introduced the Provincial Youth Initiative called "Nomads", where young people, Black and White, partnered. They were asked to give a year of their ministry in a parish in a Diocese.<sup>115</sup> Lee elaborated saying:

The Province launched a non-racial youth leadership training programme for youth called Nomads. They were asked to be available for a cross cultural and cross racial ministry ... the youths were encouraged to give a year of [their] life for mission and ministry in the diocese ... It was a model for a new kind of church ... It was a new vision for the church ... out of which fine leaders emerged for the future.<sup>116</sup>

In his conclusion, Draper noted that in spite of the fact that it was an important programme, in which the full time youth workers went out two by two in non-racial teams. Nevertheless, it was a short-lived experiment, particularly after Phakamile Mabija, one of the Nomads whose partner in the work was a white woman was murdered by the apartheid Security Police. Its significance, so Draper recalled, lay in the fact that "it was a cross-racial/cultural experiment for dioceses".<sup>117</sup> Jacque Williams, a "Coloured"

<sup>109</sup> Interview with Counsell, 20 March 2014, Zonnebloem; Interview with Jonathan Draper, 6 March 2014, Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg.

<sup>110</sup> Interview with McGlory Speckman, 9 July 2014, Stellenbosch.

<sup>111</sup> Informal discussions with Michael Worsnip, 22 April 2015, Cape Town.

<sup>112</sup> Jonathan Draper said the name derived from the nomads as the wanderers in the desert.

<sup>113</sup> Lee, *Compromise and Courage*, p. 341.

<sup>114</sup> Interview with Jonathan Draper, 6 March 2014, Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>116</sup> Lee, *Compromise and Courage*, p. 341.

<sup>117</sup> Interview with Jonathan Draper, 6 March 2014, Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg.

recalled that her diocese, Port Elizabeth, sent her to St. Paul's College in 1977 for a week, and in 1978 for four weeks as part of Nomads' programme – intended to expose her to broader church experience. She recalled that Father John Stubbs, of the Community of the Resurrection was the founder of the Nomads. She would later on in 1979 be sent to the College for training of the ministry of the Church.<sup>118</sup>

It would seem that the Nomads Youth Programme directly affected St. Paul's College. Buchanan informed the Provincial Standing Committee in 1978 thus:

An experiment which we have tried this year has been the on-going training, for three weeks each term, of the so-called "Second Year Nomads". It is early yet to see how successful this has been but it is important that some contacts be established between the Nomads and one of Church institutions. One of the problems we have noticed is that of the Youth work of the Church is being done having the Nomads with us to see whether there is a possibility of an appreciation of the work done by the Students of the College, and vice versa.<sup>119</sup>

The establishment of the Nomads was not only a product of the influence of the youths as a catalyst for change in society. It must also be viewed as a consequence of the ongoing challenge by SPROCAS to the Church since the late 1960s. Yet, the programme must also be seen as not unrelated to the broader trends within the context of the Charismatic Renewal.

## Charismatic spirituality

In Chapter 2, it was noted how St. Paul's College was introduced to the renewal in the 1972 by Burnett and other clergy. In the 1980s, St. Paul's College was in its heyday of the Charismatic Renewal. It affected students in various ways. For Counsell, the stress on the Charismatic spirituality in the College was to be one of the struggles in (some) students' lives as they tried to make sense of their training in the context of their experience of apartheid.<sup>120</sup> He reminisced that pressure was put on the students to conform to the ethos of the college.<sup>121</sup> He particularly recalled his first experience of the College term Assessment. In that meeting, so he recalled, some members of staff interviewed the students about their life in the College. He said that in the interview the issue of the Charismatic experience had been raised, wanting to know if he did or did not speak in tongues.<sup>122</sup> In his words, Counsell recalled some of his experiences thus:

After the interview I was so upset that I started packing my belongings ... and then said to myself: "I am here ... I cannot conform to what others want me to ...". [The experience] [left me] with a feeling decidedly uncomfortable ... The issue so much traumatised [me].<sup>123</sup>

<sup>118</sup> Skype interview with Jacque Williams, 8 February 2018.

<sup>119</sup> Report of St. Paul's College to Provincial Standing Committee, June 1978, AB 1363, S 21 (file 8), Archbishop of Cape Town, St. Paul's Theological College, 1976-78, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>120</sup> Interview with Garth Counsell, 20 March 2014, Zonnebloem.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>122</sup> Interview with Garth Counsell, 20 March 2014, Zonnebloem.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*

Under those circumstances, he reminisced, he had almost resolved that he was leaving the College at which point he felt as if something saying to him: "What on earth are you doing? You are here for a bigger purpose". And I stopped, and started putting my things back.<sup>124</sup>

Counsell was constrained to leave the College, as he believed that he had been 'called' for a special purpose. Equally, he could not leave as he felt that he was accountable to his Bishop, and the Church, who had paid for his training.

Buchanan, writing to Archbishop Burnett on Kenneth Leach's comment on the movement gives insight. On 22 January 1981, Buchanan asserted:

I must say that our experience, both with the students who have been here and also in conducting Missions, is that those people who are the most deeply committed to the renewal movement in this country are very frequently the most blind and escapist in terms of the situation in this country. This does not, in my opinion, invalidate the Renewal in any way at all. It simply means that in this country at least, we have to anchor the Charismatic Renewal in a very firm and solid spirituality ... It does occur to me that what is necessary in this country and certainly what we try to give in this College is a very solid, reliable spirituality which derives both from the excitement and the experience in the Holy Spirit and, at the same time, also draws from the rich heritage of the Fathers and the Spiritual Masters through the ages.<sup>125</sup>

As it was noted in the previous chapter, it is claimed that Burnett was suspicious of Liberation Theology. To some people the Charismatic Renewal seemed to be a flight from the reality of engaging with the difficult issues of apartheid. Some students of St. Paul College subscribed to this view. In recalling his experience of the spirituality and those who had gone through it, Counsell recalled that the Charismatics gave the impression that being "in the spirit" the realities of apartheid would blur.<sup>126</sup> In his view there was an emphasis on the spirituality of being freed in the spiritual sense.<sup>127</sup> He recalled that the spiritual renewal focused on things spiritual.<sup>128</sup> This form of spirituality, he asserted, caused some difficulty for him (and others) who had "come from the background of the struggles and oppression of apartheid ..." He described the rest of his experiences thus:

I always had [some] difficulty with one of the choruses of the Renewal Movement ... in [the] words something like "Turn your eyes upon Jesus and the things of the world will grow strangely dim" ... Passages like, "in Christ there is no Jew or Gentile were often banded around". [To me, perhaps others as well, this implied that] the things of apartheid will become irrelevant ... [This] was not an easy thing to get around theologically; and so in that sense [there would be tension in the] Common Room [over] the issues of the day ... and that was reflected on the manner in which we interacted in the college ... [There was a] desire to be a family ... that Christ [had] made us one; and that since we have been made one we must live together, and Gal. 3 was banded around ... but we kept saying there are [also] part of exercises that we must live through.<sup>129</sup>

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>125</sup> See Letter from Buchanan to Burnett, 22 January 1981, AB 1363, S 21 (file 10), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, 1980-82, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>126</sup> Interview with Garth Counsell, 20 March 2014, Zonnebloem.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*

Counsell's experience with regard to the spirituality of the Charismatic Renewal seems to be supported by Bob Clarke's observations,<sup>130</sup> insights and analysis of the movement. Commenting on this phenomenon, Clarke said that "this popular Chorus used to set a tone for many in the Renewal Conference and at a Charismatic worship services". He asserted: "It reflected the prevailing tendency of the Charismatic Renewal to evade Christian responsibility for witness regarding social and political issues."<sup>131</sup>

## Struggles over symbols and icons of apartheid

Before Black ordinands had joined the College in 1976, the College had always observed apartheid holidays. This started to become an issue from 1977. Counsell recalled that, as Republic Day on 31 May "was approaching, there was expectation from some of the White students that the day would be observed as a public holiday while Black students insisted that it be treated like an ordinary day with lectures ... or else they should wear their black cassocks as a silent witness of protest in the perimeters of the college grounds".<sup>132</sup> According to Counsell, however, during the Common Room meeting, there was heated debate and conflict where "[the situation] blew up".<sup>133</sup> Counsell said that thereafter, some Black students stood in their black cassocks in silent protest in the grounds of the College.<sup>134</sup>

Courtney Sampson gave a similar testimony. However, he went further to portray the confrontational nature of the episode. He recalled that the College had agreed in the Common Room with the Warden that on the Republic day, prayers in the chapel would not focus on the political significance of the day. According to Sampson, however, the agreement was not kept, an act which he said "provoked the Black students to march out except for him who stayed as an act of rebellion "as a reminder of [their] discomfort".<sup>135</sup> Sampson went further to state that after the service, he then went to confront Buchanan in the chapel and said to him: "This proves again that you White people can't be trusted, and the Warden cried."<sup>136</sup> In trying to recollect the events, Counsell seemed to think that Black students' pressure on the College (staff) was such that no lectures were held that day.<sup>137</sup>

Draper recalled his experience of the fury of some Black students at his suggestion for the day, however. In his own words, he said that on that occasion "what seemed to him was an innocent thing ... thinking that he was on the side of the saints and angels", he suggested that [the College] observe the apartheid Republic Day in "fasting and praying".<sup>138</sup> His suggestion, so Draper recalled, "provoked the ire of Courtney Sampson and other Black students [since for them] the day was a symbol of oppression".<sup>139</sup>

<sup>130</sup> Clarke, *Anglicans Against Apartheid*, p. 308.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>132</sup> Interview with Garth Counsell, 20 March 2014, Zonnebloem.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>135</sup> Interview with Courtney Sampson, 11 November 2014, Stellenbosch.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>137</sup> Interview with Garth Counsell, 20 March 2014, Zonnebloem.

<sup>138</sup> Interview with Jonathan Draper, 6 March 2014, Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*

Even though Draper possibly had the right intentions, his suggestions could have been construed by some Black students as a way in which he sought to avoid dealing with the difficult issues of apartheid. Thus, during apartheid, national symbols became a divisive issue. This was precisely because these represented conflicting meanings, messages and values to different racial groups. In his thinking and perception, however, Draper could have represented many other like-minded White students at the time. In their view, for these students, confronting apartheid required “fasting and prayer”, the spiritual ‘weapon’ that the Christians had at their disposal.

For some Black students, however, such an approach was not helpful at all to change the apartheid system. In their view, these students argued that changing the apartheid system required engaging with its structures. Apparently, they saw their protest in silence while in black cassocks as part of this. Although symbolic, the act drew the attention of the White students to a national symbol that symbolised their oppression and robbed them of their human dignity.

It would seem that sometimes tension over race issues did not always yield negative consequences. Counsell recalled a personal transforming experience, which he said has stayed with him until today. It related to a heated exchange that he and a few other Black students had with a White student after the heated Common Room debate. He stated:

What I do remember distinctly after the incident is that after the Common Room meeting there was a lot of tension, and then some of us gathered in the room; and one White student came in the room and said how upset he was with the issue [that had been discussed in the Common Room] .... That really raised the temperature. It became quite an issue where guys expressed themselves ... it opened almost confrontation ... but eventually that particular student and I, and my family, grew very closer to each other that we have always been friends till today.<sup>140</sup>

Such experiences were not very isolated. In the 1980s, Common Room debates on the issues of political nature often generated a lot of heat, leading to emotional outbursts, accusations, misunderstandings, misinterpretations of intentions, causing a lot of hurts.<sup>141</sup> What is significant in this case is that eventually moments such as this one seemed to lead some students beyond the hurts caused by apartheid, to a journey of self-discovery and a transforming experience to acknowledge in each other a common humanity, dignity centred on Christ. It was in and through incidents like this that it can be said that St. Paul’s College was practically living through its missionary calling.

## Wives of students

Apartheid experiences of some wives of students entailed another significant dimension in the life of the College. In contrast to the time when Suggit was Warden, women played a much more prominent role in the life of the College during the Wardenship of Buchanan. Teaching wives of students constituted an important aspect of the life of the College where sometimes racial issues were always on the surface.

<sup>140</sup> Interview with Garth Counsell, 20 March 2014, Zonnebloem.

<sup>141</sup> Personal reminiscences, 1984-1987.

In 2014, a former teacher of wives of students in the late 1970s and around 1980s made the following confession regarding her racial prejudice towards Black wives of students at the time:

My lack of interest in them as possible friends or people [that] I should get to know was a result of my own racism and cultural conditioning. I felt ashamed that I couldn't remember any of the Black women who were married to students at St. Paul's. I felt very ashamed when I realised this ... this was one of the effects of apartheid on my time at St. Paul's. I felt to see these student wives as people I could really get to know and that is a terrible thing to admit ... I have moved a long way from that position as the Lord has dealt with me and changed. I am the poorer for missing out on getting to know those people ... I did know the Coloured wives better, but I don't think there were many Black students who had wives on campus. Very often they stayed back at home where they already had jobs or because their children were in the school there; yet another factor that was a result of apartheid.<sup>142</sup>

The attitude of this particular former teacher towards Black students' wives was representative of many others in the College. Nonetheless, one thing that apartheid seemed to have succeeded in doing was to dehumanise people by way of distorting their view of others. In the process, this tended to undermine trust amongst people. Although culture is essentially a blessing, it would, however, seem that the ideology of apartheid distorted some elements of White culture to the extent that at times it served its purposes. There was interplay between the two to the degree that sometimes the line between them seemed to blur.

## Racially integrated college?

In 1977, with the second intake of Black students, the racial demographics of the College started to change. That year, during its 75th anniversary, there was a sense of optimism in the air. In the special newsletter to commemorate the occasion, Archbishop Burnett lauded the College's achievements. Part of his letter read:

And now we thank God for a College full of students and one which is increasingly racially integrated. We all have the stimulation of a humanly-speaking impossible socio-political situation in which we learn to trust in the total adequacy of God. This also is a good time in which to live and be prepared for a ministry in God's church and in God's world. I praise God that our inadequacy in this seventy-fifth year of the existence of St. Paul's College is a movement by the sufficiency of God. I have no doubt that the changes that have taken place between 1945 and 1977 will be more than matched by the changes of the next 25 years.<sup>143</sup>

The achievement of racial integration seemed to usher in a sense of optimism about the future of the Church. The same year, St. Paul's College had 54 students, a number that Buchanan considered "far too many but we can just cope with that number".<sup>144</sup> Burnett had no doubt whatsoever that the increase

<sup>142</sup> Interview with Anonymous, 24 January 2013.

<sup>143</sup> Warden's Letter, AB 2568, A 4, St. Paul's College, 1983-1991, Newsletter published in July 1978, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>144</sup> See Letter, Buchanan to Weiss, 16 May 1978, AB 1363, S 21 (file 8), Archbishop of Cape Town, St. Paul's Theological College, 1976-78, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

in numbers in the College was due to the impact of the Charismatic Renewal in the Church. He was unequivocal in this respect and stated:

That St. Paul is almost wholly is due to what the Lord is doing in the movement of His Holy Spirit as he renewed the life of many people in the Church. Duncan Buchanan told me that at one time or another almost the whole student body came into an experience of the release of the Holy Spirit.<sup>145</sup>

In 2014, commenting on the impact of the Charismatic Renewal on that time, Suggit recalled that some of the people who spoke in tongues seemed to take it for granted that they had been called into the ordained ministry and hence presented themselves for ordination training.<sup>146</sup> Suggit went further to assert that sometimes this did not end with the desired effects in the ministry.<sup>147</sup> Like Burnett, however, Hewitt attributed the increase in numbers in the College to the impact of the Charismatic Renewal. He asserted:

From 1976 the rather meagre numbers at college suddenly increased, and its rather elastic walls bulged. The college had been built to house 36 but when I arrived for my first year in 1977, there were over 50 students and those numbers were maintained well until about 1989 (when numbers began falling back quite severely).<sup>148</sup>

Seemingly, there was also another factor that could explain why numbers were increasing at St. Paul's College. McGlory Speckman suggested that the increase in the number of Black ("Coloured") ordinands who were being sent to St. Paul's College from 1977 on coincided with the period when Fedsem was becoming politically more radical, a development that made some Bishops of the Province feel uncomfortable to send students to Fedsem.<sup>149</sup> Likewise, Denis and Duncan noted that the Anglican Bishops, who were involved and supported the Charismatic Renewal, "expressed disquiet about certain aspects of the curriculum taught at Fedsem, – the emphasis on Black theology and liberation theology, for example, – which they regarded as too secular".<sup>150</sup> Hence, it would seem that the reticence on the part of some Bishops in sending their ordinands to St. Peter's College made them consider St. Paul's College a much better alternative.

## Military service conscription

In apartheid South Africa, military service was one of the core edifices of the apartheid machinery and although it directly affected White male students at St. Paul's College, its ramifications also consequently affected Blacks. In the 1960s, St. Paul's College Prospectus had stipulated that an ordinand could not engage in military service during the time of theological training. In the 1970s, almost every year,

<sup>145</sup> See Letter, Burnett to Hinchliff, 5 March 1976, AB 1363, S 21 (file 8), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, St. Paul's Theological College, 1976-78, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>146</sup> Interview with John Suggit, 19 November 2014, Silvermine Village, Noordhoek.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>148</sup> Hewitt, "A History of St. Paul's College".

<sup>149</sup> Interview with McGlory Speckman, 9 July 2014, Stellenbosch.

<sup>150</sup> Denis and Duncan, *The Native School that Caused all the Trouble*, p. 195.

through the office of the Chaplain General in Pretoria, the government put pressure on the Warden to submit a list of students who would be completing their studies that year to join the military immediately after their training. On 7 July 1977, the Chaplain General wrote to the Warden. Part of his letter read:

Would you be so kind as to provide this office with the particulars of the theological students of the Church of the Province of SA [South Africa] who complete their studies at the end of 1977 on or before 3 Aug 77.<sup>151</sup>

The Warden complied. Just as the Group Areas Act affected Black and “Coloured” students with regard to their residence status at St. Paul’s College, so did national military service on White students. The Anglican Church operated within the government Defence structures. The Archbishop of Cape Town was the Province’s Liaison Officer with the Defence Force and the Province. The Church also had its principal chaplain, J.R. Vogel.<sup>152</sup>

In spite of the moral issue associated with South African Defence, the Anglican Church took a position that its clergy or ordinands needed to fulfil a national duty to the state. A letter by the Bishop of Johannesburg, Timothy Bavin to Worsnip (then his ordinand) shows this clearly. On 3 March 1981, writing to Worsnip, Bavin cited the letter that he had written to the Exemption Board on 2 March 1978 in which he stated to the Board: “I would assure you that there is no question of Mr. [Michael] Worsnip’s trying to avoid his obligations with regard to National Service, and the Church insists that he fulfils his obligations, either before or after ordination.”<sup>153</sup> Similarly, in response to Worsnip, writing on a similar issue on 28 January 1980, Buchanan asserted: “I think I would like to say that as far as I am concerned I would prefer you to do your Army training prior to your coming to the College if for no other reason than because it will make you older than you are at the moment.”<sup>154</sup> Worsnip was one amongst others who objected to doing military service.

For Bavin and Buchanan, in spite of the fact that they did not approve of apartheid, nonetheless, in their eyes the apartheid state was still legitimate, to which one had to be loyal. This was a view held by many White South Africans at that time. The Anglican Church and other “English-speaking” Churches participated in government structures, such as military chaplaincy. In spite of occasional protests, the hierarchy of the Anglican Church gave legitimation to the status quo. It espoused what the Kairos Documents would identify in 1985 as “State Theology”. Like the “Court Theology” of the Old Testament espoused by court religious functionaries connected with the royal court, State Theology was a theology that tacitly or openly supported the apartheid status quo. State Theology was essentially politically conservative. Almost in every aspect, State Theology was an anti-thesis to a “Theology of Liberation”, that sought to set Black people free.

<sup>151</sup> CPSA Principal Chaplain J.R. Vogel to Col. (Revd.) P.E. de Kock, SADF principal chaplain, letter dated 7 July 1977, AB 1363, S 21 (file 8), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, St. Paul’s Theological College, 1976-78, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>153</sup> See Letter, Bavin to Worsnip, 3 March 1981, loaned to the author.

<sup>154</sup> See Letter, Buchanan to Worsnip, 28 January 1980, loaned to the author.

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Send to Archbishop G.P.-S. (B)

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Verw. Nr./Ref. No. KD 102/12/3

NAVRAE/ENQUIRIES:

Tel. No. 411751x13

The Warden,  
St Pauls Theological College,  
P.O. Grahamstown.

KANTOOR VAN DIE—OFFICE OF THE

Chaplain General,  
Private Bag X479,  
Pretoria.  
0001

7 July 1977.

Chpln J.R. Vogel

For information

NATIONAL SERVICE THEOLOGICAL STUDENTS : 1978

1. This HQ Min KD 2/5 dated 2 Feb 77 refers.
2. Would you be so kind as to provide this office with the particulars of the theological students of the Church of the Province of SA who complete their studies at the end of 1977 on or before 3 Aug 77.
3. Your co-operation will be appreciated.
4. Kindly acknowledge.

Letter from Chaplain General J.R. Vogel to Duncan Buchanan, requesting the particulars of students who would complete their studies at the end of 1977, making them eligible for military service in 1978.

## Conclusion

The period from 1976 to 1980 was very critical to the College, fundamentally because Black students<sup>155</sup> were introduced in the College. The presence of the second intake of these students started to transform the racial dynamics in the College on many levels. In various ways, some of the Coloured students started to resist various manifestations of apartheid, most notably the government issuing of the permits. Sometimes this tended to raise tensions in the College body. As will be noted shortly, resistance to apartheid, especially in the form of racially segregated amenities would take another dimension. This is the issue that the next chapter will discuss.

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<sup>155</sup> The apartheid government classified these students as "Coloureds".

## Chapter 4 | Racially Segregated Amenities 1977-81

The Separate Amenities Act constituted one of the core pillars of apartheid. It provided for racially segregated amenities for different race groups. Separate racial amenities, notably recreation and sport facilities in Grahamstown, adversely affected students' lives in the 1980s. It seemed to be undermining Duncan Buchanan's (and the staff's) efforts to build a multiracial community. Raphael Hess shared with this author his reminiscences about how this tended to affect relationships between Black and White students. He stated:

[We] would be together in the College for study and worship, but once [we] left the premises [we became so divided as all the facilities [in Grahamstown] were racially segregated ... restaurants, cinema ... We found no sympathy from the White students ... There were moments that some White students without even feeling the conscience of how apartheid affected the Black students they freely went about using these facilities ... without thinking about the six guys who couldn't get out.<sup>1</sup>

In other words, for Hess, some White students were entirely insensitive to the issue of the racially-segregated facilities that excluded Black students. Hess concluded that it was things like this, which: "[The students] realised that although [they] were living and studying together in the same place, in the same lecturer hall, [they] [were] still very very far apart of each other in a new environment."<sup>2</sup> Hess recalled that it seemed that for some Black students, the experience of living at St. Paul's College had caused some sort of identity crisis to their personality. Somehow they had begun to believe that they were "White".<sup>3</sup> He cited an incident when one of the Black students sent his son to a White barber in town, where the son was turned away because he was of the "wrong" colour.<sup>4</sup> What Black people perceived as the insensitivity of White people towards their needs often generated resentment and sometimes anger. So in this context, Hess recalled:

To relax [Oswald] Swarts and [I] found some sort of entertainment at the Settler's Motel, which had "international status", [and] was the only place where Black students could go to [for recreation] ... and [only for a few hours] it could have foreigners, Black foreigners ... either eat there or sleep there ... I would get an allowance having come from England.<sup>5</sup>

It is ironic that the Settler's Motel, a monument commemorating the 1820 British settlers and looking like an isolated Island on top of the mountain, outside Grahamstown alongside the road to Port

1 Interview with Raphael Hess, 27 March 2014, Malmesbury.

2 *Ibid.*

3 *Ibid.*

4 *Ibid.*

5 *Ibid.*

Elizabeth, could for a few hours during the week become a symbol of racial integration. It was an irony of apartheid that as racially segregated amenities divided people along racial lines, so it also tended to unite people of the same race against apartheid. Racial categorisation on the basis of skin colour was so absurd in apartheid South Africa that it made a mockery of apartheid. However, Hess recalled a personal experience. He said that on one occasion when he and others went to the Post Office, the Post Office Official took Hess for a “White person” and allowed him alone to use a Whites’ only compartment, simply because he looked fairer than the others.<sup>6</sup>

Similarly, Garth Counsell recalled that to overcome the apartheid imposed restrictions that affected the selling of liquor to Black people, with the arrangement of the College and a local liquor supplier, a beer-club was established for the students in the College premises.<sup>7</sup> He recalled that he was in charge of this arrangement.<sup>8</sup> However, other aspects of apartheid life were not so easy to overcome. The experience of White students using the luxury Leopard Express from Grahamstown to Port Elizabeth alienated Black students from their fellow White students living together as one community. This caused a lot of pain and bitterness.<sup>9</sup>

Sometimes there was will on the part of some White students to show solidarity with their fellow Black students against apartheid laws. Counsell recalled that one day a White student had bought tickets for the cinema for Black and White students. At the cinema hall, as an act of solidarity, so he reminisced, the White students refused to occupy their apartheid designated area down, but rather chose to sit with their fellow Black students at the top part of the cinema hall.<sup>10</sup> Hess particularly remembered one episode that demonstrates the extent to which some White students conformed to apartheid. He related:

One day [I] went with one of these [White] guys to the Wimpy Restaurant and when [we] got there ... [I] said “let’s have a cup of coffee ...” and he said “no”, but [Hess] said “no we must go in, it doesn’t matter, we can go in, I am sure we can slip in and nobody will notice us” [and the White student] turned around and said “no”, [then he] pointed to the Whites-only sign] on the door, and then he said “[he] had a conscience”. In other words he felt it would be wrong to break the law.<sup>11</sup>

This is an interesting episode. It depicts the sharply contrasting attitudes of the two former students, the one, White, as a “law abiding citizen” and another one, Black, as defiant of apartheid law. Amenities played a big role in the breaking down of the social life of the people, in undermining the social cohesion of communities. However, sometimes apartheid also affected students on a more personal level. Courtney Sampson recalled a personal experience of racial discrimination in sport. He recalled being chased off the field of Rhodes University by a “White guy”, an incident that he said totally ruined his chances of participating in the South African Council of Sport (SACOS) athletics long Jump

6 *Ibid.*

7 Interview with Garth Counsell, 20 March 2014, Zonnebloem.

8 *Ibid.*

9 Interview with Raphael Hess, 27 March 2014, Malmesbury.

10 Interview with Garth Counsell, 20 March 2014, Zonnebloem.

11 Interview with Raphael Hess, 27 March 2014, Malmesbury.

championship in 1977 to which he had been invited when he arrived in Grahamstown.<sup>12</sup> He related his experiences as follows:

I went to Rhodes University to use the Hockey sport facilities since St. Paul's and Rhodes had an arrangement to use each other's sport facilities. When I started to practise a White guy asked me, "what are you doing here?" [And I said] "Just running." The White fellow said: "You do not belong to us." He chased [me] away. [I] reported to Duncan [Buchanan] and nothing was done ... He did not pursue the matter.<sup>13</sup>

However, in this context one critical issue that the multiracial community had to encounter was the White students' use of facilities that barred "Coloured" and Black people in Grahamstown. It became an issue of heated debate. It seems for some White students it became an issue of "conscience" as Black people were barred to use those facilities. Recalling this episode, Di Buchanan stated: "In fact, Duncan and I decided that if people of colour were not allowed to go to this place or that place or the other, movies, restaurants, public swimming pools, anything like that, ... [we] would not go, and many people in the College [considered that position]."<sup>14</sup>

Philip Le Feuvre gave insight into the kind of exchange that typically took place between some Black and White students at the time. These exchanges occurred around issues relating to the racially segregated (and those that barred Black people) amenities in Grahamstown. Regarding the movie theatres, he recalled:

Blacks would say [to Whites]: "You go to the movies, but we are not allowed to" (and yet [these] were [the] same students in the same College). It took the [Whites] totally by surprise. Then the Whites would respond: "What are you asking us to do? You want us not go to the movies?" They [would] respond: "That's right", and the answer would be: "You must be joking." [White students] suddenly had to work through things. It caused initial tensions.<sup>15</sup>

According to Le Feuvre, the most critical and incisive critique came from the "Coloured" students. This group of students, so Le Feuvre, remembered "were the most vocal, like Garth Counsell, Raphael Hess, Courtney Sampson, and most of them all was Mike Weeder" (future Dean of Cape Town).<sup>16</sup> Le Feuvre recalled that he had the impression that "some Black students from the north had come rather with a negative view about the Coloureds".<sup>17</sup> Le Feuvre asserted that "to some Black students Afrikaans was a no, no, and they wondered that the Coloured students expressed their radical politics in Afrikaans".<sup>18</sup>

In other words, Le Feuvre's testimony suggests that the presence of some "Coloured" and some Black students amongst White students started to change the dynamics in relationships in the College. The issues that Black students started to raise challenged the life style, the privileges which hitherto the White

12 Interview with Courtney Sampson, 11 November 2014, Stellenbosch.

13 *Ibid.*

14 Interview with Di Buchanan, 12 June 2014, Newtown, Johannesburg.

15 Interview with Philip Le Feuvre, 5 March 2012, Somerset West.

16 *Ibid.*

17 *Ibid.*

18 *Ibid.*

students had taken for granted in the “White” society of South Africa. These issues started to prick the social conscience of White students. They made them feel uncomfortable and some of them were even hurt or angry towards Black students. In the process, the College was polarised.

Yet, it was confrontation like this that gradually began to transform some White students’ attitude towards Black students’ experience of apartheid. Some White students started to see Black people through new lenses, as human beings, rather than through a distorted image projected by the apartheid political apparatus. Consequently, this started to raise tension in the College, and tempers started to flare. In response to the author’s question, “What issues came up in relations between Black and White students?”, Le Feuvre asserted: “There weren’t issues as such. It was just the tension of the whole situation. If there were issues they were merely sparking what was already there, things which were already there.”<sup>19</sup> He went on to give a background to what he said had started to raise tensions that would occasionally erupt in the College. He said:

From 1977, the presence of Coloured and subsequently (Black from 1979) students in the hitherto White college did begin to raise for many Whites issues [which they] had never thought of before ... but for many of the Whites they knew about the scene ... they disapproved of apartheid, they knew about injustice but they had never heard anybody from inside the Coloured or Black community actually state experientially what they were feeling ... how they responded to these things. For instance, it had never crossed [the minds of Whites] ... [that Blacks] couldn't go to the movies, [that Blacks] were not allowed to, and yet they were students in the same College ... it was something that they had to work through.<sup>20</sup>

Le Feuvre’s insights are significant. The presence of the Black students, particularly their expression of the anger that derived from their brutal experience of apartheid, made many White people feel very uncomfortable, and indeed insecure. It pricked their consciences and seems sometimes to have made them angry. The White students felt the pressure. However, Hess gave another perspective to the racial tensions. In his view, the Black students’ engagement with the White students was also a sort of ‘coping mechanism’ in trying “to deal with their own sense of insecurity”. Again, this is how Hess described his experience:

One of the first issues that [we] had to deal with was [our] own perceptions, of one another. As Coloured boys [we] would gather together to have a little bit of reflection and ... [We] would say, “Wow, we are here and they [i.e. Whites] think they are so smart” [whatever the code language was, a bit of Afrikaans] ... [We had to deal with our own sense of insecurity and pull ourselves together ... and say that [we are here], we are going to contribute ... [we would] be part of this College.<sup>21</sup>

In other words, according to Hess, for Black students, as a minority, they were feeling vulnerable. They had to find some ‘space’ to position themselves. They found themselves in a situation where they defined their position as “us” and “them”.

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<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> Interview with Raphael Hess, 27 March 2014, Malmesbury.

It was in this context therefore that in 1977 the College took a resolution on racially segregated facilities in Grahamstown. A.J. Kriel captured the significance of the moment. Commenting on this episode in November 1977 in *The Highway* (Diocesan magazine of Kimberley and Kuruman), he related a moving story of how, being a multiracial community, the College decided that year that “if they could not all go to the same places of entertainment in town, they would not go at all”.<sup>22</sup> He went on to note:

This left a gap on Saturday nights, usually spent at the bioscope. So then they decided to entertain themselves. Not only did they discover hitherto hidden talents, but they found themselves growing closer in love to each other. The entertainment provided for the visitors was the cream of the regular Saturday evenings, and was a touching example of sharing in the suffering of one another. The college is full to capacity, and one was aware of the vitality of the place. Students spoke of the wonderful ways in which God was renewing their lives, and their strong and warm fellowship among them was evident. One was too impressed with the quality of men leading the College, and felt that the future of the Church was in good hands.<sup>23</sup>

Martin Breytenbach (future Bishop of the Diocese of St. Mark, the Evangelist) was a student in the years 1981 and 1982. He recalled that during this time, the College took a decision in the Common Room to boycott certain shops and restaurants that excluded Black people in Grahamstown.<sup>24</sup> When the students went into town, so he recollected, before they sat down in a restaurant or in a movie house they would ask if facilities were open to all races. If the answer was no, then they would say ‘I am sorry I can’t come in’. In that way, they hoped that the owner would think seriously about their policy.<sup>25</sup>

It would seem that the position that the College took in 1977 had an impact on some of the children of all races in the College. Di Buchanan recalled the experience of and witness against apartheid by this group of children. She asserted:

One of the lovely stories is that a number of children in the community of different colours and different ages one day – they went down to the cinema in town to go and watch a movie. And when the Black children were told at the ticket office that they were not allowed to go, the White children came home with them, they didn’t stay. They picked up this discrimination, and they also couldn’t deal with it – because these were their friends, just because they had a different skin colour. And so they started to understand the unfairness of apartheid. The parents must have told Duncan [Buchanan] about it.<sup>26</sup>

If children of different races, as Di Buchanan says, were politically conscious, it could then well be an indication of the extent to which St. Paul’s College had become really a multiracial community, not only structurally, but also socially. Some Bishops would have noted these developments. The logbook scribe in 1977 recorded the Bishops’ exaltation to the students in the following words: “You are asked to sow, and keep on sowing; do not worry about the harvest – From Taize”, and then went on to admonish:

<sup>22</sup> A magazine cutting of *The Highway*, a newspaper of the Diocese of Kimberley and Kuruman, AB 2568, A 3, History of the College, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> Telephone interview with Martin Breytenbach, 7 May 2014.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> Interview with Di Buchanan, 12 June 2014, Newtown, Johannesburg.

How to create new attitudes and relationships which correct past history? How to provide 'signs by anticipation' of a society converted to reciprocity ... to witness to the truth that our ills come from the same virus – profit, conquest, domination, grabbing, selfishness privileges. The contradictions in our political systems are greater. Because we are members in a non-racial community – we seek to realise the implications and demands of this membership: "Communion is possible only when we remember that we are all under one roof."<sup>27</sup>

There was an increasing awareness that gradually, as the socio-economic and political apartheid was falling apart, there was a need for students to stand in solidarity with one another and work together. In some quarters in the Church it was recognised that as part of preparing White (also "Coloured"/Indian) students for a broader ministry in the emerging new South African context, learning an African language should be an important aspect of that process. Just as learning Afrikaans had been an important issue at St. Paul's College in the 1960s and 1970s, so learning an African language turned out to be a necessary issue in the 1970s. Reporting to the Provincial Standing Committee in August 1977, Buchanan asserted:

The problem of ministering in the country requires that increasingly men must be put where it is right and not where race dictates. Pressure has been put on the College to give students the opportunity to learn an African language. In theory this looks good, but must students as far afield as Rhodesia, the question is which one? We believe that the very essential task must either be accomplished before a student comes to the College or after he leaves. The latter preferable, since he is then in a position to keep in practice the language in a way he would never be able to do at college. We would like to urge all Dioceses to take this seriously.<sup>28</sup>

Resistance to learning an African language in fact implied the reluctance to learning an African culture, since language is an expression of culture. At that time, St. Paul's College had seven Black students. The resistance to learning an African language raises the question: To what extent were White students prepared to cross racial boundaries? English missionaries had been effective ministers largely because some of them had tried hard to learn the local languages. Were students not called to become "missionaries" by Jesus? Was their training not part of that ministry? Nonetheless, the issue of African language would rear its head again in 1983.

## Rapidly changing times

In the meantime, the changing socio-political situation in the late 1970s also started to impact on relationships between Black and White students. Hess recalled how this tended to affect the students. He stated:

[I and the other Black students] were conscious of the changing dynamics in the country ... There [was] now greater openness to recognise that the church [had] a profound role to play in being the

<sup>27</sup> Logbook, AB 2568, C 1.11, 1976-86, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>28</sup> Warden's Report to the Provincial Standing Committee, August 1977, AB 1363, S 21 (file 8), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, St. Paul's Theological College, 1976-78, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

articulator for justice and for equality and so [he saw] himself [and others] in the context of the college as being a participant in transformation and [that they had] to contribute to the discussion, to the theology ... and how as the church [was] going to usher in the new era, although it was not yet there ... of course the government of the day was still very much in power ... but before [the students'] very eyes ... the things [they] thought were impossible when we were growing up as a child were beginning to happen.<sup>29</sup>

Hess's optimistic sentiments with regard to the changing order reflected the changes that were taking place in the country. He recalled that in 1979, encouraged and led by Le Feuvre, together with other students, Hess attended the South African Christian Leadership Assembly (SACLA) in Pretoria. The College logbook scribe noted the significance of the event:

Probably the biggest event in the Church this year was the meeting of the Christian leaders in Pretoria. The two main speakers for SACLA were Michael Cassidy and Dominee David Bosch. St. Paul's was represented by a team of students led by Philip Le Feuvre. The students helped with the administrative load which was immense. The conference was attended by approximately 6 000 people from all walks of life. The most significant aspect was probably the fact that the conference was the most significant gathering of different race groups in the history of the Republic. The students returned full of praise for the Lord and shared in the report back to the college meeting.<sup>30</sup>

It would seem that such an event and others had emboldened some students. In contrast to Hess's experience, however, for Sampson the SACLA carried a liberal White agenda and hence, he said that he never participated in it.<sup>31</sup> Buchanan caught some glimpse and was conscious of what he saw as the rapidly changing socio-political context of the period. He articulated it more vigorously:

All this looks as though God is doing, or trying to do, a new thing amongst us. It is for this that we must be prepared. My own belief is that the old order is changing more rapidly than we think, and that we are to be prepared for radical, painful change. Whether this change is social, political or economic, and I believe that it will involve all three, we are to be prepared to participate in the building of a more God-like society. The tendency to think that we can either avoid the 'secular' change or believe that God is only involved in His Church ... God is attempting to build His society, not by building walls, as the Prime Minister has recently suggested, but breaking them down, and by calling us to live without protection of our worldly securities. To trust Him, in these times, is not being unpolitical, but very involved in the affairs of the world; however, it produces a rather different answer from the one given by politicians, economists or sociologists.<sup>32</sup>

Buchanan's response to the question is quite extraordinary. It is like some kind of psychological self-mediation. Conscious of the gradual demise of apartheid and the emerging new order, Buchanan became more conscious of the need to prepare ordinands for the envisaged change. It was this atmosphere, this spirit that seemed to inspire confidence in some Black students. Consequently, they

29 Interview with Raphael Hess, 27 March 2014, Malmesbury.

30 Logbook, AB 2568, C 1.11, 1976-86, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

31 Interview with Courtney Sampson, 11 November 2014, Stellenbosch.

32 Advent Warden's Letter, 1979, AB 1363, S 21 (file 8), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, St. Paul's Theological College, 1976-78, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

begun to see themselves as operating on an equal footing as White students and therefore started to challenge some assumptions held by some White students. It would appear that they wanted to show this new confidence through robust debate in the Common Room. Hess recalled one such episode:

I remember in our first year [1977] ... one day an incident that caused an eruption ... [was that, so and so<sup>33</sup>] in the Common Room had referred to a young Black man delivering newspaper down the street as the "newspaper boy" ... That caused such an eruption, it became a big story ... a Common Room issue. Courtney took it up as an issue for debate ... [He] raised the matter in the Common Room saying 'this is unacceptable ... this is the language we find offensive. The attitude was, "We are going to show them, how insensitive these people, uncaring, dominant [they] are ... you haven't changed a bit, we are going to help you change ... we going to put matters on the table for discussions."<sup>34</sup>

In relation to White people, it was a kind of relationship in which Black people tended to "define" themselves as "us" versus "them" (Whites). It mirrored the categorisation of apartheid. Some "Coloured" and Black students seemed to take it upon themselves as their 'mission' to make White students politically 'aware of how apartheid affected them, the horrors of apartheid. When the writer came to St. Paul's College in 1984, the term "conscientising" was very much part of the socio-political discourse. It denoted making politically "unaware" White people "aware" of the evils of apartheid. However, Henry Naidoo recalled an experience that suggests the extent to which apparently White racist attitudes surfaced in the College at times. He recalled:

One was the incident when a White liberal accused the children of some White students setting their dogs on Black people who were passing by. A call was made to educate their children against this practise and a heated debate ensued on racism. When the student brought up the issue that generally the dogs portray the traits of their masters, Duncan Buchanan said this was "rubbish ... [and that the student] should never have said such a thing."<sup>35</sup>

The incident suggests that there was a division between the so-called liberal and conservative elements in the College, the latter overtly supporting apartheid. The incident is symbolic. In apartheid South Africa, some White people associated Black people with dogs or even worse. The incident suggests the racist attitude that was rampant in the wider society. St. Paul's College was a microcosm of the apartheid society.

## Security branch

Apartheid thrived on intimidation, fear and suspicion. Sometimes espionage operated on these premises. Some students studying in the 1980s recalled that there were always strong feelings in the College that they were under some sort of Security Police surveillance. Counsell recalled what he considered were some suspicious occurrences in the College. For instance, according to Counsell, "there were clear indications sometimes that the [students] letters' had been tampered with".<sup>36</sup> He said that "[though] it was never proven, [nonetheless] there was always a strong feeling that one of the students was an

<sup>33</sup> Name and surname of student withheld.

<sup>34</sup> Interview with Raphael Hess, 27 March 2014, Malmesbury.

<sup>35</sup> Response to a Questionnaire, 5 February 2016.

<sup>36</sup> Interview with Garth Counsell, 20 March 2014, Zonnebloem.

informer".<sup>37</sup> In particular, Counsell recalled an incident where he said "one of the students disturbed a certain fellow, a stranger, who had been prying through in the College during the time when the students were at worship in chapel".<sup>38</sup> This stranger, he said, "rushed out from the front door of the College to the vehicle which had been recognised as a police vehicle which had been waiting for him on the road".<sup>39</sup>

Likewise, Charles Williams, a student in the years 1979 to 1981, recalled that there was another White student<sup>40</sup> who, during the weekends, according to Williams, was often spotted in the South African Defence Force intelligence operations in the Caspiers in the Black townships with other army colleagues.<sup>41</sup> According to Williams, he and others reported this to Buchanan and, subsequently, the student left.<sup>42</sup> However, according to Le Feuvre, who knew the student, recalled that the student had to leave the College for a different reason.<sup>43</sup>

It would appear that the extent of suspicion and fear of Security Police surveillance was so pervasive in the College that even at the sight of innocent strangers in the College premises or buildings was enough to raise eyebrows suspecting that the strangers were on espionage. Le Feuvre and his wife Charmian Le Feuvre recalled that when Le Feuvre had just returned from overseas in 1980, one day as he was sorting out his office, he was startled by a strange voice behind him, which said: "Who are you? What are you doing here?" To his shock, the enquirer turned out to be a new student who hitherto had not met Philip Le Feuvre!<sup>44</sup>

The apartheid state had successfully managed to sow fear and suspicion not only amongst members of one race, but also amongst different races and ethnicities. Draper recalled that being White, his visit to Nomsa Ngodwane, the President of Anglican Students Federation at Fort Hare when he was the Regional Co-ordinator of the ASF for the Eastern Cape raised alarm because many thought he might be an impimpi (an apartheid state operative).<sup>45</sup> Whether apartheid security apparatus had infiltrated St. Paul's College we will never know for certainty. However, these anecdotes show the extent to which apartheid government had successfully managed to sow mistrust amongst South Africans.

Draper's reminiscences bring in another dimension to this study, however, namely, the experiences of some White Christians working alongside Black persons in the struggle against apartheid. Even though Gerald West was not a student of St. Paul's College, his life illustrates something of the struggles that a White Christian working against apartheid confronted. In his experience, his encounters with Black people and working alongside them against apartheid, compelled him to confront and "interrogate" his Whiteness, his critical self-consciousness of White power, which he came to realise was both a privilege and a pain.

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<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> Name of student withheld.

<sup>41</sup> Interview with Charles Williams, 30 March 2014, Hopefield.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>43</sup> Interview with Philip Le Feuvre, 5 March 2012, Somerset West.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>45</sup> Interview with Jonathan Draper, 6 March 2014, Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg.

“Speaking from a position of Whiteness but framed by Blackness”, he said that he came to understand the dynamics of his Whiteness, the power and privilege that it entailed, not disowning it, but in a way recognising its liberating, as well as constraining effects in his life. In other words, he saw his life as a relentless struggle of identity, locating, dislocating, and positioning himself in the struggle. It was a journey of self-discovery. He was living on the edge of White cultural structural power and Black structural power.<sup>46</sup>

## Towards full racial integration

### The College in transitional period – Black students

Meanwhile, the Review Committee of the Constitution of St. Paul’s College, which had been instituted in 1976 to review the Constitution so as to reflect the racial diversity of the College, met in 1978. It met to draft changes in the Constitution in time for the Provincial Council that would be sitting in 1979 to ratify the new Constitution. It noted that “the following alterations were recommended in the Preamble of (Canons and Constitutions 1971, p. 148, Act X (a). The word ‘European’ should be omitted forever” (p. 148), and the line should read “candidate to the ordained ministry”.<sup>47</sup> With this provision, St. Paul’s College paved the way for the entry of Black students.

These developments were taking place against the following background. The Provincial Synod in November 1976 passed a resolution asking the Archbishop and the governing councils of Church schools to negotiate with the government the admission of Black children into Church schools. Addressing the Conference of Private Schools in Grahamstown in August 1977, Bishop Kenneth Oram is cited to have said that South Africa was in a period of change, “change is coming”.<sup>48</sup> In 1979, after long back-door negotiations between the Minister of Community Development and Bill Burnett, the government opened Church schools to all races.<sup>49</sup> It was in this context that the Anglican Church started in earnest to consider sending Black students to St. Paul’s College. The reader may recall that the Anglican Church had first introduced the first two Black ordinands in the College in 1960, Kuse and Crutse. After the two graduated, no more Black students were ever sent to St. Paul’s College until 1976, when Hendricks and Swarts took their place as ordinands.

In 1978, preparations were underway to send African ordinands to the College for training. From correspondence, it is clear that after the Church had requested permits for “Coloured” students a couple of time (1967-1977), the government seemed no longer to consider the issue of permits for “Coloured”

46 West, G. “White Theology in a Black Frame: Betraying the Logic of Social Location in Living on the Edge”, In: J.R. Cochrane, E. Bongmba, I. Phiri and D. van der Water (eds.), *Living on the Edge, Essays in Honour of Steve de Gruchy, Activist & Theologian*. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2012, pp. 70-72.

47 Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Provincial Standing Committee, 23 March 1978, AB 1363, S 21 (file 8), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, St. Paul’s Theological College, 1976-78, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

48 Clarke, *Anglicans Against Apartheid*, p. 323.

49 *Ibid.*, p. 321.

students as big of a deal as it now did for Black students. Writing to Buchanan on 19 September 1978, Ivan Weiss stated:

I will immediately get onto the business of getting permits for both the Coloured and Black students. Last year they did in fact send us a permit for the Black students but the Coloured students seemed to be acceptable without further attention. Nevertheless we will have to do this in order that we do not in any way become a cause of hindrance to study for these particular students.<sup>50</sup>

Speaking to the author in 2015, Weiss confirmed that when he was Chaplain to the Archbishop, applying for permits was not an issue at all. They applied and the applications were granted. He said:

It was necessary to do so as to comply with the Law. We never wanted that. No matter what I thought, we had to get the permits for them to go. No difficulties, we had to write and we got the permits. We just wanted them to go ... and that they were allowing them to go, which was a blessing. We didn't have problems; we didn't have difficulties.<sup>51</sup>

Weiss seemed to have attributed the ease in getting permits to the influence that Burnett was said to have wielded in government circles. He recalled:

Bill [Burnett] and I didn't agree with apartheid one bit; and Bill [Burnett] particularly. Desmond Tutu very much misunderstood Bill [Burnett]. Bill [Burnett] went to the parliament to see [John] Vorster ... and Vorster wouldn't let me in ... He spoke to Vorster, he spoke to Pik Botha, he spoke to [Piet] Koornhof. He had a lot of influence on Koornhof. Bill turned the two around ... They became less full of apartheid ... and they were part of the change to start thinking otherwise in the 1980s.<sup>52</sup>

Buchanan seemed to have considered the recruitment of African students as part of his "mission". Writing to Weiss that year, he stated:

I do also want to remind you that whoever else you send us, please continue to send us as many Blacks as you possibly can because this is a terribly important part of our whole movement forward.<sup>53</sup>

It is striking that Buchanan considered the recruitment as a "movement" forward. It is possible that he (and possibly others) recognised the gap in Black leadership in the leadership of the Church; hence, the urgency to make up for it.

Consequently, in 1979 St. Paul's College received Amos Ntutha, Sabelo Sillile and Langa Msengana. Like the "Coloured" students, these Black African students, came into a situation that was racially and culturally different background. Largely because of this they experienced some difficulty in adjusting to a new cultural, academic and religious environment. Writing to Weiss on 13 November 1979, Buchanan pointed out the struggles that they faced:

50 See Letter, Weiss to Buchanan, 19 September 1978, AB 1363, S 21 (file 8), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, St. Paul's Theological College, 1976-78, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

51 Interview with Ivan Weiss, 25 March 2015, Claremont.

52 *Ibid.*

53 See Letter, Buchanan to Weiss, 16 May 1978, AB 1363, S 21 (file 8), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, St. Paul's Theological College, 1976-78, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

Blacks are in a more difficult position than most other students. Some Coloured and some Whites also follow into this category but they are fewer of them ... It must take some of these Blacks a little while to settle into college life and the kind of study they are being called to. It is that case the other students could be encouraged by you to assist the Blacks in particular in this field.<sup>54</sup>

The fact that Black students struggled suggests the extent to which the College was too White in its ethos and institutional culture. This would be one of the chief grievances in 1982 when a racial conflict erupted. In spite of the fact that apartheid had affected Black, "Coloured" and Indian people, Black people were even more disadvantaged than the other two groups, for such was the nature of apartheid to grade people in all aspects of their lives. In the meantime, Hess recalled that in 1978 the College appointed Chichele Hewitt as senior student alongside Fred Hendricks. Hess said "[the students sort of] ... wondered":

Was that a kind of a balance of power? Was it an arrangement that [the College] needed a Black one and a White Senior Student? I am just thinking about it now. Was having a Coloured and White senior student intended to represent Black and White student constituencies in the College? In a national context where racial categorisation played a very important role it was that students would have such attitudes.<sup>55</sup>

In the light of Hess's claim, it would then seem that the arrangement of a White and a Black Senior student reflected structures in apartheid society. It would be tempting today to think that the arrangement had been made to cater for respective racial groups. Racial categorisation was being applied in the structures of the Church – the very Church that claimed to fight apartheid.

Nonetheless, it is noted that during this period some Cape Town students were going through some anxiety and uncertainty. A logbook scribe captured the feelings of the students in a headline that proclaimed: "If only the Archbishop would send somebody". This was the cry of the Cape Town ordinands. In response, Ivan Weiss, Archbishop's Senior Chaplain, came and stayed from 24 to 26 September.<sup>56</sup> It is reported that "with his tremendous love – Ivan [Weiss, Senior Chaplain of the Archbishop of Cape Town] ministered to the Cape Town ordinands and restored their 'confidence and morale'".<sup>57</sup> He managed to interview "each ordinand individually".<sup>58</sup> It was particularly a difficult period through which the country was going. It was in this context that in his address to St. Paul's College in 1978, Alphaeus Zulu, Bishop of Zululand, addressed the students on "Jesus on the law of love"; "the realisation of the action of the Holy Spirit in our ministry"; "reconciliation", and "Jesus, the Prince of Peace".<sup>59</sup> These issues seem to reflect the concerns arising out of polarised racial relationships in the context of South Africa in 1978.

54 See Letter, Buchanan to Weiss, 13 November 1979, AB 1363, S 21 (file 9), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, St. Paul's Theological College, 1979-80, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

55 Interview with Raphael Hess, 27 March 2014, Malmesbury, Cape Town.

56 Logbook, AB 2568, C 1.11, 1976-86, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

57 *Ibid.*

58 *Ibid.*

59 *Ibid.*

Perhaps it is quite noteworthy that the logbook scribe described the College leavers of 1979 as “a team of history makers ever to grace the hallowed grounds of St. Paul’s College with their presence”. Does this suggest the leavers’ high sense of awareness of their role in trying to transform the College? The title of the entry reads: “There is no time for cat naps in the rat race.”<sup>60</sup> No doubt, the years between 1977 and 1979 had been eventful. Reflecting on his and other Black students’ time at College, Naidoo noted: “In 1976 was the very first time that the College opened up to having students from the different races, and I think that it was not prepared for the ‘storms’. They did not know how to handle us. I don’t think that they were prepared for us who were the first people of other race groups to attend the College.”<sup>61</sup>

## Progress and setbacks

Meanwhile, presenting a report on St. Paul’s College to the Provincial Standing Committee in 1980, Buchanan reported that six years prior, the “Province took a decision” to “integrate Theological colleges” and regretted that integration had not yet occurred.<sup>62</sup> The Church itself was not very willing to transform. It was so caught up in apartheid structures and mentality. It is also clear that the initial steps to racially diversify the College that had started since 1976 had now started to strain race relations in the College. In the same report, Buchanan noted the hardening of attitudes in the White society, which was beginning to affect the students coming from those communities. He asserted:

5.1. The situation in the country is less and less conducive to an open acceptance across colour lines. Blacks and Whites come to College with inherited prejudices and stereotypes and are very sensitive to anything which confirms these. All who come to us know our Lord and clearly love Him; may have come to grips with the problems of race and fears and bitterness which it engenders.<sup>63</sup>

He then pointed that this boiled down to the sharp divergence in perceptions that prevailed in the approach to the political issues that the country faced. In the same report, however, Buchanan seemed to be responding to some of the critics of the College who in comparison to other colleges, possibly St. Peter’s, Fedsem, considered St. Paul’s College as an ‘easy’ place: He asserted:

St. Paul’s is not an ‘easy’ place to be around. We are also caught in the dilemma of those who believe that we must do something in relation to the country and those who believe that we are here to pause and look and train for the ministry by concentrating on ‘being’ within the context of the College and, of course, College activities. Inevitably there are those who espouse both views with passion and we are the richer for it.<sup>64</sup>

It would seem that the critical issue that Buchanan (the College) always faced from some quarters was: What kind of training was St. Paul’s College giving in preparing the students for the context in modern South Africa? There was division between those who advocated the College’s more robust engagement

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> Response to a Questionnaire.

<sup>62</sup> Warden’s Report to the Provincial Standing Committee, 1980, AB 1363, S 21 (file 9), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, St. Paul’s Theological College, 1979-80, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

with socio-political issues and those who believed the College had to concentrate on “spiritual” issues. As we noted in Chapters 1 and 2, there was always tension between those who advocated the so-called “pure” Gospel and those who viewed socio-political engagement as part of the mission of the Church in South Africa. More significantly, in the final paragraph of his report, Buchanan stressed that ministry and the mission of the Church rested on evangelism. Hence, in his view, training clergy to evangelise was the aim and goal of ministry. In his own words:

The College must be helping potential clergy to evangelise – to take the good news to people both individually and in society. That process has to be learnt, it does not just happen. It takes courage to do what God wants and not what society wants and indeed, to say what God wants and not what people want to hear. Evangelism is so often dismissed as pietism or escapism, but to bring people to Jesus is the heart of the Christian ministry and the Clergy must be able to do that themselves and help others to do it too. Thus increasingly we are finding ourselves exercised by this and running the necessary courses which might make this possible. I pray that we are part of making the Church more aware of its evangelistic imperative.<sup>65</sup>

In the 1980s, involvement in evangelism was seen as avoiding the more difficult issues of engagement in politics in society. During this period, St. Paul’s College was reputedly more charismatic than other colleges, notably St. Peter’s, Fedsem. Indeed, in his letter to Archbishop Burnett on 22 January 1981, commenting on Kenneth Leech’s book on the subject of the Charismatic Renewal, Buchanan touched on how many people saw the Charismatic Movement. He asserted: “I must honestly say that I do believe that you have over-reacted somewhat to [Kenneth] Leech’s comment about the Charismatic Movement in this country being ‘escapist’.”<sup>66</sup>

## 1980 – Black Cape Town students

### Amendment of the Constitution

Meanwhile, the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the St. Pauls College Council of 27 March 1980 reported that the Provincial Standing Committee and the Provincial Synod had passed the proposed amendments to the College Constitution and these had now taken effect. The only amendment that had not been passed was the removal of the phrase “European Students”, which is offensive to many people, as Provincial Synod deemed this to be an historical description of the founding of the College. The College Council believed that it was important that a sentence should be added to the Constitution, saying that this was no longer the case in the life of the College. This could be brought directly to the PSC for their approval.<sup>67</sup>

That year also saw St. Paul’s College receiving a number of Black students, mostly from the Diocese of Cape Town. This group of students was politically vociferous, more politically conscious than had

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> See Letter, Buchanan to Burnett, 22 January 1981, AB 1363, S 21 (file 10), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, 1980-82, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>67</sup> Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the St. Pauls College Council of 27 March 1980, AB 2568, B 3, St. Paul’s Theological College Council Minutes, 1976-1982, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

been even their predecessors. However, these students also differed from the previous ones in the sense that they were the largest number of Black students (compared to White students) ever to come to the College at that stage. Some of these students were directly or indirectly involved in student or community politics or ANC politics in Cape Town. Amongst them were Charles Williams, John Dyers and Chris Ahrends (White), Andrew Wyngaardt, Amos Ntutha (Black African), Florence Anthony, Gilmore Fry, Cliff Philips, Alan Smith, Alastair Buchanan, Trevor Pearce, Keith de Vos, David Mouls, John Atkinson, Aleck Ernest, and Langa Msingane (Black African).<sup>68</sup>

Amongst the more radical ones, were Charles Williams and John Dyers, joined later in 1981 by Michael Weeder. Williams and Weeder were different in the sense that they had a background as political activists. Williams recalled that he had found his vocation while in prison serving a political sentence. Prior to their coming to St. Paul's College, according to Williams, he had faced the challenge of appearing before the Selection Board in Cape Town, where he and Fumanekile Gqiba were asked if they had had an experience of the Charismatic Renewal or not, or if he spoke or did not speak in tongues.<sup>69</sup> For instance, Williams recalled that at the Selection Conference in 1978, the Selectors found that Williams and Gqiba could not speak in tongues, a fact that had a negative effect on the selectors.<sup>70</sup> In various ways, this issue would affect them during their time of study in the College. This would suggest that speaking in tongues had become a test of vocation.

## Government residence permit

The most pressing issue, according to Williams and Wyngaardt, which the Cape Town Black students faced, was the government's permit regarding their residence status in the White designated area.<sup>71</sup> They were anxious to find out whether they were in the College studying under the government permit. Williams recalled that what prompted the students to engage Buchanan on the issue of the permit was the presence of a certain man in the College. This man was apparently an "inspector", Williams recalled. It was said that he had come to check whether the permits were correct and this strengthened their resolve to send a delegation to Buchanan to talk about the issue of the government permit.<sup>72</sup>

According to Williams, they sent a delegation, which included Florence Anthony, Keith Muller, Mike Weeder, and himself, to Buchanan. He recalled that they raised two issues with him: "First that [they] did not appreciate that [he] filled in the forms on [their] behalf, and [secondly], [they] demanded that unless [he] discontinued applying for permits on their behalf, they could not continue studying." Williams continued to assert: "This created tension with the White students."<sup>73</sup> He recalled that it was the same year that the College Council complied with their demand not to apply for residence permits. In Williams's view: "[T]his was one of the small victories that they had won." Wyngaardt recalled:

68 Interview with Chris Ahrends, 7 February 2014, Century City Mall, Cape Town.

69 Interview with Charles Williams, 30 March 2014, Hopefield.

70 *Ibid.*

71 *Ibid.*

72 *Ibid.*

73 *Ibid.*

The permit was applied for the Black students to study to subscribe to the standard of the apartheid regime ... Even though it was never made public, somehow a permit was applied for, for us to be able to study there ... It was unfortunate that the Church had been made to subscribe to the standards of the apartheid regime ... that in your own country you [had] to get a permit to study anywhere ... We were never officially told ... Nobody ever told you that you are studying here with a permit because [you] are not of the right complexion ... The only thing we could do was to assume because of the abnormality of the situation in our country.<sup>74</sup>

Two important issues arise: first, the Church authorities conveniently did not inform the students that a permit had been applied for their study, apparently because of the political sensitivity of the matter; second, the Black students' feeling that they were being tolerated, and the impression conveyed that they were somehow different from the White students would seem to have defeated the whole purpose of raising a non-racial community, union and fellowship in Christ. The result of this was some resentment and frustrations. Wyngaardt put it in this way:

It was not easily, and not well accepted by the students, [and] by myself. There was always a feeling that because you are not White [you were] seen as different, and in a sense felt tolerated, if one can use that word. It wasn't as obvious. The reason why I say this is because we often sent delegations to the Warden [Duncan Buchanan] to raise objections about [such issues]. And at the same time the church was not strong enough to say to the government [that] these are our students; this is our responsibility, and accept us the way we are, and not to have anybody to prescribe to us where we should study at whatever institution, that we won't allow you to prescribe to the Church ... There were lots of frustrations. It was a boiling pot, in my time. St. Paul's College was very much a boiling pot.<sup>75</sup>

It is significant that according to Wyngaardt, the students had realised that the College was not a normal community. It was a community in which the Black students lived with contradictions in terms of their identity, their culture, and pressure put on them to live like White students. Wyngaardt went on to elaborate, saying:

To cool us down, I think Chris Ahrends was the Head Student at that stage; and of course they appointed John Dyers as Assistant Head Student. But we know it was just a token. One got a feeling ..., it might be all perceptions, but it could be true, that John Dyer's appointment was intended as a token ... to ensure that John Dyers [and we, Cape Town students] toed the line.<sup>76</sup>

The issue of the permits did not only affect the students. It also affected Archbishop Philip Russell, Buchanan, and others. Much correspondence was going on between the office of the Archbishop, Buchanan and the government officials in the Department of Community Development. Buchanan was at the centre of this. Responding to Buchanan whether he had applied for a government permit for the students, on 5 May 1980, Weiss stated:

I have, because of the furore at Synod to apply for permits. The Archbishop is in a very awkward position at the present as having to investigate the matter as asked to by the resolution passed at Synod and will prejudice his own attempts to do that faithfully if he is found to be out of step prior

<sup>74</sup> Interview with Andrew Wyngaardt, 24 March 2014, Kraaifontein.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*

to enquiry. It is rather a pity that we have to do this now since I had got to the position where I no longer needed to ask for permits. The Regional Representative of the Department of Community Development was no longer replying to my letters and my last letter on their file stated that I took it to be in order that the students proceeded to St. Paul's if I heard no more from them. Now I have to begin all over. I hope it ends well.<sup>77</sup>

The issue was discussed at the Synod in 1979. During the interview with this author, Weiss recalled that the furore would perhaps have been related to some Bishops who questioned why Black students had to go to the College on permits. In his words, the question would have been: "Why can't Blacks go to College without a permit?"<sup>78</sup> It is also very likely that many Bishops supported the application of the permits. It would seem that Buchanan was under immense pressure from the government. A memo from M.N. Weatherston dated 23 June 1981 to Archbishop Burnett read:

This is to let you know that we heard on Friday 19 June that St. Paul's had received another phone call from the local branch of the Department of Community Services asking for information about certain families as to whether they were still at St. Paul's or not. Duncan Buchanan was hoping that there would be nothing to worry about but thought that you ought to be kept in the picture.<sup>79</sup>

From this memo, it is obvious that the authorities had independent sources of getting their information about certain families who were resident in the College. The College was clearly under surveillance.

## Married students

### The Group Areas Act

Besides having to contend with the issue of residence permit for Black students, the College also had to deal with the issue of the residence permit especially for Black married couples. Since apartheid regulations allowed only White people to live in town, White students did not have as much problem in finding accommodation as was the case with Black students. There was also the issue of the shortage of houses for students who married while studying, as prior provision had not been made. Part of the letter that Buchanan wrote to Archbishop Burnett read:

Thank you for your letter of 4th June, 1980, in which you mentioned the problem of students being married while they are here. I must say I share your disquiet enormously. I have, in fact, found myself being caught in a cleft stick on this one. Many students arrive here and I am told by their Bishops that they are single men. At our first interview we discovered that of the new people who had arrived last year, four were intending, quite overtly, to be married at the end of the year and were expecting accommodation.<sup>80</sup>

<sup>77</sup> See Letter, Weiss to Buchanan, AB 1363, S21 (file 9), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, St. Paul's Theological College, 1979-80, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>78</sup> Interview with Ivan Weiss, Claremont, Cape Town, 25 March 2015.

<sup>79</sup> Memo from M.N. Weatherston to Archbishop Burnett, AB 1363, S 21 (file 10), CPSA, Archbishop Cape Town, St. Paul's Theological College, 1980-82, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>80</sup> See Letter, Buchanan to Burnett, AB 1363, S 21 (file 9), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, St. Paul's Theological College, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

Almost any issue in apartheid South Africa carried some racial overtones. It shows the extent to which racism had pervaded the society. In dealing with Black students, Buchanan found exactly that. In the same letter, he confided in the Archbishop about the attitude of some Black students towards Buchanan's sometimes not so positive response to their requests:

When I said that it would be very difficult, if not impossible for me to give them accommodation, they simply looked at me with the sort of astonishment which only comes out of, I regret to say, a racial situation. In almost each case the men were Coloured, not all from your Diocese ... I am caught in the impossible situation of having to jump him up the queue for housing and, as you say, preclude other people from coming to the College because we do not have accommodation.<sup>81</sup>

Buchanan's experience reflects mistrust engendered by the apartheid structures and policy between White and Black people. During the time of apartheid, not many Black people trusted White people and vice versa. It ran deep in the lives of people. It was the political dimension of this issue, however, which seemed to have subjected Buchanan to too much pressure from the government. Di Buchanan recalled Buchanan's stressful encounters with some members of the Security Branch or government officials who she said regularly visited him. She reminisced:

Some memories; one is about the married students, irrespective of race. They were not allowed to live at home except for two nights a week initially and Duncan [Buchanan] seriously wanted that to be changed, and it was changed ... We built married quarters, houses on two properties on the other side of Durban street opposite the College, and nobody, we took no notice of Group Areas [Act] in terms of that. All colours, races lived in those houses and it really upset the government [in the sense that] ... [the] apartheid authorities came to see Duncan [Buchanan] ... They would ask him to send them the numbers ... And they were very upset; ... and because when they were responsible for something he had asked for – they took a long time, and so, he didn't hesitate to take a fairly long time to response to that question; and so you know they went back the next day, and, by the time they had received his response they probably were on to something else; and so it was a very slow reaction on their part, but nevertheless I know it was to Duncan [Buchanan] very stressful time because they were full of threats, and I think one was to remove him if he didn't send people of colour away. Fortunately it didn't happen ... He and I decided that if people of colour were not allowed we would not go.<sup>82</sup>

The presence of Black students with regard to the allocation of houses to students posed a major challenge to Buchanan (and the College). Issues like this affected relationships in the College community. In the meantime, the year 1980 ended on a sad note. In spite of progress made in 1980 regarding the record number of fifty-three, in March 1981, Buchanan reported to the College Council considerable dropouts. He asserted:

That during the year it became clear that several ought not to proceed further. In all, nine students left without continuing towards ordination and that created a great deal of uncertainty within the college. The reasons for their leaving were various: four believed that they were not ready; one believed that he was not in fact called to the ordained ministry at all; two had several moral problems which meant that it was impossible for us to recommend that they continue. One failed all his examinations

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>82</sup> Interview with Di Buchanan, 12 June 2014, New Town, Johannesburg.

outright and we did not believe that he would be well served by continuing at the college; the last of them was clearly unsuitable, even though, he was, and remains unconvinced.<sup>83</sup>

A dropout rate of about 18% was quite considerable in light of the total number of 50 students. Buchanan's report suggests that the ordinands had personal problems. Suppose they had personal problems, how did they get to St. Paul's College in the first place? This could suggest weakness in the Diocesan systems of discernment of vocation and the selection of the ordinands. It is also possible that the new context of St. Paul's College in which these students now found themselves made it relatively easier for these personal problems to surface. It is in light of this view that we now turn to consider the context of St. Paul's College and therefore try to respond to the question: How did some Black students perceive and experience St. Paul's College in the 1980s?

## A White enclave – A mirror of the society

### Critique of Anglicanism as an ideology

In 1981, St. Paul's College had 52 students, among them was one female, Jacque Williams. She had joined the College in 1979. On its staff, the College had Buchanan (Warden), Le Feuvre, Carl Garner and Ted Celitz (College chaplain). Breytenbach recalled that in that year "[the College] was still overwhelmingly a White institution – the majority of students were White and all the lecturers were White".<sup>84</sup> Just as some members of staff of St. Paul's College had found it strange that St. Peter's Seminary, training mainly Black students in 1967, was "Western in idiom" (and) wondered "if many African students [didn't] sometimes feel that their lifestyle [was] a little cramped in a foreign cultural idiom",<sup>85</sup> so in the 1980s some Black students were critical of St. Paul's College too as "Western in idiom".

Gilmore Fry, a student from 1981 to 1983, described St. Paul's College at this time as a "little pocket of normality" in a very abnormal context ... situated in the area where it was regarded as a White area". He said: "When we got there the colour split was 60% (Whites) to 40% (Blacks). He recalled that when the Black students arrived [in the college], immediately they faced the issue: Where do you send [your] children to school in the White residential area?"<sup>86</sup>

Michael Weeder, the present Dean of St. George's Cathedral in Cape Town, was a student in the years 1981 to 1984. Weeder was destined to play a more prominent role in the life of the College. Weeder recalled that by the time he came to College, he had been influenced by a measure of political activism and ideological education in Cape Town.<sup>87</sup> While in Cape Town, he said that he had acquired basic principles of analysis of "See Judge Act principles" but was also involved in the Young Catholic Society.<sup>88</sup>

83 Warden's Report to the College Council, item 5: Loss of Students, AB 1363, S 21 (file 10), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, St. Paul's Theological College, 1980-82, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

84 Personal correspondence, 22 May 2014.

85 *Doulos* (the College's magazine), June 1967, Suggit's library, Silvermine Village, Noordhoek.

86 Interview with Gilmore Fry, 14 April 2014, St. Dominic's Church, Hanover Park.

87 Interview with Michael Weeder, 9 October 2014, Stellenbosch.

88 *Ibid.*

He said that he had joined the African National Congress in 1980. He recalled that unlike the group of students in the preceding years, he, together with Austen Jackson and Allan Kanameyer (future Bishop of Pretoria), had come to the College at “the time of burgeoning Black Consciousness and the Charterist Movement” (of human rights).<sup>89</sup>

Weeder recalled that early during his time at St. Paul’s College, he befriended Ashwin Desai, the chairperson of Black Students Organisation at Rhodes. Desai, so Weeder recalled, initiated him and others, (notably Jackson and Kanameyer) in Marxist theory. According to Weeder, Desai would come to the College once a week in the evening to discuss Marxist analysis with them.<sup>90</sup> Weeder’s assessment was that he was not a Marxist, but rather he used its tools to analyse the class struggle. He recalled that in 1981 he was the only student who the Christian Institute of Beyer’s Naudé, had sent to Beirut and Nicaragua “to learn about the faith in the context of conflict and ideology”. This was a visit of which Buchanan had apparently never asked why he was going to those countries.<sup>91</sup>

In his recollections about St. Paul’s College, Weeder noted that the College reflected a much more complex fabric of the Anglican Church within the broader socio-political framework of Western Christianity. First, Weeder identified St. Paul’s College within the broader colonial-apartheid framework in which he saw Anglicanism as embedded. He asserted:

South African Anglicanism came [to us] with English ... culture ... [and] colonialism. It was a Western [form] of Christianity, as opposed to its Eastern origin. [It was part] of the Anglo imperial hegemony in Grahamstown, with its axis as Rhodes University and the Cathedral. [This Anglicanism] was an apartheid-tinted version of the faith that we were ascribing to. The struggle against apartheid ... made our entry into St. Paul’s and engagement [with it] very difficult. And, so, it took outside forces to help us to engage our faith ... [We had] to use a framework of ideas, [Marxist tools of analysis] ... to contest this hegemony ... to liberate our faith in a way that we experienced it eventually.<sup>92</sup>

In his view, he had identified the “problem”. It was Anglicanism in the form of ‘British imperial hegemony’, and apartheid, of which St. Paul’s College was a microcosm. Weeder saw St. Paul’s College as part of Rhodes University, the Cathedral and the private schools that generated “values ... which sometimes were overwhelming and overpowering”. One of these, according to Weeder, was racist tendencies and attitudes displayed by some of its personnel such as the speech therapist (an issue that will be elaborated in the next chapter). It is significant that in describing the character of St. Paul’s College, Weeder used almost similar language as Wyngaardt. Wyngaardt recalled that he experienced the College context as a “very English ‘British’ oriented College, where the Black students felt a sense of alienation ... [a] very British colonial context”.<sup>93</sup>

Weeder said he valued Marxism precisely because it equipped him with the tools of socio-economic and political analysis. In his view, he needed these to cope with life at St. Paul’s, but also more importantly

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<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>93</sup> Interview with Andrew Wyngaardt, 24 March 2014, Kraaifontein.

“to liberate this Eastern origin Christian faith in the form of Anglicanism from its Western hegemonic bondage”. Weeder recalled that in their approach to the struggle with Wyngaardt, they tried not to “antagonise Whites by putting pressure on them but rather winning their confidence by explaining the issues”.<sup>94</sup>

Weeder’s use of the concept ‘hegemony’ to describe his experience at St. Paul’s College is significant. The term ‘hegemony’ means rule in the form of domineering of the subjects by the dominant.<sup>95</sup> In his view, Anglican Christianity was not ‘pure’. It had been “tainted” by colonialism and apartheid, of which St. Paul’s College represented some of its values and features. His experience of the College entailed conformity to this ‘British imperial hegemony’. Weeder recalled that, in relation to the White students, two issues disadvantaged him and other Black students in the College: the Black students were mostly young, with an average age of around 24, in comparison to White students, who were about 40 years old on average, some of whom had a university degree. By contrast, some Black students only had a matriculation certificate with very poor results. In his view, all these factors now started to impact on the manner that Black students had to engage with the White students.

Even though Weeder did not mention the impact of Bantu Education on Black students as the factor that disadvantaged Black students, nonetheless, this idea is apparently not far from the surface. Hence, Weeder retorted: “[I]t took a while to find words to express your discomfort.”<sup>96</sup> Weeder noted that on their side, the Black students had the ground experience of the brutality of apartheid, which the majority of White people did not have. This experience was to their own advantage as they could speak from the position of strength. In this context, according to Weeder, in order to assert their identity, some Black students organised themselves as a “Black Caucus”, just as Rhodes University had a Black Organisation. In this context, Wyngaardt recalled that St. Bede’s and other students visiting the College tended to raise [the Black students’] sense of African-ness.<sup>97</sup> According to Jacque Williams, the critical question that Black students faced at that time was: How could the College play a role in the transformation of the society?<sup>98</sup> In her own words, Williams asserted:

Once there was a critical mass of black students at St. Paul’s College, it became impossible for the community [to] ignore the most pressing societal issues e.g. apartheid and the role of the Community in challenging the system and speaking the truth to power. There was a tone in the Seminary that black students were less spiritual than the white students as black students more often than not were inclined to promote a gospel pushed for change in the status quo.<sup>99</sup>

The mere presence of Black students made some White students (and staff) in the College not to completely ignore the fact that change in society was necessary for racial harmony. In other words, the presence of Black students seemed to prick the conscience of some Whites in the College to begin to

94 Interview with Michael Weeder, 9 October 2014, Stellenbosch.

95 Ashcroft, B.; Griffiths, G. and Tiffin, H. *Post-Colonial Studies, Key Concepts*. London and New York: Routledge, 2000.

96 Interview with Michael Weeder, 9 October 2014, Stellenbosch.

97 Interview with Andrew Wyngaardt, 24 March 2014, Kraaifontein.

98 Skype interview with the author, 8 February 2018.

99 Personal communication, 20 February 2018.

think that for the sake of peaceful racial co-existence change of the political system was necessary. The presence of Black students was drawing the attention of the Whites to the critical societal issues that needed to be engaged. It is also significant to note the sharply contrasting attitudes between some Black and White students towards spirituality and socio-political engagement. While for Whites socio-political engagements of some Black students was a sign of their lack of spirituality, some Black students saw their socio-political engagement as part of their spiritual struggle. Hence, Williams concluded:

Many of the white students were more charismatic movement- and or evangelical movement- oriented rather than making social transformation key to their Christian experience. As black students social transformation was an imperative which we saw as central to our theological experience.<sup>100</sup>

Thus it would seem that theologically White and Black students lived worlds apart from each other. These contrasting views on life were nurtured by the different backgrounds where they had come from – the one that tended to separate ‘spirituality’ from ‘politics’ and the other that seemed to see socio-political engagement as equally an issue of ‘spirituality’. Thus in spite of ‘belonging’ to one church these students seemed to live in different ecclesiastical ghettos.

## Disunity in the country

It was the situation in the country that seemed to impact on the life of students. In his Warden’s Report of March 1982 to the College Council, Buchanan went into detail to describe how the polarised country was impacting on the life of the College. He asserted:

In giving this report on the events of 1981, there are two things which stand out sharply for me. The first is the sense of unity which exists between members of staff, in spite of very real differences of temperament, theological position and, indeed, ecclesiastical tradition. The second is the increasing tension in the country which seems to make our task ever more difficult and more urgent.

Buchanan went on to say:

So let me start with the second. It has seemed to us as we try to work within the College that those who come into the College are, each year, increasingly polarised. Blacks have “written off” Whites; Whites are increasingly unaware of the feelings of Blacks and often react with a “What’s the fuss?” response to the articulation of the Black feelings. Apartheid in so many ways has done its work – forcing people to think in caricatures of each other, breeding fear, hopelessness, indifference, arrogance and – above all – deep suspicions.<sup>101</sup>

In light of what Buchanan stated, Breytenbach recalls his experiences as follows: “It was a racially mixed community, where we encountered the different experiences of people under apartheid, especially those of ‘Coloured’ people, forcing us to face up to the dreadful injustice of apartheid and the pain it caused to so many”.<sup>102</sup> He related the rest of his experience thus:

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>101</sup> Warden’s Report to the College Council, March 1982, AB 1363, S 21 (file 10), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, St. Paul’s Theological College, 1980-82, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>102</sup> Personal communication with Breytenbach, 22 May 2014.

I suppose living quite close together and spending a lot of time together inevitably ... as it does in theology – one was reflecting on how different people experienced the issues that we were talking about ... and I think inevitably the experiences also informed people's spirituality to quite a large extent because if you growing up and living in a comfortable White suburb ... you had the luxury to think about a tough township environment ... it was very good for us reflecting.<sup>103</sup>

Sharply contrasting racial experiences led to sharp divisions between Black and White students. These divisions found expression in attitudes and perceptions relating to the manner in which they sought to deal with the issue of apartheid. It is obvious that too much time and energy was being spent in trying to mend broken relationships in the College. Breytenbach's experiences of St. Paul's College during that particular time shed some light on the challenges that the College was facing. He recalls:

Our racially mixed community in apartheid South Africa inevitably led to tensions between students at various times – although we were all strongly opposed to apartheid, nevertheless our experiences and some of our perceptions were very different. But I think this was probably a “positive” surely learning to deal with tension and conflict is important for prospective clergy. Of course there were also very different views about how to confront apartheid – from those who would focus more on “reconciliation” to those who would focus more on the struggle for justice and the whole spectrum in-between. Perhaps on the whole, we were not outspoken enough (although that is easy to say in hindsight).<sup>104</sup>

The two approaches to end apartheid – one that urged mere “reconciliation” between Whites and Blacks, and the other that advocated “justice” – was difficult for some White people to deal with. The approaches rested on two assumptions. In the first case, for reconciliation to occur required “forgetting” about the past, and starting new life. The other one was more challenging. It demanded White people giving back to Black people that which they had taken from them, sometimes called “restorative justice”. There was a general feeling amongst the majority of Whites that discussing or addressing the wrongs of apartheid would open new wounds and then lead to racial conflict. The only way forward was just to ‘forget’ about the past and just ‘move’ forward. Nonetheless, continuing to report to the College Council in March 1982, Buchanan asserted:

It is not surprising, therefore, if each year we have to battle through these emotional reactions to a new life in Christ together. There are no slick or easy answers. Division is easy and takes little time and not much energy to achieve. Unity has to break past the inertia of indifference, to meet fear, suspicion and bitterness head on – and then to be tenacious enough not to let go at the first rebuff. Much of that is what we have, of necessity, had to face in [1981].

That Buchanan noted how every year the College had “to battle through these emotional reactions”, suggests the strain that the College was going through in trying to exist as a multiracial community. Yet, these efforts were also undermined by fear and suspicions of each other amongst the races. Racial isolation imposed by apartheid bred fear and suspicions. In light of these struggles, Buchanan felt justified to confound some of the critics' perceptions that in comparison to the other colleges such as

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<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*

Fedsem, St. Paul's College was a "spiritual" oasis removed from the stark realities of apartheid. It is almost as if the struggles that the College was going through became its credentials for Buchanan. He justified its position:

Let no one suggest we are an irrelevant pietistic college, happily ignoring the problems of the land. It is precisely because we are trying to see them within our own community and deal with them here, that we are both an uncomfortable and yet exciting group of people. Part of training for the ministry must surely be the process of confronting each other in the areas which divide and finding that new life in the Spirit which is the gift of our Lord Jesus. To experience even a glimpse of that here can give a priest a vision of a life time; frankly without that vision there is little which can truly motivate the ministry, for we will otherwise do little other than be content with keeping the plant going. One of my regrets is that while we do try to take the Black/White problems seriously, we do not have the same vision or urgency in matters ecumenical.<sup>105</sup>

It is striking that Buchanan considered racial confrontation as a necessary part of training. Sampson described how the sharply contrasting backgrounds were impinging on relations in the College. He asserted: "The communities that produced us Black students lived on in us just as those that had produced White students lived on in White students."<sup>106</sup> In other words, for Sampson, the interface of racially, culturally, socially, and politically diverse backgrounds that had raised and nurtured students started to bear on the students' relationships in the College.

It would therefore seem as if those forces were much stronger than the efforts which were being made to raise a racially integrated community. In their separate communities, apartheid structures and policies had raised White and Black communities to meet as strangers, and at the worst, as enemies. This began to impact their common life in the College. It started to undermine Buchanan's (and staff's) efforts of raising a multiracial community. Perhaps Gilmore Fry spoke for many other Black students when he described his experience thus: "[I]t was the first time that I had to mix with Whites and Blacks as equals."<sup>107</sup>

## Theologising in context

It was against this backdrop that some students appeared to start experiencing changes starting to take place in the society. In the late 1970s, Hess described St. Paul's College as "a place where [their] revolution was taking place".<sup>108</sup> He described broadly the dynamics of St. Paul's College in those years as follows:

The moment for change was getting more intense and increasing. In spite of the fact that St. Paul's did not have Liberation Theology and Black Theology in its curriculum as was the case with the Federal Seminary, nevertheless, through their lecturers, Le Feuvre and Buchanan started stirring up

<sup>105</sup> Warden's Report to the College Council, March 1982, AB 1363, S 21 (file 10), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, 1980-82, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>106</sup> Interview with Courtney Sampson, 11 November 2014, Stellenbosch.

<sup>107</sup> Interview with Gilmore Fry, 14 April 2014, St. Dominic's Church, Hanover Park.

<sup>108</sup> Interview with Raphael Hess, 27 March 2014, Malmesbury.

their students to reflect critically on the socio-political situation in the country. In the context of these lectures [Buchanan] got the students to start reflecting more critically on the socio-political issues that the country was facing. Though [Duncan Buchanan] wondered far and wide ... [he] was sort of an arc-type of a liberation theologian ... Duncan [Buchanan] would interpret the Old Testament text, [in my view] in liberation themes, and tried to contextualise – really being prophetic, and [he would] say “his country got to change”.<sup>109</sup>

The significance of Hess’s recollections lies in the fact that he said Le Feuvre and Buchanan now started to theologise in contextual themes where they connected theology to the themes of liberation. It would seem that Le Feuvre’s lectures on the Christians’ response to Marxism played an important role in stirring up students’ thinking on the current issues. Writing in his Warden’s letter on 10 September 1979, Buchanan stated that “Philip Le Feuvre [had] gained certain notoriety for his articles on Marxism in *Seek* (magazine)”.<sup>110</sup> It would seem that Le Feuvre’s lectures became so popular that it got the attention of the logbook scribe who under the headline ‘Philip’s working on communications’ wrote:

How to communicate the gospel to the Marxists ... That is why Philip Le Feuvre, 43, the cool grey professional who serves as the intelligent chief of the CPSA has been called upon to co-ordinate the contributions of men all over the world on this subject of how to communicate the gospel to the Marxists. Philip will present a report on this matter at a gathering in Bangkok next year.<sup>111</sup>

Le Feuvre’s critique of Marxism should also be viewed from a broader perspective. As we noted with regard to Suggit in Chapter 2, similarly, Le Feuvre’s critique in the 1980s took place during a period when Liberation Theology, influenced by the Marxist approach to socio-economic and political analysis, seemed to offer intellectual hope to Black people for liberation. Intellectually, Liberation Theology provided some Black people with tools to analyse and try to comprehend the oppressive structures of apartheid just as Black Theology and Black Consciousness had done in the 1960s. In challenging Marxism, thus it would appear that Le Feuvre was also critical of some aspects of Liberation Theology that leaned heavily on a Marxist approach. Writing to the author on 21 February 2018, Le Feuvre recalls that his engagement with Marxism derived from a paper that he had researched in 1978. The paper, he asserts, was “in preparation for a term course which [he] gave at Fuller School of World Mission, Pasadena, California, back in 1978, and thereafter [he had] headed up the research workshop on the subject for the Lausanne Conference at Pattaya, Thailand”.<sup>112</sup>

Nonetheless, perhaps to fill in the vacuum for the conspicuous absence of Liberation or Black Theology taught in other seminaries such as St. Peter’s College, Fedsem, the College introduced what it called “Applied Theology” in its curriculum. Applied Theology sought to relate theology to the socio-economic and political issues of the day in much the same way as Liberation Theology did. Buchanan became notorious for his phrase “theologising in the context”.<sup>113</sup> In this context, Hess recalled, Allan Boesak visited

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>110</sup> Warden’s Letter in *Doulos*, 10 September 1979, AB 1363, S21 (file 9), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>111</sup> Logbook, October 1979, AB 2568, C 1.11, 1976-86, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>112</sup> Personal communication with the author, 21 February 2018.

<sup>113</sup> Personal reminiscences, 1984-1987.

the College and presented a lecture on his book, *Farewell to Innocence*. His lecture and his presence, according to Hess, played an important role in making some students become even more conscious of the need to engage apartheid. Michael Worsnip, who was a student at Rhodes at that time, recalled that Boesak's lecture "was extremely powerful". He said: "White students asked questions about the communist threat. His answer was to point to the threat of apartheid, which we all seemed unaware of."<sup>114</sup>

## The general election in 1981

### Tension in the College

Finally, the year 1981 marked two decades of apartheid in the South African Republic. It was also the year of the general election, which took place in April.<sup>115</sup> The country was under the grip of a wave of strikes and student protests, while the arrests of those who struggled against apartheid continued. Unease amongst White people was increased by the new state of Zimbabwe, under the Marxist Robert Mugabe, which seemed to be doing fairly well. In this context the government started to initiate piecemeal reforms in Black education. These were met with the response that they did not go far enough.

It was against this backdrop that St. Paul's College entered another era in its history. Fry recalled that in the time running up to the election the atmosphere in the College was tense. He remembered that when word went around that one of the students was going to vote for the National Party, tension seemed to heighten. The issue on the mind of some students was: Do I vote? There was also the vexing issue of military conscription.<sup>116</sup> According to Fry, it was under these circumstances that Buchanan decided to address the College body, whose unity now seemed to hang in the balance. Contrary to the normal practice where he would address the student body in the Common Room, so Fry recalled, on this occasion, Buchanan addressed the students in the chapel.<sup>117</sup> According to Fry, it was a "trick", to get the students to "behave" themselves.<sup>118</sup> Meeting in the chapel was meant to put 'holy' pressure on the students to obey what Buchanan had to say to them. Although he did not recall this particular episode, however, Weeder said that he remembered that on occasions, especially driven by a crisis, Buchanan would call the students to the chapel to have in Weeder's words "fire-side" chats with them.<sup>119</sup> On that occasion, according to Weeder, Buchanan would say that he spoke to them "as a father spoke to the members of the family".<sup>120</sup>

The episode denotes the symbolic significance of space. The chapel was (is) a site configured with sacred power. Usually associated with experiencing God in worship and the "communication" of His word through a sermon (worship), a chapel provided very little room for an open critical response to College authorities,

<sup>114</sup> Personal communication with Worsnip, 15 June 2014.

<sup>115</sup> Hope, M. and Young, J. *The South Africa Churches in a Revolutionary Situation*. MaryKnoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1981, Epilogue.

<sup>116</sup> Interview with Gilmore Fry, 14 April 2014, St. Dominic's Church, Hanover Park.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>119</sup> Interview with Michael Weeder, 9 October 2014, Stellenbosch.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*

as it is a place where the preacher (God) speaks to the audience. Behind this issue lay a deeper one, namely of power dynamics and power relations. The students, members of the “Bishop’s familia” were expected to relate to Buchanan as his “spiritual sons”. The only possible explanation was that Buchanan was trying to pre-empt a possible explosion in the College in the volatile climate of the general election.

Breytenbach portrayed the tension that prevailed in the College. He recalled that Trevor Pearce went to a national party meeting where he asked President F.W. de Klerk why, as a Christian, he supported apartheid.<sup>121</sup> The episode described by Breytenbach was captured by the *Eastern Province Herald*. The reporter wrote:

A National Party Meeting addressed by the Minister of Mines and Mineral Affairs, Mr. F.W. de Klerk, was stunned into silence last night when a coloured man questioned the claim by the National Party that it was a Christian party ... “Jesus said we are now one. There are no Greeks, nor Jews – we are all one in Christ, yet the NP, which claims to be a Christian party, does not apply this”, he said. Several hecklers tried to shout him down, but Mr. Olckers and the Minister told them to keep quiet and to give the man the opportunity to put his questions ... Mr. De Klerk told the questioner that diversity was part of the creation of God, and that Jesus did not say there had to be one government for the whole world. “We do not deny that discrimination exists in South Africa, but the National Party is creating prosperity for all its people and is working to remove discrimination.”<sup>122</sup>

Breytenbach recalled that it was Trevor Pearce who had questioned Mr. F.W. de Klerk. In addition to confirming the newspaper report about the newspaper, he said people wanted to throw Pearce out of the meeting when De Klerk intervened.<sup>123</sup> The note by the logbook scribe, however, significantly suggests the extent to which some Black students were now prepared to directly challenge the apartheid regime in the community. It would suggest that some Black students of St. Paul’s College had moved from mere protests to actually taking on the government.

Mr. De Klerk’s response in using Christian symbols and theology to rationalise the ideology of apartheid is significant. State authorities tended to use the argument that racial diversity was natural and therefore, apartheid, or “separate development” as they called it, was justifiable on Scriptural grounds. The Scriptures were manipulated to justify an evil system of apartheid. Many in the White section of the Church bought into this argument. Besides the general election, however, the year 1981 also turned out to be a significant year for the Anglican Church. Philip Russell succeeded Burnett to become the Archbishop of Cape Town. Russell assumed leadership, which was intended to become transitional to that of Bishop Desmond Tutu.

<sup>121</sup> Personal correspondence, 22 May 2014.

<sup>122</sup> Logbook (a newspaper cutting titled, “Coloured questioner stuns Nat meeting” – a note says, “This was a group of St. Paul’s students! Ooh”), 1981, AB 2568, C. 1.11, 1976-86, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>123</sup> Telephone interview with Martin Breytenbach, 7 May 2014.

## Conclusion

The presence of Black students from 1977 posed a challenge to the College, which hitherto had taken for granted the use of sport facilities in their neighbouring educational institutions and recreation facilities in Grahamstown that were exclusively reserved for Whites. It raised tensions and sometimes conflict. Two major issues affected the life of White and Black students in the period between 1977 and 1981: racially segregated sport and recreation facilities in Grahamstown, and government residential permits. On the other hand, some Black students resisted the College's application for government residential permits for Black students. As it will be demonstrated in the next chapter, the tension that started building in 1981 would erupt in 1982.

## Chapter 5

### “A ‘Normal’ Community in an ‘Abnormal’ Society”<sup>1</sup> 1982-83

In the years 1982 to 1985, St. Paul’s College entered yet another significant socio-political era. The impulses of the national epoch-making events of 1976 and 1977 were still very much reverberating. The Soweto Uprising, followed by Steve Biko’s death, had militarised the youths almost throughout the country. To a degree, the Soweto Uprising and its aftermath defined White and Black relationships in a new dimension. Black youths became not only more assertive and more aggressive, but even militant in their attitude towards institutional racism. In turn, White people became more insecure, more suspicious, and scared of Black people.

Largely responding to these movements and the mounting resistance to the entrenchment of apartheid, the apartheid state increased its militarism, cross-border killings of the political activists, and relentless harassment of some clergy and political leaders. “By the 1980s a resurgence protest movement focused on the township councils that had been established to control and tax urban Blacks, and on the tricameral Constitution of 1983 with its separate White, Coloured, and Indian assemblies.”<sup>2</sup> South Africa was a polarised nation and Grahamstown was one of the boiling pots in the Eastern Cape. This formed the background against which Buchanan presented his Warden’s report to the College Council that year in March. It was a report of great significance.

### The crisis

In that report he referred to the eruption of a crisis in the College. He stated:

We went through a real crisis of leadership in the College. The members of staff were not at one, being too distracted in many ways. The students complained that I was too much away, (in fact no more than any other year, but it felt more because of their need to lean on someone) ... Whatever else, I suggested [in my last year’s report], was the cause [of the crisis], the [College] itself suffered from a crisis of leadership. The experience taught us much, not least that leadership is not something which can be taken for granted.<sup>3</sup>

1 Duncan Buchanan’s description of the period. End of 1982 Warden’s Report to the College Council (minute file, confidential), AB 2568, B 3, St. Paul’s Theological College, 1976-82, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

2 Elphick and Davenport, *Christianity in South Africa*, p. 387.

3 End of 1982 Warden’s Report to the College Council (minute file, confidential), AB 2568, B 3, St. Paul’s Theological College, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

Since 1965, this was the first time that a Warden of St. Paul's College had to report to the College Council about the occurrence of a crisis. Buchanan's admission of the crisis in leadership is significant: "Things had fallen apart; the centre could no longer hold ... Unity amongst the members of staff had broken down."

In this report, Buchanan also went further to assert: "[T]he Senior Student was, while good in many ways, too young and inexperienced for this job, and was consequently not able to give the sort of lead which we have usually had from the Senior Student."<sup>4</sup> Commenting on this episode in 2012, Le Feuvre said that "the situation was so difficult that any Senior Student would have felt out of his depth".<sup>5</sup> Le Feuvre's observation suggests the gravity of the crisis. Chris Ahrends was a (White) Senior Student from Cape Town in 1982. On 7 February 2014, Ahrends talked to the author. He responded to Buchanan's report with anger as follows:

I think, I felt, its history now, it's gone and Duncan [Buchanan], and you know; but it was archetypal of Duncan [Buchanan] to be unable to take the heat in the context of that crisis and to try to find somebody else as a scapegoat. You know, as head student [then], I take offence of that. I think it wasn't a fair reflection of the truth; [It was] his own; "a failure of [his] leadership to steer the College from early times, from the 1980s. He could have steered the College far more into the conversation of non-racialism ... those issues made the students dissatisfied ... Cape Town [students were] reacting to the Whiteness of the College. The question that [the students] often raised was: Why did Duncan [Buchanan] or [the College] keep on appointing White lecturers in a pristine White College?"<sup>6</sup>

In Ahrends' view, the absence of Black lecturers was probably the most conspicuous gap that implied the domination of White culture in the College. It was the core of the students' criticism. As the absence of Black lecturers seemed to confirm the marginalisation of Black students, so did other aspects of the life of the College. However, this ran into other cultural aspects of life in the College. Since the Anglican Church had admitted Black students in 1976, 1977, then again in 1979 and 1980, one would have thought that the Church leadership would have re-introduced Black members of staff as well. After all, the Church had had the courage to appoint Mbali on the staff in 1973, and since that time no other Black lecturer had been appointed.

In essence, the core of Ahrends' criticism was that the College authorities were not moving at all on the issue of transformation. No attempt was made to introduce cultural diversity. It would seem that it was a widespread criticism often made against the backdrop of the non-racial Anglican colleges of St. Peter's and St. Bede's. However, Wyngaardt recalled that the problem was exacerbated by the White lecturers (including Buchanan) not understanding Black people. They did not understand the issues that they faced and therefore were not able to deal with them as they arose.<sup>7</sup> In his analysis of the crisis, however, Buchanan attributed the last aspect of the problem to the existence of the diversity of the talented and gifted students who needed space to express them. Buchanan said:

4 End of 1982 Warden's Report to the College Council (minute file, confidential), AB 2568, B 3, St. Paul's Theological College, 1976-82, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

5 Interview with Philip Le Feuvre, 5 March 2012, Somerset West.

6 Interview with Chris Ahrends, 7 February 2014, Century City Mall, Cape Town.

7 Interview with Andrew Wyngaardt, 24 March 2014, Kraaifontein.

The last factor was that last year's final year class was one of the most talented and amazingly competent groups of people I have ever come across in this College. The result was that, with their burgeoning talent and leadership, gifts really did not have enough space to express themselves – and so tended to turn inward, with some very fierce clashes of personality ensuing.<sup>8</sup>

It is very significant that Buchanan described this particular group of students as one of the most talented ever to attend the College. Buchanan's remarks on the character, conduct and lives of the students is also significant from another perspective. Under the socio-political circumstances of the time, it would seem as if Buchanan had not expected that this 'particular group of students' would take on the staff. It is unfortunate that Buchanan appear to reduce the struggles of these mature men merely to 'inward-looking attitudes' and 'a clash of personalities'.

Unlike the previous group of Black students, this 'talented group of students' were more mature. They were more articulate and forthright. That the College did not provide enough space to give expression to these talents and gifts suggests the existence of some structural weaknesses in the College. The College was unable to open up to the diversity of talents. Underlying this assertion was the issue of power struggle. The members of staff were unable to handle some of these students. Likewise, Buchanan's reference to fierce personality clashes amongst students also suggests the lack of adequate communication, not only amongst the students, but also the entire leadership of the College.

Commenting on this issue, Ahrends went further to reflect on some of the frustrations that he said Black students experienced. He highlighted the atmosphere which, in his view, gave rise to the frustrations of some Black students. He said:

The College was steeped in [the] White liberal ethos ... [hence] there was a lot of unhappiness among some of the Black guys from Cape Town. There was [also] resistance to the liberal ethos of [some White students who came from] the north of Johannesburg; there was [also] wariness that all the staff was White and male. What does that say about the [Anglican] Church? There had been a lot of discussion on social issues in the Common Room. Common Room meetings were very tense. And Duncan [Buchanan] was too scared to confront some of the racism [that was] going on in the College ... He was too scared to deal with the angry responses by some of the Black guys. [In the heat of the moment] some of the Johannesburg students said that they were going to leave [the College].<sup>9</sup>

Ahrends' claim that St. Paul's College was dominated by the White liberal ethos is noteworthy precisely because it would seem to reflect the general atmosphere in the Church at that time. As it will be highlighted later on, Douglas Torr, a student in 1985 and 1986, made a similar point. He observed that during his time in the College, some students from Johannesburg had come from the liberal parishes and hence wanted to minister to the army.<sup>10</sup> In this respect, it is also noteworthy recalling Weeder's criticism in the previous chapter that the Anglican Church and St. Paul's College by extension was under the domination of 'imperial ideology'. However, Ahrends also conceded that Buchanan was a man who

8 End of 1982 Warden's Report to the College Council (minute file, confidential), AB 2568, B 3, St. Paul's Theological College, 1976-82, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

9 Interview with Chris Ahrends, 7 February 2014, Century City Mall, Cape Town.

10 Interview with Douglas Torr, 12 June 2014, Bramley, Johannesburg.

“had tremendous pastoral care and tremendous gift of leadership”.<sup>11</sup> In spite of this, so he asserted, “leadership in the context of conflict wasn’t his game”.<sup>12</sup>

Speaking to this author in 2012, Le Feuvre concurred with the grievance raised by most of the former students that all lecturers were White.<sup>13</sup> Perhaps it was in an attempt to respond to this criticism that the same year (1982) Buchanan (the College) appointed Stella Bavier, a Singaporean with a Law degree. But Stella Bavier, in spite of having a ‘fair’ skin, was not Black neither was she White! For Wyngaardt, however, despite the fact that the “Whiteness” of the College was an issue, equally serious was the staff’s inability to handle Black students that exacerbated tensions. He recalled that “the staff didn’t understand [the Black students]”.<sup>14</sup> In response to a question on how the predominant White environment of St. Paul’s College affected the Black students, a former student from Cape Town in the years between 1980 and 1982 had this to say:

Whites conveyed the attitude that we owed it to them to be at St. Paul’s, they were doing us a favour. One year, a White student wanted to go to run the Comrade marathon, we said if he goes to do that – that meant that he was supporting apartheid policy. As a result of this he never went. One day I remarked during a lecture that Whites are racists; and they were very furious; and one student tried to assault me and I had to run out of class.<sup>15</sup>

Thus, some Black students tried to challenge what in their perception were racist attitudes of some White students. The leadership of the College was not able to handle effectively incidents like these. This then increased frustrations amongst Black students. Yet, according to this student, these incidents were engendered by White students’ attitude of superiority towards Blacks. He noted:

As Blacks, our experience was that White students conveyed the attitude that they could tolerate us only during the fellowship of worship in chapel – while in other aspects of the life of the College they were unquestionably looking down upon [us]. We felt very strongly and insisted that we needed to address the issues here in the College and not out there. We had a Black Caucus [forum], [where] we used to meet regularly.<sup>16</sup>

According to this student, one fundamental issue was the Black students’ experience of a sense of exclusion and marginalisation. Thus, he asserted:

When we arrived, St. Pauls’ was rigidly White. [Whites] dominated every aspect of the life of the College ... they marginalised us. I remember on one Easter Sunday where it was only Whites who were involved in the service; even reading the Scriptures Blacks were excluded that Sunday ... It was almost as if we did not exist. I marched out of the service.<sup>17</sup>

11 Interview with Chris Ahrends, 7 February 2014, Century City Mall, Cape Town.

12 *Ibid.*

13 Interview with Philip Le Feuvre, 5 March 2012, Somerset West.

14 Interview with Andrew Wyngaardt, 24 March 2014, Kraaifontein.

15 Interview with Anonymous, 14 May 2014, Cape Town.

16 *Ibid.*

17 *Ibid.*

Ahrends gave more details of what this particular student said he had experienced at St. Paul's College. He said:

I remember for example, an incident, it must have been in our final year, where there was a major celebration of the Eucharist ... I was in the altar party; my name was down [for duty]. When I arrived in the vestry at the chapel ... to get dressed, I noticed that every single member of the altar party was White; whether that was just an oversight, or a coincidence by the person who drew up the altar party list, I don't know ... The acolytes were White; the thurifer was White; the cross-bearer was White; the deacons were White, and the priest, the celebrant was White ... John Dyers was *furiosus*, and I saw it immediately and I think, I gave up my place [in the altar party]; so that kind of lack of consciousness, you know, lived in the College, and that's what the Black guys were really hurt ... there wasn't sensitivity. That kind of consciousness and sensitivity to Blacks wasn't there yet.<sup>18</sup>

Ahrends suggests that the marginalisation of Black students existed on the structural level, notably exclusion from participation in services, which was reinforced by White students' racist attitude. It is also significant that Ahrends refers to Dyers being furious precisely because Dyers was one of the main leaders amongst the Cape Town ordinands. He was the deputy head student working with the Senior Student, Chris Ahrends.<sup>19</sup>

Commenting on this episode in 2012, Steve Moreo, (current Bishop of the Diocese of Johannesburg), then the only Black student in 1982 and Philip Le Feuvre, a lecturer, attributed the crisis to the consequences of change in the racial composition of the College.<sup>20</sup> In that year, according to Moreo and Le Feuvre, for the first time the College had the largest number of "Coloured" students.<sup>21</sup> This group, mostly from Cape Town, became more politically vocal, radical and activist in orientation. This effectively changed the ethos of the College, which hitherto had been solely dominated by White lifestyle and thought.<sup>22</sup> During the weekly meetings held in the Common Room, Buchanan encouraged the students to express their views on the current social and political issues, some of the views by some "Coloured" students sounded extreme left-wing to the Whites, which tended to alienate the latter.

According to Ahrends, however, unlike students from other Dioceses, "[this group] of students [largely from Cape Town] were more willing to challenge the White guys and less willing to accept the status quo".<sup>23</sup> Even more critical for Ahrends, these students "were in the mould of Black Consciousness".<sup>24</sup> Equally frustrating, for these Black students, according to Ahrends, was the Evangelicals' and Charismatics' unwillingness to engage in socio-political issues. He put it thus:

18 Interview with Chris Ahrends, 7 February 2014, Century City Mall, Cape Town (emphasis in original audio text).

19 *Ibid.*

20 Interview with Philip Le Feuvre, 5 March 2012, Somerset West; Telephone interview with Steve Moreo, 27 March 2012.

21 *Ibid.*

22 *Ibid.*

23 Interview with Chris Ahrends, 7 February 2014, Century City Mall, Cape Town.

24 *Ibid.*

There were also too many streams of theology running through the College [espoused by various religious groups]. There were the Charismatics, Evangelicals and Liberals ... The Charismatic-oriented Evangelicals of the time weren't very socially engaged. I think that was the cause for frustrations by some of the Black guys.<sup>25</sup>

As noted in Chapter 2, the Charismatic Movement had started to impact St. Paul's College since 1972 and in the 1980s it was at its zenith. Ahrends also suggested that the non-engagement in socio-political issues of the Evangelicals and Charismatics was one of the issues that tended to alienate some Black students from Cape Town. It was in this context, Ahrends noted, that discussion on apartheid, which was taking place outside, now started to impact on life in the College. Black students, desiring to meet on their own with a view to presenting their grievances, suggest three issues: a feeling of alienation from their White counterparts; a feeling of insecurity amongst White people; and finally, to some degree, a lack of sufficient communication between the two groups. In other words, Black students attempted to "empower" themselves in a situation they were feeling "disempowered".

## White identity and Black identity

Wyngaardt recalled that one of the frustrations that some Black students experienced in the College was the domination of English culture, language, and ethos in their lives.<sup>26</sup> In the South African context of the 1980s, a very thin line seemed to exist between cultural and political issues. Cultural issues always had some political orientations, and vice versa. For Wyngaardt, the situation was abnormal in the sense that there were lots of frustrations and pain.<sup>27</sup> In his view, the major issue related to "Black" identity and culture in the predominantly White college.

In a predominantly White cultural context, Black students coming from apartheid educational background felt very much estranged and sometimes were frustrated. For instance, Wyngaardt cited an example of the difficulty of having to write an Ethics essay. He stated that the students struggled with concepts in Ethics lectures – very much alien to their cultural backgrounds. This would not be appreciated enough by some of the lecturers and would often be misunderstood.<sup>28</sup> Consequently, Wyngaardt concluded that these issues led to even tensions between a student and a lecturer.<sup>29</sup>

On the other hand, according to Ahrends, Counsell and Wyngaardt, the Black students felt that not only did the White students and White members of staff not understand Black people, but they were insensitive to the issues which affected them.<sup>30</sup> For instance, Ahrends recalled that "the Black guys told the Whites that there were not listening ... Blacks felt the Whites were very insensitive to the issues that

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> Interview with Andrew Wyngaardt, 24 March 2014, Kraaifontein.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> Interview with Chris Ahrends, 7 February 2014, Canal Walk, Cape Town; Interview with Garth Counsell, 20 March 2014, Zonnebloem; Interview with Andrew Wyngaardt, 24 March 2014, Kraaifontein.

affected Blacks".<sup>31</sup> Charles Williams concluded that, therefore living in this predominantly White context, Black students struggled with their identity.<sup>32</sup> Wyngaardt elaborated on this issue. He further asserted:

[We were] being forced to live [in a context which was] alien to us, [which we] had no control of ... [We had] to abide by the rulings of the other race group, the context where you were forced to speak English ... to conform to a British colonial system ..., otherwise you [were] out. This [system] ignored one's own cultural background ... There was no opportunity given to [us] to be ourselves ... In this context other students took the position that 'I am happy to become White just for the moment ... [That was] the only way to survive, to obey ... and some students did that. [They] were willing to make sacrifices. [They] took the position that "I am willing to become White just to please the powers that be ... You had to get the grades and pass your diploma".<sup>33</sup>

Wyngaardt raised very critical issues. He, like others, did not feel that they belonged to the College. On the other hand, the fact that Wyngaardt and others continued to live in the College, meant that they had come to accommodate themselves to White cultural domination. According to Wyngaardt, Black students felt the pressure to conform, failing which, they understood that somehow they risked being told to leave. These students felt that they had limited 'power' to contest racial issues but seemed to be overwhelmed by the system, which was much bigger than them.

Antonio Gramsci, a political scientist, theorised this dimension of power as hegemonic, which he argued was enforced by the apparatuses of a dominant ideology of the ruling class.<sup>34</sup> It is the state of being or feeling under some hold of a power over which, though one tries to contest, one somehow feels powerless to do so, since this form of power operates in the realm of 'false consciousness'.<sup>35</sup> In this case, some Black students were somehow aware of the power of the College (Warden and the Church leadership). Somehow overwhelmed by this power, however, they could not directly challenge the system; they felt that they had to put up with it. Some students were very much conscious that during the bi-annual assessment, a bad report from the members of staff could lead one's Bishop deferring ordination or even not getting ordained altogether.<sup>36</sup>

The possibility of suspension for not conforming tended to create tension and alienation.<sup>37</sup> Subjugation to White culture was inevitably an issue of power. It would appear that the students perceived that this power was institutionalised within the structures, ethos and systems of the College. Even more critical, underlying this 'protest statement' lay an unarticulated underlying issue – the denial of their Black dignity and humanity. Underlying this was the issue of human rights, which was not even in the vocabulary of the apartheid government. The context where Black students had to embrace White cultural values and

31 Interview with Chris Ahrends, 7 February 2014, Century City Mall, Cape Town.

32 Interview with Charles Williams, 27 March 2014, Hopefield.

33 Interview with Andrew Wyngaardt, 24 March 2014, Kraaifontein.

34 Heywood, A. *Political Ideas and Concepts: An Introduction*. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1994, p. 100; Comaroff, John and Comaroff, Jean. *Of Revelation and Revolution: Christianity, Colonisation and Consciousness in South Africa*. Chicago: University Chicago Press, 1991.

35 Heywood, *Political Ideas and Concepts: An Introduction*, 1994, p. 100.

36 Interview with Andrew Wyngaardt, 24 March 2014, Kraaifontein.

37 *Ibid.*

traditions, seemed to negate Black culture and identity. Non-affirmation of their cultural and social identity generated resentment and anger, which found expressions in tensions. They felt excluded, not embraced, even as they themselves had embraced White culture, traditions, and values.

Charles Williams went further to spell out exactly how the experience personally affected their lives. Williams referred to his and other Black students' experiences of the elocution classes.<sup>38</sup> He recalled that the College had hired a White lady to teach [some] Black students how to speak English words with the "right" English pronunciation.<sup>39</sup> Recalling his experiences, Williams said that with his Afrikaans pronunciation, he struggled to pronounce the word "with" with the "correct" English accent that his teacher required, and this exasperated the English teacher, who according to Williams, insisted that he spoke with what she determined was the "correct" English accent.<sup>40</sup> In his view, the manner in which the teacher insisted on what she regarded as the "correct" English accent had racial overtones. For Williams, such an experience was frustrating, and consequently they "objected to that thing; it was stopped".<sup>41</sup>

Weeder said that while he appreciated speech training as a necessary part of training for the ministry, he did not like the patronising tendencies and racist attitudes of some of the teachers during classes. He related some of his experiences thus:

[I remember] when I had to attend elocution lessons in my first year, you know you ... [were] very hesitant ... to critique and engage authority in the Anglican Church at that time because the enemy was outside. The enemy was the Afrikaner White ... It took a while ... to [articulate ... your pain], and so it was for the cause that, particularly, us Black people, had to work on our voice, our diction, and our projection of voice. I accepted that as a necessary part of our ... [priestly] formation. As a preacher, and teacher, development of communication [skills] was a necessary part of training for the proclamation [of the gospel] ... I accept[ed] it ... but I remember in class, in my first lecture, [the teacher] asked me to say a word, and I kept saying it, but in a way that she was offended.<sup>42</sup>

For Weeder and other Black students, the struggle entailed how to find the appropriate English words to articulate their feelings, and even frustration about issues that affected them. To him, lessons in speech therapy reflected English (Anglican) cultural hegemony precisely because of the attitude of the teacher. Weeder and Williams seemed to have realised that there was more to the speech lessons than just speech therapy. Weeder continued to relate his experiences as follows:

Then I said very gently and courteous: "Mam, you know – where I come from, if I go back sounding like an English man, people won't listen to me." And I said: "You know, in my culture, my mother would say to me, "*Jy praat like binnemonds*."<sup>43</sup> And so I said I want to learn to articulate and how to use my voice, and then she pulled herself upright and she said: "Young man, there is no way that a swathe-faced individual like you would sound like an English man." I don't know what "swathe-faced"

38 Interview with Charles Williams, 27 March 2014. Hopefield.

39 *Ibid.*

40 *Ibid.*

41 *Ibid.*

42 Interview with Michael Weeder, 9 October 2014, Stellenbosch.

43 Weeder translated this Afrikaans phrase as "You gobble your words"; Jackson translated this as "swallowing ones words when speaking".

meant but I knew it wasn't a compliment. But then within that I was able to go to Duncan [Buchanan] and said: "Look, I think this thing doesn't seem to be right for me. I am not here to be changed in terms of my identity; I want my identity to be enriched, but I don't want my identity to be taken away from me because – the little identity I have, the awareness I have is being undermined by this." And he listened to me. She was replaced by someone who was equally racist but not as overt as this one.<sup>44</sup>

Underlying this issue, was another one of power relations that surfaced; that is, Weeder versus the speech therapist and, by extension, Buchanan. It was not just an issue of identity, in which language and culture are embedded. More critically, it entailed the issue of human dignity; the 'worth' of the 'personhood' of Weeder. Weeder was able to 'challenge' the therapist, resist 'British hegemony', precisely because he had been 'empowered' by Marxist ideological 'tools'.

The ideological lens enabled Weeder to interpret, analyse, and critique his socio-political and religious environment and then act. Weeder put it like this:

Within that [context] you had to figure out a political environment and with the background of political activism. It gave you the lens [for the] struggle and analysis ... to look at the society into which now I stepped, which made it very difficult, because as Black students, we were also divided along racial and cultural identities ... I became more connected with guys from Soweto ... with a background of activism ... [Nonetheless] as Blacks we had a common sense of alienation.<sup>45</sup>

There is a sense of ambivalence here. For Weeder, his possession of tools of socio-political analysis was both a privilege and pain. These tools made him more aware of the "oppressive system", but also to understand his position in the College as a Black student. Issues such as this, according to Wyngaardt, "caused tension, and this caused identity crisis", for, in his view, "jokes one would tell in Afrikaans would not sound the same in English". According to Wyngaardt, "it heightened suspicion". Wyngaardt concluded, asserting that "in my time, St. Paul's College was very much a boiling pot".<sup>46</sup>

In another context, Steve Moreo recalled that his struggles in the College were on two fronts: coming from a Tswana background, where he had been socialised into believing that a White person was superior to a Black person, and his school background of Bantu Education, which tended to constrain him academically and socially.<sup>47</sup> Di Buchanan recalled that "English classes in [the College] had helped students such as Steve Moreo, whose educational background of education was not very good ... to the extent that he was now fluent in English".<sup>48</sup> Thus, the issue of the predominance of White culture in the College formed the background of the racial crisis, which in turn had been triggered by the meeting of some Black students, the gathering normally understood as the "Black Caucus".

44 Interview with Michael Weeder, 9 October 2014, Stellenbosch.

45 *Ibid.*

46 Interview with Andrew Wyngaardt, 24 March 2014, Kraaifontein.

47 Telephone interview with Steve Moreo, 27 March 2012.

48 Interview with Di Buchanan, 12 June 2014, New Town, Johannesburg.

## The “Black Caucus”

In his own words, Buchanan noted that what precipitated the problem was:

Ostensibly the desire of the Black Students to have a meeting together to formulate their grievances and to find some sort of clarity amongst themselves, and was held with my approval and blessing. This sort of sectional meeting had never been held before, and the Whites felt very threatened – and reacted in a very insecure way. Things escalated from there – the report of the Blacks was very balanced and low key – but feelings ran high. I tried on one occasion to put things in perspective, but nobody heard. I was basically accused of being too White and too Black and found the best work I could do was on a one to one basis.<sup>49</sup>

The critical question that the students sought to address was their attempt to position themselves as a force seeking to transform the College. It also seems to indicate that they did not feel socially integrated into the life of the College. Somehow, they saw themselves as on the periphery of the life of the College. On the other hand, the reaction of the White students also shows the extent to which they did not understand their fellow students. Likewise, the fact that the White students felt threatened and reacted in an insecure way suggests their estrangement from Black people. There was a big gap between them.

Gilmore Fry<sup>50</sup> was Senior Student at St. Paul’s College in 1983. He had been there in the previous year when the racial crisis erupted. In his view, the Black students had met to define their role in the community. In 2014, he recalled part of his experience as follows:

The Black students met some time at the end of first term while single students went home. These were married students ... It was during the break, which could have been after Easter in 1982, during that vacation time ... [We had met] to discuss the critical question: What is our role here in this community? When the White students heard that [the Black students] had met in their absence, it did not go down well with them ... they thought it was an anti-White caucus. There were suspicions, accusations, frustrations ... Gone was this thing of [raising a non-racial] community. It was good for me personally to understand the frustrations of people of colour and the fear of Whites ... It was very difficult because we couldn’t just find each other ... [Some] students were about to call their Bishops ... [as they were thinking of leaving the College].<sup>51</sup>

Gilmore Fry,<sup>52</sup> Chris Ahrends,<sup>53</sup> Andrew Wyngaardt,<sup>54</sup> and Charles Williams<sup>55</sup> appeared to concur that the issue that precipitated the crisis was the White students’ reaction to the meeting held by some Black married students over Easter Holidays, which excluded them. While Williams and Wyngaardt recalled that Black students operated as a “Black Caucus” in the College,<sup>56</sup> Fry stated that the Black Caucus was

49 End of 1982 Warden’s Report to the College Council (minute file, confidential), AB 2568, B 3, St. Paul’s Theological College, 1976-82, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

50 Apartheid government designated his racial group as “Coloured”.

51 Interview with Gilmore Fry, 14 April 2014, St. Dominic’s Church, Hanover Park.

52 *Ibid.*

53 Interview with Chris Ahrends, 7 February 2014, Century City Mall, Cape Town.

54 Interview with Andrew Wyngaardt, 24 March 2014, Kraaifontein.

55 Interview with Charles Williams, 27 March 2014, Hopefield.

56 *Ibid.*

not a formally constituted group of Black students who were anti-White students. Rather, it entailed Black students coming together occasionally and informally. Weeder said that they formed the Black Caucus "to assert their identity, ... just as Rhodes University had a Black Organisation".<sup>57</sup> Wyngaardt recalled that the idea of Black Caucus had its origin in the Diocese of Cape Town.<sup>58</sup>

Writing in connection with the election of Bishop Tutu as Archbishop of Cape Town, John Allen asserted that the "Black Solidarity Group had started in Cape Town [and] was responsible for forwarding Tutu to be considered Archbishop of Cape Town ... holding regular meetings in Mitchells Plain".<sup>59</sup> This idea rose in the context of the Challenge Groups in the late 1970s. They sought to create some space for the participation of Black members and clergy in the Church structures dominated by Whites. Wyngaardt outlined the objectives and the consequences of the Black Caucus as follows:

To discuss issues ... [what we encountered in the College, and] to affirm one another [in a situation where [we] found to be alienating ... [where] things were abnormal, and then [we had] to deal with the abnormality ... [It was a forum] to caucus issues [and then if agreed upon, to send] delegations to [Duncan Buchanan]. ... [It] brought a lot of pain. [There were] lots of pain and frustrations, because one was forced to abide by the White ruling [race]. The question would occur [who am I] really here? ... You were caught [up in a very difficult situation].<sup>60</sup>

It would seem as if this group of students was highly politically aware or "conscientised". Apparently, these students were trying to organise themselves as a "pressure" group or "a solidarity group" with a view to challenge what they saw as Whites supremacy in the life of the College. Wyngaardt further related some of his experience in the following words:

In our understanding, the fundamental question was: what had to be done? There were no ... alternatives in our life in the College ... You had to toe the line. Therefore, you were caught up, otherwise you are out ... finding yourself not completing your studies [as one was aware of] the assessment [that took place] every six months. [This] was a challenge that [one was] facing all the time. People continued to be in a state of frustration ... You were forced to leave your mother tongue and speak English ... You lived with a foreign identity.<sup>61</sup>

For Wyngaardt the students were experiencing tension in their lives of on one hand, having to live as Black students, with their [Afrikaans] culture, and of having to try to conform to the dominant English culture in the College on the other. It is quite clear, according to Wyngaardt's experience, that rather than enhancing racial integration, the predominant English culture at St. Paul's College tended to entrench racial differences. He put it as follows:

Even though we were [trying] [to] create a [multiracial] community for ourselves, [there were difficulties]. [We, Blacks were supposed to] ... perceive [ourselves] as being on the same level as ... Whites, [but then in reality] ... one had the experience to see oneself as not equal to Whites. You

57 Interview with Michael Weeder, 9 October 2014, Stellenbosch.

58 Interview with Andrew Wyngaardt, 24 March 2014, Kraaifontein.

59 Allen, *Rabble-Rouser for Peace, the Authorised Bibliography for Desmond Tutu*, pp. 263-264.

60 Interview with Andrew Wyngaardt, 24 March 2014, Kraaifontein.

61 *Ibid.*

were forced [to embrace] English [culture]. The College was structured [along the lines] of British colonial structure; and we were forced into that context ... The only way to survive in that situation, so, I discovered, was to accept their norms and standards; and then you are ok, and fine. You are not worrying about your background [i.e. culture], your own situation, and I think some students said: "I am happy for the time [being] to become White." They were willing to make sacrifices.<sup>62</sup>

Wyngaardt made a very crucial point. For three years of their training, the Black students lived in the context where they were required, or expected to believe that they were 'equal' to White students. However, experiences on the personal level of individual students appeared to be at variance with what in fact was experienced in the community. For Wyngaardt and some Black students, embracing White culture in the College was traumatising. As long as they remained within the walls of St. Paul's College, it was fine; however, once they left the College, they soon were reminded of how far apart they were from their fellow White students. To an extent, life in the College was too superficial to some of them. This experience tended to alienate some Black students.

As it were, under these circumstances Buchanan found himself caught in-between the cross-fire "basically [being] accused of being too White [by Black students] and too Black [by White students] ...".<sup>63</sup> Then finally Buchanan noted in his report:

Crisis tended to follow crisis – there were flare-ups – people were not hearing or indeed listening and the atmosphere was very strained. In all this, there were students who simply refused to be bullied into taking sides – and who very effectively got on and moved away from polarisation to a new and a loving unity in Our Lord Jesus. Time and again we had to face over-sensitivities. I was accused of being too weak, too overbearing, too silent, too interfering, too everything. Generally, I kept silent publically and spent many hours in prayer and often fasting as well. Ultimately, we had a last flare-up right towards the end of the year, at which I was able to say something which brought people to penitence and the year ended on a good and loving note.<sup>64</sup>

Fry highlighted the nature of the tension of the situation that Buchanan referred to. In his view, it centred on human relationships, understanding of one another's cultural and political background. He related the rest of the story as follows:

White students used to think that there was no problem in the College ... They would say: "We have the Eucharist together and share the peace together." "We smile at one another, what is your problem?" And the students of colour would say: "Just because you see a smiling face, it doesn't mean all is well ... It doesn't matter that we share peace together and smile. There [was] no problem." What's the problem? In response to the White students, Black students would argue saying: "[No], we are not doing fine because we are not being heard. Just because you see a smiling face it doesn't mean that everything is well." Whites would say: "We have been sent here to study theology and that's what we must do." And so the critical question was, how do we make these people understand our feelings? How [can we take the College's] understanding to a deeper level?<sup>65</sup>

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>63</sup> End of 1982 Warden's Report to the College Council, AB 2568, B 3, St. Paul's Theological College, 1976-82, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>65</sup> Interview with Gilmore Fry, 14 April 2014, St. Dominic's Church, Hanover Park.

Two conflicting perceptions of reality emerged. White students had come to merely study theology with very little connection with socio-political context. It was a theology that was "spiritualised", a theology unconnected to the realities of apartheid. On the other hand, for Black students, their study of theology was informed by their first-hand experiences of racial oppression, which they now sought to bear on their studies. In other words, according to Fry, for Black students the issue was much deeper than mere sharing the exchange of the "kiss of peace" in the Eucharistic fellowship. It entailed understanding the Black students' experiences of apartheid, injustice which led to frustration and anger, which they felt needed to be addressed. In fact, it entailed their dignity and humanity. So Fry further asserted: "The topic couldn't be exhausted in 2 hours (about 20 students in one room), and [we] only met once."<sup>66</sup>

To some White students, Black students meeting alone would have confirmed in them the apartheid government propaganda of *swart gevaar*, "Black danger" or "Black threat". The apartheid regime portrayed Black people as a menace to White rule and their "livelihood". It was this ideological view that drove Black and White races far apart. This psyche and perception could have influenced the White students to feel that in their midst they were exposed to "Black danger".

However, Black students meeting together was a strategic attempt to assert their power, 'empower' themselves to deal with issues that made them appear as if they were "aliens" in the College. White students saw that immediately. More critical, underlying the tensions was the fundamental issue of the power struggle – Black students seeking to reverse relations of White superiority, socialised through apartheid structures and policies. In this power struggle, to some degree, some White students were trying to resist that. Fry highlighted the context in which the crisis irrupted. He asserted:

The meeting was the Black students' attempt to define their position in the in much the same way as the Coloured members of the NGK had done in the NGK. The thinking then was that at least the Coloured members in the NGK knew where they stood with the White members of the NGK ... The Black students were trying to position themselves in relation to their White mates ... One possible explanation for the angry reaction of the White students was the context in which fear reigned as the ANC was in exile as a banned organisation.<sup>67</sup>

Seemingly, developments in the Dutch Reformed Church (NGK) in Cape Town seemed to inspire or encourage the Cape Town students' action. Fry located the challenges that the Black students were experiencing in the historical context of the College, which in his view had a bearing on the racial tensions that had flared up. He asserted:

I know that the Constitution and Canons in 1902 the Constitution of the Church of the Province of Southern Africa (CPSA) said that in 1902 ground was set aside for the training of the European men for the ordained ministry. We had a situation where Bob Demur was sent by his Bishop to train in Zonnebloem and not St. Pauls' to train in the truth is he couldn't come to St. Pauls because it was only for Whites – His Bishop said that he needed to be trained in another context. Apparently White ordinands didn't have to be trained in another context; they were trained at St. Pauls; – but the truth is he could not go to St. Pauls because it was for Whites only – I remember one of our

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*

ordinands saying that at least the Coloured members in the NGK [knew] their position with regard to the NGK.<sup>68</sup>

Fry's reference to the early colonial history of St. Paul's College and to the National Party in the same context suggests that the Black students were becoming more critical of the history of the College, which was tainted by colonialism and apartheid. He (and perhaps others), were very conscious that they were studying in a College that had been defined by the colonial legacy and apartheid policy. His reference to the Constitution that stipulated that the College had been founded to train solely European men and Bob Demur's experience, would seem to have contributed to the Black students' estrangement.

However, Fry highlighted what seemed to have been the immediate context which could have strengthened the Black students' action. In his view, the meeting was the Black students' attempt to define their position in much like the same way as the "Coloured" members of the NGK had done in the NGK.<sup>69</sup> Fry implied that the thinking then was that at least the "Coloured" members in the NGK knew where they stood in relation to their White counterparts in that Church. Hence, according to Fry, the Black students were trying to position themselves in relation to their White classmates.<sup>70</sup> Fry further asserted that one possible explanation for the angry reaction of the White students was the context in which fear reigned as the ANC was in exile as a banned organisation.<sup>71</sup>

The 1982 racial crisis in the College needs to be put into a national context. Bob Clarke noted that the African National Congress characterised the years 1982 and 1986 as the years of the "Total Onslaught", the final struggle against the White government and apartheid. In 1982, the Archbishop of Cape Town, Philip Russell warned that unless there was "radical change [of government policy] there would be increasing church/state confrontation which would pressurise the government to respond with increasing brutal force".<sup>72</sup> He further noted that "there were detentions without trial, and in Lent 1982 refugees from cross-roads camped in St. George's Cathedral in Cape Town. The Provincial Synod, meeting in Port Elizabeth that year under his presidency, condemned apartheid as totally "unchristian, evil and a heresy"; the mixed marriages and Immorality Act, resettlement of people.<sup>73</sup> Indirectly or directly, these events would not have left the College unaffected. It was against this tense situation that Ahrends would conclude: "[A]ll the issues that the country was going through ... tumbled in the College."<sup>74</sup>

In my view, the crisis that occurred in 1982 also raised a number of interrelated critical issues; the influence of the background of the ordinands selected for coming to the College for training, the criteria used for selection, and the personal motives of the ordinands for seeking ordination. Even more critical, the role of Bishops (and other leaders) in the decisions they made in choosing particular ordinands and why they chose them. Nonetheless, the processes of selection had to do with more other deeper issues

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>72</sup> Clarke, *Anglicans Against Apartheid*, p. 384.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> Interview with Chris Ahrends, 7 February 2014, Century City Mall, Cape Town.

which cannot be sufficiently dealt with within the ambit of this study. In this respect, it would seem that with very few instances, students would not have been deliberately chosen for their radical political views or political activism. Certainly some of the Black ordinands who had come from Cape Town who had started at St. Paul's College in 1980 were a unique crop of students.

## The College and the wider community

One of the concerns that some students raised in the 1980s, was that the College was not very involved in some national activities that occurred in the "Coloured" and Black townships. Wyngaardt, for instance, recalled that St. Paul's College did not reflect the context of the Eastern Cape, which was politically volatile. In his view, "there was never any effort to try contextualise training ... where we [were] ... to relate our training to African culture".<sup>75</sup> Williams, a contemporary of Wyngaardt, expressed similar sentiments.<sup>76</sup> He stressed that a gap existed between life in the College and the townships in Grahamstown. In particular, he recalled that "there was also some frustration that while June 16 (Soweto Uprising) and 21st of March (Sharpeville) were celebrated in the township, these dates were never observed in the College".<sup>77</sup> "[The College] was almost like a dormitory."<sup>78</sup> He further asserted that "in spite of the College not getting invited to the township, there were many times when I was a guest speaker or Mike Weeder was a speaker".<sup>79</sup> Then Williams concluded, saying:

We created a good understanding with some of the Black people in the township who were Anglicans, who were also brought to the College on Friday night so that they could also experience to live on the other side of the fence. Through that we created friendship ... I am still in touch with some of them.<sup>80</sup>

Williams recalled the extent of his involvement with the township as follows:

Duncan [Buchanan] tried to be democratic but he didn't succeed ... that was reminiscent of how Whites used to rule ... We persistently brought the Black agenda to him. For example, [I asked him if he could] make one room available in the College for young people in the township to learn English and Mathematics? ... Bio and history ... It took him a long time to say yes and sometimes I just ignored him.<sup>81</sup>

Some contemporaries of Williams, such as Weeder, testified to Williams' activism – his close involvement with Black communities in Grahamstown. In spite of this engagement, however, in Williams' view there existed a major gap in the College's academic life, namely, the absence of a theory of social or missional engagement. He recalled that it was in light of this disjuncture that one day he "confronted" Le Feuvre, and asked him: "What other kinds of theology can we learn [in the College]?"<sup>82</sup> Le Feuvre is

75 Interview with Andrew Wyngaardt, 24 March 2014, Kraaifontein.

76 Interview with Charles Williams, 27 March 2014, Hopefield.

77 *Ibid.*

78 *Ibid.*

79 *Ibid.*

80 *Ibid.*

81 *Ibid.*

82 *Ibid.*

said to have responded that “there must be an alternative theology”.<sup>83</sup> The fact that both of them did not directly mention but implied Black Theology, could suggest the extent to which the system at St. Paul’s College constrained them. The fact that Williams raised questions about the nature of theology that was being taught in the College, illustrate the extent to which the College was seen to be part of the status quo. Apartheid had affected the core of the lives of the people.

## The impact of a race-based education

The impact of apartheid had been so divisive in the “Coloured” communities, especially in the Cape, to the extent that some people considered themselves as “English-speaking” in contrast to the “Afrikaans-speaking” “Coloureds”. Thus, some of the “Coloured” students that came to St. Paul College tended to reflect these distinctions. The so-called “English-speaking” “Coloured” considered some private schools in Grahamstown as worthy of their status.<sup>84</sup> However, these private schools were too expensive to match with the allowances that the students were receiving. Buchanan felt that he had an obligation specially to assist with school fees for the children from these families to attend these schools.

In his response to Archbishop Burnett, Buchanan suggested that it was worthwhile for the sake of the dignity of the children, but equally important to him, it was “a way to break the stranglehold of apartheid, and I am all in favour of that!”.<sup>85</sup> For Buchanan, by equipping “Coloured” children with good education, the Church was resisting apartheid, whose objective was to enforce inferior education and determine forever the social standing of the people. However, Buchanan’s humanitarian concerns seemed to create a precedent that alarmed Archbishop Philip Russell. In his letter of 29 October 1982 to Buchanan, Russell had raised this as a concern – that Buchanan was creating a precedent for others in terms of the financial demands and the implications that this would have upon students returning to Cape Town.<sup>86</sup>

## Life within us

Ministry to wives of students constituted a critical aspect of College life. Charmian Le Feuvre was one of the teachers of wives of students in the years 1977-1985. She recalled how apartheid had affected her life and how living at St. Paul’s College was challenging her personally. She asserted:

I think apartheid was so much part of the society that particularly Whites perhaps didn’t always think through what it was doing to other people. And I think yes, St. Paul’s did challenge me in all sorts of areas and made my eyes open to understand what people were struggling with that I took for granted. And yet I was very aware what we as a College were standing against, and I wanted to see it to go, and I didn’t at any time approve of it; but without realising it I went along with it just because

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>84</sup> Informal discussions with Austen Jackson, 18 July 2014.

<sup>85</sup> See Letter, Buchanan to Burnett, 29 October 1982, AB 1363, S 21 (file 10), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, 1980-82, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>86</sup> See Letter, Russell to Buchanan, 29 October 1982, AB 1363, S 21 (file 10), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, 1980-82, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

that's how things are. I benefitted from it, you know. However, sometimes it was little things like – we can't go to that movie-house [from which] Blacks were barred ... Though very little, very small, it was a gesture. It didn't knock over any pillars – but like [the] Berlin wall, every little chip may have been part of what eventually changed; but I was a product of my culture and race. I had blind spots, even though I grew up in Zimbabwe where my father stood for justice, against Ian Smith, stood for fairness. He didn't like the South African government but even so I took things for granted.<sup>87</sup>

It is significant to hear the admission of Le Feuvre that people like her 'benefitted' from apartheid. More importantly, it is significant to hear about her personal journey of crossing racial boundaries of which she said she had experienced in the College. Le Feuvre's comparison of apartheid to the Berlin wall is significant, precisely because both stood for oppression and alienation. Even more significant is Le Feuvre's point on the subtlety of the ideology of apartheid through propaganda in socialising her into the system.

During apartheid, nearly on all levels of society, White people were shielded from witnessing the brutality that the apartheid state unleashed on Black people. Through the brainwashing of propaganda in the churches and political spaces, to a greater degree, apartheid had become embedded in their psyche, their "consciousness". Hence, many White people had come to legitimise apartheid to the extent that perhaps they did not "fully comprehend" how it alienated Black people, how it dehumanised them and robbed their identity and dignity. In the late 1980s, recognising the extent to which White people were in bondage to apartheid, the Institute for Contextual Theology (ICT) started running programmes that were designed to 'set free' Whites<sup>88</sup> like Le Feuvre. It was a special ministry to White people, geared to counteract government propaganda.<sup>89</sup> This is an issue that I elaborate on in Chapter 7.

## The impact of the Group Areas Act

### The residence permit

In 1982, the issue of permits, which since 1980 had been affecting relations between the students and Church leadership, was once again discussed in the College Council. It was one of the issues that had precipitated the racial crisis. Some Black students had asked: Why would the Church have to apply for the permit behind their backs? These were moral issues that appeared to weigh heavily on the minds of some Black students. The matters raised with the Warden by the Department of Community Development were explained and noted. The Warden was asked to write a letter to the Regional Representative of the Department of Community Development as a first step towards rationalising the situation.<sup>90</sup>

87 Interview with Philip Le Feuvre and Charmian Le Feuvre, 9 May 2014, Gordon's Bay.

88 Report on the Institute for Contextual Theology Workshop. "The White Christian Community as a Site of Struggle", Lumko, 2-4 June. Papers loaned to the author by Michael Worsnip.

89 *Ibid.*

90 Minutes of the Ordinary Council of St. Paul's College Council, 1 March 1982, AB 2568, B 3, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.



DEPARTEMENT VAN GEMEENSKAPSONTWIKKELING  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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1982-04-08

Sir

OCCUPATION OF NON-WHITE STUDENTS AT ST. PAUL'S THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE, GRAHAMSTOWN

Your letter dated 2 March 1982 in reply to the Department's Regional Representative's correspondence to your office in connection with the above, refers.

As the contents of the letter dated 22 December 1981 and addressed to the personal assistant to the Archbishop of Cape Town re=presents the official policy of Government it is unfortunately not possible to approve of a blanket concession as requested in the last paragraph of your letter.

It is noted with regret that despite requests that approval to accommodate non-White students on your campus should be obtained beforehand, conveyed to you as far back as 1979, yet another seven students some with relatives have again been admitted this year. Under the circumstances as stated in your letter the Department is prepared to condone the unauthorised occupation of the non-White students at present accommodated on the campus but this must be regarded as a final concession. Should it be ascertained that non-White students are again allowed without the required permission obtained beforehand the Department will have no alternative but to refer the matter to the responsible authorities.

Yours faithfully

J. S. BEUKES

DIRECTOR-GENERAL : COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

DEPARTEMENTELE DIREKTORATE EN AFDELINGS  
Gemeenskapontwikkeling Staatsdrukkery  
Owerheids hulpdienste Akteantore  
Grondsaak Opmetings en Kartering  
Pakkundige Dienste Landmeters-generaal

DEPARTMENTAL DIRECTORATES AND DIVISIONS  
Community Development Government Printing Works  
State Auxiliary Services Deeds Offices  
Land Affairs Surveys and Mapping  
Professional Services Surveyors-General

J.J. Beukes, writing to Buchanan on 8 April 1982, stated: "As the contents of the letter dated 22 December 1981 and addressed to the personal assistant to the Archbishop of Cape Town represents the official policy of Government it is unfortunately not possible to approve a blanket concession as requested in the last paragraph of your letter." Then Beukes continued, saying:

It is noted with regret that despite requests that approval to accommodate non-White students on your campus should be obtained beforehand, conveyed to you as far back as 1979, yet another seven students some with relatives have again been admitted this year. Under the circumstances as stated in your letter the Department is prepared to condone the unauthorised occupation of the non-White students at the present accommodation on the campus but this must be regarded as a final concession. Should it be ascertained that non-White students are again allowed without required permission obtained beforehand the Department will have no alternative but to refer the matter to the responsible authorities.<sup>91</sup>

Beukes' letter indicates that Buchanan had requested for a "blanket" permit, which was refused. It also suggests that Buchanan continued to ignore government's instructions to apply for permits for Black students beforehand. Di Buchanan put this issue into context and shed more light. She recalled:

Visiting him regularly, the authorities would ask [Duncan Buchanan]: "How many Black, White, Coloured, Indian students do you have?" And he would reply that he didn't know, and [that he] would have to look it up [as he didn't store] that information in [his] head ... "They are students and are part of this college ... They are part of this community." ... They would always ask him to send [them] [the] numbers ... [And perhaps] because they were responding to some issue ... they weren't back the next day ... and [Buchanan] didn't hesitate to take fairly a long time to respond to that question ... And by the time they received his response, they were probably on to something else, and so it was a very slow reaction on their part, and I know it was to Duncan [Buchanan] a very stressful time, because ... they were full of threats. And I think at one time they wanted to have him removed [as Warden] if he didn't send the people of Colour away ... But Duncan [Buchanan] always said if that was going to happen, the Anglican Church would just have to close St. Paul's ... Fortunately that didn't happen ... They were always upset ... and were full of threats ... He didn't want to see the Anglican Church applying apartheid rules.<sup>92</sup>

The fact that the officials requested information from Buchanan when they visited him would suggest that for some time he had not been willing to do so in correspondence. The officials were under pressure from their seniors in government to implement apartheid policy. In his letter to Archbishop Russell, on 21 May 1982, Buchanan showed that he had been under considerable pressure from three fronts: from the government, especially for non-cooperation; from the Black students' side to resist government's pressure to apply for the permits; and the Bishops' decision that permits be applied for. Part of the letter reads:

I have heard recently from both Bishop Freddie [Amoore] and Bishop Kenneth [Oram] about the discussion and decision which the Bishops had on the subject of permits for Blacks studying at St. Paul's. I must honestly say that I was very disappointed in the decision which does not apparently

91 See Letter, J.J. Beukes to Buchanan, 8 April 1982, AB 1363, S 21 (file 10), CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, St. Paul's Theological College, 1980-82, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

92 Interview with Di Buchanan, 12 June 2014, New Town, Johannesburg.

take into account the very deep feelings that the students have on the subject. I have not communicated the decision to the students and do not intend to do so unless it is absolutely essential.<sup>93</sup>

This excerpt of the letter suggests that, entirely ignoring the strong feelings of some Black students on this issue, the Bishops had taken the decision that permits be applied for Black students to study at the College. It was a decision that distressed Buchanan, precisely because it seems he was under great pressure from the students urging him not to co-operate with the governments' demands. Yet, it would seem that for Buchanan under those circumstances a compromise on this issue was the best way forward. In the same letter, he outlined part of his strategy as follows:

I have spoken to Bishop Kenneth [Oram], and he is happy for me to try to deal with the problem as follows:

- (a) To recognise, as we all do, that we cannot avoid the Department of Community Development.
- (b) To give them a list of students who will be coming, and hope that they will take this to be all that is required.<sup>94</sup>

Submitting to the Department of Community Development a list requested of the Black students who would be resident in the College premises in the following year implied a tacit measure of co-operation. It did not sound the same thing as wilfully applying for the permits. It was the strategy that seemed acceptable to the students. Then Buchanan asserted stating that:

The point is that, if they accept this as alright – then the students are at least reasonably happy for it does not feel like the Church is asking permission from the State as to where it may train her ordinands, and for many (including me – for I am in complete accord with the students over this) there is a significant difference between asking for a permit and informing – even if in the process permits are issued. May I, therefore, PLEAD with you as a matter of urgency not to inform your ordinands for next year that permits will be issued- and if there are any further complaints we can discuss them at Provincial Synod. I could go on and on about this, but I do hope you will accept my word and strategy on this. It is a burning matter of conscience before the Lord for many of us here.<sup>95</sup>

It would appear as if Bishops who informed their Black ordinands before they came to College that permits would be obtained for them made Buchanan's life very difficult, as it seemed to the students that (Buchanan), the College was deliberately applying apartheid rules. These students arrived in the College already with resentment against the College authority (Buchanan). Since the issue of the permits was such a highly sensitive and controversial nature, not even many Black students knew exactly what was happening. It would seem some of them were not even aware exactly what was happening behind their backs. Wyngaardt recalled that "the issue that the College had applied for the government permit was never made public".<sup>96</sup> In retrospect, he recalled that indeed the permits had been applied for. In anger, he concluded:

93 See Letter, Buchanan to Russell, 21 May 1982, AB 1363, S 21 (file 10), Archbishop of Cape Town, CPISA, St. Paul's Theological College, 1980-82 (emphasis in original document), Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

94 *Ibid.*

95 *Ibid.*

96 Interview with Andrew Wyngaardt, 24 March 2014, Kraaifontein.

A permit had been made to subscribe to the standards of the apartheid regime ... [We were not informed] ... The only thing we could do was to assume because of the abnormality of the situation of our country ... This wasn't accepted by the students ... and that in a sense [living in the College we were] being tolerated ... It wasn't as obvious ... [though] ... The Church was not strong to stand up to the government ... There [were] lots of frustrations ... It was a boiling pot ... Because of this, we often sent delegations about issues in the College. To cool us down, the [College] appointed Chris Ahrends as Head Student ... and John Dyers as his Deputy. The feeling [then] was that it was done so that Chris Ahrends (and others, more mature men, such as John Dyers) toed the line.<sup>97</sup>

In Wyngaardt's view, securing permits enforced the perceptions that the Black students were being tolerated. Consequently, they experienced little sense of belonging in the College which was supposed to forge racial fellowship. The application of the permits tended to foster perceptions that Black students were merely 'invited guests' in the College. That their being there was beholden to Whites. More significantly, Fry highlighted the stark contrasts in the manner in which he said Black people and White people perceived the government residence permit. He asserted:

For a White person, [the question] was: What's the big deal? [A permit] is just a piece of paper ... [In contrast to Whites], for Blacks the permit meant something else. Some of the [Black] people came from abject poverty, others had been thrown out of the residential areas due to the polices of apartheid, and others came from particularly activist background ... [So and so<sup>98</sup>] said: "We all had benefitted from apartheid." Amongst others, in particular, David Hurrell tore him into shreds.<sup>99</sup>

White people saw the permit entirely from their own perspective, with the Black narrative taking a secondary place. In the eyes of White students, it was a document that represented the authority of the government which every 'law abiding citizen' had to obey. It was about loyalty to the government and patriotism. For Black students, the permit was not just a mere 'piece of paper'. It was a symbol of oppression, dispossession, alienation and loss of human dignity. Likewise, speaking to the author, Counsell and Williams said that they told Buchanan that he must not apply for permits on their behalf.<sup>100</sup> It would seem that Buchanan informed the Archbishop about the feelings of the students. On 16 June 1982, Archbishop Russell wrote to Buchanan to say:

Sorry that the suggestion from Episcopal Synod caused you so much distress. I can assure you that Synod did take into account the very deep feelings that students have on the subject. I am quite happy to accept your suggestion not to communicate any decision to the students until we have an opportunity to have discussed the matter further. Your suggestion of informing the Department of Community Development will, I hope, overcome the difficulty. I doubt however, whether they will accept it; and of course in a very real way it is still getting a permit from the Department. There will of course be difficulties about families but we will have to face that when it comes. At this juncture I will respect your desire not to inform Cape Town students of this decision.<sup>101</sup>

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>98</sup> The name of this particular White student has been withheld.

<sup>99</sup> Interview with Gilmore Fry, 14 April 2014, St. Dominic's Church, Hanover Park.

<sup>100</sup> Interview with Garth Counsell, 20 March 2014, Zonnebloem; Interview with Charles Williams, 27 March 2014, Hopefield.

<sup>101</sup> See Letter, Russell to Buchanan, 16 June 1982, AB 1363, S 21 (file 10), Archbishop Cape Town, CPSA, St. Paul's Theological College, 1980-82, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

In light of this excerpt, it seems that there was an argument as to whether merely submitting a list of Black students to the government entailed applying for a permit or not. Even though it was not the same thing as making a formal application for a permit, it nevertheless implied co-operation with the government. Implicitly, the College co-operated with the government's requirement, which came in a clandestine manner.

The officials must have known that Buchanan (or Archbishop) would not willingly apply for the permit. Hence, the government had to ask for a list of students, upon which then the government would issue a blanket permit for Black students. In effect, government's pressure put on the College was a way in which it compelled the Church to apply for the permit surreptitiously. Writing to Archbishop Russell on 19 July 1982, Buchanan asserted:

Thank you for your letter of 8th July, 1982, in which you mention your conversation with Dr. Piet Koornhof. I am not as bothered about that as you are because in the early days when there was pressure put on us on another occasion, Archbishop Bill [Burnett] contacted Dr. Piet Koornhof and mentioned it to him and I suppose he imagines that is the only problem we are having. I therefore do not think we should be too alarmed by the problem which this implies and should just carry on as we have planned.

Nevertheless, I am grateful to you for informing me and shall bear this in mind in terms of the next stage of what are clearly delicate ways through.<sup>102</sup>

However, regarding the issue of permits, Weeder gave another perspective. He recalled that when he asked Buchanan if he (the Church) applied for permits for Black students studying at St. Paul's College, he only said "not individually".<sup>103</sup> Evidence clearly shows that the College used to apply for 'blanket' study permits for all Black students. There was 'no civil disobedience'. What follows is further evidence.

On 5 February 1982, the Regional Representative of the Department of Community Development, Mr. Meyer, wrote to the personal assistant to the Archbishop, M.N. Weatherston, saying:

1. My evenly-numbered letter dated 22 December 1981, refers.
2. It will be appreciated if you would provide me with a complete and detailed list of all non-White students and their families, if any, who will be occupying living quarters on the campus during 1982.
3. I wish to stress once again that no new non-White students, with or without families, are to be accommodated on the campus, without the prior approval of this Department. [On the side of this letter there is a handwritten note saying: "We have done this."]<sup>104</sup>

<sup>102</sup> See Letter, Buchanan to Russell, 19 July 1982, AB 1363, S 21 (file 10), Archbishop Cape Town, CPSA, St. Paul's Theological College, 1980-82, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>103</sup> Interview with Michael Weeder, 9 October 2014, Stellenbosch.

<sup>104</sup> See Letter, Meyer to Weatherston, 5 February 1982, AB 1363, S 21 (file 10), Ref. 32/1/1742/47, CPSA, Archbishop of Cape Town, St. Paul's Theological College, 1980-82, The Group Areas Act, 1966: Occupation of Non-White students at St. Paul's Theological College, Grahamstown, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

AB 1363/501 (file 10)  
CPSA - AB CT.  
1980-82

REPUBLIEK VAN SUID-AFRIKA



REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

GO 104

DEPARTEMENT VAN GEMEENSKAPSONTWIKKELING  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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Sir

THE GROUP AREAS ACT, 1966 : OCCUPATION OF NON-WHITE STUDENTS  
AT ST. PAUL'S THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE, GRAHAMSTOWN

1. My evenly-numbered letter dated 22 December 1981, refers.
2. It will be appreciated if you would provide me with a complete and detailed list of all non-White students and their families, if any, who will be occupying living quarters on the campus during 1982.
3. I wish to stress once again that no new non-White students, with or without families, are to be accommodated on the campus, without the prior approval of this Department.
4. Your co-operation will be appreciated.

Yours faithfully

*J. Meyer*  
REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE

used

*Who have done this*

Letter from Mr. Meyer to M.N. Weatherston, requesting a list of all "non-White" students and their families who would occupy living quarters at St. Paul's during 1982.

The note seems to indicate that Buchanan had provided the authorities with the list of Black African and “Coloured” students who would be in residence in 1982. Writing to Buchanan on 16 November 1982, the Regional Representative of the Department of Community Development, J.F. Roberts, stated:

1. My evenly-numbered letter dated 8 April 1982, refers.
2. It will be appreciated if you would provide me with a complete and detailed list of all non-White students and their families, if any, who will be occupying living quarters on the campus during 1983.<sup>105</sup>

The Regional Representative was asking for a list of students who would be coming to start in 1983. As illustrated, the issue of the permit was the most controversial matter that the College, the Church leadership, and in particular, Buchanan had to contend with. It was an issue that was at the core of the grievances that sparked off the racial crisis in 1982. So in light of the above evidence, the Church did indeed apply to the government for the students’ permit to study in the 1980s.

Speaking to this author on 11 June 2014, Di Buchanan recalled the stress and the pain that she said her husband, Duncan Buchanan, was going through. She recalled that “[Duncan] didn’t want to share [the issue of government permits] with too many people and he didn’t want many people to be involved, he didn’t want everybody to be caught up. He was absolutely adamant he didn’t want the Anglican Church to be seen applying apartheid rules”.<sup>106</sup>

In Buchanan’s book, *Breaking a Mould*, Di Buchanan asserted: “The Special Branch was breathing down his neck, and threatening dire consequences because he admitted increasing numbers of students ‘of colour’, who with their families – and White students’ families – lived in houses the College had built on property in the next block, in an exclusively ‘White’ suburb.”<sup>107</sup> However, writing Buchanan’s obituary in *The Sunday Times* of 23 December 2012, Loraine and Di Buchanan went even further, asserting that “[Buchanan had] decided that if push came to shove he would recommend to the church that it closes the College rather than be forced to obey the law”.<sup>108</sup> It was an issue that was highly sensitive precisely because it involved the dignity of Black people, but it also involved matters of confidentiality.

## Call for Africanisation – Bishop Desmond Tutu

In the 1980s, the College faced two critical contextual issues: the question relating to a Black member of staff and the use of African language. Both issues were critical precisely because St. Paul’s College at that time was nearly 50% Black and 50% White. Moreover, St. Paul’s College was situated in the Xhosa community in the Eastern Cape. Writing about theological training, Marilyn Naidoo stressed

<sup>105</sup> See Letter, Roberts to Buchanan, 16 November 1982, Ref. 32/1/1742/47/Miss Vos/EP, AB 1363, S 21 (file 10), Archbishop of Cape Town, CPSA, St. Paul’s Theological College, 1980-82, The Group Areas Act, 1966: Occupation of Non-White Students at St. Paul’s Theological College, Grahamstown, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL..

<sup>106</sup> Interview with Di Buchanan, 12 June 2014, Newtown, Johannesburg.

<sup>107</sup> Buchanan, *Breaking a Mould*, p. xii. See also Obituary by Di Buchanan and Loraine Tulleken, “Duncan Buchanan: Anglican bishop”, *The Sunday Times*, 23 September 2012.

<sup>108</sup> Buchanan and Tulleken, “Duncan Buchanan: Anglican bishop”.

the relevance of context. "The education of clergy", so Marilyn Naidoo argued, "needs to engage the pedagogies of contextualisation that heighten student awareness of the dynamic character of the content and agency of contexts." Naidoo went on to assert: "Contexts as settings of human interaction have content. Contexts consist of patterns of relationship and social structures, historical trajectories and local particularities, status and power configurations, values and commitments that intrigue contemporary social analysis."<sup>109</sup>

Naidoo's point about the power of context was very relevant for St. Paul's College in the 1980s. The immediate context in which the issues of a Black member of staff arose, was the racial crisis in 1982. Not only were they issues of identity for some Black students, but more importantly, they were issues of power – the power to affirm Black identity and dignity in the College. Tutu, then Bishop of Johannesburg (1983-86) and a member of the College Council, raised this issue at the College Council meeting in 1983. He suggested that it had contributed to some grievances that precipitated the crisis in 1982. The College Council report of 28 February 1983, Minute 7, noted two important issues that Bishop Tutu raised:

[The question] of staffing, and that it would be appropriate for a Black member of staff to be appointed. The Warden responded that he is greatly concerned that this should happen and is in the process of negotiation with two possible members of staff in this regard.<sup>110</sup>

Tutu's recommendation reflects his interesting insight into the problem of race relations. The absence of a Black lecturer in a White-dominant context somehow alienated a few Black students. Since the departure of the first Black African member of staff, Zolile Escourt Mbali, in 1974, no Black lecturer had been appointed to replace him. Thus, a tradition started in the previous years was broken.

For Tutu, the presence of a Black member of staff in a White-dominant context was critical as a 'bridge' between Black and White students. In the environment of racial mistrust in the College, a reflection of the national context, Black students were more likely to confide to a Black rather than a White lecturer. The next Black lecturer was to be Fred Hendricks in 1984. In the same College Council meeting, Bishop Tutu also raised the issue of African languages. He asked:

Whether anything was being done about African languages. The Warden responded that he had always believed that this was a responsibility of the post-ordination training programme and should be dealt with at that level, if people needed to know a language; they were in a position to use it immediately.<sup>111</sup>

In the light of the racial tensions, Buchanan's answer was not very helpful, as it seemed to suggest that the use of African languages [especially in worship] was not of immediate concern to the College, but was rather a matter for individual Dioceses to deal with in Post Ordination Training programmes. Bishop Desmond Tutu was perceptive as his question suggests that Black people were excluded in a context that

<sup>109</sup> Naidoo, M. "Ministerial Training: The need for pedagogies of formation and of Contextualisation in Theological Education", *Missionalia*, Vol. 38, No. 3, November 2010, pp. 347-368.

<sup>110</sup> Warden's Report to the College Council, 28 February 1986, AB 2568, B 1-B 5, 1983-86, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*

appeared to affirm only White culture, “spirituality”/worship and life style. When, in 1985, Sithembele Thomas Rini introduced a few IsiXhosa choruses in chapel, the response from some White students ranged from puzzlement to indifference, curiosity and discomfort. Only after explaining the meaning did they try to sing.<sup>112</sup>

By not accommodating the African languages at that stage in the history of the College, it would appear to have implicitly affirmed apartheid policy regarding language. On the other hand, the fact that the College did not introduce the use of Black languages in worship suggested a denial of the affirmation of Black students. The issue of African languages in worship was very important, as Black African students made up at least ten per cent of the body in 1983. That the College had not until then taken that seriously was a serious deficiency. At that stage, it failed to provide an opportunity for White students to be exposed to Black languages. Yet, the racial eruption in 1982 has to be put into the wider political context. It took place just six years after the June 1976 Soweto Uprising. The episode marked a shift in perceptions and attitudes between the races – Black people increasingly mistrusting White people.

## The Referendum

One major issue that occupied the nation in 1983 was the Referendum. It was designed to test the views of White people on the new Constitution, which included “Coloured” and Indian people in what was termed the tricameral parliament. The Referendum weighed heavily on the minds of some White students (and staff) at St. Paul’s College. It had implications on the state of relationships between students across racial lines. In his report to the College Council in 1983, Buchanan reported that:

During the year we had to deal with some thorny issues. The Referendum and the new Constitution featured heavy on our consciences, and the loving support and prayers given by the Black members of the College to those of us entrusted with the vote, was a model of Christian living. We are aware in a new way of the burden we were carrying for others. Throughout the year matters affecting race were constantly coming to the surface, and being dealt. That they came to surface was good. That we were able to deal with them in the love of Christ seems to me at least partly what we are here for. The student body was, as always, loving and full of care for each other and those outside.<sup>113</sup>

It would seem that in referring to himself and other Whites “as those of us entrusted with the vote”, Buchanan was in fact legitimising the apartheid State that the majority of Blacks had delegitimised, and the Anglican Church would denounce apartheid as “heretical” in 1986. The issue of the Referendum and the new Constitution was divisive precisely because it appeared to expose the privileged position that White people occupied in apartheid South Africa. Within this political climate, this context of political violence, the apartheid government seemed to wield limitless power, including the capacity to dictate to religious organisations in the name of security.

<sup>112</sup> See Mbaya, “The Contribution of the Anglican Church to Theological Education in Southern Africa”.

<sup>113</sup> Warden’s Report to the College Council in 1983, AB 2568, B 4, St. Paul’s Theological College, 1983-86, Historical papers, Research Archives, UWL.

## The banned church service

In his report to the College Council, Buchanan continued to report that the service to commemorate the 1977 banned organisations was banned three hours before it could take place at the Cathedral in Grahamstown on 19 October 1983. He was reported saying: "As the Dean was not in town, we did not feel it was fair to carry on with the service and put the Church Wardens and Mrs. Barker (the Dean's wife) in an embarrassing position. It was a terribly ham-handed thing – and as Philip Le Feuvre suggested to the Press, [the government banning order] was like using a 'howitzer'<sup>114</sup> to kill a fly." The story was covered in two newspapers. The local paper, *The Grocott's Mail*, reported: "A service which was to have been held in the Anglican Cathedral here last night to commemorate the clampdown six years ago on 19 organisations and individuals was banned three hours before it was due to start."<sup>115</sup>

The banning order and three photocopies were served at the Deanery, St. Paul's College, Rhodes University, and pinned up at the magistrate's office. The *Eastern Cape Herald* reported: "The service ... arranged by students of St. Paul's 'to commemorate the 19 organisations banned in October 1977, was prohibited in terms of Section 46(1)(i) of the Internal Security Act of 1982'." The Dean of the Cathedral, Roy Barker, responded, saying: "I believe that the legislation upon which the order was based excludes bona fide services from such action. I am bound to say that the service should go ahead as planned. It is inconceivable that any Church should be told by any secular authority what Christian worship can or cannot be held."<sup>116</sup> Not recalling much of the episode in 2014, Le Feuvre said:

There was to be a service in the Cathedral ... I can't remember and I think the police were involved and there was a rumour that it was likely to be banned ... I was astounded, really I was, but certainly it had a political orientation, just about everything in those days did.<sup>117</sup>

Le Feuvre's reminiscences highlighted the apartheid atmosphere of the 1980s. It was the context in which almost every issue in community took on political overtones, where it seemed impossible to draw clear distinctions between issues of religious nature from those of a political character. One seemed to run into the other. It was a period where the state, through its security apparatus, seemed to intrude into almost every sphere of societal life. In this context, the Church did not seem to have much liberty to order its life without the interference of the state. On 9 October 2014, speaking to the author, Weeder said that he was asked to organise the service. He gave background of how part of the episode of 1983 unfolded:

What happened was that the local [Police] Branch had banned the service. I remember *The Daily Dispatch* or the *Eastern Cape Herald*, interviewed Philip Le Feuvre; and his classic comment was: "Banning that service is like using a 5-pound hammer to smash a flea." It was the students' own initiative, our initiative, we drove it. The students drove it. They never interviewed us. They interviewed the staff.<sup>118</sup>

<sup>114</sup> A piece of artillery that causes a lot of damage when fired.

<sup>115</sup> Logbook, AB 2568, C 1.11, St. Paul's Theological College, 1976-86, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>117</sup> Interview with Philip Le Feuvre, 5 March 2012, Somerset West.

<sup>118</sup> Interview with Michael Weeder, 9 October 2014, Stellenbosch.

AND WON FOR US OUR OWN PROHIBITION ORDER:

Telegramsadres: "LANDDROS"  
Telegraphic Address: "MAGISTRATE"

Telefoonnommer 7303  
Telephone No. ....

Privaatsak 1004  
Private Bag No. ....

Poskode 6140  
Postal Code .....

ENQUIRIES: MR VAN ZYL



DEPARTEMENT VAN JUSTISIE—DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
REPUBLIEK VAN SUID-AFRIKA—REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Verwysingsnommer  
Reference No.

11/5/2

LANDDROSKANTOOR  
MAGISTRATE'S OFFICE  
GRAHAMSTOWN

19th October 1983

PROHIBITION OF A PARTICULAR GATHERING IN TERMS OF  
THE INTERNAL SECURITY ACT, NO 74 OF 1982

Whereas I ..... ANDRIES WILLEM VAN ZYL .....  
Magistrate for the district of ..... ALBANY .....

have reason to apprehend that the public peace would  
be seriously endangered by the gathering of ..... members  
of the public to commemorate the so-called National  
Clampdown of 19 Organisations on 19th October 1977

to be held at ..... 6 ..... p.m. on the ..... 19th  
day of ..... October ..... 19 83 .....

in/~~on~~ ~~at~~ The Cathedral of St Michael and St George,  
Church Square, Grahamstown .....

in the said district, I, in terms of section 46(1)(i)  
of the Internal Security Act, 1982 (Act No. 74 of  
1982) hereby prohibit the said gathering everywhere

in the said district for the period beginning at .  
..... 5 ..... p.m. on the ..... 19th ..... day of ..... October  
19 83 ..... and ending at ..... 4.59 ..... p.m. on the ....  
..... 21st ..... day of ..... October ..... 19 83 .....

2/In .....

Banning order by Magistrate A.W. van Zyl, prohibiting the 1983 church service  
that was to be held to commemorate the 19 organisations banned in 1977.

In terms of the provisions of section 46(2)(iv) of the said Act, I hereby direct that this prohibition be notified by affixing photostatic copies hereof at the following public and/or prominent places in the district of Albany:-

- (a) The Magistrate's Office, High Street, Grahamstown.
- (b) The Cathedral of St Michaels and St George, Church Square, Grahamstown.
- (c) St Paul's College, Worcester Street, Grahamstown.
- (d) Rhodes University, Grahamstown.

I further direct in terms of the provisions of section 46(2)(iv) and (v) of the said Act that this prohibition be further notified by causing photostatic copies hereof to be distributed amongst the public and by causing it to be announced orally outside and inside the Cathedral of St Michael and St George prior to the said meeting.

Dated at ..... GRAHAMSTOWN ..... this ..... 19th ..... day  
of ..... October ..... 19 83 .....

MAGISTRATE FOR THE DISTRICT OF ..... ALBANY .....

There will  
be a  
Service in  
Chapel 18h00  
Ordinary  
Prayer.

LANDDROS  
ALBANY, GRAHAMSTAD  
19 10 1983  
2.01  
ALBANY, GRAHAMSTOWN  
MAGISTRATE

Weeder gave some background on the preparations leading to the service. He recalled:

Duncan [Buchanan] had designated myself, Austen [Jackson], Allan Kanameyer and a White guy [Philip Manning], and Andrew Hunter. We were [discussing the issue of] the speakers, [who to invite], what we gonna do ... It was [the commemorative service] of the anniversary in 1983 of the banned organisations of the 29 September 1977 ... We were [working] along with the Black Student Society Movement at Rhodes celebrating [and] commemorating that.<sup>119</sup>

In this context of repression, however, Weeder recalled a traumatic personal experience that he went through:

I remember my last year in 1984 ... I was ASF president. ... I had just arrived from Cape Town. [Rhodes University] was closed ... I was sitting in the flat of Rudolf Paulse, and a special branch lieutenant came ... said: "We are looking for Michael Weeder." And I said: "It's me." "We are investigating a charge against you for furthering the aims of the banned organisation." And I said: "I don't know what you are talking about." He said: "You wrote an article in the Anglican Student magazine on the Freedom Charter ... [with the objective of] furthering the aim of the banned organisation." And he said: "You need to come down to our Headquarters in High Street to make a statement." I went to see Duncan [Buchanan]. I said to him: "The special branch is here, they want to arrest me and they want me to make a statement." So [Buchanan]'s classic response was: "Keep a low profile." ... I had to go find my own lawyer in town, no one [was there] to help me, I am alone in this thing, I am a student ... and that lawyer took me to the special branch headquarters where I made a statement, saying: "I am not willing to make a statement." And the thing died. But what I am saying is that that little story is a parable story of how the Church responds in the time of conflict. Here I am, a young student, a seminarian, as I am in trouble, the mother Church says 'Keep your head low' and I must go to the non-church people ... You had to fight your own battles.<sup>120</sup>

Weeder's encounter with the Security Police on St. Paul's College campus seems to confirm the suspicion that St. Paul's College was under security surveillance. Apartheid security had an extensive network of surveillance. It is clear that students like Weeder and others were 'marked'; they were closely watched and monitored. Weeder's attitude towards Buchanan's response must be viewed in light of his perceptions and views of the Church establishment as noted in Chapter 4. He saw the Church as an extension of the status quo; a Church that seemed to have capitulated to the apartheid ideology of White racial supremacy. Weeder felt rejected by his Church, his mother, at the time when he felt he most needed her support. Buchanan, like other church leaders, were possibly scared of being involved in an issue that involved the Security Police.

In the interim, at the College Council meeting on 31 October 1983, Tutu commended "the involvement of the College in the life of the Country". He remarked that "he was pleased that the College had been instrumental in organising a service for the 19th October even if it had been banned at a late stage".<sup>121</sup>

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>121</sup> Warden's Report to the College Council, 28 February 1986, AB 2568, B 1-B 5, 1983-86, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

The government banning of the church service illustrated the extent to which the government had gone in interfering in the internal ordering of institutions of the Church. To an extent, the Church was no longer completely free to order its life without government's interference in such matters. It is quite surprising that Buchanan and Le Feuvre were surprised that the Church was not immune from state control, given that, as it has been shown, the Church co-operated with the state. This was a government that wielded a lot of power in almost all spheres of society.

## Conclusion

Undoubtedly, the early 1980s, and culminating in 1982, were the watershed in the history of the College, specifically with regard to the political consciousness of some of the Cape Town Black students. There is no doubt that 1982 turned out to be a landmark in terms of race relations in the College. It was a year riddled with tensions that flared up into a crisis. There was disunity amongst members of staff, a critical linchpin that would normally hold the College together, while suspicion amongst White and Black students concerning cultural identities and perceptions heightened the tension. The issue of permits further alienated Black students from their White counterparts and the College leadership. Some Black students meeting on their own as a Black Caucus sparked off a crisis that had been simmering for some time.

## Chapter 6 | “A Little Pocket of Normality”?<sup>1</sup> 1983-85

In the 1980s, the presence of Black students at St. Paul’s College brought in other dynamics to the relationship that had hitherto prevailed between St. Paul’s College and the model C and private schools of St. Andrew’s College, the Diocesan School for Girls. One aspect concerned the issue of the education of the children of Black students. The question often arose which school a Black student would send his/her child to, since the private schools very close to St. Paul’s College admitted only White children.<sup>2</sup>

More significantly, however, in no aspect did this affect the students’ relationships more than in sport. According to Fry, for the Black students, the question was always: How does a multiracial body (traditionally privileged by apartheid) play with the township schools disadvantaged by apartheid?<sup>3</sup> In Fry’s view, it was one of the “issues that related to living in this ‘pocket of normality’, which was impacting [the Black students] ...”.<sup>4</sup> Meanwhile, in his Warden’s report to the College Council in 1983, Buchanan noted:

The question of playing sport on the well-manicured fields of the White Grahamstown institutions created a great agony amongst all. It is never easy to face up to the fact that what some of us take for granted, others have never used, and are unlikely to do so. We tried, in this context to be aware of our need to witness in both areas – to the Whites and Blacks. But because we had already played a cricket match on a “White” field the Black teams would not play us, and we were left without any sporting events against outsiders, with the exception of a table tennis match played at the Community Hall. On reflection this state of affairs may well be inevitable – but it is sad, and we are hoping to try and work out a *modus operandi* during 1984.<sup>5</sup>

The issue of sport was perhaps most emotive and controversial precisely because of its socio-economic and political significance. In the city, it was closely associated with White privilege and the marginalisation of Blacks in townships. According to Le Feuvre, there were two basic issues relating to the debate surrounding sport. He recalled:

The one issue was that [‘St. Paul’s team] had to be multiracial. Was that really possible? We [as a College] had no other facilities to use ... [Then the other issue arose: if other [teams] wanted to play [us]

1 This description is according to Philip Le Feuvre of St. Paul’s College in 1984. Logbook (newspaper cutting, *Eastern Province Herald*, 22 March 1984), AB 2568, C 1.11, 1976-86, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

2 Interview with Gilmore Fry, 14 April 2014, St. Dominic’s Church, Cape Town.

3 *Ibid.*

4 *Ibid.*

5 Warden’s Report to the College Council, 1983, AB 2568, B 4, St. Paul’s Theological College, 1983-86, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

... which sport field would we use? At that stage Rhodes only had White students, and Black students with only special government permission ... And then the other group [in this debate], [Whites] would say [to Blacks] "this is silly", so it ended to be St. Andrew's, the Whites only school at that stage. There was a lot of feeling about whose fields you could use or which fields we couldn't use. [Blacks] would then say: "If you can't use any fields, and then no soccer!" You don't know how much it hurts us that kind of language ... It may be true, but you kind of get tired of it ... Everyone was getting hurt, getting worked up. There was a tendency to hear offence when none was intended ... Whites would make statements ... and the Coloured people would easily read it as a racial remark, which was not intended ... As a result, it seemed you had to walk on egg shells ..., and you get tired of it.<sup>6</sup>

That Le Feuvre described the situation like "walking on egg shells", suggests the highly fragile nature of the relationship that prevailed between White and Black students. The issue of sport was very divisive, and most contentious precisely because from the point of view of Blacks, "White" facilities entailed White privilege and White power. This was the very opposite experience of Blacks under apartheid. Whites had no idea whatsoever what Black people were going through.

Gail Blunden (formerly Gail Chester) was the only White female student in the years 1983 to 1985. She reminisced about the issues surrounding sport that time. Describing herself as the "sole [White] woman-surrounded by sixty men", she recalled that at the start of the year in 1983 she was appointed a cricket coordinator, which in her view was "very fun". She reminisced about what it was like:

I do remember that the one or two matches we could not play against outside team but against ourselves, we had a lot of fun ... We had the "Chaplains and the Lords". After two or three matches there was a lot of further debates, and discussions, about whether [they] should continue cricket or not. And then a decision was made that they could not continue playing other teams in light of the government's regulations ... Then we organised a version of cricket called 'Tip and Run' in the tennis court of our own grounds ... It was a simple game but with a lot of fun ... It was better than nothing ... I knew there were underlying issues, racial issues, but when we couldn't play outside, we played together; and we had a lot of fun; and we all enjoyed it, Blacks, Coloured, everybody. The laws of the times could not allow us to play on certain fields without a government permit.<sup>7</sup>

It is quite ironic that it had to take the boycotting of White sport facilities for some students to experience meaningful fellowship across racial barriers. One would have thought that worship, spiritual fellowship and discipline, the fundamental aspects of theological training, would have provided much stronger bonds of fellowship than sport. Speaking to me in 2014, Fry put the issue of sport and race in the context of the time. He recalled that:

There were divergent attitudes between Black and White students regarding the role of sport in society ... for White students (and staff) sport was merely something to be enjoyed. On the other hand, for Blacks, sport was more than enjoyment ... It was always entangled with the political issues of the day. On the other hand, for Black students the issue was: if we play with these [White] schools or use their ("apartheid") facilities, then the township schools won't play with us. It was a political issue ...

6 Interview with Philip Le Feuvre, 5 March 2012, Somerset West.

7 Telephone interview with Gail Blunden, 28 May 2014.

The argument was that you either play a non-racial or multiracial sport. The Whites always argued that we [were] playing as individual races ... It was the policy of the South African Council of Sport [SACOS] to use sport to promote non-racialism as opposed to enhancing racism.<sup>8</sup>

Fry highlighted a critical point. Playing sport raised different racial experiences of apartheid by Blacks and Whites. However, for Blacks, being in the "White" College had brought them some "privileges" associated with apartheid but equally also some disadvantages. Schools in the townships would not play sport with an institution which apartheid had privileged – and this seemed to affect Black students in the College. If the College continued to play sport with White "apartheid" institutions in town, then it risked alienating itself from Black teams in the townships. While for Whites sport was about leisure and relaxation, for Blacks it reminded them of living through the pain of apartheid – where apartheid sport policies and practices had dehumanised them.

Rogers Govender, of Indian background, was a student in the years 1982 to 1984 and Austen Jackson, "Coloured", was a student in the years 1983-1985. They related their experiences regarding the debates around sport. They reminisced: "The [College] took a position that in terms of its multiracial nature ... in solidarity with Blacks [it] would not play sport on White facilities."<sup>9</sup> However, according to Fry, the critical issue was that institutions with White facilities (such as St. Andrews College) allowed the South African Defence Force (SADF) to use their facilities. Thus, Black students pressurised the College to take a collective decision not to use these facilities in protest against the SADF involvement in killing Black people.<sup>10</sup> The nature of debate was such that according to Govender and Jackson: "Some of the White students would say that we used to make them cry." "They had taken it personal ... as they felt that the debates were hateful."<sup>11</sup> On 20 February 1984, the logbook scribe captured something of a typical debate to which Le Feuvre, Blunden, Jackson, Govender and Fry referred to. He wrote:

It is 16.35. And a meeting is to be started and be dealt with quickly so that we can go over into a Common Room meeting and deal with the sports issue that needed to be sorted out. The issue involved were whether we should play sports in the townships or whether we should play sports on the fields of St. Andrews, DSG and Rhodes fields. We won't be able to play against any teams in the townships because of their affiliation to GRASA (Grahamstown Soccer Association) who in turn is an affiliate of SACOS (South African Council of Sport). After several motions had been put forward and after several discussions and debates on this whole sports issue, a final motion has been put which read like this: "We the students of St. Paul's declare to play whatever sports there is to be played in the townships and the other sports like Table Tennis and Tennis to be play on [other fields] without damaging our sports contacts in the Townships". Thanks be to God, after four and half hours we could come to a decision regarding our sports activities in which we would like to participate.<sup>12</sup>

8 Telephone interview with Gilmore Fry, 24 April 2014.

9 Mbaya, "The Contribution of the Anglican Church to Theological Education in Southern Africa".

10 Interview with Gilmore Fry, 14 April 2014, St. Dominic's Church, Hanover Park.

11 Mbaya, "The Contribution of the Anglican Church to Theological Education in Southern Africa".

12 Logbook, AB 2568, C 1.11, 1976-86, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

I attended this meeting and I recall the long debate with often bitter arguments and counter arguments on the issue.<sup>13</sup> For White students, it was all simply from a position of privilege, as they saw sport entirely as a matter of enjoyment. For Black students, however, the matter went beyond the issue of the mere pleasure of sport. It had to do with their humanity, dignity and freedom in the context of apartheid. Underlying their relationship with Black people in the township was another important issue – a ministry of “solidarity” and “presence” with those disadvantaged by apartheid. To be seen not to be in solidarity with those victimised by apartheid in the township implied being on the opposite side, the “traitor”, or even worse, the “enemy”. Sometimes it boiled down to one issue: “Are they for us or against us?” These debates were taking place within the fast-changing national context, which now seemed to compel the College body to take a clear position on another important matter.

## Must we affiliate with the UDF?

The United Democratic Front (UDF), the internal wing of the African National Congress, was formed in 1983, and the Eastern Cape, Grahamstown in particular, was one of its strong bases. Its existence challenged the College to think seriously and to openly take a clear position, either for or against the political struggle. It was against this backdrop that according to Weeder, in collaboration with the Rhodes University Black Students Organisation, he invited Mr. Patrick Terror Lekota,<sup>14</sup> the National Publicity Secretary, to visit in 1984. He came to talk about the movement and the national tricameral Constitution adopted in 1983. Speaking to me on 9 October 2014, Weeder recalled that he arranged the visit of Mr. Lekota.<sup>15</sup> Weeder’s contemporaries, Govender and Jackson, recalled their experience thus:

A small group of Black students *inter alia* led by Mike Weeder started to pressurize the College to take a clear position vis-à-vis the UDF. Most of the rebellion came from Coloured (Blacks), in the College ... In 1983, we had a huge political debate for 5 hours on whether St. Paul’s should join UDF in the Eastern Cape. After the debate, the Warden, Duncan Buchanan supported the proposal justifying it by citing the Biblical story of Cyrus of Persia who used God to save Israel. After debate the proposal was carried. In spite of the fact that the Bishops did not approve of the College’s position – as seen to be a political stance, however, for us the fact that we had discussed it as the College it gave us moral support.<sup>16</sup>

The length of time for the debate, the Biblical imagery invoked for the decision, and its disapproval by the Bishops suggest the controversial and divisive nature of the issue. The decision to align with a political organisation was the most radical position ever to be taken by the College in its history. However, the logbook scribe gave a more detailed context of the issue and the visit of Mr. Lekota. He recorded:

On Wednesday 22 February 1984, we had a speaker at the College who addressed students on the role of the United Democratic Front (UDF). He is the National Publicity Secretary of the UDF, Mr. Patrick

<sup>13</sup> Personal reminiscences, 1984-1987.

<sup>14</sup> Mr. Mosiua Terror Lekota is the current leader of the Congress of the People (Cope).

<sup>15</sup> Interview with Michael Weeder, 9 October 2014, Stellenbosch.

<sup>16</sup> Mbaya, “The Contribution of the Anglican Church to Theological Education in Southern Africa”.

"Terror" Lekhota. He covered several areas of confusion which arose from the Government's new constitutional proposals and urged us to give our full support to the UDF [which] strives and work for a better society in this country of ours, R.S.A. He said that a new constitution can only be valid if all people of all races, creeds, etc. can come together and work together on a new constitution by the people and for the people. Blacks and Whites can and must work together for the best possible future of all South Africans.<sup>17</sup>

Following the visit, it was recorded that:

After three and half hours of discussing and debating on affiliation to the UDF, it was put to the vote to decide whether we would affiliate or not. When the votes [were] counted, it showed in favour of affiliation to the UDF. Although there wasn't an overwhelming majority vote, the pendulum still swung in favour of affiliation. We thank and praise God, that as brothers in Christ, we can always depend on his guidance and direction.<sup>18</sup>

The scribe's observation that it was a highly divisive issue is significant. To some students, the Common Room meetings were sometimes intimidating, as highly controversial and emotive where issues such as this one was discussed. Some students were sometimes reluctant to voice their views for fear of being misconstrued and therefore risk alienating themselves from others. This is how Gail Blunden recalled her experience of a meeting that discussed the issue whether the College had to affiliate with the UDF:

They wanted to form a new movement called UDF. I didn't understand what it was ... and I stood up, and I said I don't mind but I want to know what are the advantages ... but that was misinterpreted as not caring about [the liberation struggle] ... [They thought that I was] being indifferent. I was just saying I [couldn't just] make a decision until [I knew enough [facts] ... A lot of Black and Coloured [students] took it out on me ... People had misinterpreted my question ... some of the Coloured guys told an Indian guy [who was in the same cell group as me] that they listen to what I said [in the cell group] ... It took me a while to be careful as to how I raise questions.<sup>19</sup>

On highly contentious issues such as this one, misunderstandings leading to personal pain and hurts were fairly common, as Blunden recalled in her own experience. For Blunden, however, as perhaps could have been the case with other students, they realised that somehow the Common Room was not a 'very safe' space to articulate their personal views, as they feared these could be misinterpreted. Blunden said that what worried her more was the spirit in which some students articulated their views in the Common Room. She recalled:

With regard to the political and racial issues, they [some Coloured and Blacks] expressed their anger a lot ... in debate and discussions. [I thought] oh gosh what's gonna happen to our church? [They came across] as very aggressive, as very angry and radical, and extremely radical for your belief. I can recall three or four stack out in my memory, as particularly worrisome, as others were mild.<sup>20</sup>

17 Logbook, AB 2568, C 1.11, St. Paul's Theological College, 1976-86, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

18 *Ibid.*

19 Telephone interview with Gail Blunden, 28 May 2014.

20 *Ibid.*

Certainly, the political radicalism of some of the students worried Blunden. She was concerned that some of these politically radical students would in future be in leadership position. The issue then for her was how could this affect the Anglican Church. Yet, to some extent, the radicalism of some of these students reflected that of some of the leaders like Bishop Tutu and Father Trevor Huddleston. Blunden's attitude mirrored the politically conservative section of the Anglican Church. Weeder recalled that the response of White students to the question of joining the UDF varied. In his view, it ranged from open hostility to curiosity and anger.<sup>21</sup> The debate on the UDF was taking place within a broader context of militarism. According to Bob Clarke, the conflict had started to escalate in 1983. Since January that year, SACC leaders had recognised that the country was going through low intensity civil war. In response to the UDF's campaign against the tricameral constitution, "on 21 August seventeen leaders of the UDF and Transvaal and Indian Congresses, AZAPO and the Release Mandela Committee were arrested. [...] The first major confrontation between the people and the police took place on 5 September 1984 with a crowd of protestors marching against rent increases in Sharpeville; it escalated throughout the Vaal Triangle townships. Police behaviour in the townships resembled that of an occupying foreign army controlling enemy territory by force without regard for the civilian population."<sup>22</sup>

### "A little pocket of normality"

It was also against this background that the Diploma Award ceremony took place on 19 March 1984. On that occasion, during his graduation address, Le Feuvre described St. Paul's College as "a little pocket of normality" in the wider society. Expounding on that, he noted:

Seven years ago there had been only two Black faces on the campus but today there were as many Black faces as there were White. There were also Black faces on the staff. This has not been achieved without pain but is something of a reality in the credibility of our nation.<sup>23</sup>

Le Feuvre looked back to 1977 [1976] when the College had its first Black students. In 1984, with more Black (and "Coloured" students), there was a sense of great achievement. Gone were the days when Buchanan was regularly being harassed by the Security Police; now there was a sense of racial integration in the College. He went on to note that "St. Paul's had been called a White theological college but that was a misnomer today. St. Paul's may be more Western-oriented but it is marked how the presence of Black Africans is enriching us all." Le Feuvre was quick to caution, however, that "this might work while people were together in but once outside it could fall away. Please make that a lie. Let this work not disappear but work for it in the diocese".<sup>24</sup> To Le Feuvre and perhaps for others as well, St. Paul's College was a model Christian community, an alternative to the apartheid society. On the other hand, Le Feuvre's statement almost seem to suggest that Black people had been "favoured" to be in the College, where their numbers increased from two to an equal number to the White faces present (even on the staff). The progress had not been made without pain.

<sup>21</sup> Interview with Michael Weeder, 9 October 2014, Stellenbosch.

<sup>22</sup> Clarke, *Anglicans Against Apartheid*, pp. 391, 392.

<sup>23</sup> Logbook (newspaper cutting, *Eastern Province Herald*, 22 March 1984), AB 2568, C 1.11, 1976-86, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

It is true that since 1976, St. Paul's College had gone through tremendous racial integration. In saying that St. Paul's College was a little "pocket of normality", Le Feuvre suggested that the wider society was "abnormal" with regard to racial groups not living together. In his view, the College seemed to exist as an alternative society. To some degree, as far as racial composition was concerned, irrespective of the absence of Black Theology and political radicalism, St. Paul's College had become a little like the Federal Seminary.

Nonetheless, the "normality" of St. Paul's College as portrayed by Le Feuvre contrasted starkly with the "abnormality" of the South African society in terms of the huge inequalities regarding government funding of education along racial lines. In 1984, a logbook scribe commented on the newspaper report in parliament that stated that eight times more money was spent on White pupils than on Black pupils:

This is the reality of the matter. While some who find it difficult to make ends meet are still prepared to give their children some amount of education, others who are much more settled are inclined not to enjoy the fruits of the benefits which has been reaped for them. We pray that the South African government would be more sensitive to the needs of others and give each student an equal amount for the purchase of books.<sup>25</sup>

Unequal distribution of national resources among the races constituted the fundamental edifice upon which racial segregation was enforced. Disparity in the racial allocation of financial resources buttressed the 1953 policy of Bantu Education. In effect, it determined the social position of races in the strata of the society. As noted in Chapter 1 with regard to the issue of the inequality of the allowances in the Anglican colleges, Church structures mirrored this. It was the pillar that propped up structural apartheid in an abnormal society.

## Harare mission – July 1984

Le Feuvre's reference above to St. Paul's College as a "pocket of normality" was also significant from another perspective. In July 1984, under the leadership of Justus Marcus, a multiracial group of students undertook a mission trip to Harare, Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe, formerly Rhodesia, had attained independence four years previously. That was the period when some in Southern Africa or the world saw Zimbabwe as what South Africa could one day become. However, under the rule of P.W. Botha, that day seemed very far into the future. According to the College Logbook scribe, the local newspaper journalist in Harare captured the students' visit as follows:

A Group of 14 South African students in theology, is in the country to spread Christianity and unity, to save the world from corruption. The students, headed by Reverend Justus Marcus, were invited by Archdeacon Bob Woodward of the Anglican of St. Paul's Church of Marlborough, Harare. They visited schools, houses for the aged and Zimcare as part of their spreading the work of God. The Revd. Marcus said the group had carried [out] seminars at the Marlborough St. Paul's Church and have had a positive response from several of their listeners.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Logbook, 28 July 1984, AB 2568, C 1.11, 1976-86, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

Besides pastoral work, this trip was important for another reason. It seemed to have been designed to give a multiracial College team exposure to Zimbabwe, where Black and White people lived alongside one another in harmony. To the students, it was an example of a Black government leading a non-racial society. However, the newspaper journalist went on to report as follows:

On the situation in South Africa, Revd. Marcus said apartheid was very strong because nothing the Church said moved racist minority rights. He said Desmond Tutu who was a member of the Anglican Church in South Africa was well known for his strong criticism of the apartheid regime. Re Marcus believes change in South Africa will come when what is being aimed to be achieved by freedom fighters is combined with Christianity.<sup>27</sup>

Unfortunately, we do not have Marcus's version of what he said to the journalist. Nonetheless, the comment attributed to him that liberation could only be achieved with the combined effort of Christianity and the Liberation Movement, sounds strange. The notion behind this view then seemed to prevail in some Christian circles that the Liberation Movements were unchristian or ungodly, seemingly tainted by Communism; hence, they needed the influence of Christianity to purify them. This view seemed to echo the views of state officials that demonised Liberation Movements as Communist, which was a euphemism for ungodliness.

## A polarised nation – a polarised college

### The impact of the state of emergency

The years 1985 and 1986 witnessed the intensification of the war in Angola and Namibia and “a new wave of resistance and protest surged in the townships, often led by trade unions”. The government “used its massive security power to crush all opposition at enormous cost. An undeclared civil war was in progress forcing Christians and the churches to take an unambiguous stand”.<sup>28</sup> The government responded by proclaiming various states of emergency (the second of which, beginning on 21 July 1985, lasted until after State President P.W. Botha's resignation in 1989) and used its massive security power to crush all opposition at enormous cost. An undeclared civil war was in progress, forcing Christians and the churches to take an unambiguous stand. Widespread and increasing political violence characterised the year 1985 in South Africa.<sup>29</sup>

To some degree, racial tension in the country found expression in the life of the College. Writing in the report to the College Council, Buchanan captured the atmosphere in the College, stating that “we reflect very much the opinions and the differences of the country as a whole. We agonise through many things to try and find the will of God for us. We do not always find it easy to express His will and we do not always arrive at the right answers”.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> Elphick and Davenport, *Christianity in South Africa*, p. 168.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> Warden's Letter, 31 July 1985, AB 2568, A 4, St. Paul's Theological College, 1983-91, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

ST. PAUL'S COLLEGE 1985



**Back:** H. Mbaya; J. Campbell; D. Smit; H. Marais; D. Potter; W. Lautenbach; R. Huskins; S. Rini; C. Jacobs; T. March; E. Williams

**Row 3:** M. Smith; M. Spyker; R. Menhennet; T. Mngomezulu; O. Mngomezulu; N. Dimitriou; J. Roberts; D. Torr; V. Bastiaan; M. Burgess; I. Bastable; A. Chinnah; N. Mdukaza; A. Jacobs; K. Abrahams; B. Durham

**Row 2:** K. Bensusan; D. Gwilliam; A. Kannemeyer; G. Harrison; R. Walsh; S. Mnguni; R. Gersbach; R. Penrith; J. Letsholo; P. Manning; W. Fosbrook; M. Sham; F. England; L. Mathebula

**Front:** G. Chester; L. Flint; K. Griffiths; G. van der Merwe; G. Mitchell; A. Smedley (Senior Student); Miss S. Bavier; Revd. C. Hewitt; Ven. D. Buchanan (Warden); Revd. J. Marcus; Revd. F. Hendricks; Revd. Dr. R. Clarke; T. Luthuli; R. Govender; R. Paulse; L. Adriaanse; A. Jackson; J. Verwant

**Absent:** Revd. M. Bands (on long leave); J. Thomson (1st term only)

In the same letter, more tellingly, Buchanan asserted: "On the whole we are a happy College, though the word 'happiness' involves quite a wide range of meaning! Seeking God's will is a happy experience but rarely comfortable."<sup>31</sup> The qualified "happiness" suggests the difficult times that the College was going through. Polarisation in the College must be seen in light of the state of emergency.

Thus, in response to the intensification of the ANC struggle, which was being waged in 1985, the State President, P.W. Botha, imposed the State of Emergency. Responding to this development, Buchanan wrote:

As I sit to write this letter, the State of Emergency has been in effect for less than twenty-four hours ... It is clear that many people are going to be caught in the midst of suspicion of it ... while the external unrest will die ... The Church must stand as a bridge, and that can mean facing the torrent and the forces would sweep everything away ... For most of this term the College has been doing a very slow in depth study (hopefully) of violence.<sup>32</sup>

With possibilities of racial tension flaring up, the issues of communication and dealing with violence were urgent. That there had been some instances of communication break-down between Black and White students threatening the stability of the College is evident from the fact that Buchanan wrote: "For most of this term he has been doing a very slow 'in depth' study (hopefully) of violence", organised by Political Studies department of Rhodes University. Issues surrounding communication and violence became critical as many parts of the country were engulfed in relentless violence. Thus, Buchanan further asserted:

... So for me, the answer lies in the desire, expressed at the Provincial Synod, for the genuine leaders of this country to sit together in order to listen and hear. The Biblical principle of seeking to talk to those with whom we disagree is essential. No one has, or is, the repository of all truth. Yet all too often we act as though we believe we have all truth ... So Whites simply cannot hear the anger and frustrations of the Blacks; and the Blacks are oblivious to the terrified fear of the Whites – and we all suffer ... The Provincial Synod was trying to address itself to the matters in the land which make for an escalation of violence. Sin does not stop in the political arena! "The constant misuse of Romans 13 or the inability to exegete the "render to Caesar" passage" correctly is all part of a blindness which the Church in the form of Provincial Synod tried to point was almost hysterical to say the least.<sup>33</sup>

The issue whether the use of violence was justifiable to end apartheid split White and Black Anglican members in the Provincial Synod of 1985. The division now manifested itself amongst Black and White students in the College. It was in the context of the ANC's slogan of the 'total onslaught'. The ANC threatened to make the townships ungovernable and in return, Botha launched his 'total strategy', which among other things, resulted in increased Security Police brutality. Botha's 'total strategy' caused havoc in the townships and cross-border raids, including detentions without trial.<sup>34</sup>

Botha's 'total strategy' must be viewed from the broader perspective of the comprehensive strategy of 'Low Intensity Conflict' (LIC), which the apartheid government had adopted since 1984.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> Personal reminiscences, 1984-1987.

<sup>35</sup> Worsnip, M. "Low intensity conflict and the South African Church", Institute for Democratic Alternatives in South Africa (IDASA), Occasional Papers, No. 23, 1989.

Complex and comprehensive, the LIC involved both military and non-military fields of society, *inter alia* civil, educational, and religious (churches), as resources through which the apartheid state sought to legitimise itself.<sup>36</sup> Designed to win the 'hearts and minds' of the people, it sought not to attack the Church as an institution. Instead, it attacked prominent individual church leaders (perceived as its threat), whom it tried to isolate from the Church by characterising them as anti-Christian and godless. Similarly, through the use of its Christian (church) symbols and rituals, the government projected itself as in alliance with the Church in its war against godlessness (communism); at the same time, through its intensive propaganda, it tried to weaken the Church from inside.<sup>37</sup>

In the interim, the Provincial Synod of 1985, meeting under the presidency of Archbishop Russell, called for the renunciation of violence from both sides. The Bishops asserted:

We, the Bishops of the Church of the Province of Southern Africa, meeting in Synod at Faure, Cape, have considered with growing alarm the escalating violence and deteriorating situation in communities throughout the Republic of South Africa. We note that the Foreign Minister, the Hon. R.F. Botha, speaking on SATV (South African Television), actually said, 'We are at war. Since we know that parties at war have to negotiate a peaceful settlement – often after a considerable loss of life and property – we urge the government to negotiate now rather than later. For this reason, we renew our call for a National Convention involving the leaders and representative leaders freely chosen by the people. We are asking government to seek this path of negotiation and work towards an open, democratic society, rather than the way of violence and destruction presently being followed.'<sup>38</sup>

The call for national dialogue by Anglican Bishops found resonance with a similar call by the Ecumenical Leaders' Meeting in Pietermaritzburg from 10 to 12 September in 1985. In the aftermath of their consultation, they launched the National Initiative for Reconciliation (NIR). Following the conference, they issued a 'Statement of Affirmation', which called for continued "meaningful fellowship and worship across racial divide, amongst the churches, to share reality of suffering and common witness with people in the townships and Renewal, ... to continue this process of reconciliation and initiate changes in South Africa society". The NIR was a mission statement intended to initiate the process of racial dialogue in a context of alienation, largely as a result of brutality by apartheid machinery.

## Prayer and liturgy – as a terrain of contestation

Charles Villa-Vicencio noted that this was a period when the English-speaking churches were challenged to relate the liturgy to the resolutions of the synod, assemblies and conferences condemning apartheid, but that they were reluctant.<sup>39</sup> On 16 June 1985, the tenth anniversary of the Soweto Uprising, the South African Council of Churches (SACC) called on the churches to pray for the end of the unjust rule. In retrospect, this was a decisive moment in the Church struggle. The SACC had now publicly declared the state to be a "tyrannical" regime and was praying for its removal.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> Logbook (Palm Sunday 1985, newspaper cutting), AB 2568, C 1.11, 1976-86, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>39</sup> Villa-Vicencio, *Trapped in Apartheid*, p. 153.

In this tense context, the internationally celebrated Kairos Document was published by the Institute for Contextual Theology.<sup>40</sup> It was a period that was also characterised by two events: The Call to Prayer for the End to Unjust Rule on June 16 as part of commemoration of the Soweto Uprising and the publication of the Kairos Document in September that year,<sup>41</sup> an “End to unjust rule” and the removal of the “tyrannical structures of oppression and the present rulers ... who persistently refuse to heed the cry for justice”.<sup>42</sup> In the Anglican Church, Villa-Vicencio noted that Archbishop Russell was reluctant to consider the implications “to remove the present rulers in our country”.<sup>43</sup>

Under the heading, “Downfall of the Government”, the logbook scribe captured the issues of the moment. He recorded: “June the 16th brought, once again, the divided nature of the South African society to the fore and the call for a day of prayer for the downfall of the government was a matter of considerable attention (debate) – merely by assent or dissent to this notion, so much was said.”<sup>44</sup>

Douglas Torr was an ordinand of the Diocese of Johannesburg in the years 1985-86, who before he came to study at St. Paul’s College, was a student at Rhodes University, where he had been exposed to students’ politics. He was one of the youngest students at the time. He described the context of the College then, and the issues that it was wrestling with thus:

Throughout the period of [my] study, the College was not only racially divided but it was politically divided. I remember very long Common Room discussions on many issues, like – amongst some of the White students who had come from Johannesburg and were married, they wanted to minister to the soldiers in the army barracks [in Grahamstown], and I was already a conscience objector; and I refused to be part of that, and we questioned why they should do that kind of ministry. I know it caused a lot of great unhappiness at the time ... I refused to be part of that.<sup>45</sup>

The critical issue that the White students in the College faced was: What role did they have to play regarding the (White) soldiers who were involved in the violence and killings of Black people in the townships and on the South African borders? For Torr, however, the major issue was not just ministry to the soldiers in the barracks, but more critically, some White students’ attitude towards apartheid. He asserted:

I often had a feeling probably because I was young and so much more radical, in thinking that a number of the White students did acknowledge the evil of apartheid but [that] [after College] there were going [to go] into White parishes and there were just going to conform. [We only found out that later on [that] some of them before coming to St. Paul’s had done military service already]...There was very little thinking that actually one should go into a Black parish and have an experience of bringing one’s theological expertise to bear on the context where there were needed.<sup>46</sup>

40 Elphick and Davenport, *Christianity in South Africa*, p. 168.

41 Villa-Vicencio, *Trapped in Apartheid*, pp. 152-153.

42 *Ibid.*, p. 153.

43 *Ibid.*

44 Logbook, AB 2568, C 1.11, St. Paul’s Theological College, 1976-86, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

45 Interview with Douglas Torr, 12 June 2014, Bramley, Johannesburg.

46 *Ibid.*

It is most likely that the students who had first been to the military had undergone through intensive apartheid ideological education and propaganda. They arrived into the College with entrenched positions. Yet for Torr, St. Paul's College was also defined and influenced by various other important factors, notably the standard of education and the manner of preparing the students for ministry, and the staff's attitude towards socio-political issues. He put it thus:

There were no attempts to teach us any languages beyond using the medium of English language ... I was made to study the Diploma which was a waste of time ... We had students with tertiary education, matric, and barely matric ... There were other interesting things about the College but not the Diploma ... I did not find the staff at Grahamstown very radical in their political thinking. Justus Marcus was interesting, so was Fred [Hendricks], but Duncan [Buchanan] would have been of a more liberal persuasion. I remember talking to Duncan [Buchanan] telling him that I was going to the End Conscription Campaign Launch meeting in Johannesburg. Duncan [Buchanan] allowed you to do what you felt was right. He said that I had the freedom to do so. He didn't stop me but I don't remember that he was the most enthusiastic person ... The [staff] tried to steer a counter balance. I looked at the [*Journal of Theology of Southern Africa*] where in an article there was, ... I remember, a prayer for the 'down-fall of the government' and that was controversial. We did discuss the *Kairos Document* which was secretly copied ... There were no signatories from our College to the *Kairos Document* as far as I recall; but Desmond [Tutu] had also expressed his reservations about the *Kairos Document* at the time. The document was critical of state theology.<sup>47</sup>

Simply put, Torr claims that the College was politically uninvolved; that no effort was made to deal with issues of political injustice. In this respect, seeking to avoid polarisation in the College, what the staff was interested in was steering the College in a middle-way position. Compromise was a useless position, as it implied neutrality. However, Torr's criticism regarding language is significant. It had been an issue that Bishop Desmond Tutu raised in the aftermath of the racial crisis in the 1983 College Council. The issue of language ran into a broader issue of cultural diversity in the College. Finally, and equally important, Torr attributed the College's ambivalent stance and attitude towards the liberal and conservative spirit in the Anglican Church in South Africa then. He asserted:

They tried to engage the students but tried to remain neutral, a liberal position which was an impossible position to maintain ... It was not radical in the main sense ... They were open to discussing things and wanted the students to engage with each other and then tried to, I think, remain neutral, a typically liberal position which I think it was impossible position to maintain. It was a very interesting place to be but it was not radical in any sense ... Duncan [Buchanan] would have to keep the peace between the different factions. Some of the petty apartheid was dropping at the time. You must remember that the Church itself was conservative ... There would be constant motions condemning [the] government one way or the other but nothing more than that ... A number of people became chaplains and insisted to become chaplains to the army [SADF] ... The number of White students who left after 1994 is quite high ... I worked with the Black Sash and Advice Centre where some students were exposed to the realities of apartheid.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

Torr was one of very few White students who were actively involved in apartheid issues as they affected people in the Black Communities in Grahamstown. I can concur with Torr's insights into the College life then. The College (Buchanan and the staff) tried to engage with often difficult socio-political issues on many occasions. Finally, in a typically Anglican position, it tried to take a middle-line stance. It was a position that the staff believed would hold the College together. Others, of course, might dismiss this as sitting on the fence and therefore a useless position.

Sithembele Rini, a student in the years 1985-86, went further to assert that "though embracing multiculturalism ... there was a gap between what some lecturers taught in the class rooms, racial equality and practice". In his view, "some White students refused to live with Blacks as equals".<sup>49</sup> Yet it would seem that Russell Mngomezulu had a different experience. He noted: "My experience in College made me realise that I was equal with the Whites, but then leaving the College the reality was different."<sup>50</sup>

However, Alan W. Smedly was a student from January 1983 to November 1985, and a Senior Student in 1985. He went on to outline what he experienced as a mutual transforming experience of races living together at St. Paul's College. He recalled his experience thus:

I think all of us were on a steep learning curve. For many it was the first time we had lived with, and amongst, other racial groups. Consequently, it was the first time that we discovered the real humanity of one another. I think many Black students discovered that there were actually some humane and decent White people out there. Likewise, many White students discovered what apartheid really meant to Black people. The horrors and injustice of apartheid were exposed in a way that most White students had never experienced before.<sup>51</sup>

For Smedly, the closer interaction with Black students changed the perceptions of some White students with regard to the suffering of Black people under apartheid. Yet for some White students, they were more exposed to the unjust nature of the system itself. Undoubtedly, the experience of living with Black people and interacting with them on a regular basis to an extent transformed Blunden and other White people. The change came as a result of White people experiencing on a first hand basis the pain of Black people, their bitterness, and their alienation from apartheid policies. The White students' experience in the College tended to be at variance with their socialisation of apartheid in the White residential areas and in the Anglican Churches that they attended.

Nonetheless, Torr's observation with regard to the conservative character of the Church is equally important. St. Paul's College reflected the very conservative outlook of the White (and to some extent Black) hierarchy in the Church. The Bishops were largely responsive to the wealthy White members of their constituency, some of whom often threatened to leave the Church as they perceived it was involved in 'politics'. During this period, the logbook scribe gave insight into some of the developments that were taking place in the Church hierarchy:

<sup>49</sup> Mbaya, "The Contribution of the Anglican Church to Theological Education in Southern Africa", p. 986.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 985-986.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

A rather weary Fr. Buchanan proceeded to Maritzburg for Provincial Synod which was to last almost two weeks. Among prevalent matters on the agenda – the state of the nation, military conscription an interesting resolution [rightly a motion] on the suspension of Holy Communion “for a period of time” to promote reflection on the serious plight of South Africa were to be debated. This was proposed by a former Roman Catholic priest and now Suffragan Bishop of Johannesburg, the Right Revd. ‘Sigi’ Ndwandwe.<sup>52</sup>

The *Daily Dispatch* political correspondent, Patrick Cull, quoted Bishop Sigsbert Ndwandwe as saying: “It is a matter of urgency that attention be given to the serious conflict within the Church ‘which reflects the conflict in Southern Africa...’.” He went on to say: “It is necessary that Christians be brought to repentance. Calling for the suspension of the administration of Holy Communion ‘for a period of time’ [Ndwandwe said that should be done as] ‘an act of penitence [in order] to bring us all to a state of true repentance and unity’.”<sup>53</sup>

Even though the call by Bishop Ndwandwe sounded extreme, nevertheless it was symbolically significant. It would appear that he intended to draw the attention nationally of Anglicans and perhaps also others, to the worsening political situation that the country was going through. Its significance lay in the symbol of the Eucharistic “fasting” or “penance” for a cause that he considered critical. In a way, it was meant to be an act of witness, symbolically expressed as “resistance” or a “protest”. The call was divisive in the Church. Reporting in the *Daily Dispatch*, a political correspondent, Patrick Cull, quoted one source within the Church, stating that the move “[smacked] of high medievalism ... reminiscent of action taken by the Pope against England during the reign of King John when he suspended all the sacraments”.<sup>54</sup>

The broader violent context that seemed to justify Bishop Ndwandwe’s call for the suspension of Holy Communion affected the College. One dimension to this was the escalating military brutality in the townships and violence. For instance, in his Warden’s Letter of 31 July 1985, Buchanan reminded the students to use the two prayers, which he said the Bishops of the CPSA had asked the College to use daily: The Prayer for Africa and the Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi.<sup>55</sup>

Buchanan’s urge to use the prayer of St. Francis of Assisi highlighted the prevailing violent context of the period both in the Eastern Cape and the rest of the country, and the urgent need for peace. These prayers must be seen as the Church’s alternatives, or rather as ‘counter prayers’ to the controversial “resistance” prayer of the “downfall of the government”, which some in the ecumenical churches and some more radical students were advocating.<sup>56</sup> Roy Barker, the Dean of St. Michael and St. George in Grahamstown, was quoted calling the “downfall prayer unwise, totally unrealistic and did not address the deep problems facing South Africans”.<sup>57</sup>

52 Logbook, 1985, “Provincial Synod”, AB 2568, C 1.11, 1976-86, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

53 *Ibid.*

54 *Ibid.*

55 Warden’s Letter, 31 July 1985, AB 2568, B1-B5, St. Paul’s Theological College, 1983-91, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

56 Interview with Douglas Torr, 12 June 2014, Bramley, Johannesburg.

57 Newspaper cutting, AB 2568, C 1.11, 1976-86, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

Praying for the “downfall” of the government was an issue that divided the Church. From the perspective of some political radicals, the argument was that the apartheid government was illegitimate precisely because it was at war with the majority of the people. The illegitimacy of the apartheid regime had been highlighted by the Kairos Theologians who had drawn up the Kairos Document.<sup>58</sup>

## Living through the Kairos

The Kairos Document was produced by the “underground church”. The “church above” was taken by it by surprise. Traditionalists like Archbishop Desmond Tutu refused to sign it precisely because it aimed at “Church Theology”, which he would not admit that he espoused.<sup>59</sup> On the antecedents of the Kairos Document, Elphick and Davenport noted that it “was a response to the spiral of violence in the years of unjust rule implemented by police and military force. Its dominant theme was the illegitimacy of the South African government, indeed, its tyrannical character, which had to be resisted through civil disobedience. While the Kairos Document did not overtly justify the liberation armed struggle, it was a radical rejection not only of the ‘state theology’, which supported the status quo, but also of the more liberal response to apartheid of the English-speaking churches throughout the years, ‘church theology’.”<sup>60</sup>

“The Document identified ‘non-political’ theology that supported the status quo, state theology that legitimised the status quo and prophetic theology that was highly critical of the status quo.” Through various avenues, such as the Albany District Council of Churches or the Anglican Students Federation, St. Paul’s College students experienced the revitalising power of the Kairos Document in the form of Liberation Theology. Although Liberation Theology had never been part of the curriculum of the college, the term “Liberation Theology” was nevertheless on the lips of some students in the College.<sup>61</sup>

## College and community

Buchanan highlighted the atmosphere of the College in 1985. He asserted: “One of the things that worried me most about 1985 was that we had no explosions or clashes in the College. I say ‘worried’ because not only in the past have these seemed to be almost inevitable but also because there have been few other ways, eventually, for people to see and hear each other clearly.”<sup>62</sup>

As Buchanan had been Warden since 1976, writing in 1985 would imply that racial explosions had become part of life of the College for the past nine years. Did that suggest that racial integration was not succeeding? That racial explosions had become part of the College for such a long time precisely because it reflected the sustained and entrenched racial polarisation in the country at large. Buchanan went further to assert:

58 Interview with Douglas Torr, 12 June 2014, Bramley, Johannesburg.

59 Personal communication with Michael Worsnip.

60 Elphick and Davenport, *Christianity in South Africa*, p. 168.

61 Interview with Douglas Torr, 12 June 2014, Bramley, Johannesburg.

62 Warden’s Report to the College Council, 1985, AB 2568, B 1–B 5, St. Paul’s Theological College, 1983–91, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

My own view is that South Africa is so polarised, that students come into College from our various "group areas" with appalling and often obscene caricatures of each other – and the breaking down of these is necessarily a painful and uneasy process, which more often than not requires an explosion to actually help people to see people and not two-dimensional cartoon figures. That this did not happen in 1985 was for me a cause of concern. It has happened in every other year I have been Warden. The reason may lie in the personalities of the students themselves. In the face of trauma and violence outside the college, the desire not to continue it into their own lives became important. Whatever was the case, issues were settled individually and not corporately, and relationships within the College were creative, open and healthy. So explosions are not always necessary. I was repeatedly impressed by the way issues which in the past would have given rise to much anger and division in the College, were dealt with privately, and yet were dealt with. So my worries were unfounded; and we had a very quiet and in my opinion very happy year.<sup>63</sup>

Buchanan put a finger on the problem. Clashes in the College largely derived from the students' opposing experiences of the communities where they had come from. To some degree, they met in the College not only as "strangers", but as "enemies", attitudes that had been inculcated by the policies and practices of apartheid. Because apartheid had become so entrenched in the lives of the people, breaking down its barriers required from people, to a degree, to go through the process of pain. Sometimes it was a costly process.

The volatile political context of the 1980s called for a new way of training students, a new way of engaging with the issues that arose. The College could no longer ignore reflecting more deeply on the contextual issues of the day. While prior to 1976 St. Paul's College had little contact with Black Townships, in the 1980s some of the students in the College were increasingly establishing contacts with the people in the Black Townships. It is as if the social walls of St. Paul's College had started breaking down, or would it be an exaggeration to say it was like "the walls of Jericho" collapsing? Gone were the 1960s and 1970s when St. Paul's College existed like a semi-monastery on the Island of Iona!

Weeder recalled the racial and cultural diversity of the College at this time. Besides Whites, "Coloured", and Indian students, the Black student population now included Tswana, Sotho, mostly from the then Transvaal, especially Johannesburg, IsiXhosa and IsiZulu speaking students.<sup>64</sup> However, there was also an international outlook of the College. In 1986, besides a few Zimbabwean students in residence, Mildred Sham, a young single lady from Mauritius, had joined the College. Coming from an Evangelical background, it seemed at times that she felt uncomfortable with the Anglo-Catholic spirituality of the College.<sup>65</sup> Sham's presence in the College was unique. She was the only female student amongst a considerable number of single male students. It seemed at times that some single students would try to seize any opportunity just to be in her company.<sup>66</sup> The presence of Sham was in line with a tradition of former female students – extending to Sister Virginia of the Community of the Resurrection of our Lord (CR) in 1970, Jacque Williams (1979), Gail Chester (1983) and Jane Campbell (1985).

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>64</sup> Interview with Michael Weeder, 9 October 2014, Stellenbosch.

<sup>65</sup> Personal reminiscences, 1984-1987; Informal conversations with Leslie Adriaanse, 29 March 2018.

<sup>66</sup> Personal reminiscences, 1984-1987.

Nonetheless, continuing his comment on the ethnic diversity in the College in relation to the issue of political engagement, Weeder said he found more common ground with the students from Soweto who had a hybridity of culture and not so much the Zulu, who had come with a sense of a dignified personality, they had IsiZulu, a heavenly language ... with Iviyo. However, Weeder stated that, in spite of this, Black students had a common sense of alienation.<sup>67</sup>

The writer recalls a spirit of rebellion and anger amongst some students in the College, asking: "Why are we not more involved in what is happening in Black Townships where our people are being daily harassed and murdered by the apartheid Security Police?" One of them was Hector Wanliss, who on many occasions being in the township, sometimes found himself in 'running battles' with the Security Police.<sup>68</sup> Very few White students like him were prepared to associate with the Black cause for liberation or, on several occasions, to put his life on the line as he did. It would seem then that some White students (and members of staff) looked at Wanliss as "odd". Abe Jacobs, from George Diocese, would in informal conversations question the "relevance" of "doing theology" in what he saw as the "secure environment" of St. Paul's College, while the townships were literally "burning". He insisted that "real" theology entailed "dwelling amongst the people", hence some students nicknamed him the "dweller".<sup>69</sup>

Buchanan recalled that, at that time, the debate in the College was on three levels: "how to integrate Blacks and Whites in a warped and dysfunctional society; how to make the learning and content relevant to the needs of the people in our society; and how to integrate the Charismatic and the Traditional students, without one or the other group going into a ghetto".<sup>70</sup> But for Buchanan, the internal life of the College was itself a contribution to the local community. He stated:

Perhaps the best contribution to the Grahamstown community, and in some cases more widely afield, was our worship. Some invited individuals coming in to share in its life and some students going out to work in the community. Worship was the centre of the life, with the rhythm of daily Eucharist, the offices and meditation/personal prayer. One prominent feature of this was the attempt to open the Eucharistic worship and the communal meal on Fridays to the wider community within Grahamstown and beyond.<sup>71</sup>

Through participation in the Eucharist, followed by the sharing in the communal College supper on Friday night, some people from the less privileged community in Grahamstown started to share in the life of the College. For a few hours at least, these people experienced something of what it was like to live in a privileged 'White' community like that of St. Paul's College. Yet it would seem that some student activists were not content with such gestures.

Austen Jackson and Michael Weeder recalled that in 1984, with the permission of Buchanan, they brought young men belonging to the Congress of South African Students (COSAS), who sought refuge in the College from the Township. Michael Worsnip came to fetch them and took them to Lesotho to

<sup>67</sup> Interview with Michael Weeder, 9 October 2014, Stellenbosch.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>69</sup> Personal reminiscences, 1984-1987.

<sup>70</sup> Mbaya, "The Contribution of the Anglican Church to Theological Education in Southern Africa".

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*

join *Umkhonto we Sizwe*, the armed wing of the African National Congress.<sup>72</sup> Buchanan, writing to me, recalled that such hospitality was a powerful witness in society. He stated that only a year ago he had met a young man who had told him that he had been one who had been given shelter and that "saved their lives".<sup>73</sup>

A Special Branch document supports what these informants say. On the basis of the information provided by a "reporter", the Special Branch in Grahamstown compiled a report of the visit of Michael Worsnip to Grahamstown. He had come from Lesotho to fetch political activists. According to this document, on 19 December 1984, Worsnip arrived in Grahamstown at 7 o'clock in the evening to fetch Lindile Bavuma, Siphon Kolisi, Thembinkosi (Terror) Mankayi, and Monde Tabata, former Black Student Movement president at Rhodes University. The Report further states:

In respect of the three (COSAS) members, Worsnip said arrangements had been made to fetch them at St. Paul's Theological College and from there to take them out of the country.<sup>74</sup>

The author remembers very clearly the presence of some of these young men in the College in 1984. We had meals with them in the dining hall. It was a very quiet arrangement as there was no debate about them in the Common Room.<sup>75</sup> It was a very bold stance, and the most radical thing that Buchanan (and the staff?) had ever done.<sup>76</sup> Buchanan risked being arrested. With this action, we can confidently say that indeed, St. Paul's College had come a long way. In a very concrete way, the College was in solidarity with the oppressed majority. The new context called for a new way of reflecting practical issues, a new way of analysing the socio-political issues. For St. Paul's College, an era of Applied Theology had indeed arrived.

## Applied Theology – A new way of doing theology?

In his 1985 Warden's Report to the College Council, Buchanan attributed the absence of racial tensions during that year to the part played by Applied Theology, especially on conflict resolution. He asserted:

To some degree at least this state of affairs was made possible because of a new policy in relation to Applied Theology. For a year or two this had been run by a rather "ad hoc" basis, trying to help the students to theologise on issues as they rose. In 1985 we singled out three areas and looked at them in some depth. In the first term we dealt with communication; for a good deal of the second and third terms looked at violence ... In each case we used a variety of techniques – helping people to face and deal with the rather difficult things in themselves. This was helped too by weekly planning meetings

<sup>72</sup> Informal conversations with Michael Weeder and Austen Jackson on a number of occasions in 2015.

<sup>73</sup> Mbaya, "The Contribution of the Anglican Church to Theological Education in Southern Africa".

<sup>74</sup> Document titled, "Sekerheidsklassifikasie, Geheim, Veiligheidsverslag", No. 85002753, loaned to the author by Michael Worsnip.

<sup>75</sup> Personal reminiscences, 1984-1987.

<sup>76</sup> Di Buchanan says she seemed to think that Duncan Buchanan could have informed the staff about the arrangement. Personal communication with the author, 22 August 2017.

between the staff and the group leaders. Many of the issues which came up later in the groups were raised and dealt with in that context, to good effect.<sup>77</sup>

The introduction of Applied Theology should be viewed as an attempt to fill a vacuum that could have been occupied by the radical Liberation or Black Theology, which was prominent in some seminaries, chiefly at Fedsem.<sup>78</sup> At St. Paul's College, however, Applied Theology was nothing compared to the nature of Black Theology and Black Consciousness at Fedsem, which tended to foster a spirit of criticality and rebellion. As noted above, just as the Church had encouraged the use of the peace prayer of St. Francis as an alternative to the "downfall prayer", so it now introduced Applied Theology almost as an alternative to the "radical" Liberation Theology. Writing with regard to the influence of Black Theology and Contextual Theology at Fedsem, Denis and Duncan noted that "the standard Joint Board Diploma reintroduced in 1985 included a course on church and society", which dealt inter alia with "the witness of the Church in South Africa today".<sup>79</sup> However, as it happened in the late 1980s, regarding its prophetic witness, the College took one step forward, and the next one backward. This was especially with regard to its relationship with the UDF.

## Severing ties with the UDF

Early in 1985, Buchanan communicated to the student body the Bishops' decision that the College sever its ties with the United Democratic Front (UDF). Buchanan reported to the College Council regarding his communication to the College about the Bishops' decision as follows:

Early in the year I informed the College that the Bishops had requested (we understood that to mean "required") us to drop our formal links with the U.D.F. I believed that the only way for this to happen was there to have no discussion on the matter – but for me to simply inform the students that I required them to sever formal ties with the UDF. This meant that the students themselves could 'blame' someone for losing the contact which they and I, believe to be important. While we all did as the Bishops requested I cannot say that many of us considered it was the right move. It was a good example though, of having to learn to live under authority.<sup>80</sup>

It is obvious that the decision that the College had taken to align with the UDF early in 1984 had not gone down well with some Bishops of the Province. This was one issue in the life of the College that the Bishops exerted their authority over the students directly. For Buchanan, it was on the principle of obedience to the *pater familia!* For the Bishops, the College's association with the UDF was too radical. Yet it would seem that they did not view the White students' association with National Party politics or even getting involved in the South African Defence Force as an issue.

77 Warden's Report to the College Council, 1985, AB 2568, A 4, 1983-91, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

78 Cf. Denis and Duncan, *The Native School that Caused all the Trouble*, pp. 89-94.

79 *Ibid.*, pp. 151-152.

80 Warden's Report to the College Council, 1985, AB 2568, B 1-B 5, St. Paul's Theological College, 1983-91, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

Buchanan conveyed the impression that he was completely one with the students. Even though he was organically part of the College, however, by virtue of his office, Buchanan was in fact an extension of the Anglican hierarchical authority (and power). In this respect, he was not entirely 'part' of the College. Buchanan's decision not to open a discussion on the matter was strategic; the stakes were too high. Such a controversial issue was bound to raise heated debate and had the possibility to polarise the College. Severing ties with the UDF was a momentous decision. Symbolically, the action implied that the College dissociated itself from struggle politics. Nonetheless, this did not imply that they now supported the apartheid government. It was an issue of subservience to Church authority rather than rendering support to apartheid.

Perhaps this reflected a change in the Church leadership's attitude towards students' 'politics'. In the years 1984 to 1986, Desmond Tutu was the Bishop of Johannesburg, a position which soon turned out to be a stepping stone on his accession to the Archbishopate of Cape Town in 1986. The Anglican hierarchy was ecclesiastically and politically conservative. Tutu and other Bishops were opposed to clergy becoming members of party-political organisations. The *Cape Times* reported that Tutu had described the members of clergy who had expressed intention to vote for the ANC in the 1995 election as "disloyal and disobedient", since in his view, they had "breached the Bishops' prohibition on priests becoming members of party-political organisations and he wanted them to apologise".<sup>81</sup>

Marion Stevens, was the Anglican Students' Federation Projects' Officer in 1989 and 1990. Stevens recalled that there was a tumultuous ASF conference in 1989 at Fedsem in Imbali, Pietermaritzburg, where Archbishop Tutu made a "ruling" that he would not allow any priest to be a member of a political party, whether that party was the SACP, ANC, or Inkatha.<sup>82</sup> Stevens states that Tutu made the declaration in the context of the murder of the ANC-aligned Black priest, Father Vactor Afrikander. It was suspected that he had been murdered by members of the Inkatha Freedom Party. The students' response, Stevens remembers, was one of utter contemptuous dismissal of Tutu's call.<sup>83</sup>

The Bishops' decision, however, also ought to be viewed in light of the highly volatile political situation in the country. Buchanan portrayed how this unpredictable political state of affairs was impacting on the College life. He stated:

The situation in the country is very much reflected in the College. The differing attitudes focus never more clearly than on annual debate on sport policy. Do we play "non-racial" or "multi-racial" sport is not an exercise in semantics, but a matter of deep and agonising Christian concern. The question of playing teams which are not committed to a non-racial policy on fields which are available only by permits is a matter of agony to many Blacks, yet often initially not even vaguely understood by most Whites. The sensitivity with which this issue is dealt is often one of the marks of the year.<sup>84</sup>

81 Clarke, *Anglicans Against Apartheid*, p. 537.

82 Interview with Marion Stevens, 15 August 2017, Muizenberg. According to her, she was ASF Projects Officer in the years 1989-1990.

83 Interview with Marion Stevens, 15 August 2017, Muizenberg.

84 Warden's Report to the College Council, 1985, AB 2568, B 1-B 5, St. Paul's Theological College, 1983-91, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

Perhaps resulting from the violent political context of 1985 and how that was affecting St. Pauls, Buchanan slightly redefined the purpose of theological training as follows:

The whole nature of the training must be to help people to change, for preparation for anything must involve that process. So growth in knowledge of the Scriptures, and theology, of prayer and spirituality, of ethics and community living, comes as a result of facing the forces of sin within oneself and being prepared to move in new directions. And inevitably that is a frightening experience, for few of us are confident enough in God to trust that He is there in the darkness of fear and in the blindness of new directions.<sup>85</sup>

There is stress on the change that he saw arising from confronting sin within oneself in light of the violent situation that the country experienced. Similarly, for Buchanan the signs were emerging that the old order would not endure for much longer. Buchanan saw the role of St. Paul's College in theological training as transforming people, preparing them for the emerging order. This vision seemed to differ slightly from the usual one. For instance, in 1983, he had outlined:

Our aim is to turn out people who are deeply committed, loving concerned leaders ... to love and serve Jesus ... people who can see issues and act wisely, obediently and with joyful faith, without ducking the hard things of ministry ... look for people who are both consistent and also adaptable – who can take responsibility.

This slightly contrasted with the new vision outlined in the context of political violence. In his Warden's letter, he continued to say:

I wrote my last letter to you the day after the State of Emergency had been declared. We are still in the state of emergency and I am not sure that we are better off – except that we no longer hear what is going on. Years ago our Lord told us that “the truth will make you free”, but it is sadly true that for most governments, our own included, the truth is the last thing that is available. I have come to realise afresh how little we realise what is going on, how completely and effectively news is either withheld or distorted. Even more tragic is how we happily believe what we see and hear what is served up to us as being the truth. The phenomenon is of course not new but it is nevertheless frightening.

In the 1980s, Buchanan was conscious of the hypocrisy of some Anglicans with regard to apartheid. He was critical of this attitude. Writing in his Warden's Letter on 20 November 1985, he asserted:

I find it very sad that often the people who are calling the loudest for change in this land are themselves incapable of it in other spheres of life. The Christians who call for political change seldom want that process to happen in the Church. In fact, that area we are often as reactionary as we claim the government to be in their sphere of activity. That is sad of course, because it means that we are often meeting closed minds – with equally closed minds – and the truth is not able to penetrate the darkness of our minds and hearts.<sup>86</sup>

85 Warden's Letter, AB 2568, A 4, St. Paul's Theological College, 1983-91, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

86 Warden's Letter, Buchanan, 20 November 1985, AB 2568, A 4, St. Paul's Theological College, 1983-91, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

Buchanan's letter is significant precisely because it revealed rare insight into the attitudes of some White Anglicans towards apartheid. It accurately illustrated the apparent incongruence between what some White Anglicans said in public and what their lives were in the private domain. The prevailing conservative attitude of some White Anglicans during this period would seem to be supported by the situation as it then existed in the Diocese of Johannesburg.

Lee noted that in response to the initiative by the Challenge Groups to transform the Anglican Church, some conservative White Anglicans resisted changes that would allow Black Anglican clergy and laity to participate more fully in the life of the Church in the Diocese of Johannesburg.<sup>87</sup>

In the late 1980s, South Africa was going through a state of transition, as the voice calling for change was getting much louder and some aspects of "petty" apartheid were falling away. Buchanan, like others, noticed the signs of socio-political change that started to surface in the country. The emerging environment called for a different kind of approach to theological education. The minutes of the Ordinary St. Paul's College Council held on 15 October 1985 noted that:

The Warden read a letter from Fr. [Njongonkulu Winston] Ndungane, the principal of St. Bede's in which he proposed a long term commitment of the two institutions to pool resources and ultimately set up a new, single campus. In his reply Buchanan stated several negative reasons, as well as desiring to talk more. The Warden undertook to keep the Council informed of future discussions.<sup>88</sup>

Buchanan's negative response to the proposal sounds strange. Ndungane's vision for a merger of St. Bede's and St. Paul's College marked a sign of the changing times. It would seem that Ndungane's proposals were based on pragmatism. Running separate colleges seemed to be a waste of precious resources, which could rather have been used to effectively operate one theological institution. There was also another underlying reason: To some people, running parallel theological institutions founded on the legacy of apartheid and colonialism appeared to continue applying apartheid rules in the Church.

## Conclusion

The years 1983 to 1985 were politically a very turbulent period in South Africa. As a result of political violence and racial tensions, South Africa was a racially polarised nation. In many respects, this atmosphere continued to impact on the life of the College. The College had to deal with challenging issues of a political nature. Most prominent and persistent among these related to sport. It was a matter that was highly politicised. The question was often raised which teams in Grahamstown the College team could or could not play sport with. It was a critical issue precisely because apartheid legislation barred Blacks from using sport facilities in the neighbouring White institutions. Tensions that raged nearly the entire year of 1985 would spill over into the following year. As will be shown shortly, through internal forces in the College, as well as forces from outside, the period from 1986 to 1992 marked the last era of the life of the College. It is an episode in the life of the College to which we must now turn.

<sup>87</sup> Lee, *Compromise and Courage*, pp. 328-329.

<sup>88</sup> Minutes of an Ordinary Meeting of St. Paul's College Council, 15 October 1985, AB 2568, B 3, 1983-86, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

## Chapter 7

## Living through the 'Kairos' 1986-92

### Closing the chapter

On 10 April 1986, Buchanan wrote his last letter as Warden to the College. He informed the student body that he had been appointed Dean of the Diocese of Johannesburg. Buchanan had been appointed Dean by Bishop Desmond Tutu, the very same year that the latter would become Archbishop of Cape Town. With these changes, the College, and especially the Anglican Church in South Africa, now entered a new era. In the letter, Buchanan also announced that on 6 March, at the College Award Ceremony, the Archbishop had announced that Chichele Hewitt would succeed him. He went on and stated:

I want to say that I am delighted with his appointment for several reasons, but not least is that I believe that the College will prosper greatly under him. He is a good leader, a man of real compassion and understanding, a good administrator and very wise. He will, I know, keep the vision of the College which we have sought to foster, and is so radically different from me that no one must dare to try and compare us. I love him very much, and I am sure that the right choice was made under God. Please pray for Chichele and his wife Gill, their daughters, Clare and Inger, as they make the same move that we made – from 117 Durban Street to Cullen House.<sup>1</sup>

Buchanan's strong commendation of Hewitt is very significant. He knew very well that after being Warden for 10 years and another 10 as Sub-warden before that, in many respects the College had come to be too closely identified with his *persona*, his life and career. This writer recalls that it was almost impossible at the time to think of the College without Buchanan.<sup>2</sup> Two aspects of Buchanan's commendation are critical in this respect. Firstly, that Hewitt was very capable, and that he shared Buchanan's vision of the College. These issues were intended to inspire the confidence of the College, the Anglican Church (clergy and laity) and Bishops, in Hewitt. The second aspect of importance was that Hewitt was different from Buchanan, and this was meant to give room and freedom to Hewitt to introduce his own vision and administrative style without alienating himself from the College or the Church. Throughout his Wardenship, Buchanan had formed some very close relationships with certain students. Some of these students kept close ties with Buchanan long after they had left the College. In some respects, these students were like an extension of the College. Buchanan had tried hard to transform the College into a family-like community.<sup>3</sup>

1 Warden's Letter, 10 April 1986, AB 2568, A 4, St. Paul's Theological College, 1983-91 (emphasis in the original document), Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

2 Personal reminiscences, 1984-1987.

3 *Ibid.*

The College operated in a context where the state seemed to view the Anglican Church as its foe. Right wing state-sponsored organisations such as the 'Gospel Defence League'<sup>4</sup> and 'Anglicans Concerned for Truth and Spirituality' (ACTS)<sup>5</sup> waged war against the Anglican Church. Through various forms of propaganda, the state demonised, vilified and abused Archbishop Tutu as a Communist. Influenced by this state propaganda, considerable numbers of White Anglicans left the Church.<sup>6</sup> These developments ought to be viewed in the context of the Low intensity Conflict strategy as discussed in the previous chapter.

### 'A new thing' – a 'young revolutionary'

It was in this context that, in his second letter to the College in his first year as Warden in November 1986, Hewitt set a tone that appeared to break new ground. He started his letter with the subheading, "A new thing?". In that letter, Hewitt referred to himself as a "young revolutionary", and also said that he used the term "revolutionary" to refer to the need for "openness" to move in new directions, a readiness to learn, and that he was responding to the transformative nature of the ministry of Christ.<sup>7</sup> The term was relevant in the 1980s and the 1990s, precisely because it was a context where politically, the idea of a 'political revolution' of the status quo was very much in currency within the circles of the liberation struggle.<sup>8</sup>

Hewitt took over leadership during the time when South Africa was going through major changes. The country was in a state of emergency, which had been imposed in 1985. The Eastern Cape, and Grahamstown in particular, was a boiling point. The dropping of petty apartheid laws and the clarion call for Black leadership in national politics seemed to embolden Black people in asserting themselves. This formed the background against which, in his Warden's Report to the College Council in 1986, Hewitt also announced the appointment of the first Black African Senior student. Hewitt said:

Once again, we have a very full College, and with Lawrence Mathebula as Senior Student. There was great rejoicing at this election when St. Paul's elected its first African Senior Student. Some of the old issues will resurface, and this will include debating the sports policy where hopefully sport will be played with regularity of 1986. New freedom in non-racial facilities resulted in some good sporting activities last year which did a great deal for the College.<sup>9</sup>

Mathebula became a leader at a time when the numbers of Black and White students seemed to be fairly balanced. His election appeared to be an affirmation of the contribution that Black people could make in the country that was slowly moving towards an open society, where Black people were destined to play an important role. It was in this context that the College started to face the challenge of preparing for the commemoration of Youth Day on 16 June in 1986.

4 Clarke, *Anglicans Against Apartheid*, pp. 418, 481, 488.

5 *Ibid.*, p. 419.

6 *Ibid.*, p. 409.

7 Warden's Letter, 27 November 1986, AB 2568, A 4, St. Paul's College, 1983-91, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

8 Personal reminiscences, 1984-1987.

9 Warden's Report, 1986, College Council, St. Paul's College, AB 2568, A 4, St. Paul's College, 1983-91, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

## The commemoration of Youth Day on 16 June 1986

Speaking to this author, Hewitt recalled that every year when 16 June was approaching, it was always an occasion of anxiety as to how the College would deal with the commemorations.<sup>10</sup> The occasion raised debate in the Common Room as to how best the College could observe the day. Hewitt recalled that “very early in his post” the College made a decision in the Common Room to march to the township where the students and members of staff would attend worship at the Order of Ethiopia.<sup>11</sup> He said: “Before going very far, they were stopped by Police [in Raglan] Road, but then subsequently were allowed to attend the service ... It was a very tense situation”.<sup>12</sup> In his report to the College Council in 1986, Hewitt gave more details, as follows:

Remarkably, June 16th was the occasion when there was the greatest sense of unity in the College. Not that it was easy getting there. As the 10th Anniversary of June 16th 1976 was approaching, there was a feeling in the College that more than a quiet day spent in prayer was required in identifying with the greater part of Grahamstown people. The declaration of a State of Emergency forced the College into long debate, with a meeting on Sunday June 15th running into the next morning. Most of the College, it was agreed would proceed to the township to attend a service of worship while some would remain behind to pray. This decision was arrived at with no sense of division between the two groups and as we met at a final Eucharist of Celebration on the evening of June 16th it was evident that the Lord had been with us and worked strongly that day.<sup>13</sup>

This writer witnessed this incident.<sup>14</sup> Even though there was no sense of division, there was a sense of fear of the unknown; what would happen if the police were to shoot? It was a terrifying experience passing through heavily armed Caspirs. One got the feeling that the presence of White people (staff and students), somehow seemed to have a restraining effect on the White soldiers, often known for their brutal treatment of Black people. Emotions were running high.<sup>15</sup> There was also some feeling that we were merely trying to cause unnecessary trouble. This was a Black cause in which some White people had no stake at all. More importantly, the debate and the act seemed to be a “test” of the unity in the non-racial College.<sup>16</sup>

## The Constitution and the trust deed of St. Paul's College

In the interim, the issue of reference to “European Candidates” in the College Constitution raised its head again. This time it became an even more urgent matter. Thus, reporting to the College Council in 1986, Hewitt asserted that:

<sup>10</sup> Telephone interview with Chichele Hewitt, 17 March 2016.

<sup>11</sup> The Order of Ethiopia has an historic relationship with the Anglican Church. See Peter Hinchliff, *The Anglican Church in South*. London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1963, pp. 200-203.

<sup>12</sup> Telephone interview with Chichele Hewitt, 17 March 2016.

<sup>13</sup> End of 1986 Warden's Report to St. Paul's College Council, AB 2568, A 4, St. Paul's College, 1983-91, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>14</sup> Personal reminiscences, 1984-1987.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

Reference was made to the term "European Candidates" in the Preamble of the Constitution and Canons of the C.P.S.A (ed. 1982) p. 185. It was agreed that this is an historical statement which can't be altered, but the need for sensitivity on such an issue in the present South African situation was recognised. It was thought that the matter had been dealt with previously at Provincial level, but it was agreed that the Provincial Registrar be approached on the inclusion of a footnote to the preamble.<sup>17</sup>

As noted in Chapter 4, this had been a controversial issue. In this context, reference to "European Candidates" in the College Constitution, which now trained numbers of Black ordinands, appeared to be an anomaly. It was as if it was an albatross that hanged around its neck. The transformation of St. Paul's College did not only entail the presence of Black students, but it also required some contextualisation of the historical documents in light of the changing socio-political context.

It seemed to be an issue that was questionable in this context. Hence, the difficulty of changing a legacy such as this seemed to give impetus to the idea of establishing a new college that reflected the racial dynamics of the country more broadly. By the end of the year, in his Warden's Letter, Hewitt highlighted in different ways how the challenges emanating in the context of apartheid were affecting the College, the country and the Church. It was in this broader context that he had used the analogy of a "young revolutionary" and "a new thing". Writing under the subheading, *A Challenge to the College*, Hewitt stated:

These challenges face us all, as Christians, and not least at St. Paul's. On June 16th with a new declared state of emergency, the College spent a long but profitable time debating how the day was to be used. A great spirit of unity was felt as members of the College attended a service in the township followed by a service at the Commemoration Methodist Church. The day concluded with a Eucharist in the College Chapel where we could truly give thanks to God for the way he had guided us. However, much a theological college differs from the reality of parish life, it is South Africa in microcosm, and a training scheme to be undertaken which hopefully will be relevant in a changing society. As we need to pray for you, so I hope you will pray for us. Because where men and women are being trained for full-time service in Christ, there one is in the fore front of a spiritual battle.<sup>18</sup>

In the same report, Hewitt gave a broader context to this. Under the heading, *A Challenge to the Church*, he asserted:

All what is happening around us is of course a formidable challenge to the Church. And whatever happens the Church cannot claim neutrality. Even were she to do this, the neutrality would be interpreted as taking sides. If the Church takes an option for a particular cause, it cannot and must not neglect anybody. And if the Church takes a so-called preferential option for the poor, which I believe it ought to, that does not mean that it is to neglect anybody else. If two people are fighting and one is clearly punishing the other unmercifully, one would hopefully intervene on behalf of the one who is suffering; but one has a concern, too, for the person inflicting the punishment. So it should be for the Christian who has to witness to Christ in the situation. Ultimately, as Father Nolan has

<sup>17</sup> Warden's Report, 1986, College Council, St. Paul's College, AB 2568, A 4, St. Paul's College, 1983-91, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>18</sup> Warden's Letter, 27 November 1986, AB 2568, A 4, St. Paul's College, 1983-91, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

put it, it is the option "to whom we must preach the Gospel; it is a matter of what Gospel we preach to anyone at all" (*Resistance and Hope*: Villa Vicencio & De Gruchy. Philip/Eerdmans, 1985, p. 190).<sup>19</sup>

Hewitt articulates the difficult position that the Anglican Church faced, compelled to decide whether to minister exclusively to the oppressed Black majority or to the oppressive White 'minority'. Thus, the question which side of the conflict the Church must take was very critical. Finally, he went on to assert:

Nor is the issue as simple as this. Pressures are on the Church from all sides and it is difficult to know which way to move. Some want it to uphold the system, some want it to overthrow the system; some want it to be peaceful, others want it to be violent. And whichever way it turns, someone will be unhappy. This may also involve a dropping off of revenue, and indeed persecution. Never more than now do we need to wait upon God, to listen to what He is saying, and to act upon it in His love. God is love, and that means His Church is to witness to that Love in the power of the Spirit; and that means we are not to grow cold on the charisms He has made known to us, nor to avoid the challenges of proclaiming a just society.<sup>20</sup>

In the same report to the College Council, under the subheading, "South Africa today", Hewitt reported:

Our country is in a state of change, and there is escalating violence. The official media would like us to believe that it is only a minority calling for change, and that the multitude is content. Further they would have us believe that violence emanates from the ANC. Yet almost the call for change is from the majority [of South Africans]. The system of apartheid and its manner of being ... is violent. It is evil and heretical and it has to go. It is now in the process of going – not through reform, for it cannot be reformed but through overthrow. That to me is what is happening around us. It is easy to forget the state of emergency and the suppression of news, which has almost become commonplace. In fact, I find the word 'emergency' interesting. For some it has the meaning of events demanding some immediate action. For others it may mean an 'emerging' from one order to another.<sup>21</sup>

South Africa had lived in a state of emergency since 1985. In 1986, the Anglican Church had declared apartheid a heresy. This was the context in which the march to the township took place in 1986. Meanwhile, in his report to the College Council towards the end of 1986, Hewitt described the state of the College for the rest of the year. He reported as follows:

So as the year began with a degree of uncertainty it reached its zenith by the middle of the year, with the nadir at the end. The end of the year produced one of those clashes which was absent in 1985 to the concern of the former Warden ... Such events are never easy to live through and are time consuming (especially during the pre-exam week!), but are also growing experiences. This was not so much the nadir as was the necessity of dealing with a College lethargy in academic and spiritual life, manifesting itself in one or two incidents where action with individual students was necessary. While on paper this may sound alarming, College life continued smoothly with many positive features, but the above served as a reminder of the meaning of the Biblical imagery of soldiers and athletes in the Christian way.<sup>22</sup>

19 *Ibid.*

20 *Ibid.*

21 *Ibid.*

22 End of 1986 Warden's Report to St. Paul's College Council, AB 2568, A 4, 1983-91, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

It was within this context that in his Warden's Letter of August 1987, Hewitt gave a brief report about the 'mission' trip that he had led to Queenstown earlier that year.

## Missions in 1987 – apartheid in the graveyard?

In that letter, Hewitt stated that "[he] had a wonderful and supportive team, and [they] ... were given the opportunity of ministering in the so-called White and Coloured parishes of Queenstown". He related the rest of the story as follows:

We learnt a great deal in the week away, many people were reached, and lives were changed. During the week a parishioner died and some of us were privileged to attend the funeral. There was something memorable and moving as we stood in the cemetery with its backdrop of trees and mountains, including the enormous "Hangklip". Even in death a fence separates a White and Black, but Christ has defeated death and has broken down dividing walls between people, and in the joys and sorrows of the past week, we saw people reaching for one another in Christ.<sup>23</sup>

It was the absurdity of apartheid policy that enforced separation along racial lines, even in death. It was an extension of the implementation of the Group Areas Act or Separate Amenities Act. In that same year, Paterson recalled to have led a multiracial team on mission to Fort Beaufort.<sup>24</sup> He said that he allocated White students to live with Black members of the congregation.<sup>25</sup> His intention, so he recalled, was to expose White people to Black people's experience of apartheid in the township.<sup>26</sup>

Paterson, however, seemed to "think that their experience would not have made any difference" as he said that he found that difficult to assess.<sup>27</sup> In my view, this exposure could not have made any difference for two reasons. Firstly, Black families chosen to host the students would on the whole be 'better off' than the average family in the township or village;<sup>28</sup> hence, White students were not really exposed to the harsh realities of apartheid during the mission tour. Secondly, sometimes these visits were too short to make any impact on the students.<sup>29</sup> As far as I can recall, very few or none of the White students would insist on staying with poorer Black families.<sup>30</sup>

23 Warden's Letter, August 1987, AB 2568, A 4, 1983-91, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

24 Skype interview with Torquil Paterson, 2 March 2016.

25 *Ibid.*

26 *Ibid.*

27 *Ibid.*

28 Personal reminiscences, 1984-1987.

29 *Ibid.*

30 *Ibid.*

## The ministry to “liberate” White people

The preceding issues need to be placed in a broader context of the late 1980s. James Cochrane<sup>31</sup> and Charles Villa-Vicencio<sup>32</sup> have shown that although occasionally issuing protest statements against some aspects of apartheid legislation, or certain practices, essentially, White members of these churches were entangled in apartheid. In the 1980s, the Institute for Contextual Theology (ICT), having identified White Churches (communities) as “a site of the struggle”, embarked on programmes to liberate White people from their alignment with apartheid ideology and policies – to embrace the struggle for liberation. For instance, at its Annual General Meeting in 1987, the ICT adopted the following motion:

... the ICT take up the matter of a positive ministry to the oppressor with particular attention paid to issues such as guilt, fear and material interest in the white community.

To implement this resolution, the ICT called together a planning group that produced a position paper outlining the following needs:

- a liberating ministry to whites needs to address the fears and alienation in the white community
- it needs to help whites understand and accept the legitimate aspirations and demands of the black majority
- it needs to present to whites an alternative Christian world view to counter their misguided reality.<sup>33</sup>

In its programmes, the ICT promoted close interaction between White and Black people, opening church schools to Black children and exposing White people to Black leadership.<sup>34</sup> The statement went on to assert: “This is seen as not an exclusively white enterprise, but a joint effort of Black and White Christians to develop a liberating ministry to White people.”<sup>35</sup>

In another context, subjecting churches to critically analysing its “contradictions” within its structures, practices, theology and spirituality, theologians produced a document, *We Shall Overcome, A Spirituality for Liberation*.<sup>36</sup> The authors sought to produce a “spirituality” that would give the Churches new direction during the transition towards a democratic South Africa. Rod Bulman, who was the Registrar at Fedsem, recalled that:

It was an attempt to explore a theology through which White people could experience liberation from the oppressive state theology which sanctified apartheid and separation. It drew its inspiration

31 Cochrane, J. *Servants of Power, The Role of the English-Speaking Churches in South Africa 1903-1930*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1987.

32 Villa-Vicencio, C. *Trapped in Apartheid: A socio-theological history of the English-Speaking Churches*. MaryKnoll, NY: Orbis, 1988.

33 “A Liberating Ministry to the White Community”. Document loaned to the author by Michael Worsnip.

34 *Ibid.*

35 A leaflet titled, “The White Christian Community As A Site of Struggle”, published by ICT. Document loaned to the author by Michael Worsnip.

36 Worsnip, M. and Van der Water, D. (eds.). *We Shall Overcome, A Spirituality for Liberation*. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 1991.

from Black Theology and Liberation Theology ... for me it was also a recognition of how Christian National Education was being used to distort the world view of our youth as it being right to dominate, be superior to others.<sup>37</sup>

In addition, Fiona Bulman recalled:

It was also an opportunity to recognise our White privilege and what that was doing in separating us from a large part of our Christian family and more widely the people of our country. It operated on the basis of a radical reading of scripture 'from below', with the emphasis on our common humanity as being made in the image of God. It looked at the experiences of oppression experienced by white people in the form of being confined to a specific role in society, the lack of freedom of association, expression, art and culture. It looked for signs of suffering and of hope shared by others. It encouraged forming bonds of understanding and mutual support across the then rigid barriers of race and class.<sup>38</sup>

She further indicated that the effect of this on the churches were as follows:

I can only report my experiences which took place in a very middle class, White Anglican Cathedral parish. Some parishioners were inspired to begin examining the social realities from a different perspective, but many were horrified at any challenge to the established order.<sup>39</sup>

Rod Bulman also went further to assert:

The [churches] discussed and planned the *Standing for the Truth Campaign* ... the campaign was interfaith and non-racial with many supporters from across all social divisions.<sup>40</sup>

These initiatives remained those of a very few White minority, as most of the majority of Whites found comfort in apartheid privileges. They did not envisage or desire change of the status quo. K. Kritzinger identified "Whiteness" as a problem that was at the core of racial problems in (South) African churches (and communities). In his view, White people grew up, being socialised into the "Western colonialist master narrative with all its assumptions of the superiority, special entitlement, and unique destiny of European people".<sup>41</sup> To liberate White people, so he argued, Whiteness needed to be deconstructed, so that White people could then acquire a "hybrid identity", which ought to enable them to enter into "a dialogic, appreciative, committed relationship with the continent that whiteness came to conquer".<sup>42</sup>

37 Personal correspondence with Rod and Fiona Bulman, 20 October 2016.

38 *Ibid.*

39 *Ibid.*

40 *Ibid.*

41 Kritzinger, K. "Liberating Whiteness: Engaging with the Anti-Racist Dialectics of Steve Biko", p. 103, a quote from Melissa Steyn, *"Whiteness just isn't what it used to be": white identity in a changing South Africa*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001, p. xxvii.

42 *Ibid.*, p. 105.

## The fast changing context: 1988-1989

Hewitt recalled that the years 1988 and 1989 were the most turbulent years he had ever experienced as Warden.<sup>43</sup> In his report to the College Council in 1988 he noted:

Society is changing very fast, and we trying to anticipate some of these areas of change within our programme. These include greater openness to indigenous music and language in Chapel, as well as newer emphases within group work which will help students not only in their handling of Bible studies, but also come to terms with so-called "basic Christian Communities".<sup>44</sup>

The process of transforming the College with an African ethos continued to accelerate. In 1989, Hewitt reported that "this year there has been an increase in the use of vernacular languages at the Eucharist, and on average one service a week is said in one of 5 languages other than English. At other times hymns in different languages are used, and we have also recently acquired a set of Marimbas".<sup>45</sup> This was a far cry from the crisis in 1982, where one of the complaints was the "Whiteness" of the College. The College was transforming at a very fast pace.

Today, some of the former students recall how the College context seemed to have been breaking down racial barriers. Michael Bailey was a student in the years 1987 to 1989. He recalled that one of the ways in which he socially experienced unity being "displayed, [was] when his son went to the matric ball with Nick Williams's daughter (Coloured)".<sup>46</sup> In another context, Lanceford Moeti, a student in the years 1990 to 1992, recalled what he saw as social transformation taking place when he said he witnessed a fellow student, Joseph Khanye (Black), dancing with the Warden's daughter, Inger Hewitt, during the Leavers' dinner dance.<sup>47</sup>

Khanye has confirmed that this did take place.<sup>48</sup> Likewise, Dane Elsworth, who was a student in the years 1987 to 1989, recalled that "on one occasion during a class lecture (the students) burned a piece of paper, which according to Elsworth, symbolised the burning of the 'dompas'... [In that respect, according to Elsworth, the students sought to] confront the apartheid government ... In their view [they were seeking to free themselves] from the shackles of apartheid ... [It was an] act of healing".<sup>49</sup> These developments reflected the fresh air of change that was blowing in the country. More critical in this context, there emerged trends in theological education that now also started to impact on the future plans of the College.

43 Telephone interview with Chichele Hewitt, 17 March 2016.

44 St. Paul's College Council Minutes, 8 March 1988, AB 2568, B 5, 1987-92, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

45 Telephone interview with Chichele Hewitt, 17 March 2016.

46 Group interview with Victor Jones, Michael Bailey, Stafford Moses and Margaret Vertue, 5 April 2016, Somerset West.

47 Telephone interview with Lanceford Moeti, 1 April 2016.

48 Telephone interview with Joseph Khanye, 19 April 2016.

49 Interview with Dane Elsworth, 29 July 2013, Stellenbosch.

## Paradigm shifts in theological education

The issue that the College was now being confronted with was, what mode of theological education would be appropriate for training clergy in the changing times? To some extent, it was an old issue. It had already emerged in the 1960s, characterised by Trevor Verryn's book, *The Vanishing Clergyman*. At the core of the issue of ministry was the question of the authority of the priest, his relevance in the context where some aspects of his traditional authority or ministry seemed to be disappearing or being taken up by secular professions. In some measure, the role of a priest was changing and full-time residential training was also being questioned. It was in this context that Hewitt reported:

[At the end of 1987] Torquil Paterson presented a vision for St. Paul's which we had discussed as a staff. The basis of his approach is the recognition of the frenetic pace at College, and a way forward. Simply put, Torquil [Paterson] suggests a ten-month year, closer to the experience from which most have come and into which most will be going. The pace within this will be forcibly slower, and there will be compulsory rest periods, and a one subject per day scheme. There will be also a greater involvement in the local community, and a greater emphasis on rural ministry, including some community projects – e.g. vegetable growing.<sup>50</sup>

One dimension of Paterson's vision entailed opening the College to community engagement. Behind this lay a very ancient important monastic principle, namely *orare et labora*, prayer and work; life in which intellectual engagement is balanced with manual work for the benefit of the community. Paterson was critical of a kind of theological education that was, in the words of Marilyn Naidoo, "heavily emphasise[d] learning that takes place in the classroom, and [was] focused on knowledge production".<sup>51</sup> Paterson's proposals that the College had to be more practically involved in community life raised the issue of the significance of context in theological training. According to Naidoo, contexts bear meaning and identity.<sup>52</sup> In her view, "meaning and identity are always contextual and content is hidden unless contexts become accessible to critical and open to transformation".<sup>53</sup> For Naidoo, the significance of meaning entailed the transformation of structures. Paterson's vision envisaged the transformation of pedagogy, the manner in which training was done. He was calling for authentic contextualisation, engaging structures in society. In the report, however, Hewitt continued to state:

The staff are not unaware of a number of disadvantages, as well as the obvious advantages of such a scheme and have already met with 6 invited guests, each an expert in the particular area relevant to the College life, in an attempt to test the feasibility of such a scheme. Some of the suggestions have already been adopted on a trial basis, including personal tutorials, and the abandoning of Sunday worship in Chapel so that students will get involved in local parishes.<sup>54</sup>

50 Warden's Report, Council Minutes, February 1988, AB 2568, A 4, St. Paul's College, 1987-92, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

51 Naidoo, M. "Ministerial training: The need for pedagogies of formation and of contextualisation in theological education", p. 349.

52 *Ibid.*

53 *Ibid.*

54 Warden's Report, Council Minutes, February 1988, AB 2568, A 4, St. Paul's College, 1987-92, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

The envisaged scheme considered a greater exposure to life in the community as a critical aspect of this form of training. Exposure to community would facilitate the College's engagement with the practical issues in the society. As noted in Chapter 1, St. Paul's College, which had been formed on the semi-monastic ideals of 'withdrawal' from the world, was now being challenged to engage with issues in the world more robustly. It would seem, however, that a question would arise, namely, how could St. Paul's College, steeped as it were in its decades of traditions, change? Why must the Church not just open another College, with a new ethos and traditions? In the following year, this development took on another turn. Hewitt announced to the College Council that Njumbuxa Bikitsha had joined the college staff.<sup>55</sup>

Bikitsha was the first Black African member of staff since Zolile Mbali had resigned in 1974. It is quite striking that it took five years since Bishop Tutu had recommended in 1983 that a Black lecturer be appointed in light of the racial crisis of 1982.

## College and community

According to Hewitt, in 1988 the College numbers were 50/50, hence there was a balance of power between White and Black students.<sup>56</sup> While new directions in theological training started to affect the College, increasing number of women ordinands began to change the face of the College. Hewitt recalled that at the Provincial Synod meeting in Durban in 1989, while Bishops voted for ordination of women to the priesthood, a few votes of the lay members voted against the motion going through. Hewitt recalled Paterson, reacting to that, took a stance that "from that moment onwards ... in protest [against the failure] ... of the motion] he was not going to preside at the Eucharist until the ordination of women to the priesthood went through".<sup>57</sup>

Margaret Vertue (future Bishop of the Diocese of False Bay), who was a student in the years from 1988 to 1990, recalled the critical role that the College had come to assume in the community. She said: "If anything happened in the community of a political nature, the community would look to us to take the lead; the students would go with cassocks on to support the community."<sup>58</sup> Vertue's assertion is confirmed by Hewitt. Presenting his report to the College Council in 1988, he stated: "The College was complimented on its role in the immediate community."<sup>59</sup> The prominent role with regard to socio-political engagement in the community suggests the extent to which the College had transformed from the 1970s.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>56</sup> Telephone interview with Chichele Hewitt, 17 March 2016.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>58</sup> Interview with Margaret Vertue, 15 December 2015, Somerset West.

<sup>59</sup> St. Paul's College Council Minutes, 8 March 1988, AB 2568, B 5, 1987-92, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

Victor Jones was a student in the years 1987 to 1989, and a senior student in 1989. He recalled the College as “a very [intense] context ... during the last apartheid years”.<sup>60</sup> He said that it was an atmosphere that was riddled with racial tensions and sometimes verbal fights. In trying to explain why ordinands from Cape Town in particular seemed more politically militant, Jones went on further to assert that “what Soweto experienced in 1976, Cape Town experienced in 1986”.<sup>61</sup> In his view, the College was the place where people who came from the backgrounds of “woundedness, brutalised [by apartheid] ... [encountered one another]”.<sup>62</sup>

Matt Esau,<sup>63</sup> a student in the years 1990 to 1992, was the last senior student of St. Paul’s College in 1990. He gave further insight into the nature of the issues that the College was dealing with. He retorted: “How do you form an ecclesial community [in that context]?”<sup>64</sup> “All the people came with embedded racism, not of their own choice, they lived in a country which had done this; we had to come to terms with that; we had to admit to ourselves that apartheid had [brutalised us] ... there were suspicions ...”<sup>65</sup> In this context, Jones recalled that since the issues under debate were sometimes so hot, he as a senior student had to step aside to allow an independent person, usually an outsider from Rhodes University, to chair the discussions.<sup>66</sup>

However, Margaret Vertue and Stafford Moses recalled that intensive discussions of a political nature that took place in the College prepared them (and possibly other students in the College) for a similar situation outside the College. They recalled one occasion where the College sent them to attend the South African Council of Churches conference in Soweto where they represented the College.<sup>67</sup> In their own words, they asserted: “We used to grapple with these issues in the Common Room ... and therefore there wasn’t a fright when you got there ... and when you went to that context it wasn’t an abnormal context ... the College had prepared us ...”<sup>68</sup> In other words, the situation that the College went through seemed to have transformed some of the students. Seemingly, in its own way, the College was engaging in some ‘missional praxis’, that is, transforming some students into agents of change.

### The “train race”

For Michael Bailey, however, the issue surrounding the “train race” stood out in his memory as one amongst others, which in his view increased tension in the College in 1989. During the interview with this author, Bailey recalled the incident of the “train race” that used to take place in Port Elizabeth. In his view, the incident negatively affected the College. Bailey stated:

60 Group interview with Victor Jones, Michael Bailey, Stafford Moses and Margaret Vertue, 5 April 2016, Somerset West.

61 *Ibid.*

62 *Ibid.*

63 Before Matt Esau joined the College, he was the Personal Chaplain of Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

64 Interview with Matt Esau, 15 March 2016, University of Cape Town.

65 *Ibid.*

66 Group interview with Victor Jones, Michael Bailey, Stafford Moses and Margaret Vertue, 5 April 2016, Somerset West.

67 *Ibid.*

68 *Ibid.*

In our last year we had the *train race*. The aim was to try to beat the train in a race ... The issue was discussed in the [Common Room] ... It was quite a difficult one because there were lots of Black students, some of them were opposed to Black students participating in the race ... [Subsequently, after the meeting] there was a very violent reaction, some of the doors were damaged, and some of the runners were intimidated ... and they withdrew; and so the race was cancelled ... That for me was a great sadness ... The College succumbed to the intimidation by a minority of Black students.<sup>69</sup>

Hewitt, recalling the same incident, gave a slightly different version of what took place. He said:

There was a time when the students wanted to enter a well-known race ... racing against the Apple Express [in Port Elizabeth] – And I remember that just shortly before the race was due to take place ... one student said he couldn't race because of such and such [reason] ... giving lame excuses ... Then we had a meeting, and the truth came out – that the Black Sporting Association [SACOS] had declared the race as a non-event for Black people. White students were quite fed up about it.<sup>70</sup>

Hewitt went on to indicate:

Coupled with this of course ... we had a predominant ANC base amongst African students. There was also PAC presence, PAC leanings ... We would have had some Inkatha, but they generally kept their heads below grounds because [their] presence was small ... They tended not to push their own thoughts or beliefs ... but in the main the Black students stuck together because they were in the struggle ... In the 50-50 environment the tensions were much higher, I remember than at any time.<sup>71</sup>

The underlying factor in both versions of the story was the 'politics of Black solidarity', the influence of some Black people prevailing on the would-be participants to withdrawal from participation. In apartheid South Africa, sport had some political ramifications. It could be used as a weapon for the struggle against apartheid. Equally, it could also be used to entrench apartheid.

It would appear that in this rapidly changing circumstance, one of the major challenges that the College faced was the calibre of ordinands who were sent for training. Seemingly, there were ordinands who displayed characters that were deemed undesirable for the priesthood. This would seem to suggest that not much care had been exercised to sift these through Selection processes in the Dioceses. Thus, in his report to the College Council, Hewitt stated:

It is important, too, that men and women of calibre be sent for training within difficult times that face us, and it is not always easy for Diocesan Selection Conferences to fulfil their tasks accurately within the time limits available. One wonders if it would not be better for the College staff to be part of the selection processes. This would be time consuming especially when it has been stated above that we are over-busy, but time could be saved in fewer painful interviews and decisions which take place on occasion within the life of the College. These should not be avoided, and they are part of our ongoing life, but experience has suggested that every now and then a student ought not have begun his or her training at this College.<sup>72</sup>

69 *Ibid.*

70 Telephone interview with Chichele Hewitt, 17 March 2016.

71 *Ibid.*

72 Minutes of St. Paul's College Council, 8 March, 1988, AB 2568, B 5, 1987-92, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

Hewitt's suggestion for the College staff to be involved in the selection processes was pragmatically sound and reasonable. It suggests the presence of some ordinands who found themselves in the 'wrong place'. Moeti recalled the ill-discipline of some of his fellow students. He lamented that some of them were very reckless in terms of lifestyle and had a careless attitude towards studies. Besides the financial implications, however, Hewitt's suggestion would run counter to the ethos and tradition of the Bishop's *familia*. It was incumbent upon a Bishop of the Diocese to select or approve the selected ordinands for ministry since these persons would ultimately be answerable to the Bishop. It was an issue of power relations.

## Instability in the College

### The "Coca-Cola Mass"

Vertue, Jones, Moses and Bailey described St. Paul's College in 1989 as a "melting pot".<sup>73</sup> These former students recalled that one of the incidents that disturbed the College was the celebration of the so-called "Coca-Cola Mass".<sup>74</sup> During the interview with this author, Hewitt related the rest of the story. He said: "In 1989, the Anglican Students Federation (ASF) had one of their meetings at St. Paul's." On that occasion, "he invited Michael Worsnip, Chaplain of ASF, and Anglican priest teaching at Fedsem at the time to preach and [celebrate] one Friday Evening".<sup>75</sup> According to Hewitt: "Worsnip preached that night, I knew he would be popular. He preached quite a strong sermon in terms of change in South Africa which ... unsettled some students."<sup>76</sup> "The difficulty came when it got to the Eucharist ... I remember I was playing the piano that evening."<sup>77</sup>

Hewitt continued, stating: "When [Worsnip] got to the Eucharist after the peace ... he got behind the altar, and he said: 'Tonight we are going to do things differently, we are going to use ordinary unleavened bread.' And ... I said to myself: 'I don't have a problem with that but he didn't let me know about this', and then more drastic, he said: 'Tonight we are not going to use wine but Coca-Cola.' I kind of froze."<sup>78</sup> Hewitt went on to recount his reminiscences:

I thought about this: "Do I stop this, or let it happen?" I said to myself, if – I stop him I am going to anger Black students, but then for him to continue I also risk the anger of White students; and so I just let it happen. He went ahead with the service. When it came to the Consecration Prayer of the bread ... He said: 'We offer this unleavened bread ... [As the prayer goes ...]. When it came to the Coca-Cola, his version was like: "Blessed art thou O Lord, God of Heaven, we offer you this Coca-Cola made by the hands of the oppressed for the oppressor" ... and I kind of froze. It appeared that this liturgy had been used at Fedsem without much difficulty."<sup>79</sup>

73 Group interview with Michael Bailey, Victor Jones, Stafford Moses and Margaret Vertue, 6 April 2016, Somerset West.

74 *Ibid.*

75 Telephone interview with Chichele Hewitt, 17 March 2016.

76 *Ibid.*

77 *Ibid.*

78 *Ibid.*

79 *Ibid.*

Hewitt was caught in-between being responsive to the sensitivity of the political feelings of Black students and White students. In letting Worsnip continue, however, by implication Hewitt had taken sides with the Black students. The response to the incident was striking. Hewitt related the various responses to the incident as follows. He said:

John Suggit was there. [He] wasn't fazed by this. And when I said I knew nothing about it, he said: "But that was very naughty" ... There was an apology from the ASF ... There were repercussions in the Church. The issue was an authority one ... [If Worsnip had informed me before about this liturgy], the answer would be "no". Some people didn't take communion at all.<sup>80</sup>

There is no doubt that the incident provoked very strong reactions. In his Warden's Report to the College Council on 18 February 1990, Hewitt commented on this incident. He wrote: "Those who were feeling negative, experienced a resurgence of hope at the beginning of last term in [1989], but this was dashed by the unfortunate incident of the 'Coca-Cola Mass'."<sup>81</sup> So it would seem that the Coca-Cola Mass had considerable negative impact on the College. Bailey gave the background to the incident. He recalled that the Eucharistic celebration was Suggit's farewell service in Grahamstown.<sup>82</sup> In his view, it was intended to mark his retirement from Rhodes University and also to give thanks for his work in Grahamstown.<sup>83</sup>

However, Hewitt gave another version of this episode. He said: "John Suggit had retired from Rhodes, but as a past Warden of the College [he was there], and as someone with a commitment to theological education he was helping out at the College at that time as we were short staffed."<sup>84</sup> Undoubtedly, Worsnip's actions caused outrage in the Anglican Church.<sup>85</sup> Commenting on the Coca-Cola Mass as Worsnip celebrated it at Fedsem, Denis and Duncan noted: "[Michael Worsnip's] colleagues in the seminary [Fedsem], it must be said, were not particularly upset by his unorthodox ways of celebrating the sacrament."<sup>86</sup> Why did Worsnip's "unorthodox ways of celebrating the sacrament" upset St. Paul's College? Perhaps one reason was that unlike Fedsem, St. Paul's College had not been exposed to the "political" environment and consciousness which had characterised the former. It would seem that the two colleges were politically miles apart.

Talking to this author on 6 July 2016, however, Worsnip gave his version of the story as to what he said he remembered had happened on that day. He said that before the service started, he explained the reason why he would use Coca-Cola. He said that he had chosen to use Coca-Cola as it was a contemporary common drink, the equivalent of wine in the time of Jesus Christ. The other significance for Coca-Cola, so Worsnip explained, was that it was made by the ordinary poor people, who the

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>81</sup> Warden's Report, 18 February 1990, St. Paul's College Council Minutes, 15 March 1990, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>82</sup> Group interview with Michael Bailey, Victor Jones, Stafford Moses and Margaret Vertue, 6 April 2016, Somerset West.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>84</sup> Personal correspondence, 21 June 2016.

<sup>85</sup> Telephone interview with Chichele Hewitt, 17 March 2016.

<sup>86</sup> Denis and Duncan, *The Native School that Caused all the Trouble*, p. 261.

capitalist industrialists exploited. Worsnip also said that he had used normal Communion wafers and not unleavened bread. Likewise, Worsnip said that he never substituted the words, “This wine” for “This Coca-Cola” in the Liturgy.<sup>87</sup>

The issue of the Coca-Cola Mass must be placed within the broader perspective of the debate that was raging in the 1980s and 1990s regarding the role of liturgical symbols and rituals in Christian theology and especially worship in apartheid society.<sup>88</sup> It was strongly held in some quarters that just as over the years the apartheid state had appropriated some Christian symbols to legitimise itself, so it was equally necessary that to “delegitimise” the apartheid state, the Church had to reclaim some of its Christian symbols and rituals. The same year of the incident of the Coca-Cola Mass, Torquil Paterson raised the issue of the relevance of the Eucharistic tradition in the context of the struggle for liberation. In his essay, “A liturgy for Liberation”, following an historical exposition of the ideological captivity of the Eucharist tradition over the years, Paterson asserts that “used properly”, the liturgical tradition could “be freed from its ideological captivity”.<sup>89</sup> He then asserted further that the liturgy could be seen as a “powerhouse for the struggle for liberation” and therefore “could become a powerful agent for the transformation of the oppressive structures in our society”.<sup>90</sup>

## Continuing crisis in theological education

In the meantime, the crisis in theological education continued unabated. In his Warden’s letters of 1989, Hewitt highlighted the challenges that St. Paul’s College was facing. In his letter of 5 April 1989, he wrote:

The first term went relatively smoothly, and this year we have 50 students – slightly down on previous numbers. With Diocesan funds more and more stretched and with some Dioceses embarking on “in-service” training. I hope that the present numbers will be maintained. I believe that whatever the disadvantages of residential training, this method still has much to recommend it, and is of prime importance in South Africa today. Such a seminary is not always a comfortable place. But the experience is invaluable for those going forward for ordination at this stage of South African history. We learn a lot. Changes are taking place throughout the College life. Our milieu is still very Western, and while we have nothing to be ashamed of in this tradition, it is vital to explore traditions of worship which allow expressions for our majority Black student body.<sup>91</sup>

One of the ulterior reasons why some leaders in the Church were calling for St. Paul’s College to give way to the new College, was its very Western milieu that Hewitt was proud of. Hence, Hewitt’s reference to this is very significant. Meanwhile, in his 1989 report to the College Council, Hewitt portrayed even a gloomier picture of the College. He said:

87 Personal communication with Michael Worsnip, 6 July 2016.

88 Cf. Kairos Document.

89 Paterson, T. “A Liturgy for Liberation”, In: F. England and T. Paterson (eds.), *Bounty in Bondage, The Anglican Church in Southern Africa*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1989, p. 54.

90 *Ibid.*, p. 55.

91 Warden’s Letter, 5 April 1989, AB 2568, A 4, St. Paul’s College, 1983-91, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

Numbers [are in] decline, costs rise proportionally, and it becomes more difficult to pay those coming forward, leading to a further decline in numbers. This is just one aspect of a severe crisis which must be addressed in Theological Education. Despite this crisis, we continue, with our sister Colleges, to seek new ways in theological education, especially with regard to methodology and syllabi. At the last meeting of the Joint Board for Diploma in Theology, there seem to be a genuine interest in the whole matter, and a committee with staff and student representation from each of the participating Colleges will be meeting under the Chairmanship of the Revd. Canon Torquil Paterson.<sup>92</sup>

Two issues lay at the core of this crisis: the prevailing general perceptions of the diminishing role of a priest in society. In turn, this related to another broader issue, namely the perceptions of the relevance of the role of the Church in society. Even more significant was the critical attitude towards the top-down pedagogy in tertiary institutions. This issue became more pertinent in the context of the debate of the new model of Outcomes Based Education. This model tended to question the traditional pedagogy behind which lay a philosophy of education that considered an ordinand (or a pupil/student) as a child who was to be 'spoon fed' with knowledge. Traditional institutions like St. Paul's College were conceived to be perpetrators of such systems.

## Rife with tension – 1989

### Amongst students

In his Warden's Report of 18 February 1990 to the College Council, Hewitt reported about the tension that had occurred on every level of the College life in the year 1989. He attributed this to the volatile situation in the country. He stated:

There were also tensions [in 1989] within the student body. There is nothing new about this, and within South Africa of 1989 it would have been surprising were this not so. There was obvious polarisation in the first year class, although its constituent members worked hard at relationships. The final year class, was however, much more difficult. People had taken up entrenched positions, and were not prepared to change. Some were just waiting for the year to end, and there was a feeling of negativity which has not been experienced for some time ... The College, nevertheless, worked through this in quite a creative way ... If the final year class of 1989 was not an easy class, it was most certainly a gifted one. Eight out of the 16 who have obtained their diplomas did so with distinction, and two others narrowly missed this honour. These must be among the best results attained at St. Paul's.<sup>93</sup>

In the late 1980s, South Africa experienced intense racial polarisation, which was reflected in the life of the students in the College. It impacted on students' relationships and their attitudes towards one another. The leadership of the Senior Student had made a considerable difference in putting out the fires. In that report, Hewitt further asserted:

<sup>92</sup> Minutes of St. Paul's College Council, 1989, AB 2568, B 5, 1987-92, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>93</sup> Warden's Report, 18 February 1990, Minutes of St. Paul's College Council, 15 March 1990, AB 2568, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

Mr. Thabo Makgoba was a member of that class, and he was a Senior Student for 1989. Thabo [Makgoba] is an outstanding person with great leadership skills, and were it not for him there would inevitably have been a few more "incidents" last year. He had the ability to sort out some of these in their early stages, before they affected the whole community ... In conclusion it is abundantly clear that something new must happen. It is likely that numbers will continue to drop, and while there is as yet no clear Provincial direction as to which way we are moving, the pattern of present seminary training may soon be a thing of the past. While space does not permit opening up the discussion in this report, I hope that it will be a major talking point at the Council meeting.<sup>94</sup>

Thabo Makgoba (future Bishop of Grahamstown and Archbishop of Cape Town) was a student in the years 1987 to 1989. Makgoba was a very likeable person who easily socialised with fellow students. He also came across as a very sharp and deep person.<sup>95</sup> He was gifted with a warm personality, the ability to unravel intricate issues, the ability to command confidence of people on the opposing sides, and a visionary leader.<sup>96</sup> His election as Senior Student seemed to testify to his excellent leadership skills, which subsequently were affirmed by the Church when he was elected Bishop of Grahamstown and then Archbishop of Cape Town in 2010.<sup>97</sup>

### Amongst domestic staff

It is also noteworthy that Hewitt highlighted severe tension occurred amongst the domestic staff. He stated:

Tensions amongst the kitchen staff have been a feature every year at St. Paul's, but were rather more severe in 1989. The difficulties were rather more time consuming rather than insuperable. Quite a lot of effort went into discussing contracts and grievance procedures, but the domestic staff were rather suspicious of these discussions and there was no further progress in the last term of last year ... Miss Fiona Christian [Head Keeper] felt the strain of these pressures and she had also to handle some personal crises and illness. She nevertheless coped very well with her job, and the standards of catering remained high. We are well served at St. Paul's in this area.<sup>98</sup>

The severity of tension amongst the domestic staff reflects the cumulative impact of tensions on the College at large.

### Amongst academic staff

It is very likely that the instability amongst the academic staff was one of the most painful experiences that the College was going through at this time. Hewitt asserted:

The academic staff situation was obviously more complex than usual. 3 of the 5 members who began the year together had left before the year was out. We had known for some time that the Revd. Fred

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>95</sup> Personal reminiscences, 1984-1987.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>98</sup> Warden's Report, 18 February 1990, Minutes of the College Council, 15 March 1990, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

Hendricks would be leaving in July to take up a parish appointment in the Cape Town Diocese after a period of long leave. At the beginning of his leave, he married Miss Dorothea Thorne, and the joy of this occasion was mingled with the sadness of leaving someone who had given so much to St. Paul's. Fred was a fine teacher – a man of wisdom and prayer, and a trusted colleague. His support will be solely missed. Miss Stella Bavier has been with us since 1982, and felt that her time on the teaching staff had come to an end. She also took long leave prior to leaving the staff, but is staying on at the College as a paying guest while she begins studies at Rhodes University. She, too, has given of her considerable gifts, and her contribution will also be missed. Stella has not found her last 2 years at College easy, but has nevertheless given of her energy and many will miss her, not only as a teacher, but as a director and friend.<sup>99</sup>

John Thompson joining the staff in 1989 could not in the least fill the big gap that had been created by the departure of Paterson, Bavier and Hendricks. However, Hewitt also announced the departure of Torquil, as follows:

Canon Torquil Paterson also announced his resignation in the final week of last term. Because he had resigned his licence, his departure from staff followed very quickly, although he too is staying on at College for this year; he will not be teaching at all, but will continue as College Librarian. This will be of great help to us all, because he knows the library well, and has made a huge contribution to its new order over the past 3 years. His departure has been a great loss to us all, and has not been without its difficulty. Torquil was brilliant if not a controversial teacher and preacher, and while some liked his lecturers, others were repulsed by its content.<sup>100</sup>

The departure of three members of staff at the same time suggests serious underlying issues in the College. In this respect, it is noteworthy that Hewitt referred to Paterson and Bavier as not having had easy time. It would appear that these lecturers were experiencing personal challenges that also naturally affected their relationships with others in the College. The situation regarding Paterson seemed even more dramatic and desperate, however. He concluded:

As a result, [Paterson] and the College came in for a lot of fire from within and without. He himself was struggling with the new directions of faith, and his great integrity would not eventually permit him to remain as an Anglican priest, even though he says he will always be a theologian. He was also a caring pastor, and a very able counsellor, and these gifts, together with his immense capacity for work will be solely missed. He has recently completed his PhD in Theology and awaits the results of this as he takes up undergraduate studies in Law.<sup>101</sup>

Paterson was going through a kind of crisis of faith, which made it difficult for him to continue teaching the Christian faith with a sense of integrity. Recalling this incident on 17 March 2016, Hewitt spelt out varied reactions to Paterson's journey. He said that Archbishop Tutu "was quite sympathetic about Torquil's position, though he insisted that he could not remain teaching", but then suggested that

<sup>99</sup> Warden's Report, 18 February 1990, Minutes of the College Council, 15 March 1990, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*

“he could stay in one of the clergy houses”.<sup>102</sup> Tension in the College and the personal ‘crisis’ of Paterson’s faith cannot be isolated from the context of apartheid. In the 1990s, for some people, the impact of apartheid on their personal beliefs was considerable. The question had to be faced: What is the meaning of the Christian faith for God’s people brutalised by apartheid? Is the Christian faith relevant amidst the evil, and what appeared to be the paralysing forces of apartheid?

It is interesting to note how Hewitt described Paterson’s relationship with Black students. He said that, “as Torquil [Paterson] was becoming quite radical in his beliefs”,<sup>103</sup> Black students liked him, as he “was on their side wanting political change”.<sup>104</sup> On the other side, according to Hewitt, there was a group of Evangelical White students, with Anglo-Catholic leanings who were politically conservative. They resented Paterson’s stance and beliefs.<sup>105</sup> Yet, the instability amongst the staff was taking place in the context of mounting uncertainty with regard to theological training.

## Finances and the future of theological training – 1989

Meanwhile, the worsening financial position of the College seemed to correlate with the decline in the numbers of the students. The financial situation in the College appeared more uncertain. Hewitt reported to the Provincial Standing Committee in 1989:

While the College’s financial situation looks less secure this year owing to a smaller intake than expected, we face an issue of major concern. It would seem that numbers are dropping at all our residential seminaries. If this trend continues (as it looks like doing) all attempts at containing costs within the boundaries of inflation will be thwarted.<sup>106</sup>

In “A History of St. Bede’s and St. Paul’s”, Hewitt elaborated further on these issues. He asserted:

Numbers at residential seminaries were dropping. The reasons related to finance, administration and policy. From the financial point of view, as diocesan finances throughout the CPSA came under strain, the theological education budgets were often the first to be cut. With regard to administration, a long existent grant for residential seminaries from the Province was removed putting all the load on the reduced budgets of the dioceses ... As fewer students came to colleges existing students had to be charged more, and so the downward spiral began.<sup>107</sup>

The financial situation the College faced was very dire and his forecast of 1990 produced a very gloomy picture of the future of the College. Hewitt asserted:

In 1990, 50 students would result in annual fees of about R6 000 per student. Sadly, the number of students for 1990 looks like being 40, and may even drop lower. As a result, the budget has been cut

102 Telephone interview with Chichele Hewitt, 17 March 2016.

103 *Ibid.*

104 *Ibid.*

105 *Ibid.*

106 Warden’s Report, Provincial Standing Committee, 1989, AB 2568, B 5, College Council Minutes, 1987-92, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

107 Hewitt, C. “A History of St. Bede’s and St. Paul’s”, In: J. Suggit and M. Goedhals, *Change and Challenge*. Marshalltown: CPSA, 1998, p. 121.

quite drastically, and we hope to contain the fees at R7000 per student; this may still result in a deficit for 1990. This is very serious, because there is every likelihood of a "vicious circle" developing. Numbers decline, costs rise proportionally, and it becomes more difficult to pay those coming forward leading to a further decline in numbers.<sup>108</sup>

According to Hewitt, finance was merely one aspect to the problem. Related to this, was the issue of "policy, new schemes of in-service training which sprang up in various dioceses".<sup>109</sup> He further elaborated, stating:

Residential and in-service components should and can complement one another. But the bench of Bishops who had dealt so effectively with the issue of the ordination of women by acknowledging that there were differences among themselves but agreeing to move together, in this instance they chose to proclaim their united support for residential seminaries while each diocese went its own way. These three factors together sounded the death knell of the residential colleges in their old form.<sup>110</sup>

More significantly, however, Hewitt put this challenge within a wider problem of the crisis that faced theological education. He noted:

This is just one aspect of a severe crisis which must be addressed in Theological Education. Despite this crisis, we continue, with our sister Colleges, to seek new ways in theological education, especially with regard to methodology and syllabi. At the last meeting of the Joint Board for Diploma in Theology, there seem to be a genuine interest in the whole matter, and a committee with staff and student representation from each of the participating Colleges will be meeting under the Chairmanship of the Revd. Canon Torquil Paterson.<sup>111</sup>

At the centre of the crisis was the question of the relevance of the traditional mode of theological training. Traditional residential training was seen as not very relevant to the modern pattern of ministry, where the "authority" of the priest seemed to be waning and the pattern of ministry seem to be changing.

## Contestations of colonial symbols

In this fast changing socio-political context of the late 1980s and early 1990s, some students had been questioning the continued presence of war plaques and monuments inside and outside the premises of the Cathedral of St. Michael and St. George in Grahamstown. Hewitt recalled that this had started in the 1980s during the time when Roy Barker was Dean and reached a climax in the 1990s.<sup>112</sup> Presently, Cory Library at Rhodes University holds a memorandum from staff and students at the College regarding the various Frontier War memorial plaques in the Cathedral, and resulting church meetings held in connection with the problem of these offensive plaques.<sup>113</sup> Hewitt wrote:

108 Warden's Report, Provincial Standing Committee, 1989, AB 2568, B 5, College Council Minutes, 1987-92, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

109 Hewitt, "A History of St. Bede's and St. Paul's", p. 121.

110 *Ibid.*

111 Warden's Report, Provincial Standing Committee, 1989, AB 2568, B 5, College Council Minutes, 1987-92, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

112 Personal communication with the author, 19 November 2015.

113 MS 18 062, Cory Library, Rhodes University.

The plaques commemorated the events of the Frontier War (1880-97) by the Colonial British authorities. Until their existence were challenged they were part of the socio-religious and political fabric of the cathedral. However, as the country progressed towards democracy in 1992, the staff and students of St. Paul's Theological College in Grahamstown were critical of the statements contained in the plaques. These were deemed offensive to Blacks. The offensive nature of the plaques was two-fold: references to Black people in derogatory manner, such as "barbarous enemy" ("kaffers") in contrast to the "heroic" acts and death of TC White. Then the second was the derogatory naming of places such as the SB Adye plaque that used "Caffre Drift" as a name of the place.<sup>114</sup>

The power of these plaques lay in defining and circumscribing the socio-political, historical and religious boundaries through which White and Black people related to them. To White people, they represented British heroism over Black people. To the latter, they represented British dispossession and insult. They represented a contested arena of history. As the archivist noted, in 1992 the issue was very controversial and hotly contested at St. Paul's College. It took several meetings to try and resolve.<sup>115</sup>

The fact that only Black people found these plaques offensive exposes the arrogance and insensitivity of the majority of White Anglicans towards the Black people in general, as these impugned the dignity of Black people. Hewitt also highlighted that on the one hand, "Black people found these offensive in a place of worship",<sup>116</sup> while, on the other hand, "White people wanted them retained as these were their ancestors and part of their history".<sup>117</sup> Conflicting perceptions and interpretations of the presence of the monuments suggest that both races interpreted the Frontier War differently.

Highlighting the contradictions and ambiguities inherent in the Africanisation of Anglicanism in Southern Africa in 1989, Mamphela Ramphele noted, "the Anglican Church in this country embodies all these contradictions, mainly because of the relationship of the church and the British over the years...".<sup>118</sup> Nonetheless, according to Hewitt, the issue of the plaques

... was resolved by moving the plaques out of the area of worship to the stairs on the way down to the crypt. This was not possible in Grahamstown. Roy [Barker]'s solution, along with the College Council, was to place an apology along each of the 3 plaques. They said that this was not the kind of language which was acceptable now. The monument to [John] Graham was moved so that the offensive wording was turned towards a pillar so that it could not be read. This was the situation when you and I were together at St. Paul's.<sup>119</sup>

John Graham was a Lieutenant-Colonel of the Regiment at the Cape Colony. He is said to have inspired "a proper degree of terror" in the AmaXhosa and brutally murdered them in the years 1811-1812.<sup>120</sup> Therefore, Graham was not a "saint". He was a thug! For two hundred years, White Anglicans in

114 Personal communication with the author, 19 November 2015.

115 MS 18 062, Cory Library, Rhodes University.

116 Personal communication with the author, 19 November 2015.

117 *Ibid.*

118 Ramphele, M. "On Being Anglican: The pain and the privilege", In: F. England and T. Paterson (eds.), *Bounty in Bondage*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1989, p. 179.

119 *Ibid.*

120 Elphick, R. and Giliomee, H. (eds.), *The Shaping of South African Society 1652-1840*. Cape Town: Maskew Miller Longman, 1989, pp. 480-481.

Grahamstown worshipped in the Cathedral that celebrated the colonial oppressive history, closely associated with the activities of Graham. That various suggestions were offered how they had to deal with the problem suggested that the White members were not very willing to part with these. The monuments were part of their identity and history. They seemed to live in the past, in spite of the fact that times had changed. Black people who were now members of the Cathedral felt insulted to worship in the Cathedral whose monuments undermined their dignity. This issue was similar to the one where the College Constitution excluded Black students by referring to the College as the institution that trained "European Candidates". However, there was also another issue over which tension arose, namely culture.

## Tensions over cultural issues

Vertue recalled that during her time as a student, most tensions that arose in the College had to do with the issues of culture.<sup>121</sup> In this respect, Hewitt recalled that one White student had said to a Zulu student: "You Zulus make a lot of noise." According to Hewitt, "this caused a huge meeting in the Common Room to discuss what people were doing".<sup>122</sup> On the other hand, Jones recalled that some Black students found it strange that White students put a "Do not disturb" note on their doors.<sup>123</sup> Jones experience suggests a clash of values between Black and White students. While for a White person, a "Do not disturb sign" was a quest for privacy, for a Black person, the sign would be construed as bordering on selfishness. This is a typical example of a clash of cultural values, White culture stressing individuality and Black culture emphasising communality.

On the other hand, Esau recalled that sometimes, when cultural issues emerged, some students would construe them as racial.<sup>124</sup> According to Esau, one such related to complaints regarding left-over food in the dining-room. Black students would say that it was not in their Black culture to eat food left-overs, which was part of White culture.<sup>125</sup> Esau also recalled that some Black single students always assumed that single White students were more privileged than them, which Esau denied was true. In his view, it was such things that appeared to raise tension.<sup>126</sup> Esau particularly recalled that during one Easter holiday Black families decided to go to Port Alfred for a picnic, an issue which afterwards some single Black students were very upset about and saw it in light of discrimination.<sup>127</sup> Even though the informants state that the issues affecting Black and White relations were "cultural", these were, in fact, fundamentally racial precisely because they entailed racial attitudes of "they" and "us" in terms of behaviour and lifestyle. Whites saw themselves in stark contrast to Blacks, and vice versa. In this context, it was the issue of human sexuality that seemed to challenge the College even more.

<sup>121</sup> Interview with Margaret Vertue, 15 December 2015, Somerset West.

<sup>122</sup> Telephone interview with Chichele Hewitt, 17 March 2016.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>124</sup> Interview with Matt Esau, 15 March 2016, University of Cape Town.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*

## Human sexuality and gender

During an interview with this author on 17 March 2016, Hewitt recalled that one of the issues that emerged during the last years of St. Paul's College was human sexuality. However, Hewitt said that this, as was the case with other issues, was part of the power struggle that raged between White and Black students. In his words, he said:

The issue of sexuality was quite a rough one. I remember clearly the incident. Ivan Toms who belonged to the Evangelical Church in Wynberg came to speak at St. Paul's. He was a medical doctor and he was very popular for the work in the Black and Coloured Community. He came to speak in the College about resisting the army; about half-way his address he said there is another issue I want to speak about. "I am a gay person." He then spoke about the difficulties that he had had – coming from an Evangelical background; he said people had laid hands on him in the Evangelical Churches but nothing had happened about it.<sup>128</sup>

Then Hewitt recalled: "He had another huge anger in the College from this [conservative] White group ... There was a strong feeling that I should have stopped him."<sup>129</sup> On the other hand, Hewitt said that he "didn't know what Black people thought about the issue".<sup>130</sup> On another occasion, during the interview with Douglas Torr, however, he reminded this author: "There was another dimension to life in the College [that this author had not raised during the interview with Torr], namely, the contested arena of sexuality." He said: "I don't believe that we ever dealt with this area." He continued to state: "There was no way I would have come out. I felt very much isolated. Politics was for our lives; I couldn't share the [issue of sexuality] with Duncan [Buchanan]."<sup>131</sup>

Khanye recalled that during his time, there was a Black student who was thought to be a paedophile. Khanye said that "[this student] was very inclined [to] Sunday School ministry". According to Khanye, the student's position in the College raised a very hot discussion, which "almost tore the community apart ... precisely because the student was involved in Sunday School".<sup>132</sup> Khanye also recalled another student, J.P. Heath, however, who, according to Khanye, was open about his sexuality.<sup>133</sup>

At the end of 1977, a commission appointed by the Archbishop of Cape Town "to determine a Christian understanding of homosexuality particularly pertaining to the ordained ministry" submitted its "final confidential report", which was presented to the episcopal synod of the Anglican Church.<sup>134</sup> The document was compiled mostly by Grahamstown clergy closely associated with theological training.<sup>135</sup> In unequivocal terms, the commissioners condemned homosexual behaviour among clergy and theological students.

128 Telephone interview with Chichele Hewitt, 17 March 2016.

129 *Ibid.*

130 *Ibid.*

131 Interview with Douglas Torr, 12 June 2014, Bramley, Johannesburg.

132 Telephone interview with Joseph Khanye, 19 April 2016.

133 *Ibid.*

134 Southey, N. "Confessions of a gay ordinand: a personal history", In: P. Germond and S. de Gruchy (eds.), *Aliens in the household of God*. Cape Town and Johannesburg: David Philip, 1997, p. 54.

135 *Ibid.*

Referring to students in theological colleges, in particular, the commissioners asserted: “[Gay students] tend to be highly manipulative of situations, generally devious, and form a sort of network of homosexuals ... They are seldom penitent, and their ability to rationalise their own excesses, when these do take place, is brilliant.”<sup>136</sup> Apartheid did not just deny Black people their human dignity, but also tended to suppress the sexuality of people across the colour line. It would seem as if political oppression overshadowed sexual oppression.

## On the threshold of the new era: 1990-1992

In 1990, Mr. F.W. de Klerk, the then State President, announced the release of Mr. Nelson Mandela from prison and other political prisoners. The event ushered in great optimism. The country entered a new era and so did St. Paul’s. In his Warden’s Letter of 1 December 1990, Hewitt stated:

I have likened the past year to a flight which was remarkably smooth, even though the take-off and landing were bumpy! The new initiatives of the Government brought about different dynamics in the College, but we all continue to learn new lessons about living in a non-racial environment ... The future of Theological Education has many minds for much of the year, and various meetings have taken place in the Church. False rumours have been rife about the College closing. Let me set the record straight. At the Award Ceremony in March, I said that numbers at all our Colleges were dropping, and if this pattern continued, the Province might have to adopt a policy of rationalisation. This could involve St. Paul’s or any of the other Colleges closing or combining.<sup>137</sup>

How did the government’s new initiatives affect the College? Moeti recalled that as it increasingly became more likely that the ANC would be the government in the near future, in spite of their long time association with the National Party, to gain acceptance, White people started to identify themselves with the ideology of the ANC.<sup>138</sup>

It was in this context that talks about the impending closure of the College started to emerge. Bailey recalled being called by Hewitt, who, according to Bailey, told him that Hewitt had heard that Bailey was praying for the “closure” of the College.<sup>139</sup> It was a time of great anxiety, uncertainty, frustration and confusion. Esau recalled the closure of St. Paul’s College as being closely related to the changes that were taking place in the country. He stated:

During my time it was the three years of endings. Not only were we in the process of ending apartheid which would happen in 1990; the release of the political prisoners including Mandela ... at St. Paul’s, it was a similar sort of thing because a decision was made round about 1991 by the Bishops and the Provincial Synod that three Colleges were going to amalgamate ... it was a decision [which] was prompted I think firstly [by] the fact that the political situation in the country made it very difficult ... [to have] racial theological schools for the church.<sup>140</sup>

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>137</sup> Warden’s Letter, 1 December 1990, AB 2568, A 4, St. Paul’s College, 1983-91, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>138</sup> Telephone interview with Lanceford Moeti, 1 April 2016.

<sup>139</sup> Group interview with Victor Jones, Michael Bailey, Stafford Moses and Margaret Vertue, 5 April 2016, Somerset West.

<sup>140</sup> Interview with Matt Esau, 15 March 2016, University of Cape Town.

Esau's point is valid. The emerging non-racial South African society partly prompted the leadership of the Anglican Church to consider establishing a new theological College, which was not associated with the baggage of apartheid. The history of St. Paul's College and St. Bede's College had been too closely associated with apartheid. It was in this vein that Esau went on to assert:

[The College was] attracting less White students ... [But it] was also ... the time ... [when the Church [had also started] preparing women for ordination. [Less] White males [were] coming to the College [than White females] ... [For instance], women ... [in my] ... second year were entirely White.<sup>141</sup>

The increasing number of women in the College reflected a shift in outlook on ministerial training. It was a social, as well as a religious issue. The issue had social and religious dimensions precisely because in society, as well as in the Church, women were already taking leading positions. In the same letter, he went on to note:

Near the end of 1991 the situation of the Colleges [i.e. St. Bede's, St. Paul's and Lelapa la Jesu] will be reviewed, and if one or more are not viable, a process of rationalisation could then begin. Our numbers dropped from about 50 in 1989 to 37 this year, there being only 8 in the first year class. Information from Dioceses leads me to anticipate even smaller first year for 1991, but instead it has grown to nearly 20. This year there are 18 leavers, so our numbers will remain constant. I thank God for this sudden new influx of students, and remain hopefully that we will be in business for some time! We are hoping that in 1991 our first year class will do their academic studies through Rhodes, individuals enrolling for degree or diploma course as seems appropriate. There is no attempt to spite the Joint Board, and we will be maintaining links with them for a number of reasons. Rather, this is an opportunity to explore new avenues.<sup>142</sup>

Hewitt's forecast regarding the review at the end of 1991 was fulfilled. According to Denis and Graham: "In September 1991 ... the Provincial Standing Committee decided to close St. Bede's at the end of 1992 and to establish a new college which would incorporate St. Paul's in Grahamstown."<sup>143</sup> In this respect, it is also important to note a shift that relates to an academic relationship with Rhodes University. The relationship between the College and Rhodes University was becoming closer. It was a 'sign of the time' that Hewitt was increasingly opening up the College. In the same letter of December 1990, Hewitt announced:

The Revd. Bikitsha Njumbuxa leaves us at the end of the year, having been with us for three years. We will miss him greatly; his loyalty and enthusiasm are great qualities and he has exercised pastoral ministry at the College which grew and grew. He has especially enjoyed this year, and should go out with happy memories of his rich giving ... I am pleased to announce that the Revd. Eddie Daniels will join the staff at the beginning of next year.<sup>144</sup>

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>142</sup> Warden's Letter, 1 December 1990, AB 2568, A 4, St. Paul's College, 1983-91, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>143</sup> Denis and Duncan, *The Native School that Caused all the Trouble*, p. 259.

<sup>144</sup> Warden's Letter, 1 December, 1990, AB 2568, A 4, St. Paul's College, 1983-91, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

As an African lecturer, Njumbuxa was an important link between the White lecturers (members of staff) and Black students, but also played a valuable role in building bridges between the two groups. Against the backdrop, we now turn to discuss the issue of the "Black Forum".

## The Black Forum

Moeti recalled that a Black Forum existed in the College in the years 1990 to 1992, of which body he said he was the chairperson.<sup>145</sup> Hewitt confirmed the existence of the Forum.<sup>146</sup> According to Moeti, no "Coloured" students belonged to this group and not all Black students were members.<sup>147</sup> Khanye, however, recalled that "Coloured" students were part of the Forum. In the Forum, according to Moeti, they discussed political issues. Hewitt further recalled: "I remember being comfortable that [the Black Forum was] there and realised that it was necessary, but I suspect some felt threatened by it. I guess not being part of it meant that this process has not stuck in my mind."<sup>148</sup> Moeti reiterated that it was formed to "conscientise" and "militarise" other Black students who were "puppets" of Bishops, who were not politically aware about issues.<sup>149</sup>

Moeti gives the impression that he was politically very articulate. In this respect, he recalled that sometimes he would find an envelope with money slotted under the door of his room once a week or once a month. Moeti said that he construed this gesture as an attempt to restrain him from being very politically vocal in the College.<sup>150</sup> In contrast to Moeti, Khanye, who also recalled to have received envelopes of money, said in his case it was gratuitous. It was sent to him by a well-wisher.<sup>151</sup> The fact that the two students understood this gesture differently suggests the complex nature of the College context. Individual students in the College saw and interpreted issues according to their social and political circumstances as they were informed by these accordingly.

It was under these circumstances that Khanye recalled that during his time as a student, the country was boiling politically, and that the "College would always mark days like June 16". He attributed tensions in the College to the politically divergent backgrounds [of students which he said were] highly politicised [and now caused tension].<sup>152</sup> To the shock of some White students, he asserted, [Black students] would always pray for "the downfall of apartheid".<sup>153</sup> Then Khanye highlighted the conservative reaction of some White students. He asserted:

Some Zimbabwean students, in particular Francis Dey, who was very Anglo-Catholic and yet very politically conservative, [he] couldn't cope with that environment ... On occasions when we sang *Inkosi*

<sup>145</sup> Telephone interview with Lanceford Moeti, 1 April 2016.

<sup>146</sup> Telephone interview with Chichele Hewitt, 17 March 2016.

<sup>147</sup> Telephone interview with Lanceford Moeti, 1 April 2016.

<sup>148</sup> Telephone interview with Chichele Hewitt, 17 March 2016.

<sup>149</sup> Telephone interview with Lanceford Moeti, 1 April 2016.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>151</sup> Telephone interview with Joseph Khanye, 19 April 2016.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*

*Sikelela Africa* in chapel, he would walk out ... and sometimes other White students would avoid to come to chapel if services of a 'political nature' were to be held. Yet in a spirit of prayerfulness, in a very amazing way this was bringing us together.<sup>154</sup>

Khanye's experiences of the politically conservative White students call to mind similar experiences that Draper related in Chapter 2, regarding Duncan Bell and others. It would appear that power relations between Black and White students and staff were uneven, the legacy of the Whites' privileged position under apartheid. In the eyes of Blacks, the privileged position gave Whites some status and power, which seemed to create a socio-economic and political gap with Blacks. It is within this perspective that we ought to view the following issue. Moeti recalled that sometimes some students used African languages during prayer life in chapel to communicate sensitive messages to one another. In his words, he said:

[Some Black] students would pray in an African language where they would communicate freely that so and so was an informer.<sup>155</sup>

Moeti's contemporary, Khanye, confirmed that some Black students would say prayers in an African language in the chapel. He recalled an occasion where one student is said to have prayed saying things like, "White people are not Christians, they must repent". Khanye reminded this author that prayers in the vernacular ought to be viewed in the context where students at the time were very mindful of an Assessment Report that members of staff would normally write to one's Bishop about the conduct of a student.<sup>156</sup> This author clearly recalls that, in most cases, these reports formed the basis upon which a Bishop would make a decision whether or not to ordain an ordinand.<sup>157</sup>

As noted earlier on in Chapter 3, these reports acted like 'silent monitoring' tools of conduct and behaviour of students. In spite of the absence of the Bishop, just the thought of possibly receiving an Assessment Report of one's conduct by the members of staff was enough to restrain one's behaviour or conduct merely to avoid a 'bad report'. It was as though some invisible figure was peeping over one's shoulder and whispering: "Be careful lest you get a bad report."<sup>158</sup> Such was the power of the 'surveillance system' that was put in place. Douglas Torr recalled, however, that on one occasion he challenged the accuracy of the report given about him by the members of staff, which resulted him getting a more favourable report in the next round.<sup>159</sup> Students like Torr were exceptional, otherwise, one had to leave with one's report. Thus, these reports acted almost like an invisible police force.

Nonetheless, what is implied here is that the use of a vernacular was therefore a deliberate strategy to keep certain information, which was regarded as sensitive, from members of staff or shielding oneself from a 'bad' report to the Bishop that one may get from a member of staff. It was a strategy of survival. James Scott called acts such as these as "politics of anonymity and disguise", where the less dominant in

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>155</sup> Telephone interview with Lanceford Moeti, 1 April 2016.

<sup>156</sup> Telephone interview with Joseph Khanye, 19 April 2016.

<sup>157</sup> Personal reminiscences, 1984-1987.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>159</sup> Interview with Douglas Torr, 12 June 2014, Bramley, Johannesburg.

power relations seek to resist their dominant masters.<sup>160</sup> Using African languages was a means by which these students deliberately excluded Whites from knowing what was going on amongst them in the College. Language was used as a tool to empower themselves by hiding from Whites information that they deemed very sensitive, which might be used against them. This shows some of the power dynamics that prevailed between Black and White students.

There was also another dimension to the political life of Black students. According to Hewitt, individual Black students belonged to various political parties, such as the African National Congress, the Pan African Congress, and the Inkatha Freedom Party.<sup>161</sup> In his view, these students would have "met to strategise" before an important meeting took place. Hewitt said, however, he was "not aware of them acting openly in line with their organisations".<sup>162</sup> It was under these circumstances that, in March 1991, he made a very important announcement to the College Council, the inauguration of the new College.

## Vision and plans for a new college

In that report Hewitt announced that:

The College which will start on this campus in 1993 needs to be a new operation. I will therefore not be staying beyond the end of 1992, and that was discussed at P.S.C. It seems certain that none of the other full-time academic staff will be staying either, and it is likely that the college secretary and housekeeper will also resign. I think you will see why the meeting is an important one! The budget for next year is very difficult because of so many unknowns in the equation. I will try to draft something before the meeting, and let Norman Heath look at it. It is highly likely that for the first time since I have been Warden, we will have to consider a deficit budget.<sup>163</sup>

The idea of starting the new College with a 'clean slate' as it were, was noble, but impractical. For the new College to succeed, it needed some form of continuity with the old. Issues critical to the College, such as budget and administrative staff, were indispensable to be carried on to the new College precisely because of the experience of personnel acquired through the years.

In the interim, on 13 March 1991, Hewitt presented his report to the College Council. In that report, he highlighted the financial state of the College and possible plans for the new College. He stated:

- (b) St. Paul's was in profit, aided by renting rooms and homesteads to Rhodes students. Other colleges were also surviving, but everything depended upon ordinand numbers for the year. With the Cape Town Zonnebloem idea and other diocesan initiatives, the future was very uncertain. It was also noted that ecumenical initiatives via the CUC and SACTE were looking into the wider theological training issues of the country. Bishops were asked about prospective numbers of candidates, but could not supply figures. Women's possible

<sup>160</sup> Scott, J.C. *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990, p. 10.

<sup>161</sup> Telephone interview with Chichele Hewitt, 17 March 2016.

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>163</sup> Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the St. Paul's College Council, 13 March 1991, AB 2568, B 5, St. Paul's College, 1987-92, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

ordination to the priesthood after 1992 might affect numbers. Debate concerning student's contributions to their own training and the provision of bursaries was raised. Some felt this might benefit the better off. Others stressed the sacrificial tendencies of the poorer.<sup>164</sup>

Hewitt's reference to the diocesan initiatives is very significant. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, dioceses like Johannesburg started their own training schemes, such as the Desmond Tutu School of Ministries. The presence of such schemes obviously affected the number of ordinands who were being sent to College. The idea of the possible ordination of women to the priesthood increased anxiety and uncertainty in the College, which for years had been associated with merely male priesthood. It is the issue to which we now turn.

## The ordination of women

In his report to the College Council of 19 March 1991, Hewitt asserted:

This matter had been discussed on various occasions in the College since March, using Church and Society slots and a guest speaker. The presence of the Revd. Suzanne Peterson as a boarder at the College had also aided receptivity to the idea and only one or two had absented themselves when she celebrated the Eucharist. Mr. C. Hartnick echoed this and noted a good number of St. Paul's students at the Grahamstown Diocesan debate on the matter.<sup>165</sup>

From this report, it is clear that there had been some resistance to the ordination of women to the priesthood. The issue of ordination to the priesthood was one of power in the form of patriarchy. With the changing gender roles in society, women could no longer be denied a leadership role in society. To some in the Church, this was perceived as a threat. The report and the students' attitudes ought to be viewed in light of the impact of the 1989 Provincial Synod Resolution on the College. The Synod had failed to pass the vote approving the ordination of women. Hewitt recalled that "a few students [were] irritated by this decision, but many respected it".<sup>166</sup>

Resistance to women's ordination must also be situated within the wider context in the Anglican Church. There were some who put forward some arguments to justify the exclusion of women from the priesthood. Gloria Smith outlined some of their arguments as follows: Anthropologically, it was argued that God had created men and women to take up different roles in creation and society.<sup>167</sup> From the point of view of the historic Church Tradition, it was also further argued that there was no precedent for ordaining women.<sup>168</sup> Finally, there was the argument that centred on the gender of Jesus Christ.

<sup>164</sup> Minutes of the Ordinary meeting of St. Paul's College Council, 19 March 1991 (confidential), AB 2568, B 5, St. Paul's Theological College, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>166</sup> Personal communication with Chichele Hewitt, 20 December 2016.

<sup>167</sup> Smith, G. "Response to the Ordination of Women as Priests in the Anglican (CPSA) Diocese of Pretoria, South Africa", *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*, March 2001, pp. 83-93.

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*

Given that Jesus Christ incarnate was male, so too, only men can be priests, it was argued.<sup>169</sup> In this regard, the priesthood was associated with the maleness of Christ. Hence, for some, women in the priesthood was viewed as standing in opposition to Jesus Christ presiding over the Passover (Eucharist).<sup>170</sup> In this respect, the maleness of Jesus Christ was considered as being representative for humanity.<sup>171</sup> It is almost as if during the Lord's Supper, Jesus Christ only represented men. Essentially, these arguments centre on the issue of male power over women, commonly viewed as patriarchy.

The changing roles of gender in society put pressure on the Church to reconsider women's roles, vocation, and gifts in ministry. It was increasingly becoming difficult for the Church to continue to deny women leadership roles where this was affirmed in society. To some men in the Church, however, this was a threat to their "power" and "authority". The presence of Revd. Suzanne in the College was strategic, as it was meant to break down some barriers amongst students who would lead the Church. It is one thing to see and experience, and another to imagine.

## The proposed closure of St. Paul's College

The minutes of the College Council of 9 October 1991 noted Hewitt's report from the Provincial Standing Committee regarding the closure of the College thus:

The warden, in presenting the PSC minute concerning the closure of St. Paul's, gave a brief history of the process leading up to the resolution, noting proposals such as the focusing of all training at the Federal Seminary, the reaction to the loss of a rural college, the original proposal to close St. Bede's and retain St. Paul's (made at Episcopal Synod), and the perception (at PSC) that this was a white college surviving at the expense of a black one. He concluded by mentioning the Archbishop's suggestion of a new venture on the Grahamstown campus, and how this had been followed up. The warden suggested that the problems outstanding concerned the psychological and logistical problems faced by both staff and students alike, combined with an inevitable deficit budget for 1992.<sup>172</sup>

The College Council received and endorsed the resolution of the Provincial Standing Committee to close St. Paul's College and St. Bede's College. The new college would operate on St. Paul's College premises. It is interesting to note that perceptions had been created that St. Paul's College, a "White" campus, would survive, while St. Bede's College, a "Black" college, would cease existing. In these perceptions the issue of apartheid came to the fore. To the people who saw things in that light, St. Bede's College had been sacrificed because it was a "Black" sheep. Hewitt indicated:

There after discussion centred upon further issues concerning theological education, including dissatisfaction with the Federal Seminary amongst Bishops (to be addressed by an episcopal visit there led by Bishop Bruce on 11th November 1991), the wounded reaction of Lelapa La Jesu upon being

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>172</sup> Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the College Council, 9 October 1991, AB 2568, B 5, 1987-92, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

reduced to the status of a diocesan college, together with concern that Provincial initiatives were being threatened by local diocesan ones. There was also discussion concerning ways of reducing the budget deficit, by moving either college to the campus of the other for a year ... but the logistics suggested that this would be impractical.<sup>173</sup>

Hewitt continued to proclaim:

It was then proposed that representatives of St. Paul's and St. Bede's Councils and students meet to prepare for the purpose of amalgamation etc. Further discussion concerned the reactions of St. Paul's students to the PSC resolution and implications. The head student mentioned uncertainty among students about the motivation of the resolution and a feeling that it would affect morale during the year ahead, although a meeting of a student delegation, with the Warden on 10/10/91 ought to clarify matters somewhat. Bishop David intimated that any apportioning of blame for the situation was inappropriate, but when questioned concerning who was taking responsibility for the process of transformation agreed that this remained unclear and determined to address the metropolitan to this effect.<sup>174</sup>

Furthermore, Hewitt asserted:

In addition, the implication of the PSC resolution was that St. Paul's College Council would not be reappointed at the 1992 PSC. Bishop David mentioned the appointment of Revd. Canon M. Mpumlwana of the Order of Ethiopia, to head up a new "Pastoral Institute" that would run in tandem with the new College, though commencing in 1992 ... It was also mentioned that a candidate for the Wardenship of the new College had been approached and had been in consultation with Canon Mpumlwana re the relationship of the college to the Pastoral Institute. It was suggested that the new Principal ought not to be over involved in St. Paul's prior to its closure to avoid any impression of belonging there. However the need to know who the Principal was, and his/her ideas of staffing would give greater stability to the process and ought to be clarified in the immediate future, preferably before the Archbishop left the country.<sup>175</sup>

The idea of a Pastoral Institute operating alongside a new college is interesting. The Roman Catholic Church has these training centres, which operate as centres of Lay Training programmes. However, a more serious issue was raised. Hewitt asserted:

Some concern was voiced about the financial relationship of St. Paul's to the proposed "Pastoral Institute", especially given the former's precarious financial position in 1992. It was mentioned that the Pastoral Institute would generate funds abroad and that its educational contribution to the college was a necessary anyway. Equally the Diocese of Grahamstown would be contributing about half of initial costs.<sup>176</sup>

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173 *Ibid.*

174 *Ibid.*

175 *Ibid.*

176 *Ibid.*

Hewitt continued to report:

In the course of discussions, the question of structures existing during the period of transition was raised, given that the warden might take long leave in advance of the closure of the college and the fact the Council would have to resign at the September PSC of 1992. It was agreed that verbal agreements entered into by the present warden with the full time staff should be ratified in the form of a written contract. The question of student participation in the process of transition was raised by the head student, together with the question of how creative ought St. Paul's to be in 1992 if a new dispensation might decide to travel a different route. It was agreed that students ought to be participants, especially present first years and that innovation/creativity should be explored, albeit within a provisional framework. However it was felt that student involvement in the choice of staff was more contentious.<sup>177</sup>

The practical details of the transition became a necessity to allow the smooth handing over of the administration. Given that St. Paul's was also celebrating its anniversary that year, Hewitt announced preparations for the event. He continued to state:

A student committee was presently working on proposals for the year which, to date, included the following:

- an orientation week and speaker in February
- a longer Awards occasion, possibly over two days
- a 90th Anniversary Ball later in the year, possibly combined with the Leavers' Dinner and a "handing over ceremony". Further ideas concerning transition arrangements were that the Episcopal Synod and even the Anglican Primates Conference be held in Grahamstown as a way of publicising the launch the new College.<sup>178</sup>

Meanwhile, in his Warden's letter of 10 December 1991, he formally announced that St. Paul's College would cease operating, as it would merge with St. Bede's on the present campus. He indicated:

Dear Friends, as you will have heard by now, we are entering a very uncertain time in Theological Education. Provincial Colleges have all experienced a drop in numbers in recent years, and a process of rationalisation had to come. It has been decided to amalgamate St. Bede's and St. Paul's and to create a new College on the old St. Paul's College campus. The new College will probably be called the Peter Masiza College, and will begin its operation at the beginning of 1993.<sup>179</sup>

The context in which a decision was made to create a new college was complex. It was prompted by the emerging of new socio-economic and political circumstances. Apartheid legislation was gradually dropping as the new order was emerging. This context needed a new college with a new vision, new ethos and new model of theological training. One of the characteristics of the new vision was the creation of an African-oriented college, hence the name Peter Masiza. Peter Masiza was the first ordained African priest in the Anglican Church in 1870. Hewitt went on to assert:

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>178</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>179</sup> Warden's Letter, 10 December 1991, AB 2568, A 4, St. Paul's College, 1983-91, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

The Peter Masiza College needs an entirely fresh start, and a new principal is in the process of being appointed. It is also time for me to do something different; I have been warden since 1986, and at the College since 1984. I am too much a part of the present order to be able to give a new College a fresh start. I will therefore be leaving when the new principal takes up his appointment. He will appoint a new staff, and there is the prospect of a new and exciting phase opening in Theological Education. Obviously next year will be difficult in terms of the transition, but we are positive about it. It is the 90th anniversary of St. Paul's, and Matt. Esau, our new senior student, has a small committee which is already planning ahead. The Archbishop will be our speaker at the Award Ceremony on 20 March, and once again we have just confirmed good end of the year results.<sup>180</sup>

Symptomatic of the change, the head of the College would no longer be called the "Warden", but rather the "Rector". Luke Lungile Pato became the first Black Rector appointed to head the College, which would become the College of the Transfiguration (COTT).

## The protest outside the Cathedral in 1992

During the very last years of the existence of St. Paul's College, the College body became much more socially and politically engaged. At the beginning of 1992, Hewitt reported to the College Council as follows:

In other ways, too, the year got off to a good start. The senior student of the College, Mr. M. Esau, put together a creative orientation programme for the first week of term, which included a visit to the local township. This coincided with the ugly event of the township water being cut off as a result of the dispute between the Grahamstown town council and the Rini town council. Students and staff felt strongly enough about this to join with the Bishop in making representations to the Town Clerk, and holding a poster demonstration outside his offices. This led to the arrest almost of the entire community, and their release a few hours later.<sup>181</sup>

Hewitt stated:

The positive side of this inane action had the effect of binding the students' body together early in the year. They year has continued to have a positive feel. This can also be attributed to the kind of leadership exercised by our new senior student, coupled with a positive first year group. I have been here long enough to know that no year is going to pass by without some kind of incident at sometime within the community. But there are a couple of factors that have taken of the pressure of the extremely difficult period between 1985 and 1990.<sup>182</sup>

In 2016, speaking to me about this incident, he recalled:

One other incident in 1992, the last year of the College, at the beginning of the year we had a programme of introducing new students to the College to Grahamstown and was going on in Grahamstown and so there was a tour of the city ... It happened that there was a boycott ... the

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>181</sup> Warden's Report, College Council Minutes (confidential), 19 March 1992, AB 2568 B 5, St. Paul's College, 1987-92, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

<sup>182</sup> *Ibid.*

township residents ... it was very tense, Mandela had been released in 1990 ... so it was a transitional period ... the college decided that we can't just have a tour, an observation of the township while this water rationing, restriction [was going on] ... and so it was decided to stage a demonstration stage a demonstration ... Bishop David [Russell] came to the college meeting and we started drawing up posters. The intention was to stage a peaceful demonstration outside the cathedral ... and so we were all there with our placards, and all of a sudden the police came and we were all bundled off to the Police Station ... and myself and the Bishop and the staff and all the students.<sup>183</sup>

Hewitt continued to relate his experience thus:

It was quite funny because they started taking records of each one of us before releasing us ... and the forms to fill in it took about half an hour to three quarter of an hour for each person ... and we were about 40 or 50 of us. Before I was released I got permission from the Police Officer to phone Gill [Hewitt] and I manage in a kind of coded way to inform Gill [Hewitt] saying please phone Archbishop Desmond that we have all been arrested ... and so news got out quite quickly. There was no follow up and eventually we were told that the charges were dropped out ... What seemed to be happening was that we understood there was a power struggle between the new guard and the old order.<sup>184</sup>

Bob Clarke recorded the incident. He stated: "During the Broederstroom workshop I learnt that the Grahamstown City Council had cut off electricity and water to the townships because the (Township) Rini City Council had failed to meet a deadline set in December to pay its bills. Rioting erupted, cars were stoned in the main road linking town and township, the Bishop of Grahamstown, the Principle and the entire student body of St. Paul's Theological College protested outside the City Hall only to be arrested for staging an 'illegal gathering'."<sup>185</sup> St. Paul's College had become more outward oriented than had been in the late 1960s as its impact was being felt in the community at the time.

## The provincial resolution to close St. Paul's College and St. Bede's College in 1992

In his Warden's report to the Council early in 1992, Hewitt gave a very extensive account in which he covered wide-ranging issues about the College. These issues reflected the major changes that the College was going through. Under the heading, "The College now", Hewitt noted:

The first factor concerns the so-called De Klerk initiatives of 1990. Perceptions of these obviously vary in the country and in this community, but they have acted as some sort of a pressure valve which has decreased the intensity of racial feeling that we have experienced in the College in the past.<sup>186</sup>

This is very significant, precisely because for the first time in the history of the College, White and Black students were now starting to feel that they had the same destiny. De Klerk's initiatives seemed to have had a unifying factor in the College. Hewitt indicated:

<sup>183</sup> Telephone interview with Chichele Hewitt, 17 March 2016.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>185</sup> Clarke, *Anglicans Against Apartheid*, p. 500.

<sup>186</sup> Warden's Report, March 1992, AB 2568, B 5, 1987-92, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.



Staging a protest outside the cathedral in Grahamstown. On the left is Eddie Daniels with Matt Esau standing next to him.

The second relates to the racial composition of the College. While it may be undesirable to draw attention to such things, I do so for two reasons. If one includes our colleagues from the Order of Ethiopia, the student body is almost 80% Black. Apart from the fact that this is more or less representative of where the country is, it has firstly relieved the tension. When the College was more or less 50-50 White-Black there was a ceaseless power struggle in College life. This has become less extreme, coincident with the effect of the new initiatives in the country.<sup>187</sup>

Under the heading, "The future of the new provincial seminary", Hewitt stated:

I have another reason, however, for mentioning the racial composition of the College. There is a pathetic bleating in the C.P.S.A about St. Paul's being a White college. Now of course this has to be taken seriously. Only 3 years ago we managed to eradicate from our constitution the phrase about St. Paul's being a college for training "European males". Apart from the total embarrassment of such a racial phrase, it has since the mid-70s become increasingly untrue. One might add that it is blatantly sexist, and that this year we are "training" more "European females" than "European males" which has its own special significance. One might also ask what has happened to the supply of "European males" coming forward for ordination?<sup>188</sup>

The number of White male ordinands being sent to the College had been decreasing from 1988. A similar trend was also noticeable in other residential seminaries. Hewitt continued to proclaim:

But returning to the White college issue. The accusation has some truth. The staff, part time, are overwhelming White, and that will presumably change at the end of this year. I made the point at P.S.C that it is time that the College had a Black principal, and that, too, will be happening from the end of this year. (In terms of creative change, and as to where South Africa is moving, and I am not the person to make it.) Our theological training and academic background as staff is undeniably 'Eurocentric'. With all our new initiatives in music and chapel worship in the right direction, our ethos remains Western. None of these things can be denied.<sup>189</sup>

It would seem that very little had changed since the outcry in 1982 about the ethos and structure of St. Paul's College being predominantly White. St. Paul's College was still using a very Western model to train ordinands. Hewitt further asserted:

Yet it is high time that those who make such accusations do so from an informed position. If they were to come to St. Paul's, they may see something different. They would experience worship which is becoming increasingly African, and in which a number of languages are used. (Here I might complement my colleague, the Revd. John Thomson for the initiatives he has taken in learning Xhosa). They will experience the subtle shifts in harmony that suggest the emergence of a new tradition, despite the interesting preference for Victorian music within college student body. They will experience a community ethos which is taking its own authentic shifts in the right direction of a truly African spirituality. If the other residential Colleges can be called Black so can we. I strongly suspect, however, that if we are still 'Western' then so are they!<sup>190</sup>

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187 *Ibid.*

188 *Ibid.*

189 *Ibid.*

190 *Ibid.*

Perceptions die hard. Even after significant changes had taken place in the African ethos, some people still saw St. Paul's College as a 'European College'. It would seem that they refused to acknowledge these developments or either deliberately ignored them. To a great extent, St. Paul's College had become African-oriented in its ethos. Thompson's efforts to learn IsiXhosa would suggest this. But then one also wonders: Why did it have to take Thompson, who had just arrived from England, to learn IsiXhosa? For the entire four years that I was a student, no lecturer had tried to learn IsiXhosa! Yet Hewitt also raised a very valid comment: To what extent was St. Paul's College less Black than St. Peter's College or St. Bede's College, or than Le Lapa La Jesu College in Lesotho? The issue of African Anglican identity is very complex, precisely because there is a sense in which Anglican identity is impossible without some degree of the English ecclesiastical system and ethos.

Hewitt then portrayed a gloomy picture of the state of the College. He said: "The proposed closure of St. Paul's College at the end of 1992 has dominated much of our thinking over the past year [i.e. 1991]."<sup>191</sup> Hewitt asserted:

Ironically the numbers at St. Paul's have increased in 1992. There were 33 students at the start of 1991, and at the beginning of this year there were 32. When one counts in the O of E (Order of Ethiopia) members, however, the number stands at 38. So far the relationship has worked happily.<sup>192</sup>

Hewitt highlighted the response to the closure of the College, as follows:

It would not be true to say St. Paul's welcome its own closure, and the amalgamation with St. Bede's College. The inevitability of rationalization was understood, but nobody likes to see the demise of an institution, especially during the year in which it celebrates its 90th anniversary! We are, however, grateful to the Bishop of Grahamstown for the level of communication which he has maintained with staff and students at the College. The day after PSC closed, Bishop David [Russell] informed the College of P.S.C.'s decision, and he has regularly kept in touch with individual staff members. This has greatly assisted in obvious hurts which have been evident with amongst all resident residential seminary staff, and which has been exacerbated by lack of information throughout the Province resulting in speculation and rumour. In this regard we are also grateful to the Dean of the Province for the initiatives he took in bringing together representatives of the two Colleges recently.<sup>193</sup>

Close attachment to the College made many former students feel sad at the prospect of it ceasing to operate. It was under these circumstances that on 6 October 1992, Hewitt wrote his last letter as Warden:

This will be the last time I write to you as warden of St. Paul's College, and in fact the last time you will probably receive mail from St. Paul's College, before it becomes the new College of the Transfiguration. Some of us will attend the closing ceremonies of St. Bede's on Sunday 1 November, and then some St. Bede's folk attend our ceremonies 2 days later. From the beginning of next year, the two colleges amalgamate.<sup>194</sup>

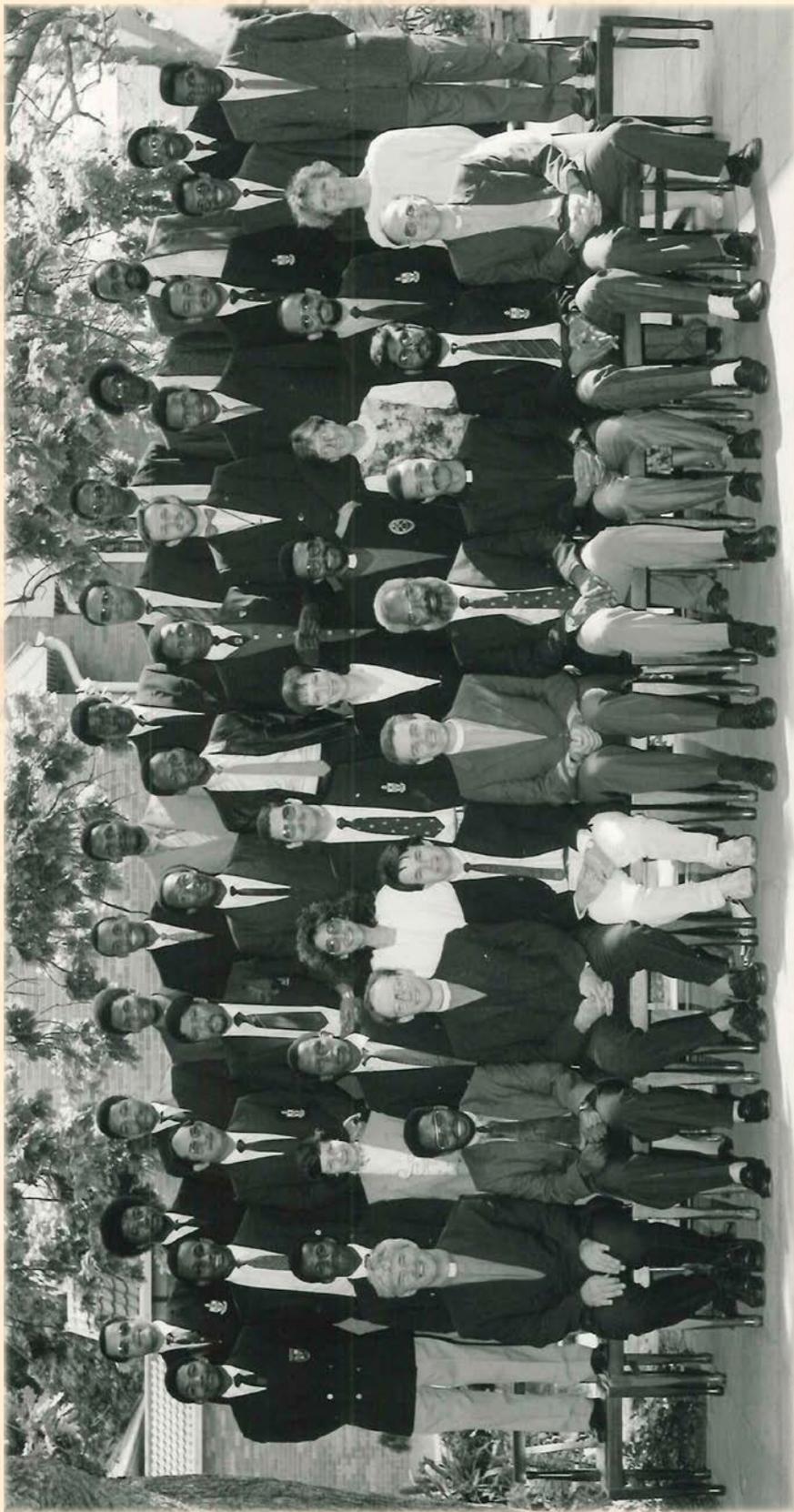
<sup>191</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>192</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>193</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>194</sup> Warden's Letter, 6 October 1992, AB 2568, A 4, 1983-91, St. Paul's College, Historical Papers, Research Archives, UWL.

## ST. PAUL'S THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE 1992



**Back:** Revd. M. Julius; M. Dwane; N. Nojoko; T. Philip; M. Mohajane; T. Peteni; I. Maruza; M. Oliphant; S. Gidi; D. Mokolopo; M. Ndungane; T. Lebusa

**Row 3:** V. Stefane; M. Moshime; R. Dennis; D. Cloete; P. Xhallye; S. Mokoena; M. Mbenyana; J.P. Heath; C. Seupe; E. Damon; E. Pockpass; T. Rogers

**Row 2:** T. Willem; E. Cherry; L. Nyakale; B. Haddad; T. Prince (Sacristan); S. Thomson (Part-time Tutor); Revd. M. Mpumlwana (Part-time Tutor); J. Trisk; J. Hardnick; M. Walker

**Front:** Revd. E. Goodyer (Part-time Tutor); J. Khanye; Revd. J. Thomson (Tutor); M. Walker; Revd. C. Hewitt (Warden); M. Esau (Senior Student); Revd. E. Daniels (Tutor); A. Sigamoney; Revd. D. Holgate (Part-time Tutor)

Hewitt gave the details as follows:

I am writing to you now about our closing ceremonies, and a rather exciting development to mark our 90th anniversary celebration.

- (a) With regard to the closing ceremonies, please read the enclosed invitation on the blue sheet; we do hope that as many of you as possible can be with us. It has been suggested that past students may like to help the new College through the establishment of a Book Fund to be administered by the Rector of the new College. Past students of St. Bede's are also considering this project.<sup>195</sup>

Equally significant was that the start of the new College was given an international context. So, Hewitt reported:

- (a) The opening ceremonies are timed to coincide with a visit from the heads of the Anglican Church in various parts of the world. From the old collage I am humbled as I look back on my predecessors. My years as the last Warden of the old college have been hard, but good. It has been a time of particular transitions (there have been many different transitions), and importantly we have held together when so much roundabout has not. Our worship, with its ups and downs, has been a key factor, and I am delighted that the new full college has an extended chapel. A few years ago, some of us had a vision of a rebuilt chapel even when numbers were beginning to fall, and it is exciting to have seen this vision fulfilled.<sup>196</sup>

Hewitt's last years in the College were very difficult, precisely because of the socio-economic and political changes in the country, which also were impacting on the College, as well as the shifts in the patterns of priestly ministry. Similarly, the uncertainty of the future of the College raised tensions. Finally, Hewitt asserted:

I am not sure that any of us in the church is absolutely certain of the way forward in theological education in these confused times when education as a whole is in turmoil, but I am certain of one thing. Important alterations have been made in the place where it most matters. We assure the new rector, the Revd. Luke Pato, and his staff, of our prayers and good wishes in the years ahead, and we look forward to seeing as many of you as possible on Tuesday, 3 November, 1992.<sup>197</sup>

With this arrangement, the way now opened for the new College. Thus, on 3 November 1992, the new College was established. It was not named Peter Masiza as had earlier been thought, but the new College was given the name, College of the Transfiguration (COTT). The name seemed racially neutral as it neither belonged to a "White" Saint, nor a "Black" Saint. However, the establishment of the new College on the premises of what was then St. Paul's College soon gave the impression, at least to others, that the new College was just the old St. Paul's College with a new name. Whatever misgivings other people might have had, in its 92nd year, the old St. Paul's College ceased to operate with all of its traditions and ethos that had originally come from England.

<sup>195</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>197</sup> *Ibid.*

## Conclusion

During 1986 to 1992, the last years of its existence, St. Paul's College went through fairly turbulent times. This was against the background of the State of Emergency proclaimed in 1985, and the political transition towards democracy, especially from 1990 onward. Other transitions in the College also tended to heighten tensions. The 50/50 balance of White and Black students raised tensions as well; likewise, the increment in the number of female ordinands during the very last years started to change the face of the College. In general, the uncertainty of residential theological training, instability amongst the staff, financial uncertainty, and the decline in student numbers all exacerbated the uncertainty of the future of the College.

# Conclusion

## St. Paul's College: A Site of Struggle

In light of the story told so far, this book could easily have been titled, 'St. Paul's Theological College: A history of struggle'. From 1965 to 1992, on different levels and areas of its life, the history of St. Paul's College was about struggles. St. Paul's College was shaped by different streams and forces. Fundamental to this was the policy of apartheid, whose roots lay in colonialism from the 17th to the 20th century. The Anglican Church, then known as the Church of the Province of Southern Africa (CPSA), of which St. Paul's College was an integral part, was itself intricately embedded in the structures of apartheid.

To an extent, these struggles were informed and nurtured by an ancient Western "Christian" worldview, which included value systems. Quasi-ideological, this religious worldview often saw and projected life in dualistic, sometimes contrasting, and even opposing terms. There was the sacred sphere, which was in opposition (in struggle with) to the profane/secular; the spirit was opposed to the flesh; religion was opposed to politics; "godliness" was opposed to "godlessness"; "Christians" was opposed to the "Communists" or "terrorists", and so on. Yet the boundaries between these binaries were not always definitively drawn.

Operating on ideological rather than pedagogical level, students were socialised rather than drilled in this milieu. Sermons in the chapel, and sometimes class lectures or public lectures would have served to reinforce this view.<sup>1</sup> Some hymns in hymnals such as *English Hymnal*, or *Hymns Ancient & Modern*, or *Fresh and Living Sounds*, or charismatic choruses tended to foster these perceptions. It was an ideology that seemed to play well into the apartheid state political agenda, namely, that the Church (clergy) must not interfere with politics. The view that "things secular" were the anti-thesis of "things religious", and vice versa, was implied. In short, that politics must not mix with religion.

During the years 1965 to 1970, the period when apartheid was being consolidated, St. Paul's College encountered streams of theological, religious and social views that sought to justify apartheid, and at the same time, other streams that were opposed to it. This was characterised by the considerable numbers of students (and most Whites in the wider society) who advocated the "No Other Gospel" "religious" ideology. The spirituality that proclaimed "No other Gospel" positioned itself on the opposite side of those who strove to engage society on apartheid.

The work of the South African Council of Churches (SACC) in the 1960s and 1970s could be viewed as being on the opposite side of this spectrum. The 1960s and 1970s were the golden years of the work of the World Council of Churches (WCC). It was also a period where, as a result of the brutality

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<sup>1</sup> The author has been unable to locate audio sermons or written sermons of this period.

of the apartheid government, South Africa was becoming increasingly isolated internationally. Besides ecumenism, the SACC's agenda of race relations started to affect the College. Regular visits of eminent persons associated with the SACC tried to engage the College on race relations and issues of social justice, seemingly on the understanding that things of the "flesh" (justice for Blacks) were not fundamentally opposed to those of the "spirit".

Sometimes, hostile reaction to the Anglican Church's association with the WCC's agenda to combat racism by some individuals indirectly affected St. Paul's College. Mrs. Fiske's angry correspondence with Robert Selby Taylor, in which the former implicated St. Paul's College, occurred almost at the same time as Robert Mercer, French-Beytagh, former students of St. Paul's College, to which John Suggit responded. Mrs. Fiske represented a wider section of many White Anglicans who believed that the Church had to confine itself to the religious sphere and not involve itself in politics.

Anglo-Catholicism of the 1960s and early 1970s in the College (and the Church) very much associated the priesthood with masculinity. St. Paul's College's "semi-monastic" traditions that tended to marginalise women and family life tended to characterise its outlook. As we noted in Chapter 1, except for very special occasions, women (and wives) were not allowed in the College. It is said that a College rule required that they had to live very far away from the College in Grahamstown, and at one time, even in Port Elizabeth. This attitude would seem to suggest that women were associated with "things of the flesh", perceived to be in opposition to "things of the spirit".

From another angle, the dominant Charismatic Renewal, which started to impact on St. Paul's College from 1972, tended to stress "spiritual liberation", sometimes even at the expense of social engagement. The experience of freedom in the spirit gave some students meaningful purpose for theological training and the ministry that lay ahead. Within this environment, the scholarly and intellectual influence of Suggit appeared to critique this view – by stressing the necessity of sound biblical scholarship and church tradition as the legitimate criteria with which the Church had to judge its experience in every generation.

Suggit's brave appointment of Mbali in 1973 heralded another milestone in the history of the College. Even though it has been described as a disaster by some former students, it was an attempt to critique the apartheid system that marginalised Black people. Contrary to what apartheid ideology taught, symbolically Mbali's appointment was meant to make a statement that a Black person could function as well as a White person. His appointment was intended to demonstrate that apartheid ideology, which taught that a Black person could not live with White people, was a fallacy. It tried to disprove the ideological myth that Blacks were inferior, let alone that given similar opportunities to Whites, they could not function like them, or could not rise above the lowest levels in society. Thus, Mbali's appointment had political as much as spiritual (faith) orientations. It was as if Suggit (the Church) was saying: "We obey God rather than the state!"

Relationships with other colleges seemed to have considerably influenced the life of some of the students of St. Paul's College. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, St. Paul's enjoyed regular contact with St. Peter's College of the Federal Seminary, then the hot bed of Black Theology and Black Consciousness. Through this contact, some of the students of St. Paul's College are said to have become more politically aware.

It has also been noted that the College's decision to assist St. Bede's College in welcoming the Fedsem from Alice in 1974 provoked the reaction of some evangelically conservative fringe elements in the College, who construed the College's decision as unnecessarily meddling in politics, "secular" affairs. It was typical of the perception of the divergence in thought between the flesh and the spirit.

Within the constraining environment of apartheid, the scholarly and intellectual influence of Suggit appeared to critique the logic of apartheid in suggesting that there was an alternate view. There is no doubt that the emergence of the Charismatic Renewal in the 1970s, together with Bishop Burnett's leadership in Grahamstown, started shifting the theological orientation of St. Paul's. Alongside traditional or Anglo-Catholic spirituality, the Charismatic Renewal was in ascendancy.

In this context, those who espoused charismatic and evangelical streams seemed suspicious or uncomfortable with the rigid intellectual orthodoxy associated with Suggit. Intellectualism would be seen as opposed to the pure things of the "spirit". St. Paul's College tended to play a very important role in soothing the consciences of some who either supported apartheid or sought to shy away from confronting its gruesome realities.

The appointment of Buchanan in 1976 was another turning point in the life of the College. His own personal experience of the Charismatic Renewal, a dominant spirituality, whose key figure was Archbishop Burnett, put him in a very good position to be appointed Warden. His appointment not only epitomised these changes, but also heralded a new phase in the history of the College, where the intellectual legacy of Suggit was "loosening" up. Buchanan's vision on what a theological college ought to be differed greatly from that of Suggit.

With Suggit at Rhodes University, away from the scene of St. Paul's College, Buchanan had free rein to mould the College largely according to his vision, of which the Charismatic Renewal and spirituality was a critical dimension. In contrast to Suggit's tenure of leadership, during Buchanan's Wardenship, scholarship took a back seat as the Charismatic Renewal was in ascendancy. It was as if Buchanan was trying to reverse Suggit's rigorous intellectual approach.

Besides pursuing an ecumenical agenda, Suggit's vision for the scheme for closer collaboration with Rhodes University and his seeking of a cluster-kind of relationship with Livingstone (Methodist House), also entailed his desire to bring St. Paul's College into close association with the University, precisely for academic purposes. Some students of St. Paul's College studying at the University could benefit from the culture of critical thinking (scholarship) that Rhodes University could provide in Grahamstown. Buchanan and others resisted this approach.

Undoubtedly, the opening up of St. Paul's College to Black students from 1976, largely as a result of pressure from both within and outside of the Church, started to transform the face and context of St. Paul's College, hitherto as a White-only College. The encounter between White and Black put the College to the test. Fundamentally, through these trying times, this entailed transformation in the manner Whites and Blacks started to see themselves.

The Soweto Uprising in 1976, followed by the death of Steve Biko, ushered in a new phase in White and Black relations. It emboldened the youth, who were now ready to challenge White supremacy. We have

noted the College's non-involvement in these very important episodes. The College did not want to associate itself with "political" issues, which would have attracted the attention of the apartheid state. It was too risky. It was better to play it safe.

The increasing racial diversity of the College from 1979 also heralded an important phase in the transformation of the College. These changes were bound to heighten tension in the College, which had hitherto been exclusively for Whites. Black students, who started arriving from 1979, were politically very conscious, and less willing to not challenge the status quo. Buchanan (and the Bishops) took a position that it was right to apply for the permits. And they did. Some Black students from Cape Town took on Buchanan (and the staff) on this issue.

In spite of the increasing presence of Black students, in the 1980s, seemingly, the College had no agenda for transformation. This raises the question today as to what extent the Church leadership had prepared the College (White students) for racial diversity.

Undoubtedly, 1982 marked a milestone in the history of the College. As we have noted previously, contrasting or conflicting streams running through the College seemed to raise tensions, at least from the perspective of some Black students. Some Black students were critical of the College dominated by charismatic, Catholic, liberal, and evangelical streams, which seemed very reticent to engage in the social issues that plagued the society. Some of the Black students meeting together (with the consent of Buchanan) in the so-called "Black Caucus" was an important development in the efforts to achieve a balance of power with the White students. It was also strategically an act of resistance to the dominant White power.

Perceptions of acts of racism in some aspects or structures of the College life by some Black students appeared to increase dissatisfaction. Under such circumstances, the College leadership could not hold together to deal with these tensions. The issue of leadership was at the core of grievances. It was, therefore, inevitable that some Black (married) students meeting in the absence of White students sparked off the crisis early in 1982. Perhaps the flare up of racial tensions in 1982 were necessary to move the College to another level of racial encounter.

The College's controversial debate to affiliate with the United Democratic Front or not on 22 February 1984 was a milestone. Initially, it divided the College between those for and against. Typically, it reflected contrasting attitudes between those who saw life in terms of 'religious' versus 'secular' matters. The victory was held by those who saw things in the former manner. On the other hand, the Bishop's decision a year later, forcing the College to rescind its decision, is very significant. This was one of the instances where Bishops believed that the College had to steer away from politics. The Bishops were scared of the political implications of the College's decision on the life of the College and the Church.

Increasing militarism during the period between 1983 and 1985 heightened political tension and polarised the nation. In this context, perhaps no issue demonstrated the racial struggle for power better than the sport and recreation facilities in Grahamstown in the 1980s. The multiracial character of the

College posed a challenge as to which sports field they could use, since on most of these facilities Blacks could not play without government permits. Mobilising around these issues, some Black students highlighted the inequalities of privilege and resources that prevailed in the apartheid society between Black and White people.

Perhaps no phase in the history of the College demonstrated it as a site of intense struggle more than the period between 1986 and 1992. The departure of Buchanan in 1986 heralded an era of the new leadership of Chichele Hewitt. Hewitt assumed leadership at the time when Mr. F.W. de Klerk started taking initiatives for political reforms, gradually moving South Africa towards a democratic state. In many respects, the new political environments started to impact on the College.

Increasingly, moving away from the traditional position of non-engagement in "political issues", from 1986 to 1992, the College started engaging in societal issues in Grahamstown more actively. The College started receiving more Black students, and increasingly also White female students. The decision to march and finally commemorate the 1976 Soweto Uprising in the township in 1986 was an equally significant episode. It marked a departure from the past tradition, where the College was uninvolved in the township.

From 1988 to 1990, the College took an activist role, engaging in socio-political issues in the townships, for which the College received compliments from the local community. The 1980s and 1990 marked shifts in the patterns and paradigms in ministry and theological training. The "secular" sphere, where women now started to occupy important roles, challenged the traditional male domination of ministry and this also impacted on the College. The ordination of women became a critical issue for the Church, as well as how theological training was being conducted. Women, who in the 1960s and 1970s had been on the periphery of College life (and the Church), were now moving to the centre.

A view that associated women with the "Fall of Man" was outdated and unjustifiable. Men and women were equal, for He created all of them in His image. The increase in the number of White women entering the College had started to transform the face of the College. This development was also related to the issue of theological education as a whole, gender and roles in society.

The issue of human sexuality became more controversial than that of the ordination of women in the Anglican Church. In the 1980s and 1990s, this topic, hitherto rarely raised in the open, started to be spoken of, although still very much restrained. People like Douglas Torr and visiting guests such as Ivan Toms were only a few who struggled with it. The College did not provide a safe space for people of different sexual orientations to come out.

The challenges facing the traditional mode of theological training, the need for a new model of training, coupled with financial challenges that the Anglican Colleges were facing, put pressure on the Anglican Church to consider the issue that St. Paul's College had to go, and make way for a new theological college in the late 1980s and early 1990s. It was an issue that derived from the need for contextual relevance.

The Coca-Cola Mass incident in 1989 was symbolically significant, precisely because it raised the question of the relevance of the Anglican liturgy and its symbols (sacramental theology) to the context where a large majority of Anglicans were oppressed by the state (and by many White Anglicans). Irrespective of different versions given of the so-called Coca-Cola Mass celebrated by Michael Worsnip, the critical issue was: the role of theology (the Church) in reconciling Anglicans (Christians) divided by apartheid. Jesus Christ did the same at the Passover meal, and so did Paul in many contexts. Hermeneutics is key to theological and missional praxis. The point about Worsnip's action is that he was challenging the Church to make the Eucharist symbols relevant to the context of apartheid, where the Black majority suffered indignities. Had the Church done enough to make the Eucharist speak to the oppression of Black people?

Finally, it is significant that 1992, when the College closed, was the same year that it staged a demonstration outside the Cathedral, protesting against the Grahamstown City Council's closure of water supply to the Black township of Rini Municipality. St. Paul's College had come full circle, from the 1960s and 1970s when it was inward looking, to the 1990s when it symbolically challenged the apartheid government. This became possible for two reasons. In the first place, its racial demographics had changed drastically – it had a majority of Black students. More significantly, the College was operating during the transition to a democratic South Africa. The closure of St. Paul's College in 1992 marked the end of a theological tradition whose roots lay in its history before 1965, even since before 1902 in South Africa, and indeed way back to 19th-century England and antiquity.

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