

20. Collaboration in action

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

21. Obstacles to collaboration

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

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

22. Introduction of Scientific Socialism to Zambia

It is only recently that, in contradiction to the policy previously followed, an open determination to reject Humanistic Socialism in favour of Scientific Socialism has been expressed in our country. It is not clear where the demand for this has come from. It is certainly not the result of that participatory democracy, which is central to our political process. What is happening is very much in line with the Marxist-Leninist idea of a "vanguard party" that claims to know what is good for the people and proceeds to give it to them whether they like it or not. Not only what is being done but also the manner in which it

is being done confirms our fears that there are those among us who are trying to force our country along a communist path and are prepared to manipulate people and politics for that end.

“Doublespeak” — saying one thing while doing the opposite — is a well known Marxist tactic for keeping opponents in false security. An example is camouflaging as “People’s Democracies” systems where a Communist Party simply dictates to the people and where civil rights are respected only to the extent to which they are exercised in support of Party policy. The same could happen here and talk of participation and democracy could become a mere smoke-screen for dictatorial rule. His Excellency the President himself has warned us of this. “If you are not careful”, he has said, “the One Party Participatory Democracy can become tyrannical. It can enslave the people it is supposed to serve.” (8)

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

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

23. Participatory Democracy and the move towards Scientific Socialism.

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

— From the fact that courses where Marxism is taught are being held for Party leaders and

(8) See “The Daily Mail”, 25th April, 1979.

"political educators", it seems that a decision has been made to give the Party a Marxist ideology. Who in the Party has taken this decision?

- Are the views of the "common man" being sought? If he expresses them will they be listened to? If not, what becomes of Participatory Democracy?
- Are even the leaders free to disagree with the new policy? The emphasis on "re-educating" them suggests that they are not and that they imply have to be enlightened about the wisdom of what is being done.
- One of the purposes of the recently established Young Pioneers is precisely to indoctrinate young people with Scientific Socialism. Have parents been asked about this? In this context we record our alarm at the proposal that all youth organisations should be suppressed in favour of the Young Pioneers.
- Is Scientific Socialism to be taught in our schools? If so, to what extent will it interfere with the teaching of religion, which is the strong desire of the great majority of our parents?

24. Conclusion:

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

Before it is too late, we call on all our Church members to take a stand so as to protect our present liberties. Many members and leaders of the Ruling Party are Christians. We ask

and them to do all in their power to keep the Party true to its own principles. Now is the time for everyone to take political life seriously and not to allow an oppressive system to be introduced because of their indifference and inactivity. —

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

On behalf of the

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