

**University of Cape Town
Faculty of Social Science**

**From Protest to Development :
The Dynamics of Change at the
Western Province Council of Churches**

A dissertation presented in fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
Masters in Philosophy

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Abstract

From Protest to Development: the Dynamics of Change at the Western Province Council of Churches

by Roderick Bray, University of Cape Town, August 1995.

The Western Province Council of Churches (WPCC) is an ecumenical organisation based in Cape Town which promotes ideals of justice. From 1971 to 1995 it was a branch of the South African Council of Churches. The WPCC regards itself as a non-governmental organisation (NGO), and it is part of the NGO sector. It is funded by foreign donor agencies.

This thesis studies the transformation of the WPCC as an organisation. This occurred as a direct result of the political transition in South Africa between 1990 and 1994. The main forces pressing change upon the WPCC during this period were: (i) its commitment to retain relevance in a changing political and social environment according to the principles of contextual theology; (ii) its need to adapt its mode of operation following considerable changes in the context of its work; and, (iii) the most powerful force, the influence of foreign funding agencies upon the nature of its activities.

The information discussed was gathered principally through seven months of intense participant observation at the WPCC, in the months leading up to and including the South African general election in April 1994. Historical data was gathered from interviews and WPCC documents. The analysis of the forces at work in the WPCC's transition was drawn from research in the disciplines of political science, religious studies and development studies.

It will be demonstrated that between 1976 and 1990 the WPCC became increasingly active in the campaign to end the government's policy of apartheid. Its work was inspired by the broader ecumenical movement in South Africa and internationally. Generous financial support from abroad supported the Council's work and helped it to grow considerably. However, the support received by NGOs in South Africa, including the WPCC, will be shown to have been anomalous in the general pattern of funding directed towards Africa, which usually focuses upon development work rather than political activism.

After 1990 the WPCC struggled to redefine itself and retain relevance in a changing and complex political environment. As a result of the shifting context, various dynamics of change affected the organisation and its size decreased; it lost profile; and its mode of operation and the focus of its work altered. The methods and activities that it had used in the 1980s lost their effectiveness, but new practices emerged in their place.

In 1994 democratic elections took place and foreign funding agencies revised their policy towards South Africa. The WPCC faced closure unless it rapidly reoriented its work. The staff faced considerable dilemmas concerning the future work of the organisation, and its policy towards foreign donors and the new government. The WPCC chose to shift towards a 'development' paradigm, as did other NGOs experiencing similar forces of change.

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Roderick Bray, Cape Town, August 1995. Eph. 3:20,21.

Table of Contents

Acronyms	i
Preface: The WPCC, April 1994	ii
Introduction.....	1
The South African Political Situation.....	1
South Africa and International Donor Agencies	2
The Western Province Council of Churches.....	3
Background to the Study.....	6
Methodology.....	7
Thesis Outline	10
1. The Ecumenical Movement and Apartheid South Africa.....	12
1.1. The World Council of Churches and Apartheid	13
1.2. The Christian Institute	15
1.3. The Development of the SACC	17
1.4. Contextual Theology	21
1.5. Conclusion	24
2. International Funding, Apartheid and the WPCC	25
2.1. Introduction	25
2.2. The Political Situation 1976-1990.....	27
2.2.1. Soweto	27
2.2.2. The United Democratic Front.....	28
2.2.3. Crossroads	31
2.2.4. International donors and South Africa in the 1980s.....	31
2.3. The WPCC, 1976-1990	33
2.3.1. The WPCC and Crossroads.....	35
2.3.2. The WPCC and the UDF.....	36
2.3.3. Publications.....	38
2.3.4. Crossroads 1986, and Beyond	39
2.4. International Financial Aid.....	40
2.4.1. The Financial Support of the WPCC.....	41
2.4.2. International Funding to South Africa in the 1980s	44
2.4.3. Northern NGO Aid	47
2.4.3.1. NGOs and Development in Africa.....	48
2.4.3.2. Criticism of Development Policy and the Rise of NGOs 50	
2.4.3.3. Academic Support for NGO-led Development	52
2.4.4. Development Through Animation.....	55
2.5. The Financial Strength of Northern NGOs	57

2.6. Conclusion	61
3. The WPCC in a Time of Transition	63
3.1. Introduction	63
3.1.1. The Political Situation 1990-1994	63
3.1.2. The Transition for NGOs	67
3.1.3. The Ecumenical Movement and the Transition	69
3.2. Negotiating Political Change: The Restructuring of the SACC	71
3.3. The Organisation of the WPCC	74
3.3.1. The Staff	75
3.3.2. The Executive	75
3.3.3. The Organisation - Camaraderie	76
3.3.4. Daily Devotions	79
3.3.5. Daily Routine	81
3.4. The Activities of the WPCC During the Transition	82
3.4.1. Cape Town City of Peace, a Campaign	83
3.4.2. The Umtata Raid - A Demonstration	87
3.4.3. International Ecumenism	89
3.4.4. Academia	92
3.4.5. The WPCC and Local Ecumenical Organisations	95
3.4.6. The Church	97
3.4.7. The Community	101
3.4.8. Fires and Floods	102
3.4.9. Conflicts, Peace and Monitoring	103
3.4.10. The WPCC and the Elections	105
3.4.10.1. The Programme of the WPCC	105
3.4.10.2. The Election Niche	109
3.4.10.3. The WPCC and Election Networks	111
3.4.10.4. The Problems of the IFEE Structure	113
3.4.10.5. Problems for NEON	117
3.4.11. The WPCC and Development	119
3.4.11.1. Relating to Projects and Communities	120
3.4.11.2. The Church and Development Conference	121
3.4.11.3. Women's Development	122
3.4.11.4. Contextual Theology as Development	124
3.5. Conclusion	128
4. Facing the Future	129
4.1. Introduction	129
4.2. The Cessation of Funding for the WPCC	132
4.3. Staff Experiences and the Influence of Liberation Theology	133

4.3.1. Biographical Details	134
4.3.2. A Sense of Identity.....	139
4.4. Sources of Funding.....	142
4.4.1. The WPCC as a Development NGO	142
4.4.2. Relating to International Donor Agencies	146
4.4.3. Making Choices and Devising Projects	149
4.4.4. Relating to Government	152
4.4.4.1. NGOs and Government in Africa	152
4.4.4.2. The WPCC and the Government.....	156
4.4.5. Post Election Changes in the South African NGO Sector.....	159
4.5. The Problems of Moving from Protest to Development.....	163
4.5.1. Activism versus Development.....	164
4.5.1.1. Problems with the Term 'Development'	165
4.5.2. NGOs as Development Agencies.....	167
4.6. Conclusion	171
5. Conclusion.....	173
5.1. From Protest to Development.....	173
5.2. The Dynamics of Change.....	176
Bibliography	179

Acronyms

AACC	All Africa Council of Churches
ANC	African National Congress
BCM	Black Consciousness Movement
BftW	Bread for the World
CCSA	Christian Council of South Africa
CI	Christian Institute
Cosatu	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CWD	Catholic Welfare and Development
DC	Dependants Conference
Delta	Development Education & Leadership Teams in Action
EFSA	Ecumenical Foundation of Southern Africa
EWC	Ecumenical Women's Consultation
ICT	Institute for Contextual Theology
IDAMASA	Inter-Denominational African Ministers Association of South Africa
IEC	Independent Electoral Commission
IFEE	Independent Forum for Electoral Education
MPD	the institute for Multi-Party Democracy
NIM	Network of Independent Monitors
NEON	National Election Observer Network
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
ODA	Overseas Development Administration
PAC	Pan Africanist Congress
PCR	Programme to Combat Racism
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
SACC	South African Council of Churches
SHAWCO	Students' Health and Welfare Centres Organisation
TEP	Theological Exchange Programme
TEC	Transitional Executive Council
UCT	University of Cape Town
UDF	United Democratic Front
UWC	University of the Western Cape
WCC	World Council of Churches
WPCC	Western Province Council of Churches

Preface: The WPCC, April 1994

A visitor to the WPCC in April 1994 would quickly gain an impression of the kind of organisation it is. They would note that it is a religious organisation from its decoration and its chapel. From its size and the number of offices they would appreciate that it is a substantial organisation concerned with a variety of activities. The conversation, the posters and the publications on display would indicate to them that it is not only concerned with religion, but also with issues of justice and social change, both in South Africa and globally. The reason for the activity in the building may be gathered from the WPCC's own introductory publication which explains that the organisation exists to promote non-sexism, non-racism, democracy and justice.

The offices of the WPCC are found near Athlone, a suburb of Cape Town. The WPCC is painted white with three large 'Council of Churches' logos - a boat on water carrying a cross - boldly presented next to the name 'Western Province Council of Churches' in blue. The building is comprised of two houses joined together, one double story, the other single, surrounded by two small car parking areas, grass and other suburban houses. Inside there is a reception area; a board room; a simple chapel; kitchen; four bathroom/toilets; and seven offices, one of which includes a lounge area. There is also a resource room - which is full of printed materials, second hand clothes, blankets and a photocopier. There are numerous cupboards and small rooms which act as overflows to the resource room. To the rear is parked the large kombi vehicle and the pick-up ('bakkie') as well as long rolls of plastic sheeting used to provide emergency shelter. Inside, the offices are carpeted throughout and quite smartly presented. Excepting the small reception area and corridors it is quite a sizeable and comfortable establishment.

The walls are adorned with various notices, pictures and posters. In the reception area there are notices advertising forthcoming meetings, conferences, exhibitions and events. Elsewhere there are framed pictures. One is of Desmond Tutu and other religious leaders kneeling near parliament at the head of a crowd, and words underneath stating that a government without justice is nothing more than a group of bandits. There are pictures of Christ in various biblical scenes depicted as a black male; and others of black women in Jesus' time, poverty stricken and working hard as richly robed men walk proudly past. In one office there is the silhouette of a woman's head and a poem:

WOMAN

*Look in her eyes comrade
Mirrors, reflections
of male tyranny.
Let's remove the shrapnel
from her eyes.*

*Torrential rivers
of sorrow
gushing through your brain
woman
source of the revolution.*

Around the offices there are old and torn stickers demanding the release of people detained in police custody, or calling for the support of a past strike, protest or campaign. There are posters which are more recent, concerning AIDS awareness, and the 1994 South African elections.

Copies of the Institute of Contextual Theology's Challenge magazine and the Theological Exchange Programme's People's Church are set out on display. The shelves are loaded with numerous publications, statements and reports by the WPCC and the South African Council of Churches dating back over the last 15 years. In the store room, there are numerous reports and magazines of various organisations from around the world including the World Council of Churches; Amnesty International; the United Nations High Commission for Refugees; the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom; and numerous other papers such as one entitled The Sudan Democratic Gazette. There are even more numerous publications concerning South Africa the 1980s by organisations such as the Congress of South African Trade Unions; the Surplus People Project; various student groups and non governmental organisations, and copies of two other publications, Work in Progress and Ons Leer Mekaar.

In the corridors one might hear talk of the way VAT taxes the poor more than the rich; the effects of violence on children as they grow up; or the ups and downs of political parties such as the 'Nats' and the ANC. In the background the fax machine clicks, the photocopier whirs, and the sound of people organising meetings on telephones is heard from the offices. In the reception area there is a glossy booklet introducing the WPCC which proclaims, 'the continuing struggle for a just, non-sexist, non-racial and democratic society lies at the heart of our existence' (Ecumenical Ministries in the Western Cape:1).

Introduction

This thesis is about an organisation undergoing change during a period of political upheaval. After 1990 the Western Province Council of Churches (WPCC) experienced a dramatic restructuring of its organisation and the reorientation of its work. These changes were directly related to, and concurrent with shifts occurring in the political context in South Africa between 1990 to 1994. The changes within the organisation are identified in this thesis as a shift from operation as a 'protest' oriented organisation in the 1980s; through a period of transition between 1990 and 1994; and emerging as a 'development' oriented organisation following the South African election in April 1994. The dynamics driving these changes were both internal and external to the organisation. Within the WPCC forces of change were generated by the desire to keep the WPCC's work relevant in a changing political context. 'Local' pressures included the breakdown of the organisational networks it used in the 1980s. More powerful still were the dynamics at work in the WPCC's parent body, the South African Council of Churches (SACC). The SACC was under pressure from its foreign funding agencies. Foreign donors were changing their attitude towards non-governmental organisations in South Africa as political transition occurred in the country.

The South African Political Situation

The work of the WPCC, and of the ecumenical movement in South Africa of which it is a part, has been closely related to the political situation in the country, particularly since the Soweto uprising of 1976. From 1948 to 1990 the South African government enforced a policy of 'separate development' ('apartheid') based upon racial distinctions. The policy favoured the 'white' minority, which held political power, and discriminated against the 'black' majority. Apartheid laws provoked much resentment and hostility towards the government, and this was expressed in pro-democracy movements such as the African National Congress (ANC). Conflict between the government and these opposition groups led to the banning of the ANC and other organisations in 1960. The United Nations, in the same year, passed resolutions condemning apartheid, and an international campaign to isolate the Pretoria regime steadily gathered pace, resulting in international boycotts and sanctions against South Africa in the following years.

The Soweto uprising of 1976 marked a dramatic demonstration of the tension which existed between the government and its opponents, and the government's continued willingness to use brutal force to suppress insurrection. The 1980s were a decade of intense hostility between these forces. In 1983 an umbrella organisation called the United Democratic Front was formed to co-ordinate protest action amongst township based civic organisations,

churches, student groups, unions and non-governmental organisations. Through strikes, civil disobedience, boycotts and various other forms of mass action they aimed to make the apartheid state 'ungovernable'.

The government responded to these calls for democracy with a policy of superficial 'reforms', which did not substantially alter the balance of power, and by way of repression. The latter included periods of emergency; wide police powers (such as detention without trial); the criminalisation of opposition groups; harassment of activists; and the violent dispersal of protesters. A situation of intense conflict and polarisation resulted.

In 1990 the government indicated a dramatic shift in policy by unbanning the ANC and other organisations, releasing political prisoners and declaring an end to apartheid. Negotiations were later established between the government and the opposition parties aimed at reaching a political settlement which would enfranchise the black majority in a democratic state. The period of negotiations, however, proved to be long (four years) and marred by high levels of violence, for which the government were suspected of complicity or at least inactivity. The spectre of civil war brought fears that the transition to democracy was under threat. Furthermore, the sincerity of the government was questioned since, until late 1993, it retained sole control of the executive, the legislature and the security forces. Although democratic elections were finally held in April 1994, bringing to power an ANC led Government of National Unity, the period of transition from apartheid to democracy had been characterised by uncertainty, confusion and fear that the peace process and the transition might fail.

South Africa and International Donor Agencies

The international condemnation of apartheid aroused much interest in South Africa and sympathy for the black population; it also isolated the Pretoria regime. Governments and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in Africa have been, for many years, the recipients of aid sent from northern countries to support their implementation of 'development' programmes. South Africa, however, attracted an unusual amount of foreign aid, particularly in the 1980s, as an expression of solidarity with the 'struggle' of black people.

Foreign aid was sent to South Africa by various organisations including governments, inter-governmental bodies (such as the European Union), and northern NGO donor agencies. NGOs have traditionally been associated with welfare projects and the promotion of democracy. In Africa they have also been increasingly involved in the conduct of 'development' programmes. Some authors and agencies regard NGOs as important vehicles of development in Africa, and northern NGOs have grown in prominence and financial strength

as a result. This financial strength placed them in a strong position to fund NGOs in South Africa.

The scale and the nature of funding sent to South Africa in the 1980s was an anomaly in the general distribution of international aid. Aid was sent not to the Pretoria regime but to NGOs in South Africa, and particularly those associated with an anti-apartheid stance. Due to the intense political situation, aid to South Africa was not sent to support specific 'development' programmes but for use at the discretion of organisations as they sought to support the black population, which often included protest work. In 1991, before the transition process gained momentum, aid reported to have reached NGOs in South Africa from overseas totalled R1,2 billion (Bonbright, 1992). Such large amounts of funding supported many organisations committed to anti-apartheid activities in the 1980s, including the United Democratic Front and many of its affiliates.

As the transition period progressed the international attitude to the South African regime began to soften, and it was steadily reincorporated into the international community from 1992, and particularly after the election in 1994. International funding agencies, in turn, reviewed their policies towards South Africa. Covert funding came to an end, and new criteria were applied to the use of funds. Particularly as the transition neared completion the donor agencies began to expect South African NGOs to fulfil the 'development' role for which they are supported elsewhere in Africa. Following the election of the ANC led government in 1994, many donors chose to redirect their funds towards the new administration or restricted their funding to 'development' projects related to the government's 'Reconstruction and Development Programme'.

The Western Province Council of Churches

The Western Province Council of Churches (WPCC) is an ecumenical organisation which has worked since 1981 for the promotion of a just, non-sexist, non-racial and democratic society in South Africa. Its aims are characteristic of the international ecumenical movement, which has been particularly influenced by liberation theology, and in South Africa specifically by black and contextual theologies. These emphasise the transformation of society towards greater justice and equity. Since the WPCC concentrates upon the promotion of these values it operates in society as a non-governmental organisation (NGO). It refers to itself as an NGO, and it is regarded as such by other organisations.

After the 1976 Soweto uprising the WPCC was increasingly active in the anti-apartheid movement, and in particular in the United Democratic Front. The entire organisation was geared towards resisting the apartheid policies of the state and challenging the government's

legitimacy. Its mode of operation; the rhetoric it used; the work of its staff and the aims of the organisation were all focused upon 'the struggle'. This work was made possible by the funding which it received through the SACC from abroad. Donors allowed the WPCC much freedom in the management of the funds which they sent to it, and discretion concerning its reaction to unfolding political events. The WPCC was also strengthened by the co-ordination of its activities with other organisations and individuals similarly committed to 'the struggle' for democracy, particularly through the UDF. During this period it held a high profile as an anti-apartheid organisation, and the WPCC may be characterised as a 'protest' organisation during the 1980s.

Between 1990 and 1994, however, the WPCC struggled to redefine itself in the changing political context. Just as the country as a whole entered a difficult and complex period of transition, so too the WPCC underwent a difficult transformation in its size, structure, rhetoric, activities and profile. Its protest work, however, had always been an expression of its theology: as it sort to apply its theology to a new context it retained some sense of continuity during the transition.

The changes in the organisation, however, were not merely adaptations made from within. The context of its operations also changed as its organisational networks dissolved and as national debate shifted. More important still, as early as 1991 the ecumenical movement came under pressure from the donor agencies upon which it relied for funding, to change its structure and activities. These pressures propelled the WPCC into a mode of transition which continued throughout the period 1990 to 1994. However, it found new areas of work, many of which concerned the transition in the country. Furthermore, during this time the WPCC made fundamental adjustments in its focus: it became more concerned with the work of the church in society, and it became increasingly committed to 'development' projects and the role of the church in 'development'. The WPCC addressed these concerns through new programmes, publications and conferences. The period 1990 to 1994 can therefore be identified as one of 'transition' at the WPCC, as it sort to apply its theology to a changing context and find new ways to express it effectively in society. It also experienced 'transition' because of the changing requirements of donor agencies.

Directly following the 1994 elections the WPCC experienced a financial crisis. This was precipitated by a drastic reduction in funds made available by northern donors to the NGO sector in South Africa, including the ecumenical movement. The staff were faced with the closure of the WPCC unless they could gain further funding. The situation forced them to confront various demanding dilemmas. As individuals they had to decide whether they wanted to remain in the ailing organisation. Biographical details demonstrate in each case a long standing commitment to the values of the ecumenical movement, and this was therefore a

difficult personal decision. It remained uncertain whether the WPCC could survive in the future, and if so what activities it should, or could, engage in. In addition considerations concerning the future also involved the relationship it would pursue with the new government, particularly given its history as a political opposition organisation. This question became more critical because of the apparent preference of donors for NGOs which worked with the new government's programmes.

The WPCC responded to its financial predicament by compiling proposals for various 'development' programmes which it could submit to donor agencies. It did not decide upon a firm policy concerning its relationship to the state, leaving open the possibility of RDP work in the future. The emerging stance of the WPCC following the elections indicated that it was becoming a 'development' oriented organisation. This offered hope for its survival and the continuation of its work given the donor's imposition of 'development' criteria in their policy towards South Africa.

The position of the WPCC in mid-1994 was far removed from the one it held in the late 1980s. There is much irony in the way the political changes affected it. During the 1980s it had fought for political rights, often at great personal cost to its staff members. Likewise during the period of transition it worked to safeguard the progress towards a democratic government, promoting peace work and working with great commitment to ensure that the elections were successful. Yet as it saw the first fruits of its labours for democracy emerge in 1990 so it began to lose autonomy and financial strength, it had to reduce its number of staff and it lost profile and allies. After the successful 1994 elections it was plunged into difficult dilemmas and problems concerning its future and the very existence of the organisation. Under oppression it had enjoyed greater power and autonomy than it did in 1994 when the democratic government, for which it had worked, took power. It then had to look for its survival to promoting plans approved by foreign donor agencies for the 'development' of South Africa. Furthermore, it was likely to come under strong financial pressure to promote the policies of the state, whereas in the 1980s it had always retained complete independence of it.

The dynamics of change at the WPCC from a 'protest' to a 'development' oriented organisation were partly the result of internal adaptations to the changing context, and also from pressures derived from changes at the South African Council of Churches and in the broader 'struggle' NGO sector. Chiefly, however, its changes were driven by forces which related back to the attitude of foreign donor organisations and their perceptions of the changing political environment in South Africa. The WPCC had been liberated by these agencies to do its work in the 1980s, but after 1994 it became subject to devising programmes satisfying their criteria, and therefore in danger of becoming an African NGO

practising European notions of 'development'. The WPCC will face a difficult future as it seeks to regain its financial strength and yet retain its own identity and autonomy. The dynamics of change are such that the WPCC could not have remained a 'protest' organisation after 1990, nor could it have avoided becoming focused upon 'development' after 1994, if it were to have survived as an active organisation.

In closing it is worthwhile noting that dynamics of change have been at work not only in the ecumenical movement during the period of political transition, but also in many other organisations in South Africa which acted as 'protest' organisations in the 1980s. Many organisations have closed and others such as the 'Black Sash' have experienced similar dilemmas to those of the WPCC. Some magazines associated with the 'struggle', including Work in Progress and New Era, have also been forced to close. Furthermore, it seems reasonable to assume that these processes will be at work in any situation where NGOs have received funding to oppose a government, and then in the wake of democracy are expected to enter the 'development' field or cease to operate. Further research might conclude that this represents a 'genus' of NGOs at various times and places working for democracy in the 'third world'.

Background to the Study

Although originally from the UK, my interest in the South African social and political situation grew from a year I spent between 1988 and 1989 living in a 'coloured' township as a child care worker. As I subsequently documented in an undergraduate dissertation (unpublished) I was aware that the socio-political context was directly effecting the causes of child abuse, and increasing some of the difficulties we experienced in providing for abused children. At the time I also had 'white' friends facing imprisonment for their support of the End Conscription Campaign. I took an active interest in protest activity launched to denounce the apartheid regime against which they had taken their stand. I was also shocked by the squalid conditions in Crossroads and Khayelitsha (two townships outside Cape Town) and the apparent negligence of the authorities which had permitted such a situation to arise.

I returned to the UK to study at the University of Durham, but came back to South Africa in 1992 keen to study the changing situation, and in particular any projects seeking to improve the welfare of the people in the poorest areas of Cape Town. As a Christian I was particularly interested to attend the 'Church and Development Conference' held in Johannesburg in October 1993. It had been organised by the WPCC with the help of various other organisations. I was intrigued by the efforts of an organisation, which I knew had been associated with the political struggle, pursuing with obvious dedication an attempt to harness the strength of the church for 'development' work. It caused me to wonder what kind of work

it was now involved with in Cape Town. I decided to see if I could study its activities, and indeed the staff of the WPCC welcomed my interest.

When I began the study I had in mind certain basic questions concerning the organisation: what was it doing and how was it organised and funded; why had the staff pursued their current policy and how were they responding to the national political changes; how was their history as an organisation effecting their contemporary approach; what plans had they for the future; what philosophy lay behind their activities and what was motivating them. As I experienced their work I came to ask more searching questions concerning the relationship between non-governmental organisations, both locally and internationally; the dynamics of relations between donor agencies and recipient organisations; and the relationship between governments and non-governmental organisations.

Methodology

Since my background is in the discipline of anthropology my approach to the study of the WPCC was that of participant observation. I first visited the WPCC in November 1993, shortly after the 'Church and Development' conference. For seven months, until June 1994, I conducted my fieldwork. Each day I would arrive at the WPCC offices in time for devotions at 8.45am and then go with a member of staff to observe his or her activities. The organisation is sufficiently small to have allowed me to be familiar with all that it was doing, although this was quite demanding at times. The staff allowed me to take notes during meetings, and I tried to remain as inconspicuous as possible. I also made notes following particularly informative conversations. I wrote up my notes after each day in a journal. By the end of my fieldwork this journal provided me with several hundred passages of detailed field notes. I also conducted some interviews with the staff and with two former members of staff in June 1994.

I was very fortunate to have been given access to all WPCC meetings except the few private internal meetings which are held periodically to reduce inter-staff conflict. I was barred from some of the executive meetings of organisations with which I had contact - the National Election Observer Network (NEON), the Network of Independent Monitors (NIM), the Independent Forum for Electoral Education (IFEE) and of the Delta course (Development Education and Leadership Teams in Action). The latter was the only one that really affected my programme of research. Of the others, two were irrelevant since the activities of NEON and NIM both fell beyond the direct scope of my study of the WPCC, and with IFEE I could attend its other committee meetings. These meetings were sufficiently rich in data to give me an overview of what was happening.

In addition to the activities and meetings of the WPCC I attended some conferences, and I read many WPCC related publications. I also referred to the minutes of the WPCC's executive meetings in the 1970s, which have been preserved in the archives at UCT. Mainly, however, it was through moving around on a daily basis with the WPCC's staff that I came to know them very well. They were remarkably open about their work and very helpful, making every effort to include me in their activities and to answer my questions. This gave me a strong sense of being within the organisation. I also participated each day in devotions and occasionally performed voluntary tasks for them, which I felt was appropriate and served to give me a feel for what it is like to work there. Because I was in and around the office on a daily basis the staff came to relax with me, and I with them, and I was accepted by other organisations as being a part of the WPCC.

The staff at the WPCC always refer to one another by their first names. For instance, the Reverend Benjamin Witbooi, the Ecumenical Officer, was always known as 'Bennie'. I knew them in this way, and naturally in my notes used their first names. Subsequently, as I developed this thesis I continued to use their forenames and I have retained this approach since it helps to generate on paper something of the ambience of the organisation, which is characterised by familiarity and camaraderie. I decided, also, not to change the names of the staff, as some writers do to protect their informants. Mainly this is because the WPCC regards itself as a public institution, and attempts to disguise the identity of the staff would not have hindered anyone wishing to establish to whom I have referred. I hope that I have written nothing which is personally pejorative concerning them, and I have respected the few requests I received for confidentiality. I also chose not to write in detail about some of the difficulties which the WPCC experienced with other organisations, since these were not of vital importance to the thesis and could have been injurious to the organisations or individuals involved; also I probably lacked a sufficiently balanced perspective to pass comment. An early draft of this thesis was given to the WPCC in September 1993. This contained all the references to the staff as they stand in this final version, and I was assured that the WPCC's staff were content with what I had said about them as individuals. I am grateful for their openness.

I have drawn from my fieldnotes statements made by the staff and used them as quotations. To the best of my knowledge all of these statements are used in their appropriate context and are accurate. I saw no purpose in noting in the text the date and place the quotations were made, and I felt that to do so would be stylistically ugly. Statements gathered from people subsequent to my period of fieldwork are prefaced with the phrase 'in conversation'. These particularly concern the information gathered from five interviews which I conducted. These interviews were with: Leslie Liddell (UCT, June 1994); Father Desmond Curran (Khayelitsha, June 1994); Lionel Louw (UCT, July 1995); Charles Villa-Vicencio (UCT, July 1995), and

Frank Chikane (UCT, July 1995). Quotations drawn from publications are, of course, referenced in full, and I have chosen to put these in the text rather than in footnotes. Personally I find such referencing more accessible and, in my opinion, it produces a better presentation of the page.

In the text I have on frequent occasions placed the term 'development' in inverted commas. In the fourth chapter I discuss some reservations concerning the terminology of development. I use the term freely to refer to development institutions or the movement for development in Africa, in such cases the term is used in a general sense. However, when the term development is used of particular programmes and projects I wish to make it conditional through the use of inverted commas, to indicate that the notions of 'progress' and 'improvement' attached to such 'development' projects are qualified.

My research of the WPCC focused upon the work of the organisation itself, as I have indicated above. I was, in a sense, very fortunate to witness a period of important changes at the WPCC. These were brought on by the historic political transformation which was occurring in the country at the time; the first fully democratic elections were held in April of 1994. The WPCC not only had to respond to the changing political context, but simultaneously it was faced with a funding crisis and with fundamental questions about the nature and the future of the organisation. It was an exciting time, but also a traumatic one since every member of staff had to make difficult choices concerning their own future, as well as that of the WPCC itself. All of my data, therefore, related to an organisation in a period of change, its own and in its country. The thesis which has emerged from this fieldwork, therefore, inevitably focuses upon change and the dynamics of change at the WPCC; the influence of its political context; the issues surrounding its funding; and the personal issues of the staff which influenced their response to change.

On reflection I regard my use of participant observation as both a strength and a limitation of my research. On the one hand I doubt that any other form of research would have captured the trauma felt by the staff as they faced dilemmas and the irony of their situation. Nor would another form of research have yielded the details of the WPCC's activities which are featured in the third chapter. The inclusion of biographical details in the fourth chapter was also the result of the long relationship I established with the staff, and helps to explain why they responded to change in the way in which they did. On the other hand, the particular focus on the WPCC has meant that while this thesis can argue that the WPCC has undergone change, I lack the data to prove that this has also been the case in other organisations, as subsequent newspaper reports have indicated. A broader approach covering many non-governmental organisations might have yielded comparative data. Another aspect of the in-depth focus upon the WPCC was that its transition brought many issues into question, and it was

impossible to place the transition of the WPCC into any single academic context. While the fieldwork research was anthropological the library research which followed covered many disciplines, including, principally, religious studies, political studies and 'development' studies. This thesis is therefore eclectic and inter-disciplinary in its academic approach.

After I had left the WPCC at the end of June I began to write up my notes. I returned to my native London in September 1994 and spent time in the British Library researching the various issues which had arisen during the research. I then reconsidered my conclusions in the light of this research. I re-wrote this thesis in November and December of 1994 and returned to the University of Cape Town in February 1995 to conduct further interviews and to revise it under supervision prior to its final submission in August 1995.

Thesis Outline

The first chapter sets the WPCC in context. The chapter concerns the ecumenical movement, of which the WPCC is a part, and in particular the influence of liberation/contextual theology upon it, and the effect this had upon the relationship between the ecumenical movement and the South African apartheid government.

The second chapter presents an overview of the work of the WPCC in the 1980s, in which it will be shown to have been characterised by 'protest' activities and organisation. The second half of the chapter, by contrast, argues that international funding is generally focused upon 'development' work, and particularly during the 1980s non-governmental organisations were associated with the promotion and implementation of 'development' projects in Africa. The funding directed at South Africa in the 1980s, which enabled the WPCC's work, will be shown to have been anomalous in the general trend of international aid.

The third chapter is concerned with the activities of the WPCC during the transition period 1990 to 1994. The activities of the organisation, its routine and structure will be considered in detail. The period will be analysed to show how the activities, operation and organisation of the WPCC were changing during this period. The pressures which it was under will be discussed in this context. This chapter is drawn from research by participant observation and provides a detailed account of the activities of the WPCC in preparation for the 1994 elections as well as its other work during that time.

The fourth chapter shows the culmination of the pressures working upon the WPCC, and the dilemmas it faced concerning the future of the organisation following the 1994 election. Its relationship with foreign donors and with the new government will be discussed, in particular the influence of foreign donors and the paragon of the government's reconstruction and

development plan. The emerging character of the WPCC will be presented as a shift to becoming a 'development' organisation.

A final conclusion will briefly summarise the process of change at the WPCC from 'protest' through transition and to 'development'. It will then argue which dynamics were at work in these changes and point out the central role played by the perceptions of donor agencies.

1. The Ecumenical Movement and Apartheid South Africa

Racial division has been a social and political feature of South African society since the first colonists arrived from Europe in the seventeenth century. The history of South Africa is marked by the domination of the black majority by the white minority. The practise of white supremacy was formulated in the mid-1940s into an ideology of racial segregation which inspired the 'apartheid' (separate development) policies of successive National Party governments after their first election victory in 1948. Price notes that in the following years, 'government domestic policy was directed at enforcing racial separation in every sphere: interpersonal relations, social and economic organisation, residential patterns, and political organisation of the state' (1991:13). It was soon apparent that the separation of racial groups substantially favoured the white minority and discriminated against the black majority.

The system of laws which enforced the policy excluded black people from power and the acquisition of significant resources, and all manner of regulations enforced poverty and powerlessness upon the black population. Laws such as the Group Areas Act were introduced to limit the mobility of black people. Employment controls and marked differentials in spending upon education and welfare entrenched the privilege of the white minority and discriminated against the black majority. The majority were denied any effective representation in the government of the country, and in due course popular political movements which opposed apartheid were banned, such as the African National Congress (ANC). Huddleston (1956), amongst many others, has written of the suffering these policies brought upon the black population.

The ecumenical movement has consistently and vehemently opposed the policy of apartheid in statements issued at its world assemblies. Its leading institutional body, the World Council of Churches, has actively campaigned against racial discrimination and in particular the policy of apartheid. In part this stance has been motivated by the many 'third world' churches involved in the movement, but also by liberation theology, in its various forms, which has greatly influenced international ecumenism. Liberation theology emphasises the promotion of social and economic justice in its understanding of the Kingdom of God.

The ecumenical movement within South Africa has been greatly influenced by the international movement. In particular the World Council of Churches (WCC) inspired the work of the Christian Institute, which developed a strong critique of the government's policies and worked effectively to encourage black organisations. This was strengthened and motivated by black theology, which is a form of liberation theology. In 1977 it was banned by the government, but the South African Council of Churches (SACC) had followed its

example and the two organisations had worked together since the early 1960s. The SACC strengthened its own 'protest' work after the banning of the Christian Institute, and it too was influenced by black theology and the broader paradigm of contextual theology.

The Western Province Council of Churches (WPCC) was funded and inspired by the SACC for its work in Cape Town and its activities were also an expression of its commitment to contextual theology. The WPCC increasingly focused upon opposition to apartheid after 1977, following the banning of the Christian Institute. This brief opening chapter serves to introduce the World Council of Churches, the Christian Institute, the SACC and contextual theology. This will provide an essential background to set in context the discussion of the WPCC which follows. The 'protest' work of the WPCC in the 1980s, and the way in which it adapted to political change in the 1990s, were directly influenced by the SACC and by its application of the tenants of contextual theology.

1.1. The World Council of Churches and Apartheid

The origins of the World Council of Churches may be traced back to the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference of 1910 which was held to encourage the co-ordination of mission work. A theological body called 'Faith and Order' and an International Missionary Council developed out of this conference and these international ecumenical bodies co-ordinated their work and ran a small office in Geneva during the Second World War to help Jews to escape persecution. Such work gave the impetus for representatives of one hundred and forty seven church denominations to gather together in Amsterdam in 1948 to constitute The World Council of Churches. Particularly as colonies gained independence in the 1950s churches from these countries joined the Council, and in the 1960s Orthodox churches from the Eastern Block also joined. The Roman Catholic Church has not joined, nor the Southern Baptists of the United States, but the WCC does constitute over three hundred church denominations at the present time.

Van Elderen (1990) has traced the development of the WCC, particularly through the debates which emerged at its World Assemblies. From the early 1950s these concerned, in particular, issues of colonialism and racism, which were emphasised by the churches from the newly independent nations as they joined the Council. At the General Assembly held at Evanston, near Chicago, in 1954, the Assembly declared that segregation based upon race, colour or origin to be, 'contrary to the gospel and incompatible with the Christian doctrine of man and with the nature of the church of Christ' (van Elderen, 1990:25).

This statement was reaffirmed at a WCC consultation held at Cottesloe college in Johannesburg following the Sharpeville massacre in 1960 in which 69 people had been killed

by police. The consultation called for equal rights and opportunities, education and representation in South Africa, and called for international attention to be given to the injustices of apartheid. In response to this the three white Dutch Reformed Churches withdrew their membership of the WCC. It thus became very clear that the position of the ecumenical movement stood in stark contrast to that of the South African government and pro-apartheid churches.

The Programme to Combat Racism

The position of the WCC was further strengthened at the 1968 General Assembly at Uppsala which resolved to establish a WCC 'Programme to Combat Racism' (PCR). In 1969 a consultation in Notting Hill, London, led by the General Secretary W. A. Visser't Hooft, concluded that the programme should be strengthened and 'all else failing, the church and churches support resistance movements, including revolutions, which are aimed at the elimination of political or economic tyranny which makes racism possible' (van der Bent, 1990:10).

That same year the central committee met at Canterbury, England, and made the following statement: 'our struggle is not a struggle against flesh and blood. It is against the principalities, against the powers of evil, against the deeply entrenched demonic forces of racial prejudice and hatred that we must battle. Ours is a task of exorcism. The demons operate through our social, economic, and political structures' (van der Bent, 1990:11). Hence the WCC pushed its rhetoric against structural racial prejudice into the language of a crusade against the demonic.

Their overriding concern was South African apartheid and similar conditions elsewhere in Southern Africa. Not only did the WCC call for sanctions against South Africa, and publicised the names of companies with investments in the country, but in 1970 it established a 'Special Fund' to support the aims of the PCR. Generally considered to be its most controversial policy, the WCC administered money from anonymous donors to support organisations committed to ending racism, including by the use of violence. The fund has reportedly distributed over US\$10 million to one hundred and thirty organisations in thirty countries, half of them in Africa (Harris, 1993:34). In some years as much as 40% of the allocations went to movements fighting in Southern Africa government. SWAPO, which campaigned for the independence of Namibia from South Africa, is reported to have received US\$1,7 million. The Patriotic Front, which fought the white minority regime in Rhodesia, apparently received US\$85,000 (Harris, 1993:34). Other recipients included the Pan Africanist Congress and the African National Congress, for their campaigns against apartheid, Frelimo in Mozambique, and the MPLA in Angola. The fund was managed by the PCR, whose director was Barney Pityana - an Anglican priest and an associate of Steve Biko, a

leader in the South African Black Consciousness Movement. In this way the ecumenical movement was clearly identified with the anti-apartheid struggle, even with those regarded as 'terrorists' by the South African government.

1.2. The Christian Institute

In addition to the lead taken by the WCC to challenge racism in South Africa there were also considerable pressures emerging upon traditional ecumenism from within South Africa in the 1960s. These were felt chiefly through the development of the Christian Institute led by Beyers Naudé. At the time of the Cottesloe conference Beyers Naudé was a prominent member of the Dutch Reformed Church. He was a delegate at Cottesloe and agreed with its findings. While the other delegates backed down from their support of the consultation, under pressure from South African Prime Minister Verwoerd, Naudé did not. He took up a position inspired by Bonhoeffer's Confessing church, which had opposed Hitler in the 1930s and during the Second World War. Naudé called for unity in the church to oppose racial injustice, and for the promotion of a prophetic critique of apartheid. For this purpose Naudé launched an ecumenical journal, 'Pro Veritate', and in 1963 formed the Christian Institute (CI).

John de Gruchy has chronicled a brief introduction of the CI in Resistance and Hope (Villa-Vicencio and de Gruchy, 1985). The CI had a significant influence upon the ecumenical movement in South Africa. Naudé had been inspired by the WCC's Cottesloe Conference and the CI sought to articulate these values within South Africa. It thereby became an institution upon which Christian opposition to apartheid could be focused, as Peter Walshe has written of the CI 'a prophetic Christian voice was heard and simultaneously there emerged the prospect of a prophetic ecumenical movement' (1982:35).

The CI drew subscriptions from individuals rather than churches and concentrated upon providing a forum for discussion, studies, conferences and publications to develop a critique of apartheid society. It was ecumenical and attempted to foster Christian unity. Given Naudé's background it was, initially, aimed principally at the Dutch Reformed Church to encourage a move toward Cottesloe ideals. His outspokenness ultimately cost Naudé his position as a minister in the Dutch Reformed Church (de Gruchy 1985:10), and brought him and the CI sharp criticism from Dutch Reformed Church pulpits and in the Nationalist press (ibid:18).

The CI started with the support of the Christian Council (CCSA) and the two organisations worked together closely. When Bill Burnett, the future Anglican Archbishop, was General Secretary of the CCSA (later the SACC) he and Naudé attended the WCC conference 'Church and Society' in Geneva 1966. The social thinking of the WCC had a profound effect upon them and according to de Gruchy 'markedly shaped the future of both the CI and the

SACC' (ibid:18). The two ecumenical leaders set up conferences around the country to consider how the principles of the WCC could best be implemented in South Africa. They also established a theological commission to consider how the unity of the church could be best expressed in the South African context. The result was a document entitled 'A Message to the People of South Africa' (1968) which declared, for the first time in a progressive way, that 'the apartheid ideology cannot be squared with the gospel of Jesus Christ' (ibid:20). The document called for increased racial integration in the country. This was tame in comparison to later statements, but was an important first milestone in the emerging stand off with the government. It laid the basis for future moves to declare, and oppose, apartheid as a heresy. It was a significant development for the South African ecumenical movement.

Despite general support amongst the English churches (such as the Anglican and Methodist churches) for 'the Message' neither Naudé nor Burnett expected the church to pursue such a declaration further (ibid:21). The churches were divided within their ranks on political issues, and it was a source of contention churches preferred to avoid. Therefore the ecumenical movement took it upon itself to follow up on the Message. They set up 'Obedience to God' groups to consider what the practical implications of the Message would be in South Africa, and commissioned reports to be drawn up of their findings. It was called the 'Spro-cas project' (Study Project on Christianity in Apartheid Society). As de Gruchy states: 'without doubt, its reports were the most comprehensive on the situation in South Africa ever produced by a church-related organisation' (ibid:21).

This was an important intellectual phase giving the ecumenical movement in South Africa a thorough critique of, and concrete alternatives to, the apartheid system. It involved people who in their own right came to be very influential, amongst them Desmond Tutu, a radical church leader; Francis Wilson, an economist; André Brink, a writer; Gatsha Buthelezi, a politician; Frederick van zyl Slabbert, an academic; Donald Woods, an editor and Steve Biko, an activist.

During the 1960s the CI remained rooted in Reformed theology, drawing upon the Confessing Church as a model of resistance. It focused principally upon the white community. By 1970 its black staff, which included the activist Steve Biko, challenged Naudé to reconsider his paradigm. They pointed him to the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) which was promoting black theology. Black theology aims to look from a black perspective, it must be rooted in black experience. It stands in opposition not only to racism, but argues that the roots of black suffering lie also in liberal capitalism and neo-colonialism. It is a theology of struggle against these forces and it always aims to be consciously contextual: as Lebamang Sebidi has stated (de Gruchy, 1985:94), 'racial capitalism is now the name of the game. That is the sin that Black theology wants to uncover and eradicate in God's own name'.

In addition, the WCC's Programme to Combat Racism had set an important precedent in the struggle to end apartheid which had influenced the CI, and liberation theology from South America was also increasingly inspiring its activists (ibid:24).

Naudé increasingly concentrated the CI's work upon the black population and pursued it through relating to BCM groups and black leaders. In 1971, with the SACC, Spro-cas II was launched. This time it was action oriented and aimed for nothing less than 'social justice in South Africa'. It was aimed, in the light of BCM, to encourage a sense of black power and to build organisational and leadership capacity into black communities. Biko was one of its staff members when he was first banned in 1972 (Eloff, 1983:64). De Gruchy claims that the Black Community Programmes of Spro-cas II held great potential to make a considerable impact; that the government curtailed the programme seems evidence enough of this. The CI played an important part in promoting the BCM and black theology. De Gruchy comments that CI, 'was certainly a major source of support for black community leaders within the black consciousness movement' (1985:25).

Particularly through its work in the black community in conjunction with BCM groups, the CI became a significant opponent of the government. A state Commission of Enquiry was established into the activities of the CI in 1972, under Judge Le Grange. In 1975 the Commission declared the CI to be a political organisation (ibid:24). Two years later, in September 1977, the CI was declared illegal and Naudé and a number of other staff were 'banned' (which restricted their freedom). This occurred as political tension increased after the Soweto uprising of 1976, discussed in the following chapter, and the death of Biko in police custody in September 1977.

1.3. The Development of the SACC

The origins of the SACC may be traced back to a conference in 1904 when missionaries from the Dutch Reformed Church and from the English churches (Anglican, Methodist, Presbyterian and so forth) established the General Missionary Conference to co-ordinate Christian mission in South Africa and also, significantly, 'to guard the interests of the native races, and, where necessary to exercise influence on legislation in their interests' (Eloff 1983:56). The Conference became the Christian Council of South Africa (CCSA) in 1936. Division, however, soon followed. In 1940 the Dutch Reformed Church withdrew following a 'political' decision on the education of blacks by the Council and 'the persistent use of English' in its meetings. The Eloff commission (a government commission of enquiry into the financial affairs of the SACC) argued that there was from this time a shift in balance from 'the mission field' towards social and political concerns and 'it took up the cudgels on behalf of the black population' (1983:57).

During the 1940s and 1950s the Council organised conferences and deputations to the government concerning the migratory labour system, influx control and education. It also established schemes to alleviate deprivation caused by state legislation. It never accepted apartheid, and its conference at Rostenville in 1949 concluded that 'the real need for South Africa is not apartheid but unity' (Eloff 1983:57). During the 1960s the Council tried to facilitate doctrinal discussion, but it mainly tried to foster unity amongst its member churches through the promotion of joint social action, building upon the missionary tradition but now pursuing social aims. In 1968 it changed its name to the SACC. According to Eloff the change of name marked the end of an understanding of salvation in personal and spiritual terms to its denoting political liberation. In this change of emphasis Eloff (1983:58) argued that the SACC had been subject to 'much influence by overseas movements and to a considerable degree by the WCC' (World Council of Churches).

The CCSA, however, was already recognised for its political opposition to the apartheid system before 1968. In May 1963 the Dependants Conference (DC) was established by a number of organisations as a channel for aid to the dependants of those who had become political prisoners. It provided financial support for the families of political prisoners and monthly maintenance payments. It also arranged visits to prisoners and the giving of gifts. In Cape Town the DC had a particularly important role to help those visiting the prisoners on Robben Island, which included some of the most important leaders in the liberation movement. Fearing its banning the DC came under the authority of the CCSA in the mid-1960s and derived funds from it. The DC accounted for 24% of the SACC's entire budget between 1975 and 1981 (Eloff, 1983:324), and was an important part of the ecumenical movement's work. In the mid-1980s the DC's funding increased and it helped to support the families of those under police detention, and to cover funeral and other expenses suffered by activists and their families. It assisted those on trial to afford legal defence, campaigned for those in detention and helped pay for protest marches.

The SACC decided, around 1971, to establish a Reconciliation and Justice department headed by Wolfram Kistner. The department tended toward the 'Confessing Church' model and to means of non-violence. The department did, however, actively develop strategies for resistance, and exposed the government's use of violence. It joined the CI in using grants for education, protest and organisation to help counteract black disempowerment.

During the 1970s and '80s the SACC grew considerably in size and financial strength. South Africa had remained high on the world ecumenical agenda since the late 1960s, particular due to the controversy surrounding the PCR. Eloff notes that after 1975, when the government curtailed foreign funding to the CI, Naudé introduced the SACC to various donor agencies in

Europe, which greatly increased the SACC's income (Eloff, 1983:294). When the CI and various black organisations were banned in 1977, the SACC became a focus for resistance and rose to increasing prominence. John de Gruchy, quotes Peter Randall as stating that 'the SACC moved to the fore to fill the vacuum left by the CI' (1985:81).

Desmond Tutu became the first black General Secretary of the SACC in 1978. He was known for his defence of black theology, his calls for disinvestment and his ardent opposition to the government. Tutu was succeeded by Beyers Naudé in 1984, after he had completed seven years of banning, and he by Frank Chikane. These prominent anti-apartheid leaders were supported by a budget which exceeded R20 million per annum in the late 1980s, virtually all which came from donors overseas wishing to support anti-apartheid work (this is discussed in greater detail in the next chapter). The work of the SACC while most visible for its outspoken leaders was perhaps more deeply effective for its work at the 'grassroots'. Around the country ecumenical groups, with various histories, were formulated as regional branches of the SACC and received financial support and leadership from it. They effected the SACC's campaign at the local level. One of these was the WPCC. The development of the WPCC, and the supply of international funding are the concern of the next chapter. In addition to its own work, and that of the regional ecumenical councils, the SACC also distributed funds to support a large number of other opposition organisations.

In print the SACC sought to expose the government's activities and galvanise opposition to it. Its publications, particularly EcuNews (monthly), printed WCC statements and its editorials were highly critical of government policy. The SACC also helped fund the Ravan and the Zenith press. It also worked closely, and helped to fund, other organisations opposed to apartheid, particularly ecumenical organisations such as the Dependants Conference, The Ecumenical Action Movement and later the Theological Exchange Programme and the Ecumenical Foundation of Southern Africa.

The SACC also maintained a close relationship with the Institute for Contextual Theology (ICT). ICT published the Kairos document in 1985, which declared that 'the god of the South African State is not merely an idol or a false god, it is the devil disguised as Almighty God - the antichrist' (P.7) and called for 'direct confrontation with the forces of evil' (P.10) and 'the radical change of structures' (P.11). The ICT organises conferences and studies and publishes Challenge magazine to facilitate the 'doing' of theology and promote the practise of liberation theology. In many respects the ICT resembles the CI and worked hard to promote a theological critique of apartheid society. It was directed by Frank Chikane in the early 1980s, who later became the SACC's General Secretary.

The SACC became a means of support for the broader resistance movement in several practical ways. Through various funds such as the Asingeni fund, the SACHED (South African Committee for Higher Education) trust and the Ecumenical Trust Fund, it channelled funds to bursaries for black students to study in South Africa and abroad. It operated exchange programmes for ministers to come from overseas and brought prominent leaders to South Africa.

In the 1980s it provided facilities and personnel for the United Democratic Front (UDF), discussed in more detail in the next chapter, and other anti-apartheid groupings. The UDF operated from Khotso House, the SACC headquarters in Johannesburg, and Boesak, Naudé and Tutu were amongst its patrons. There was also a close relationship with the trade union and township-based civic movements, the Congress of South African Students and the Black Consciousness oriented Azanian People's Organisation. These opposition groups were vilified by the government but the SACC worked to legitimise and support them.

Through its 'protest' work and its financial and moral support for other opposition groups, the SACC was regarded as a leading organisation in the 'struggle' against apartheid. Particularly in the 1980s relations between the state and the SACC were extremely hostile. It was subject to an official enquiry (the Eloff Commission), and many of its associates were detained without trial. On one such occasion Frank Chikane was poisoned at John Vorster Square police station and nearly died. He later had poison (organophosphate) placed in his clothes. It has recently emerged that this was the work of government security operatives (Mail and Guardian vol.11,no.26). One of these, Paul Erasmus, was also involved in the bombing of Khotso House in 1988 (the SACC headquarters) which was carried out by the Johannesburg security branch and the Vlakplaas command.

SACC consultations and conferences became platforms for increasingly strong criticism of the state and passed resolutions which the ecumenical movement pursued, even if the mainline churches did not. The 1987 national conference concluded that civil disobedience to unjust laws was a legitimate form of protest. During the 'Stand for the Truth' campaign which followed clerics of various faiths were often at the front of marches in acts of civil disobedience (the 1989 march to Strand beach, for instance). Chikane has reported that many of the ministers involved in the campaign became 'victims of state and right-wing propaganda, detentions and sinister and violent attacks' (British Council of Churches, Rule of Fear 1989:2). The co-ordination of church leaders and ministers of other faiths took place through the organs of the SACC and its regional contacts, such as the WPCC. The SACC aimed to unite a broad spectrum of opposition to apartheid and worked closely with many different types of organisations to promote one common front.

1.4. Contextual Theology

It has already been noted that underlying the political stance of the WCC, the CI and the SACC were theological principles. The ideology of the ecumenical movement, including that of the WPCC, cannot be properly understood without reference to contextual and liberation theology. Liberation theology has come to be used as an umbrella term for several 'new' theologies which have emerged from it in various contexts. From the United States, black theology, associated with James Cone, has become particularly significant in South Africa, as noted above with reference to the CI. There are many others - red theology (US Indians), urban theology, people's theology in Korea and also feminist theology. Collectively they are referred to as 'liberation theology'. The term 'contextual theology' has been used to denote those holding to the general principles of liberation theology, but not to any particular form of it. 'Contextual theology' has been the more popular term in South African ecumenism since it emphasises South Africa's unique context, which is different to that of South America. It is also broad enough to include the influence of black theology. Its basic principles, however, are in common with those of liberation theology.

Boff and Boff (1987) trace the roots of liberation theology to evangelists and missionaries in South America who questioned the position which the church had adopted in colonial society and its treatment of indigenous peoples. Out of this tradition, amidst the vast poverty and the great ferment of revolutions of South America in the 1960s, priests and lay people began programmes to improve living conditions and to analyse the dynamics of social change

According to Boff and Boff there was, at this time a reaction against Western theology since, in the South American context, it was found to be merely cognitive and irrelevant to the challenges the people faced. Furthermore, influenced by an emerging critique of 'development' in which the West enjoys overabundance at the expense of the Third world, there was also a critical analysis of social structures and international power relations. There followed a search for means to be free of 'dependence', leading away from the emerging theology of 'development', towards one of liberation from oppression. Catholic theologians, such as Gustavo Gutierrez, encouraged by a new air of freedom following the Second Vatican Council, met with Protestants such as Emilio Castro (who later became a General Secretary of the WCC) to reflect upon poverty and justice.

In 1974 Gutierrez described theology in terms of a critical reflection on praxis - in other words the Christian should be acting in society (praxis) and then reflecting upon his actions using the Bible. Thus, in liberation theology, theology only 'rises at sundown' - the day is for working towards liberation, 'theologising' comes after as a reflection upon praxis (see for instance, Gutierrez 1974;1977;1984 and Castro 1985). The new paradigm, putting all the

emphasis upon action in society, was refined and propagated in meetings and publications and centres across South America in the 1960s. A large number of authors produced books on the method, principally by Gutierrez and Castro.

According to liberation theologians, the theology of the West is built upon the deductive methodological principles of philosophy, particularly metaphysics. Its interlocutors are the philosophers of the West, principally the German philosophers. Western theology was constructed out of apologetics delivered in response to their challenge. Liberation theology reorientates itself to the poor, its interlocutor is the 'non-person' - the nameless child with the begging bowl, and theology must give answers to its questions and problems. This requires action on behalf of the child since the only legitimate reflection is that made upon praxis. Within this paradigm the classroom has little relevance. One's starting point is one's context, the text of study is one's situation. Theology is not then studied it is 'done'. God is seen as a God of action, the Bible an historical record of his tireless efforts to liberate society from all injustice. Hence the Christian must also be active in such a struggle for liberation. As Frank Chikane has put it, 'there is no question of neutrality...this methodology is subversive by nature' (in de Gruchy and Villa-Vicencio, 1985:102).

The approach of liberation theology emphasises poverty, marginalisation, injustice and seeks ways to fight those structures in the world which lead to them (its praxis). It is contextual because its starting point is not in abstract principles but in action designed to empower the poor and liberate them from dependency. It therefore requires a means to analyse the social structure and the injustices operating within it; and for this liberation theologians turned to the social sciences for inspiration. Durkheim and Weber were felt to be too liberal, and liberation theologians preferred the more critical approach of Freud and Marx. Marxist analysis provided the ready tools for the analysis of power relations and 'struggle', and its framework has become fundamental to liberation theology. Hence in liberation theology Christians pursue a discipleship of Marxist social analysis, revolutionary struggle and use the Bible to 'theologise' it. Take, for example, this WPCC devotional reading entitled *Psalms 1*,

Happy are those who reject the evil advice of tyrants
who do not follow the example of sell-outs
and are not resigned to live as slaves.

Instead they find joy to be in God's commission
for the liberation of the oppressed
and they work day and night without rest

They are like trees that grow beside the stream,

that bear fruit at the right time,
and whose leaves do not dry up.
They succeed in everything they do.

But the traitors of the liberation cause are not like this;
they are like straw that the wind blows away.
Puppets in the hands of the oppressors
will be condemned by God.
They will have no share in the blessings of the Lord.

Those in God's service for the liberation of the downtrodden
are guided and protected by him.
But those who are instruments in the hands of the oppressors
are on the way to their doom.

(from the Church and Development Conference 1993, devotions)

The Bible is read as a book of liberation. Biblical verses, stories and images are used to describe and illustrate the struggle. Concepts of evil are applied to 'oppressors', while 'salvation' is liberation from them. Under oppression one is in Egypt or on the Cross - but there is the hope of the Promised Land or the Resurrection for the revolutionary. God is seen as a liberator, who sides with the poor and fights with them. One's discipleship is to work for the Kingdom of God - which is understood to be a humane and just society; the cost of discipleship is the conflict with oppressors which results.

While some of the proponents of liberation theology retain a base of orthodox doctrine (orthopraxis) others argue that there is no 'logos' (the Word of God, truth) beyond the actual historical events in which humans act as agents. In any event liberation theology (although not necessarily black theology) tends to minimise the notion of the supernatural and is critical of the 'conservative' emphasis upon private devotion and personal salvation. The Church's role, rather, is to promote the transformation of society, as Frank Chikane (former General Secretary of the SACC) has written,

the goal or aim of all the church's activities is the reign or Kingdom of God, the righteousness of God which means justice for all... the role of the churches will be to speak out loudly, clearly and ceaselessly for the people, the suffering people, the poorest of the poor and for those who are oppressed and marginalised (*Challenge* May 1993 p. 13ff).

Liberation theology has been highly influential upon the WCC and the ecumenical movement in general. It must be understood as the backdrop to the formation of the Programme to Combat Racism, and in particular the Special Fund to support revolutionary movements. Likewise, it has also been very influential upon the political stance taken by the CI, the SACC and also the WPCC, as will be apparent in the rest of this thesis.

1.5. Conclusion

The apartheid policies of the South African government were opposed by the national and international ecumenical movements because they were in conflict with their adherence to the values of contextual theology, which focus upon the promotion of a just and non-oppressive society. The World Council of Churches published statements concerning racism which in the early 1960s helped to stimulate the creation of the Christian Institute, an ecumenical organisation opposed to apartheid. The influence of the WCC and the CI also encouraged the stance of the South African Council of Churches, which after the banning of the CI became an important source of funds and leadership for the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa. One of the organisations which benefited from this was the Western Province Council of Churches.

2. International Funding, Apartheid and the WPCC

2.1. Introduction

The political situation in South Africa between 1976, the year of the 'Soweto uprising', and 1990, when substantial political change began to take place, was characterised by extreme tension and hostility between the government and the anti-apartheid forces which opposed it. The WPCC was transformed as an organisation during this period. During the early 1970s its concerns were limited to a focus upon the local churches, but after 1976 it became far more politically active, and it established a high profile as a leading 'protest' organisation during the 1980s. It grew from being a council which met periodically in the 1970s, to an organisation with its own office building and a staff in excess of twenty-five by the late 1980s.

The growth in size and profile of the WPCC were the direct result of its response to the political situation. In particular it became a vehicle for the churches' opposition to the state, which in turn it helped to stimulate, and also a channel for finances sent from abroad to relieve the suffering caused by oppression. Its work was strengthened by its close relationship with other organisations committed to the 'struggle' for a democratic government. In the absence of the liberation movements, which were banned, these organisations were crucial for the co-ordination of activism and popular protest against the apartheid regime.

The character of the WPCC cannot therefore be separated from the political situation in which it arose as an active organisation. Its identity was rooted in 'protest', and although it worked in various ways between 1976 and 1990, all of them were motivated in response to the impact of political events, and were designed to strengthen opposition to apartheid. The WPCC was involved with a variety of such activities: it aided squatters threatened with eviction; it produced statements and publications condemning oppression; it supported political strikes and boycotts; it helped to organise demonstrations; it also supported activists and their families and in particular those in police custody. The mode of operation practised at the WPCC flowed out of this work; it mainly reacted to crises rather than launch proactive programmes. It also worked closely with a variety of like minded organisations and enjoyed a high degree of commitment from its staff and allies.

Underlying the WPCC's work were two important factors. Firstly, it had a strong intellectual and organisational basis for its work as a part of the ecumenical movement. In particular black and contextual theology provided it with the basic principles and framework to analyse the political situation and motivate its response. All of its work during the 1980s may be seen

as an application of its theological position in the prevailing political context. In this regard the WPCC was inspired by the influence of the Christian Institute (CI) and the South African Council of Churches (SACC), both referred to in the opening chapter.

The second factor underlying the WPCC's work in the 1980s was the availability of funds to finance its operations. This came from international donors, via the SACC. In response to the political situation donors sent large amounts of funds in support of the anti-apartheid movement. The SACC was one of the largest 'clearing houses' for such funds, and the WPCC one its major benefactors. Funding increased as the political situation grew worse, and with it the WPCC was able to further expand. Furthermore, the generous funding situation in the 1980s gave rise to large numbers of NGOs, and these formed a sector of organisations committed to working towards democracy and financed to operate at their own discretion in response to political events. This permitted a network of organisations to grow in the 1980s which could co-operate in protest activities. The WPCC was at the forefront of such work in the 1980s in Cape Town.

This chapter will emphasise that the funding which the WPCC received was given in response to the political situation, because of which South Africa in the 1980s was regarded as a 'special case' by donors. In general donors support development projects in Africa. This includes northern non-governmental donors, which have grown in financial strength and profile because of their involvement in development work in the 'third world'. The support of political work was an anomaly in the general pattern of international funding. In addition, the scale of the funds involved, which for 1991 was calculated to be R1.2 billion (Bonbright, 1992), and their application exclusively to non-governmental organisations (NGOs) was also very unusual. In effect the SACC and the WPCC, and the NGO sector in general, were operating in a funding 'bubble' which protected them from the demands of developmental funding found elsewhere in Africa.

The support of non-governmental organisations was not anomalous in itself. NGOs have been promoted by academics and international agencies and in fact NGOs were increasingly the recipients of aid in Africa during the 1980s. This occurred as faith in traditional inter-governmental aid declined and belief in NGOs increased. However, the exclusive emphasis upon NGOs in South Africa, without any significant giving to the state, was unique. Furthermore, NGOs elsewhere in Africa were funded as vehicles of development work, whereas in South Africa in the 1980s they were supported as vehicles of political work. In addition, the demands made upon NGOs in Africa usually include carefully considered criteria and audited accounts. In South Africa, however, money was often given in block grants to be used at the discretion of the recipients and distributed covertly if necessary. The lack of

criteria, and the generous funding of the South African NGO sector, was the result of international emphasis upon South Africa and the pariah status of its government.

The funding of the South African NGO sector is not only relevant with regards to the work of the WPCC in the 1980s, but the discussion concerning it will provide vital context and background to the events following 1990 when the political situation began to change and with it the attitudes of the donor agencies. The funding 'bubble' came under pressure after 1990 as the donors began to treat South Africa as a 'normal case' and apply developmental criteria to their recipients. These issues will be particularly relevant to the discussion in chapters three and four.

2.2. The Political Situation 1976-1990

2.2.1. Soweto

The period between 1976 and 1990 were a unique period in South African history. Although there had been opposition to the policy of apartheid since its inception in 1948, opposition between 1976 and 1990 was far more intense and enduring than at any previous time.

The Soweto uprising of 1976 gave the first indication of what was to become even more widespread in the 1980s. On June 16th 1976 15,000 school children demonstrated against the imposition of Afrikaans as the medium of education at a school in Soweto. The police dispersed the protest forcefully, killing two children. Widespread rebellion followed, marked by attacks on government offices in the townships and upon the police. The police responded vigorously and in the ensuing six months of violence one thousand people were killed and twenty-one thousand arrested (Price, 1991:48).

Soweto was not only an important sign of tension within South Africa, but internationally the events precipitated a strengthening of opposition to the South African government. Only three days after the uprising began the United Nations Security Council passed a resolution 'strongly condemning the South African government' and called upon it to 'eliminate apartheid' (Price, 1991:63). Sanctions were subsequently imposed upon South Africa, in particular a military embargo. Perceptions of South African instability, coupled with the unsavoury image of its government, also reduced investment and the government's ability to raise loans. Major corporations and banks, such as Barclays, disinvested from South Africa following 1976, under pressure from anti-apartheid groups within their home countries. As Price has noted, 'the Soweto uprising, and its brutal suppression, galvanised the attention of the international public, and emphasised the pariah status that South Africa's domestic arrangements conferred upon it' (ibid:62).

Price notes that the Soweto rebellion had not been planned or co-ordinated. Its scale and ferocity were a telling sign of black frustration, particularly amongst the youth. The underlying tension in South African society concerning apartheid, which had found spontaneous and violent expression in 1976, was in the following years translated into the formation of various organisations which expressed grievances and found means to protest against the system. They formed a broad variety of organisations, spread throughout the country, but they had in common an antipathy towards the apartheid state. Walters has noted that

since the mid-1970s community organisations have proliferated in South Africa... they have a common purpose in that they are anti-apartheid and they see their work contributing directly or indirectly to the transfer of state power from the white minority government to a popular, democratic government (1993:5).

Trade unions increased in number dramatically, and Price notes that the number of strikes increased eight times between 1979 and 1986, and the number of workers involved by eighteen times (ibid:163). Many of these strikes had motivations greater than industrial disputes alone: when the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) was formed in 1985 it declared its commitment to the pursuit of the national struggle for political rights, and this was an underlying aspect of many strikes. Similarly, civic organisations also mushroomed in number during the early 1980s, and they operated in the townships to express local grievances; but they too had a political motivation behind the rent boycotts and demonstrations which they organised. Furthermore, as was noted in the previous chapter, there were an increasing number of people criticising the state from the church and participating in protest work. The effectiveness of their participation in the 'struggle' was greatly increased as these various groups began to co-ordinate their activities.

2.2.2. The United Democratic Front

In 1983 Allan Boesak, the President of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and a member of the WPCC's council, called upon all such organisations to co-ordinate opposition to the tricameral parliament (see below). He said that he could find

no reason... why the churches, civic associations, trade unions, student organisations and sports bodies should not unite on this issue, pool our resources, inform people of the fraud that is about to be precipitated in their name and, on the day of the election, expose their plans for what they are (Price 1991:177).

In response to this call various regional fronts were established, and they came together to form the United Democratic Front (UDF). The UDF was committed to the 'creation of a non-racial, unitary state' (ibid:177).

The government could not simply stop this process of co-ordination fostered by the UDF since the UDF's strength lay not with its national leadership primarily (who could be arrested), but with the networks created amongst hundreds of locally based organisations. The UDF, although it was a loose and heterogeneous body nevertheless provided a symbol and an impetus for effective action against apartheid. As Price has noted, the UDF was 'the first nationally organised movement of black opposition since the banning of the ANC and the PAC in 1960'. The UDF helped to foster a 'culture of liberation' (ibid:186) in which all grievances, such as industrial disputes, township levies and rents were linked to the prevailing political climate and provided an opportunity for co-ordinated mass action.

There followed, between 1984 to 1986 a period of turmoil described by Price as an 'insurrection' (ibid:192). The aim of militant youths ('comrades') and many UDF organisations was to heed the call made by the ANC in Lusaka early in 1985 to 'make the townships ungovernable' (ibid:192). Students boycotted schools and manned barricades to resist the power of the state. By 1986 700,000 students were boycotting school. Business was also identified with the ruling structures and mass 'stayaways' were highly effective. Between August 1984 and the end of 1986 there were four times more work 'stayaways' than in the previous thirty-five years put together (ibid:193). The UDF, in particular, helped to galvanise these strikes. During this period, as Price has noted, uprisings were 'more radical, more violent, more widespread and more sustained than anything witnessed in modern South African history' (ibid:152).

Not only was the scale of opposition unique, but so was the vehemence of the governments' response to these protests, which it characterised as a 'total onslaught' by forces of a communist inspired revolution. On the political level it pursued a strategy of 'reforms' which in fact did nothing to alter the balance of power, but did seek to divide opposition. Since 1979 the government of P.W. Botha had promised a process of reform. He began to distance his government from the policies of apartheid, describing them as 'a recipe for permanent conflict' and declaring the need to 'adapt or die' (ibid:28). This rhetoric of reform aimed to deflect international criticism and subdue internal opposition. During the 1980s some aspects of apartheid were abolished, such as the pass laws and influx controls (in 1986), but such reforms did not in fact alter the fundamental balance of power. The most elaborate measure of 'reform' was the promulgation of a new constitution which included the establishment of 'coloured' and 'Indian' houses of parliament. It was an inept attempt to create an image of shared power: but the supremacy of the white chamber, and most importantly the exclusion of

the black majority, merely emphasised white political domination. The new constitution was seen by the emerging leadership of the UDF as an attempt to 'divide and rule', and in fact provided them with a focus for resentment (ibid:176).

More malicious than the policy of 'reform', however, was the second bow of Pretoria's policy, that of 'repression', which aimed to eliminate apartheid's enemies by force. P.W. Botha established an all-pervasive State Security Council to direct his 'total strategy'. Walters describes the purpose of this strategy as follows: 'during the 1980s the state developed a 'total strategy' to reorganise the state, to co-opt sections of the black population and bring mass mobilisation and 'unrest' under control' (1993:14). Against the intensity of political opposition in the 1980s the strategy increasingly involved the use of severe forms of repression.

During the 1984-1986 insurrection, troops were deployed in the townships and large numbers of people were detained by police. These measures were taken under emergency regulations imposed between July 1985 and March 1986. A second state of emergency began in June 1986, and there followed the 'detentions of tens of thousands and their torture and oftentimes death, death squads and assassinations, vigilantism, and the imposition of increasingly draconian laws' (Borer:21). Opposition political activity was criminalised, including the encouragement of strikes and other measures were introduced which were designed to curtail the insurrection, such the restriction of the media. The size of the police force was greatly increased and so too were their powers, which were barely regulated. The army also supported the police during the 1980s, and militant townships came under permanent military occupation. The situation became one of intense hostility between the state and much of its people, as Seekings et al have stated, 'the 1980s was a period of intense political polarisation' (1993:101).

The intense hostility continued until the end of the 1980s. The government introduced legal measures to curb insurrection in a broad policy of 'counter revolution'. UDF activists, in particular, were the focus of police action and constituted 75% of those detained in 1986 and 1987 (Price, 1991:258). Numerous UDF affiliated organisations were banned, and the UDF itself was completely restricted in its operations in early 1988 by order of the government. The government also tried to buy support through upgrading schemes in the townships, and through the covert support of certain black political figures. These policies were orchestrated by the State Security Council, which now dominated the government, and they had some success in containing the progress of the anti-apartheid forces, but they could not dispel the fundamental hostility to the regime expressed throughout the decade.

2.2.3. Crossroads

One of the primary sights of confrontation between the government and the population in the Western Cape was at the Crossroads squatter settlement. A community of black people began to settle on rough ground near Guguletu in the late 1970s. The government maintained that they were squatting illegally, in contravention of the pass laws and the migration laws. It was a scene of direct confrontation between the will of a community to stay where they had chosen to live, and the enforcement of apartheid laws by the government. In her book Crossroads, the politics of reform and repression (1987) Josette Cole has documented the various strategies which the government employed to try to move the tenacious squatters from Crossroads, initially to the homelands and later to an area further from the city called Khayelitsha.

The decade long struggle between the authorities and the people took on many forms. Initially the state attempted to forcibly remove the people, but they came back. Later attempts were made to split their unity and resolve through offering small numbers of residence permits or houses to certain sections of the community, or by the use of other incentives. Furthermore, squatter leaders were victimised by the police and some were successfully seconded by the security forces to work for them. These 'turncoats' established vigilante groups (the 'Witdoeke') who, in collusion with the police, were finally responsible for the massive violence and destruction of May 17-June 12 1986 which left 70,000 homeless and many dead.

Through policies of reform and of repression every effort was made by the government to split the community, to weaken it and so aim to dislodge it; sometimes the approach was subtle, sometimes brutal. Against the power of the state several groups, principally women's groups within Crossroads, and NGOs and opposition parliamentarians outside, sought to fight these measures and strengthen the squatters unity and resolve. The battle for the survival of Crossroads was fought in many forums and it was a long, complex, diverse and bitter struggle. Crossroads became an international symbol of resistance, a site of 'struggle' *par excellence*. I remember well the pictures of Crossroads burning night after night on the screens of British television news in 1986. Crossroads appeared to represent a picture of the entire South African struggle.

2.2.4. International donors and South Africa in the 1980s

The violent course of events during the 1980s, and the failure of the rhetoric of 'reform' to in fact produce substantial change further alienated the international community from the Pretoria regime. International sanctions imposed in 1985 were further strengthened in 1986 and countries of the Commonwealth, the United States, Japan and the European Community

introduced measures to ban loans and investment in South Africa, and imposed of embargoes upon certain imports and exports. In addition, Price notes that from the mid-1980s 'governments, business corporations, and private philanthropic foundations began to provide assistance to South African blacks' (ibid:233). These were regarded as positive measures to compliment the policy of sanctions.

The provision of international funds is almost universally made in the name of 'development'. The situation in South Africa in the 1980s, however, was so extreme, and the apartheid system perceived to be such an important aspect of the condition of the poor in the country, that aid from international donors was directed towards the support of the 'victims of apartheid'. Since the Pretoria regime was held responsible for their suffering these funds were not sent through government channels, as aid usually is, but through non-governmental channels. Funds thereby came to the organisations working in support of the black population and, given the politicisation of such organisations during the 1980s, was used in many cases for political purposes. By increasing the resources available to such organisations, Price observed that 'the net effect of foreign funding has been to strengthen black opposition' (ibid:234).

Foreign funding was an important support for the organisations in the UDF. Reflecting upon the 1980s Michael Fyfe (1990:2) at the 1990 Edinburgh conference on NGOs stated that 'in South Africa it is local groups -NGOs- (even if not registered as such) that have kept the struggle going'. At the same conference, Achmat Dangor (1990:160) of the Kagiso Trust (a large South African NGO), affirmed this view:

In South Africa most NGOs have been an integral part of the opposition to the present government, providing alternative resources to the victims of the apartheid system. Indeed, some NGOs have been closely allied to the liberation movements.

The WPCC was one such beneficiary of the funding directed in support of South African NGOs, and it thereby gained an unusual freedom to act out its protest agenda. Its work would not have been possible had it not received large amounts of funding to use at its discretion. This money came, mostly, through the SACC from overseas donor agencies.

The concern of this chapter is not only to illustrate the 'protest' work of the WPCC in the context of the 1980s, but also to discuss the large volumes of international funding which made this work possible. The second half of the chapter will discuss the sources of funding for anti-apartheid organisations in South Africa in the 1980s. It will particularly refer to non-governmental donor agencies, since the SACC derived its funds from such organisations. The

financial strength of northern non-governmental donor agencies will be shown to have been the result of their involvement with development work in the 'third world'. The funding which the SACC and other organisations received was anomalous, since it was linked directly to the apartheid situation and was not part of the general flow of international aid directed towards Africa, which is normally focused upon 'development' work. The significance of this will become particularly clear in later chapters, which consider the attitude of donors and the funding of the WPCC as the apartheid regime was dismantled after 1990.

2.3. The WPCC, 1976-1990

A history of the WPCC has not been documented. I gathered the following record from various WPCC publications and reports, and from four interviews: one with Leslie Liddell (former ecumenical officer of the WPCC); and the rest with former executive members, Father Desmond Curran, a Catholic priest working in Khayelitsha; and with Charles Villa-Vicencio and Lionel Louw, both of whom are academics at UCT.

Despite twenty five years involvement in the Cape Town ecumenical movement, Father Curran was unable to recall any major events in the 1960s and 1970s excepting a vague recollection of some occasional meetings addressed by speakers on various heavy theological topics. As he recalled, the council was basically a minister's fraternal up until around 1970, when a national conference of the SACC successfully encouraged the existing ecumenical fraternal, which probably dates back as far as the 1930s, to form a council affiliated to the SACC; hence the regional name 'Western Province Council of Churches'. The council met quarterly and was made up of delegates from the churches.

The WPCC's minute books show that it did engage in some SACC activities in the 1970s. It had a Justice and Reconciliation committee, although it does not appear to have been very active, and also an Inter-Church Aid (ICA) committee which gave recommendations to the SACC in Johannesburg concerning projects applying for funding from the Western Cape. In addition the Dependants Conference (DC), which was funded by the SACC (see previous chapter), reported upon its activities to the WPCC as the local representative body of the SACC. The WPCC helped to keep the church leaders informed of the DC's work and to raise money for its work from the church. The relationship, however, was never properly formalised and Liddell and Louw described it as a difficult and an 'awkward' relationship. Certainly the DC had a separate identity from that of the WPCC.

According to Charles Villa-Vicencio, the WPCC in the 1970s 'was not as overtly engaged in political struggle as it would become in the 1980s'. He explained that the Christian Institute provided a focus for political activity amongst Christians in the Western Cape, and that the

WPCC tended to concentrate upon reflective work specifically concerning the local churches. The Soweto uprising of 1976, however, was followed in 1977 by the banning of the CI. Villa-Vicencio perceives that these disturbing events 'created momentum, and a more directly politically engaged council of churches began to emerge'. From 1977 the WPCC began to fill the vacuum left by the CI in Cape Town, just as the SACC did on a national level.

Within the WPCC contextual theology was the predominant theological position, Louw said that 'it was the theological underpinning of what we were doing' and Villa-Vicencio described it as 'the driving hermeneutical force in the theology and praxis of the council'. In keeping with this the emphasis was upon social analysis, identification with the poor and practical action. Villa-Vicencio emphasised that in the post-1976 context the members of the executive saw no choice but to increasingly apply themselves to the political situation. Thus the WPCC rejected what de Gruchy has called 'ghetto religion' and 'pseudo-piety' (chapter 5:1979) and it challenged priests, theologians and church members to respond to their context. It preferred, as Father Curran put it, 'to emphasise the social aspects of the gospel'.

After 1976 the minute books indicate an increasing focus by the executive upon the political situation, as Villa-Vicencio suggests. This was not so much a change of perspective as an unavoidable consequence of some forms of welfare work at the time. In particular the WPCC had become involved in assisting squatters living in the Crossroads settlement which was near Curran's church in Guguletu. This welfare work clashed with the policy of the state, which had deemed the settlement illegal. The conditions were very poor, and the problems the people faced were exacerbated by harassment which the squatters received from state officials. In the minutes of August 3rd 1976 the executive pledged that the WPCC would keep church leaders informed of the 'rapidly deteriorating situation at Crossroads' and of the 'insecurity and anger' the people were feeling because of the way they were being treated by the state. Crossroads was subsequently discussed every month at the executive meetings. Periodically the WPCC sent statements to the press and to the government criticising the policy of demolition and removals in Crossroads. The WPCC also arranged for church members to accommodate those made homeless by state action. In 1978 the WPCC gained a grant from the SACC to establish a R20,000 emergency fund for Crossroads to help families in rent arrears, and to help pay for the legal fees of those wishing to claim against eviction. On these and other issues the WPCC worked in close consultation with Veritas, another ecumenical organisation, which specialised in issues of housing, unemployment and the migratory labour system.

In the aftermath of the 1976 uprising the WPCC also informed the church leaders about the large numbers of people in detention and of their brutal treatment, which included incidence of torture and death. Much of this information came from the reports made to the WPCC by

the DC. In September 1977 the executive resolved that 'the WPCC through its member churches should make known to the Authorities their utter dissatisfaction and demand an end to this evil'. The WPCC was also disgusted by the banning of the CI in 1977 and resolved to send a letter of support and sympathy 'to our brothers in Christ' who had been banned, including Beyers Naudé.

In 1979 the WPCC became involved in the strike at Fatti's and Moni's, a Cape Town food company. The WPCC, encouraged by Bishop Tutu at the SACC, made grants to the striking workers and published fact sheets concerning the reasons for the strike. Price notes that this strike was eventually won after seven months 'with the support of a product boycott by black consumers' (1991:165). This was an early example of an emerging trend towards the support of strikes through mass action by the black community. During the 1980s these became politically significant, as discussed above, and this strike was a milestone in the WPCC's potential for involvement in legitimating and supporting such activities.

2.3.1. The WPCC and Crossroads

Father Desmond Curran, urged the council at the beginning of the 1980s to take more direct action to relieve the plight of those living in Crossroads, where living conditions remained extremely deprived. Unable to respond adequately, the Council sought money from the SACC to employ a full time member of staff. In 1981 Leslie Liddell was appointed under the title of 'Ecumenical Officer'. The executive's intention was that she should take a pastoral interest in the needs of the people in Crossroads. It appears, however, that they got more than they bargained for. Curran described her to me, whimsically, as 'not a yes woman'. She had been working for the SACC in Johannesburg at the Domestic Workers Project established by Leah Tutu when Desmond Tutu was General Secretary. Leslie emerged from the political opposition work of the SACC and into the highly intense stand off between the government and the people at Crossroads. Liddell emphasised to the council that the plight of the people was primarily a political issue, and she worked in the settlement to strengthen local resolve against the government's efforts to remove them.

Liddell recalls that Crossroads 'dominated my life...you didn't sleep sometimes in those days'. With so many other organisations banned, a heavy load fell upon the churches and the ecumenical organisations such as Veritas and The Ecumenical Action Movement. Louw comments that Liddell 'was very good at networking' and she not only liased with these NGOs but she became involved in committees and groups within Crossroads. Liddell played a co-ordinating role and helped to strengthen the networks amongst such organisations. She also helped them to formulate their demands for improved conditions and respond to the various pressure they were under. When the authorities destroyed shacks to try to forcibly

remove the people Liddell made available plastic sheeting and other materials to help erect new shelters. Liddell claims that 'Crossroads would not have survived without us'.

In these activities Liddell was supported by the executive, which did not shy away from the political implications of its work. The WPCC's worked vigorously to defend Crossroads, in direct confrontation to the will of the state. Some highly effective committees were established to support the WPCC's work in Crossroads; and during times of particular tension the executive met sometimes daily to formulate a response to crises.

2.3.2. The WPCC and the UDF

The work of the WPCC was greatly strengthened by the formation of the UDF in 1983. The WPCC shared the UDF's aims, and the two organisations worked together a great deal during the 1980s. Some of their personnel were members of both organisations. Allan Boesak, who played a central role in the formation of the UDF, was a member of the WPCC's council, and had been involved in WPCC committees in the late 1970s. The UDF linked the WPCC to a broad range of organisations which had similar ideals; and the work of the UDF was often conducted through religious services, and the WPCC played a crucial role in co-ordinating these events. The high profile of the WPCC in the 1980s was partly due to its prominence in the UDF in Cape Town, and the campaigns in which the WPCC became involved were usually co-ordinated amongst UDF members.

In 1983 the UDF was launched by Allan Boesak, who was a member of the WPCC's council and had been involved in WPCC committees since the late 1970s. As part of the UDF led opposition to the Tricameral Parliament, the WPCC's Justice and Reconciliation committee launched a campaign in the churches to discredit the new constitution. They produced literature and made presentations in the churches to publicise their opposition to the constitution and point out its injustices. In the following years the WPCC continued to work with the UDF and to co-ordinate the promotion of its campaigns within the church.

The relationship between the WPCC and the UDF was very close throughout the 1980s. Louw emphasised that during the 1980s there was a camaraderie amongst activists and he mentioned the close working which the WPCC had with Trevor Manuel, Cheryl Carolus, Dullah Omar (all of whom are now prominent members of the ANC) and with Allan Boesak and later Desmond Tutu when he arrived in Cape Town as Archbishop. Louw said that sometimes people regarded the WPCC as part of the UDF, or as 'the ANC at prayer', but he said that this was a false analysis and that the WPCC had always maintained its independence. Yet it shared common political values and aspirations with the UDF and he said, 'we were all caught up in the crisis of the 1980s'.

The large number of churches and organisations in the 1980s sharing a high level of commitment to the struggle put the WPCC in a powerful position, since it had a primary role in co-ordinating the network of contacts amongst them. The WPCC benefited from its contacts in the UDF and Dependants Conference; the radical sections of the church; the universities around Cape Town; the trade union movement and with NGOs such as the Black Sash. The common commitment to the 'struggle' shared by all these organisations created a working environment which was characterised by rapid 'networking' in response to events. This involved emergency meetings, the formulation of joint campaigns, and in general high levels of flexibility, co-operation and initiative. This mode of operation was described to me by several people as a 'crisis modus operandi'. Louw said that during the 1980s, 'events were happening so fast, and the needs were so acute that you had to [simply] respond to crises because the community was in a perpetual state of crisis in those times'. The WPCC was not so much planning and executing programmes as being in a state of on-going activism with other organisations in response to the unfolding events.

The WPCC was a particularly important part of the UDF movement. The UDF, especially in the Western Cape, was associated with religious leaders, Muslim and Christian, including Boesak and Tutu. Louw comments that 'the community is largely a religious community' and increasingly during the 1980s opposition to oppression was expressed in the churches. The WPCC worked with the denominations, and also with the Muslim Judicial Council, to co-ordinate and facilitate this expression of protest. This work became increasingly important as other platforms of protest were removed and their leaders stifled. As the 'insurrection' spread between 1984 and 1986, many organisations were restricted and banned under the states of emergency. Protest was thus stifled by the state and increasingly the church 'became the vehicle for the people to express themselves', and as Louw continues 'a premier vehicle (of protest) of that time'. The WPCC was harassed and sometimes those associated with it were detained, but it enjoyed protection as the representative organ of the church which kept it from being banned. Likewise the churches were able to organise 'services' which gave 'space', as Villa-Vicencio put it, for the UDF to operate. The WPCC therefore had a critical role to play to motivate and co-ordinate the churches for the 'struggle'.

Under some emergency regulations detainees could not be spoken of publicly. The WPCC organised services to name these people in prayer. Villa-Vicencio recalls that during 1985 and 1986 services were held every Wednesday night at the Methodist Church in Cape Town to 'pray' for detainees. These services, he says, were 'major events' attended by hundreds of people and lasting for two and a half hours. They expressed solidarity with those in prison and defiance of the state. They combined religious and political language. Funerals were another opportunity to express political sentiments. Louw recalls that the WPCC helped to organise

the funerals of those killed in the uprisings. Large numbers of people gathered at these events and UDF speakers addressed the crowds. Another opportunity for protest organised by the WPCC were services organised each year on June 16th, the anniversary of the Soweto uprising of 1976, and December 16th, Hero's or 'MK' (the ANC's military wing) day. Particularly large ecumenical services were held at St. George's cathedral in Cape Town and at the African Methodist Episcopal Church in Hazendal. The sermons, liturgies and prayers were designed by the WPCC to encourage the liberation struggle.

2.3.3. Publications

The WPCC also supported the 'struggle' through various publications. On 2 November 1985, the government issued regulations which restricted the media from covering incidents of unrest. The church leaders decided to issue a church newspaper through the WPCC to provide some coverage of the real situation. The WPCC appointed an editor and throughout the years of emergency, except on the several occasions it was banned, Crisis News was published monthly or bi-monthly and distributed to churches and other organisations under the subtitle '*a bulletin of news and theological reflection on the South African emergency*'. Crisis News, became increasingly important as further restrictions in 1986 'increased the control over the media by the government' (SAIRR, 1988:838) through the regulation of the gathering and dissemination of information. This effectively muzzled even the independent media (the government controlled large sections of the media, including the electronic media, which were largely propagandistic).

Crisis News was not emotive or dramatic, but nor did it need to be. Its articles simply published the accounts of torture that it received, the stories of detention, and incisive articles which aimed to expose the falsity of government propaganda (particularly against Tutu and other church leaders) and the human suffering caused by its policies. It published details of police raids and harassment. Crisis News was an outlet for SACC, WPCC, Interfaith and WCC statements and gave coverage to the progress of strikes and the Crossroads confrontation. It discussed issues of non-violence and resistance and the meaning of Christian commitment under an 'illegitimate' regime.

Crisis News also published statistics and sometimes the names of those in detention, which at times included those associated with the WPCC. It quoted opposition leaders and published biographical reviews of them, and it particularly drew attention to the large number of priests in detention. One poignant edition called for services to name in prayer the names given, after which followed several pages of names, but almost every one censored out under last minute government restrictions. The WPCC also publicised a campaign to place candles in windows for 'missing persons', but even this campaign was banned by the government.

'The End to Unjust Rule'

Perhaps, however, the single most controversial action of the WPCC was its call in 1985 for the churches to pray for 'the end to unjust rule'. The call aroused great consternation in sections of the media and no less in the churches. At the 1984 SACC national conference Allan Boesak had spoken of the 'oppressive, brutal' and 'evil' government and called for prayers for its downfall. Lionel Louw, the WPCC chairman, in consultation with the SACC and Beyers Naudé, appointed a committee which included himself, Boesak and Villa-Vicencio to develop this appeal. The resulting document, which was approved by the SACC, was entitled '*A Theological Rationale and a Call to Prayer for the End to Unjust Rule*'. In several respects it was a forerunner to the Kairos document (1985), referred to in the last chapter.

The document tried to provide theological justification for an end to prayer 'for' the government, but rather prayer for its removal. The Church leaders saw the implications of this, that for which one prays for one must also strive; to heed the call would firmly set their churches in opposition to the state. The media rapidly blew the document into a major story and regarded it as a call for the downfall of the state, and hence for its overthrow. Church leaders chose to distance themselves from the document, but this in itself was important because they were forced to expose their true position, and so it paved the way for the formal challenge to the Church by the Kairos document. Amidst all the controversy thousands gathered at the June 16th services that year as the ecumenical leaders prayed 'for an end to unjust rule'. A year later Boesak and Villa-Vicencio published a book on the affair, 'A Call for the End to Unjust Rule' (1986).

2.3.4. Crossroads 1986, and Beyond

In May/June 1986 the situation in Crossroads deteriorated into unprecedented violence, as discussed above. Curran recalls being called out to try to talk to the Witdoeke as they prepared to launch their first attack. But he was told to go, and he could only watch as the Witdoeke burnt down the Zolani community centre and launched attacks on people in the surrounding areas, supported by security forces in a Caspir firing automatic gunfire just over his head. The WPCC helped to launch court action to establish the squatter's rights, and used its contacts to set up cases and pay for lawyers. They also attended subsequent negotiations with the authorities; Father Curran recalled meetings with both Minister Koornhoff and Minister Chris Heunis. The course of developments were published in Crisis News and the WPCC helped to lead the protests against the establishment of Khayelitsha (to which the government intended the people of Crossroads to go). Within the community the WPCC continued to support development projects which helped to establish an infrastructure in the settlement. The WPCC's Inter Church Aid committee screened and assisted projects using

financial aid from the SACC. For a time the WPCC paid the wages of the teachers of the Noxolo community school.

In addition to its continued support for the people of Crossroads the WPCC was also involved with the support of strikes, including a long strike at the Grand Bazaars supermarket, and of protests, boycotts and demonstrations. The second state of emergency which began in 1986 subdued the 'insurrection', and organisations, including the UDF were suppressed and restricted. This made the church even more important (Walters, 1993:15), and in the late 1980s Desmond Tutu helped to stimulate church opposition in Cape Town. The WPCC, therefore, continued to launch its services and other campaigns within the church, and Walters describes politicised vigils and services as both important and common. In addition the WPCC started departments for youth and women, which played a church co-ordinating function, but was also part of the on-going mobilisation campaign for the struggle. In 1989 the WPCC was at the forefront of organising mass civil disobedience in Cape Town, such as the multi-racial march on the 'whites-only' beach at the Strand, and the huge march led by religious leaders in Cape Town in August.

2.4. International Financial Aid

The WPCC was able to conduct its work in the 1980s because it was the recipient of large amounts of international aid. During the 1980s non-governmental organisations in South Africa were the beneficiaries of unusually large amounts of foreign funding, especially those which were associated with the promotion of black interests, such as the SACC, the WPCC and other organisations affiliated to the UDF. They received funding because South Africa held a particularly high profile in the international community because of the campaign to end apartheid. These non-governmental organisations (NGOs) were perceived to be vehicles of resistance to the regime and were supported for their stance.

South Africa was regarded as a 'special case' in the 1980s by international donors. Not only did the situation in the country generate high levels of interest and funding, but the pariah status of the government meant that aid was channelled almost exclusively through NGOs. Furthermore, the political situation was recognised as the overriding factor affecting the black population. Generally government and inter-government agencies direct their funds towards 'development' work in Africa. In the case of South Africa in the 1980s, however, they allowed their funds to be used by NGOs for political work, and without the usual demands for careful accounting procedures and planning. Many organisations with which the WPCC and the SACC worked derived funding from government and inter-government agencies. In particular the Kagiso Trust distributed large amounts to UDF related organisations from the funds it

received from the European Union and various governments. The WPCC itself derived its funding from the SACC, which was funded by non-governmental donor agencies in Europe.

Non-governmental donor agencies in Europe gave the SACC considerable support in the 1980s, and left it with much discretion in the use of these funds. Such agencies are part of the NGO tradition which promotes democratic political values. NGO work in Africa, however, was initially purely humanitarian relief work. The failure of this approach to effect long-term change caused NGOs to pursue 'development' work in Africa. In contrast to inter-government development policy they did not pursue macro-economic growth, but rather small-scale local self-reliance through community based programmes. The failings of inter-government development to bring change, despite huge investments, brought a shift in opinion away from government-led development towards the programmes run by NGOs. Particularly during the 1980s this brought a significant growth in the profile and resources available to northern NGOs.

In South Africa, however, these resources were not dispersed for development work, but in support of the activities of anti-apartheid organisations such as the SACC. The freedom that the SACC was given to execute political programmes was anomalous in the general trend of northern NGO-southern NGO relations. The financial strength of the former tends to leave the relationship imbalanced and southern NGOs are obliged to execute the development programmes desired by their northern 'partners'. The SACC, however, received unusually large amounts of foreign funding, and yet it also retained the freedom to execute its political policies as it desired. The situation enjoyed by the SACC was shared across the South African NGO sector in the 1980s. The special categorisation given to South Africa under apartheid acted like a 'bubble', by which its NGOs were protected from the usual development criteria applied to Africa by northern donor agencies, government and non-governmental alike.

2.4.1. The Financial Support of the WPCC

The growth of the WPCC during the 1980s was facilitated by the financial support which it received from the SACC. The SACC was funded by non-governmental donor agencies, most of which were based in Europe. The support it received rose considerably after 1976, and the branch councils, such as the WPCC, derived increased funding in turn. During the states of emergency, in particular, the WPCC's financial strength grew as it increased its political work in response to the situation. The SACC was free to disperse large amounts of funding at its own discretion because of the freedom given to it by its funders, which sent large amounts to it in block grants for discretionary funds.

The scale of assistance, and the discretionary character of much of the funding which could be used for political campaigns, were anomalous in the general pattern of northern non-governmental funding in Africa. This occurred because the donors regarded South Africa as a 'special case'. The SACC, and other organisations such as the Kagiso Trust, benefited from the policy of donors abroad who sent funds in support of organisations opposed to apartheid. The SACC and Kagiso were regarded as conduits of funding which was dispersed throughout South Africa to organisations such as the WPCC. This financial expression of hostility to the policies of the South African government, and support for the black majority, helped to swell the size of the South African NGO sector including the WPCC and other ecumenical councils.

Since the early 1970s the WPCC was run by a relatively small group of highly committed people from each denomination. However, as the political situation became more intense, first Leslie Liddell was employed in 1981, as discussed above, and during the decade the WPCC's compliment of paid staff increased, as Liddell recalls, to twenty-five by the late 1980s. This increase in the number of staff permitted a considerable growth in the work and the profile of the WPCC as the 1980s went on.

The activities and growth of the WPCC were funded, almost exclusively, by the SACC. Lionel Louw described the funding process as follows. The WPCC would annually submit a budget to cover administration and wages to the SACC for the forthcoming year. The SACC, in turn, submitted this and the budgets of other South African ecumenical organisations, to a meeting of its donor partners in an annual two day 'round table' meeting. The SACC would then fund the WPCC the amounts that had been approved.

The SACC's donor partners were a vital component of its work. They were mainly European, although the SACC in the 1980s also received support from donors in the United States, Canada and Australia. According to the Eloff Commission, more than 97% of the SACC's annual budget was obtained from overseas sources 1975-1981. This has remained the case to the present time. Eloff further noted 'that without these funds, and in the absence of any noteworthy local support, the SACC would be unable to function' (1983:33). According to Eloff (1983:298), between 1975 and 1981 more than half of the SACC's income came from West Germany, mostly from the organisation 'EKD', a donor agency principally supported by state raised 'church tax'. Other donors included ICCO, an agency in Holland supported by the Dutch government to fund development work in the 'third world', and Danchurchaid, a similar agency supported by the Danish government. There are many such agencies in Europe which, for historical reasons, are associated with the church but are supported by the state as part of its giving to 'development' in the 'third world'. They are free from direct government control, but they are expected to work within the framework of their government's foreign policy.

Christian Aid, a British donor agency, also gave to the SACC in the 1970s and 1980s, and it is largely supported by donations from the general public.

Frank Chikane, General Secretary of the SACC in the mid-1980s, described the SACC's donor partners as 'very progressive' (in conversation), referring to their willingness to support the political nature of the SACC's work. Much of the funding, he added, came in block grants which the SACC could use at its discretion. In particular certain funds were supported by the donors. The Asingeni Fund, for use at the discretion of the General Secretary, accounted for 25% of the entire budget between 1975 and 1981 (Eloff, 1983:324). In addition there were other discretionary funds such as the Ecumenical Trust Fund (for legal aid) and the African Bursary Fund (for education bursaries). Discretionary funding became increasingly important during the unrest in the mid-1980s when it was used to support those suffering under the states of emergency. Chikane added that the SACC would not receive funds from agencies which tried to pressurise it to change its policies.

The SACC's funding increased dramatically between 1975 and 1990. In 1975 the SACC received R646,000, in 1981 this figure had grown to R3,471,000 (Eloff, 1983:297). In the mid-1980s Chikane said that it was in excess of R20 million per annum, and in the early 1990s the SACC was presenting budgets in excess of R30 million for its work. These increases were made in response to the changing political situation in the country. The SACC was one of the main 'clearing houses' (the others being the South African Catholic Bishops Conference and the Kagiso Trust; see Wolpe, 1994:36) for aid coming to South Africa in support of the black population and to assist them in their 'struggle'. Chikane noted that the SACC's funds increased following the imposition of emergency in 1985 and the detentions and trials which followed. The SACC's discretionary funds were a means to support these people. Villa-Vicencio, in conversation, noted that 'it was in no-one's interest' to keep close details of the distribution of funds, particularly as some of the recipients were trying to evade the police. Funds were therefore distributed covertly and were not carefully accounted for.

Louw stated that the funds which the WPCC received from the SACC rose after 1976, and increased dramatically after the imposition of emergency in 1985. This reflects the growth in the funding received by the SACC following the intensification of political unrest. In part the increase in the WPCC's funding occurred as the SACC approved the employment of staff to establish SACC departments in Cape Town. The WPCC's Inter Church Aid Committee, for instance, was financed to employ fieldworkers to strengthen its work in Cape Town's black communities (in particular Crossroads). The workers gave assistance to communities, establishing literacy projects; community development schemes; crèches; pre-schools; projects for the disabled and so forth. The fieldworkers helped the committee to screen new projects and to complete applications to the SACC in Johannesburg for grants. Although there was an

obvious welfare aspect to this work, it should also be seen in the light of strengthening the morale of local communities in the face of apartheid, and as such also constituted 'struggle'. Furthermore, it was usually local political activists who were employed for this work. The WPCC also employed staff to produce its publications; to establish its programmes for women and youth, and to organise 'political' services. The WPCC's increasing operational expenses were also covered by grants from the SACC. Furthermore, with money from a Norwegian donor agency and the SACC, the WPCC helped to build Community House in Woodstock in 1987 which it used for offices.

A major increase in the funds coming to the WPCC, however, were from the SACC's discretionary funds after 1985 during the states of emergency. The WPCC established funds complimentary to the SACC's bursary and assistance programmes like the Asingeni Fund. These operated as an outlet in Cape Town for the SACC's discretionary funds, giving grants for bail money; legal aid; political funerals; the support of the families of detainees; protests, and other financial needs associated with resisting the effects of the emergency. The WPCC also ran the SACC's Sanctuary Programme in Cape Town, which found safe houses for those escaping from police harassment and arrest. The SACC sent block grants from its own discretionary funds to support these WPCC's funds. The WPCC applied for new block grants as its funds were exhausted. The management of these funds also increased the need for staff at the WPCC. Furthermore, the discretionary and covert nature of the funds gave the WPCC greater freedom to exercise autonomy over their use, and permitted it to increase the political nature of its work.

The work of the WPCC in the 1980s was dependent upon the funding which it received from the SACC and its international donor partners. The freedom and the flexibility of the WPCC to work upon a political agenda in the 1980s in a 'crisis' mode of operation, was only possible because of the funds coming to it from overseas. The growth of the WPCC was the result of the international funding directed towards South Africa in the 1980s in response to apartheid.

2.4.2. International Funding to South Africa in the 1980s

The funding received, not only by the SACC but by many South African non-governmental organisations in the 1980s, was anomalous in the general pattern of funding sent to Africa from the north. Government, inter-government and non-governmental donors gave unusually large amounts to South Africa in the 1980s; furthermore these grants were not sent through government channels, which is the predominant way, but exclusively through non-governmental ones.

A further important aspect of the unusual criteria applied to South Africa was that funding was sent to organisations engaged in political activity rather than 'development' work. Non-governmental organisations in Africa are generally funded as vehicles of 'development', and they have become particularly identified with this role since the late 1970s, yet South Africa in the 1980s was clearly an exception in this trend.

Frank Chikane, in conversation, said that South Africa in the 1980s was 'a special case' and that 'it had a completely different budget line, which was not for development funding'. He said that this was 'because of the unique way that the South African government behaved, which was different from other countries' and so resulted in a 'unique relationship' between international donors and the 'progressive' South African NGO sector. In practise this meant that South African NGOs were given an unusual amount of latitude in their activities and received large amounts of funding, which they could use for political purposes. South Africa was indeed seen as an exceptional situation in Africa. The welfare of the poor was linked first and foremost to the ending of the apartheid regime. Conventional development policy (which will be discussed below) was not applied while this legislation was still in place. However, the plight of South Africa's black people was nevertheless a focus of world attention, and so donors of all kinds were keen to be associated with their support. They therefore committed their funds to the South African NGO sector and supported the strong anti-apartheid stance taken by large sections of it. In this way the SACC, and through it the WPCC, came to be funded for their work, and likewise many of the organisations they worked with.

Government and inter-governmental donor agencies were amongst those which gave money to support NGOs in South Africa. In the 1980s the South African government was the subject of an intense international campaign to abolish apartheid. The Commonwealth, the Organisation of African Unity and the United Nations had all publicly and consistently condemned the policy of apartheid. This had led to the ostracism of the South African government in the international community and the application of trade sanctions, as discussed in the introduction to this chapter. The international boycott also included the banning of South African sports players, a cultural boycott of the South African arts and an academic boycott.

Large sums were sent to the South African NGO sector by government and inter-governmental agencies. In addition to the 'negative measures' of sanctions and ostracism, Price argues that the international community wished to use 'positive measures' to run in tandem with sanctions, in order to support black people in South Africa. These 'positive measures' focused upon the sending of aid packages to organisations in South Africa which promoted black interests. Wolpe has commented, 'world condemnation of the apartheid system... created the specific conditions whereby considerable donor aid entered the country'

(1994:36). Since these 'considerable funds' could not be sent through the apartheid regime they were channelled through non-governmental organisations. To illustrate this, for instance, the British Government's Overseas Development Agency devoted a multi-million pound aid budget to South Africa between 1979 and 1992 but it was, 'solely channelled through non-governmental organisations, community groups or other institutions rather than in co-operation with the South African Government' (British Aid to South Africa; Education ODA, London, 1994:1).

Government and inter-governmental agencies, despite an initial reluctance, became increasingly willing to fund South African NGOs engaged in political work. As the 1980s continued and the political situation became more intense, Price notes (1991:235) that 'by 1986 it was generally accepted... that assistance to black South Africans could not be politically disengaged'. The political situation was such that effective support for the black community was a political action in itself, and community activities had to concern political issues if they were to be meaningful. This is reminiscent of the way in which the WPCC was drawn into political activities by its concern for the welfare of the residences of Crossroads. In addition the politicisation of South African organisations, discussed in the introduction to this chapter, was such that to effectively support the black community required the funding of its leading organisations, and these had already become committed to the political struggle. Price continues that 'it was increasingly accepted that programmes for the black community ought to be defined by and channelled through organisations of the black community itself (1991:235). It was recognised that only black people could adequately respond to the complex situation which they were in.

These trends lie behind the decision by the Commission of the European Union in May 1985 to fund the Kagiso Trust in South Africa as a conduit for its 'Special Programme for the Victims of Apartheid'. The Trust distributed these funds to non-governmental organisations which supported the aim of the 'Special Programme', which was 'the complete abolition of apartheid as a whole' (Seekings et al 1993:point 2.1). The Trust grew rapidly and gained further support from other governments, trusts, foundations and church donors. Price notes (1991:234) that in 1986 the Trust had a staff of two and a budget of R5 million. In 1987 the Japanese government started to support the Trust, and the EU increased its commitment considerably. By 1989 it had a budget of R30 million, a staff of 24, offices in Johannesburg and three other cities, and supported 1300 projects. Many of these were UDF affiliated organisations, and Price notes that Kagiso 'has since its founding been closely associated with the UDF' (1991:235).

The SACC's funding came from non-governmental sources. Northern NGOs were outspoken critics of the South African government. Oxfam, for instance, launched campaigns to

strengthen public condemnation of apartheid in Europe. Organisations such as the Anti-Apartheid Movement concentrated exclusively upon the promotion of such campaigns, and launched international events such as the 'Free Mandela' concert held at Wembley Stadium in 1987. Such vociferous condemnation made the South African government a pariah to the international NGO community. The power of the non-governmental donor sector to fund activity within South Africa is discussed in detail below.

Thus, because of the politicisation of the South African NGO sector during the 1980s, and the pressure upon the international community to respond to apartheid, government and inter-governmental bodies became involved with sending aid to Trusts and other bodies which supported politically active organisations in South Africa. Non-governmental donors were also strongly opposed to apartheid and promoted campaigns to end it.

In the 1980s, therefore, the cause of black people in South Africa attracted considerable funds from government, inter-government and non-governmental sources in the north. The accumulated giving from these sources to the South African NGO sector, and in particular to anti-apartheid organisations, was thus very large. Figures for international aid to South African NGOs in the 1980s will be difficult to calculate, since large sums were received covertly, but in 1991 'direct and indirect foreign funding is estimated at R1.2 billion' (Bonbright, Paper, 1992, The Development Resource Centre), which give some indication of the scale of funding involved.

2.4.3. Northern NGO Aid

Many UDF associated organisations benefited from the large supply of funds available from government and inter-governmental sources, particularly through the Kagiso Trust. The SACC, however, was funded by non-governmental donor agencies. The SACC received large amounts of financial support from them and much discretion in its use of the funds. As Frank Chikane noted, in conversation, the SACC's donor agencies were 'progressive' in their political views on South Africa and gave the SACC full support in its campaign to oppose apartheid.

The tradition of the non-governmental sector in Europe has been to promote welfare and democracy. It campaigns for these in Europe and non-governmental donor agencies promote such values in Africa. Initially the involvement of northern NGOs in Africa was for relief work. The limitations of this work and its failure to address fundamental issues caused northern NGOs to review their approach to Africa. Since the early 1970s they have instead launched 'development' projects. In contrast to inter-governmental development aid these do not aim to promote macro-economic growth but rather concentrate upon intensive

community participation schemes. In the 1980s this approach also included 'animation' techniques which encourage political activism.

During the 1970s criticism of government-led development policy began to grow, and the worsening conditions in Africa in the 1980s confirmed the pessimism about the effectiveness of traditional aid and development. NGOs received increasing attention for their alternative approach to development and they were given support by academics and a higher profile in international forums. From this time significantly more money was channelled through northern NGOs for development work and this increased their influence greatly.

The large amounts of funding available to northern non-governmental agencies has placed them in a strong position to influence the course of development work in Africa through their 'partnership' of southern NGOs. It was this funding which also gave them the capacity to support the SACC in the 1980s. Yet, because of the political situation, they did not treat the SACC and other South African NGOs according to their development policy. There occurred in the 1980s an anomaly in the pattern of northern NGO-southern NGO development financing, by which the SACC and other South African NGOs did not gain funds for launching development projects, but were given block grants to conduct political work at their own discretion.

2.4.3.1. NGOs and Development in Africa

In Europe and pre-independence Africa, NGOs have been associated with 'progressive' political attitudes. Hyden describes NGOs as organisations motivated by 'an explicit ideological or moral commitment' (1983:120) which tend to be concerned with conditions prevailing amongst the poor. NGOs advocate political policies intended to benefit the poor and launch programmes to assist them. Hyden argues that NGOs, together with other organisations (such as churches and trade unions), contributed important support to the movements which precipitated some of the major changes in Western society experienced in the last few hundred years. He states (1983:119) that they 'played a key role in the transition to capitalism and democracy in Europe and America... much of the progress towards a modern industrial society was carried by members of these organisations'. This point is also made by Michael Bratton (1989:572), who argues that NGOs 'played a formative role... as a crucible for forging an attachment to basic democratic values. Informed and active citizens... provided a counterweight to the accumulation of excessive power by a political executive'. Bratton also notes (1989:571) that in Africa local missions and indigenous organisations formed welfare co-operatives and health and education groups which subsequently organised resistance to colonial rule. NGOs have therefore played a political role in both Europe, America and in colonial Africa

Hyden traces the work of NGOs in Africa back to their contribution to European society in the early part of this century. He refers to their campaigns for a welfare state, and the provisions they gave to the needy, which were the precursors to the state provision of welfare established in the 1950s. Hyden argues that following the success of their campaigns NGOs declined, as their activities were superseded by government bureaucracy. However, some of the larger organisations such as Save the Children in the UK turned their attention overseas to the 'third world'. Northern NGOs began to intensify their work in Africa as the welfare state emerged in Europe. They exported their 'welfare work', through launching relief projects during times of disaster and conducting welfare programmes in outlying areas. Over time northern NGOs established branches in Africa and also funded the work of indigenous groups.

Korten (1987:148) describes 'welfare work' as the first 'generation' of NGO work. Northern NGOs tried to meet shortages of supplies and services in Africa through relief and welfare work. However by the early 1970s NGOs perceived that relief work alone was not an effective response to the underlying problems of poverty which necessitated their periodic emergency efforts (Palmer and Rossiter (1990:33)). In the 1970s they turned to a 'development' paradigm, which Korten refers to as the 'second generation' of NGO work in the third world.

NGOs, however, did not promote development as governments had done. In the 1950s and 1960s government led 'development' had been conceived of in terms of economic growth, and 'development' was measured in terms of gross national product. The World Bank, established in 1949, encouraged a system of loans and aid from governments in the north to those in the south to promote this growth. NGOs, however, did not try to advance development through macro-economic growth. In the tradition of promoting democratic values and through retaining their focus upon local welfare issues, NGOs conceived of development in terms of 'capacity building' - helping local communities to start self-help projects through which they could meet their own social and economic needs. NGOs emphasised in their programmes that 'true' development would only come through community participation in decision making and in the implementation of projects. In other words NGOs tended to emphasise the nurturing of human resources and of local self determination (social development). NGOs believed that this approach was a great improvement upon relief work since it would free communities to be self sufficient (Midgley, 1986:23).

Apparently in response to the system of development aid the economies of some third world countries did grow during the 1950s and the 1960s. However, during the slow down in the world economy during the 1970s African economies also ceased to grow, and it became clear how dependent upon international prosperity African economic growth had been (see Mosley,

1991:3ff). The 'development' paradigm used to promote economic growth through inter-governmental aid began to be questioned, particularly as economic conditions in Africa grew worse. Notions of 'social development' through 'community participation' were popularised in the 1970s, as Midgley notes (1986:vii), 'by the United Nations and other bodies'. Amongst these 'other bodies' were NGOs, and as the traditional paradigm of development failed to rectify the problems of the third world, so the approach of NGOs gathered more interest.

As interest rates were raised in the northern countries in the early 1980s in an attempt to control inflation, so the African continent, which had been encouraged to borrow heavily by the World Bank in the 1970s, was plunged into the crisis of debt repayments which continue to cripple its economies. It became abundantly clear that development through economic growth strategies, fuelled by thirty years of aid, had failed, particularly in Africa. According to one popular publication over \$300,000 million has been sent in aid to Africa since 1960 (Reader's Digest, Sept 1993:68). Yet, according to Kalyala (1988:3) 'the majority of Africans experienced declining incomes and worsened living conditions' in the 1980s. Attempts to 'modernise' were in fact accompanied by growing landlessness, urban slums, unemployment, debt and environmental degradation. Many millions of people continue to live below the poverty line, unable to meet even their basic needs (also see Anacleto, 1990:278).

Against the backdrop of the failings of traditional development policy, NGOs gained increasing prominence as alternative vehicles of development. NGOs enjoyed the freedom to work intensively with local communities and put into practice the ideals of 'community participation'. It was noted by theorists and by development agencies that, 'the most successful programmes using community participation as a principal of operation have been run by non-government organisations' (Midgley 1986:68). Thus NGOs became associated with locally based forms of development, and as thinking moved away from macro-economic development, so they gained more attention.

2.4.3.2. Criticism of Development Policy and the Rise of NGOs

A growing critique of the system of inter-government aid and development helped to encourage a shift in thinking about development which helped to promote NGO-led work. Several other authors published their criticism of the traditional development system, amongst them Gram (1978); Hyden (1983); Chomsky (1986); Kalyalya (1988); Trainer (1989) and Donnellan (1993). Their criticisms have been broad, and conventional development has been attacked at many levels. The increasing influence of NGO donor agencies has come, at least in part, in response to the failures of government-led development noted by these academics.

Writers such as Trainer question the whole notion of economic development. He represents a 'green' school of thought which argues that the world's resources cannot cope with further

'development' and it is a destructive process which must be reversed. He further points out the injustice which exists in the current world system and calls for an equitable distribution of resources. Others, such as Goran Hyden, defend the notion of economic development, but argue that the process is hamstrung in African countries by social factors. Hyden himself refers to what he calls 'the economy of affection' in which clan politics, at both national and local levels, tends to direct funds for personal social and political ends rather than national economic advantage. He states that instead of reaching the poorest regions of the country aid money has been used to strengthen the position of ruling elites, thus expanding class differences and upholding regimes which may be oppressive or incompetent. He argues that NGOs are a means to circumvent these problems and bring development directly to the people.

Kalyalya has noted the criticisms of inter-governmental aid when used as a tool to promote the diplomatic and economic policies of the donor nation (1988:3ff). Aid agreements can be designed with the stimulation of northern business as their chief aim, offering northern corporations new markets and avenues for investment. Aid managers have been perceived to have more reason to be concerned with satisfying domestic policy concerns than those of villagers in Africa. Aid has also tended to be concentrated in strategic areas such as the Horn of Africa, and that it was used as a tool in the cold war to win the allegiance of nations. A graphic example of the use of aid grants for diplomatic purposes was the case of the Pergau Dam in Malaysia funded through British aid. An NGO, 'the World Development Movement', took the British government to the High Court in London, accusing it of misusing the aid budget by using the building of the dam as a 'sweetener' to win an important arms deal. The government was found guilty (in November 1994), and admitted that even though it had known that the dam project would prove to be an economic fiasco, it had carried on regardless for diplomatic reasons. It has since admitted another three such cases (The Times, 15.12.94). Such cases have shown up the politicisation of the Aid budget and have put inter-government aid in a very bad light.

Aid has also been seen as a means of neo-colonial control. The needy countries of the third world have become dependent upon aid grants, and thus upon the donor governments. Kalyalya (1988) has pointed out how large development projects continue to require outside expertise and 'hard' currency to maintain them. 'Third world' governments are forced to tailor their policies to win the aid upon which they have become dependent, and structure their economies to generate as large foreign earnings as possible. This is vividly seen in the World Bank's insistence upon structural adjustment programmes as a pre-condition to the granting of loans. Hyden notes that some governments in Africa have become dependent upon aid for 75% of their budgets (1983:165). This situation has left many African states lacking effective sovereignty. Dependent upon external help, and dominated by divided, self-interested elites,

the poverty of African countries continues and there are no signs that this can be solved through government channels.

In search of a means to reach the poor and bypass the problems associated with inter-government aid, there has been an increasing interest in the work of NGOs. Agnes Chepkwony comments (1987:16), that 'a new interest is emerging in local and foreign based non-government organisations as a possible means of alleviating the precarious social conditions prevailing in the third world', and Michael Bratton (1989:569) has noted, 'an unusual conjunction of ideas in which development theorists... agree on the ineffectiveness of the state and the need for institutional alternatives'. By contrast to the hypocrisy and ineffectiveness of government, the NGO sector appears saintly.

With theorists strongly critical of government-led aid strategies of development, northern NGOs are growing in confidence and they are keen to offer a critique of the old policies and advance themselves as an alternative. The Oxfam report of 1993, for instance, was strongly critical of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, and of the attitudes of Western governments toward the 'third world'. Of this report the Guardian newspaper wrote (April 1993), 'Oxfam's latest report, which restores the organisation's leadership role in the fight against poverty, castigates the international community' (from Donnellan 1993:30). Such organisations contrast themselves with the World Bank and other government agencies and present themselves as effective agents of change, working directly with the very poorest communities of the third world with sensitivity and effectiveness.

The popularity of NGOs has been derived not only from the perceived relative superiority of their record for the satisfaction of basic needs (see Wisner, 1988) particularly in rural communities; NGOs have also been praised for stimulating participation and local organisation. In contrast to the effects of aid, which strengthens elites, NGOs are seen as an effective way to encourage, as Bratton has argued (1989:570), 'a pluralistic and institutional environment' and 'participation in decision making to promote a democratic culture'.

2.4.3.3. Academic Support for NGO-led Development

In the light of these criticisms of traditional aid and development policy, some academics have become leading advocates of NGOs as alternative agents of development in Africa; one of the best known is Goran Hyden. Writing in 1983 he concluded (1983:xii) that in view of the cynicism concerning aid policy, 'serious doubts must be raised about the ability of the state to ensure economic expansion and development'. In the light of the failures of African government policies and departments he argued for a shift away from the politicisation of development policy manifest in state-led development. He advocated, rather, the encouragement of churches, co-operatives and unions to pursue local projects to stimulate

activity which will, piecemeal, lead to a strengthening of the internal economy and structure of the country. He regarded southern NGOs, supported by northern NGOs, as the organisations best suited to form a 'development administration' to organise, equip and enhance local groups to promote the latent capacity in African society which he describes in terms of the 'bonds of affection'. These, he argues (1983:120), already constitute, 'thousands of small self-help and community development efforts that exist in both rural and urban areas of Africa'.

To strengthen his case Hyden (1983:119 - 125) listed several features of NGOs which he believed equipped them as the leading facilitators of development. I will summarise these as follows:

i) they are closer to the poorest sections of society than is the government. Since they are generally from amongst the poor, and work with them, they tend to have an affinity and an empathy which civil servants lack. They are more familiar with local conditions and local issues, means and methods.

ii) NGO staff often act in an altruistic way. They are motivated by factors other than monetary gain, such as an ideological or moral commitment. Many NGO staff work as volunteers and are willing to be patient and sacrificial, displaying considerable commitment to their work.

iii) NGOs operate economically. They are small, decentralised and cost-conscious. Their reliance upon donations requires them to be disciplined and effective with their finances and they utilise local resources and local people in their work. Their ideological commitment reduces embezzlement and waste.

iv) They are flexible and thus able to respond quickly to local changes; they can also support and strengthen local initiatives by helping to develop indigenous methods and resources. NGOs are willing to work on small and individual projects.

v) NGOs are separate from the government. They do not need to work to national blueprints and impose particular criteria; they are separate from the intrigues of politics. In contrast to government programmes they stimulate a sense of project ownership amongst the local people which tends to improve participation and skills. Government initiatives tend to stifle local activity because they are run by 'experts' who impose national plans. NGOs can reduce dependency upon the state, thus reducing its dominance and strengthening local democratic processes.

Hyden's enthusiasm is also shared by those who wish to see social change, and writers on women's issues such as Vanita Viswanath (1994) have noted the lack of involvement of women in government programmes and, by contrast, the success of NGOs in facilitating women's participation. Viswanath has noted (1994:xi) that 'In recent years scholars have paid increasing attention to... non-government organisations (NGOs) as effective vehicles of change'. NGOs have thus been seen as effective organisations for the promotion of social change, and hold an appeal to those wishing to advance particular ideological or political causes.

In the light of such arguments concerning NGOs in the development process several authors have noted the increasing attention which has been paid to NGOs in recent years. Kenneth King (1990, ii) remarked that 'NGOs have come in from the cold'. In 1989 Lynda Chalker, the British Minister of Overseas Development referred to the 'extraordinary' growth in NGO activities in the developing world in the previous ten years. Palmer and Rossiter (1990:36) comment that, 'from relative obscurity a decade ago, northern NGOs have now found themselves catapulted into prominence as authorities on development'. NGOs have, as Michael Bratton (1989:569) has put it, 'entered the limelight'. The limelight has included academic conferences, such as the Edinburgh Conference in 1990 (Critical Choices for the NGO Community), and a growing literature on NGOs and development. In 1987 the Journal of World Development, for instance, carried a 255 page supplement that had been two years in preparation. The editor said that it came in response to, 'the perceived failure of official aid agencies - bilateral and multilateral' and the 'rapidly increasing involvement of non-government organisations (NGOs) in the development assistance process' (Drabek, 1987:vii).

Led by those from the north, NGOs are also taking a more prominent role regarding international issues. In Europe and America, in particular, the NGO sector has become a prominent advocate of humanitarian causes and critic of current economic and political issues. Northern NGOs are well co-ordinated through various committees, associations and conferences. Representatives of northern NGO committees are now accredited full delegate status at major international conferences alongside UN agencies such as UNICEF. NGOs are developing a sense of international corporate identity. In June 1992, at the Rio Earth Summit 15,000 NGOs participated in an NGO forum which drew up thirty six NGO treaties. These included taking a critical position on 'the world economic system' while emphasising sustainable and environmentally sensitive methods; advocating the decentralisation of power and taking the community as the focus of policy; and advancing the cause of human rights including women's participation in decision-making processes, to promote ethics of equality and sustainability. The NGOs also drew up a commitment to 'promote the NGO community around the world' (Third World Guide 1993 / 94:104).

2.4.4. Development Through Animation

NGO work in Africa has progressed through two 'generations', the first being relief work, and the second 'development' through community participation. The popularity of the latter has greatly enhanced the profile of NGOs and has swelled their influence. In the 1980s a further 'generation' of NGO work became apparent, development through 'animation' work. This has become popular amongst some, but not all NGOs. 'Animation' places greater emphasis upon political and social change than traditional NGO development policies, and the WPC has engaged in 'animation' work in recent years, which is discussed at greater length in the next chapter.

It became clear, as Midgley notes (1986:3), that to effect sufficiently dramatic change to alleviate the severity of African poverty, notions of community participation proved to be 'excessively idealistic'. Such projects, he argues, are prone to a lack of realistic planning and clarity; each one is individual to its location and cannot be duplicated, and thus cannot effect widespread change; moreover, the method is highly intensive, and does not always succeed (see, for instance, Kalyalya 1989:80ff). Furthermore there was a growing awareness that development through community participation failed to address the macro economic and political issues that are also involved in poverty. NGOs thus became more sensitive to the importance of structural issues.

An expression of the increasing importance of structural issues has been the increased popularity of 'animation' as an approach to development amongst some, 'animation' has evolved amongst some, but not all, NGOs. This approach is more radical. Local people are encouraged to attend 'development classes' which equip them as 'facilitators of change'. The classes aim to conscientize them to the prevailing political, economic and social realities which effect their lives. They are 'empowered' through training in social organisation and encouraged to form groups to address their perceived needs.

The inspiration for such 'animation' groups are authors such as Paulo Freire, who proposed such measures in his work Pedagogy of the Oppressed (1972). Drawing upon his experience as an educator in South America he concluded that the oppression of the poor had 'dehumanised' them and that in consequence they needed classes that would equip them with the mental tools to recognise and analyse the social reality in which they lived. Having identified the injustices of the social system they would then have to learn how to organise themselves in such a way as to challenge the system. By this process, Freire argued, the poor move from a state of 'naiveté' to one of 'critical consciousness'. He strongly rejected 'false

generosity' which aimed to soften the effects of oppression through projects designed to alleviate the plight of the oppressed. On the other hand he advocated 'true generosity' which worked for the 'humanisation' of the 'oppressed' by teaching them the analytical tools by which they were to be 'liberated' to perceive their situation. The true friend of the 'oppressed' then joined them as they struggled to be free from the oppression which, Freire states, 'is acquired by conquest' (1972:31). This methodology is unashamedly a revolutionary one, and Palmer and Rossiter note (1990:38) that 'Freire's philosophy is fundamentally a political one which offers the promise of utopian revolution through a process of self-awareness and individual revolution'.

The 'animation' approach has become popular in the context of a growing emphasis upon the political and economic causes of poverty, and is most generally applied in areas of particular political contention. As Palmer and Rossiter noted in 1990 (1990:38), 'animation has now become a popular activity supported by many northern NGOs in Southern Africa'. The approach has also, however, been subject to heavy criticism by some writers. Midgley (1986:103), for instance, criticises it as a technique 'which assumes that the poor have an incomplete or imperfect perception of their own reality and that their "awareness" must be heightened as the basis for group action'. His criticism is that since 'animation' presupposes that the lower classes require an 'enlightened person' to help them, it implies 'a hierarchical view of consciousness'. He concludes that 'this is in many ways a patronising view'.

Summary

Authors are in general agreement that northern NGOs have passed through three stages of thinking, or to use Korten's term 'generations'. From relief and welfare work they embraced 'development' through encouraging community participation in projects to engender self-reliance. More recently they have placed more attention on political issues and social structures and they have sponsored animation courses. Below I reproduce Korten's helpful summary of this process (1987:148),

		Generation	
	FIRST	SECOND	THIRD
Defining features	Relief and welfare	Small-scale self-reliant development	Sustainable systems of development
Problem definition	Shortage of goods and services	Local inertia	Institutional and policy constraints
Time frame	Immediate	Project life	Indefinite long-term
Spatial scope	Individual or family	Neighbourhood or village	Region or nation
Chief actors	NGO	NGO + beneficiary organisations	All public and private institutions that define the relevant system
Development education	Starving children	Community self-help initiatives	Failures in inter-dependent systems
Management orientation	Logistics management	Project management	Strategic management

2.5. The Financial Strength of Northern NGOs

NGOs have become increasingly prominent in recent years in terms of the academic attention to their work and their participation in international forums. This interest has been translated into financial strength, which have placed them in a strong position to act as donor agencies. In particular, government agencies have acknowledged the popularity of NGOs and have distributed significant portions of their aid budgets to support their development work. In addition their work has been popular with the general public in northern countries and northern NGOs have derived large sums from them in donations.

The financial strength of northern NGOs has placed them in a strong position to fund southern NGOs, many of which are financially very weak and depend upon their northern 'partners' for their survival. Northern NGOs tend to direct the activity of southern NGOs by the criteria they apply to their funding. Southern NGOs become the practitioners of projects approved by northern NGOs, and their funding is limited to the execution of these projects.

The SACC and the broader NGO sector in South Africa in the 1980s benefited from the large resources available to their northern NGO partners, and yet because of the situation in the country they were given freedom to pursue political, rather than development work, and

much of their funding was given for use at their own discretion, rather than according to the execution of specific projects.

Broadhead (1987:1) cites the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) figures for northern NGO income in 1986, stating that private sources account for more than US\$3.3 billion in annual flows to northern NGOs. In addition to this the US government made grants to NGOs totalling US\$1.5 billion in 1983, while in 1987 the European Community budget for NGOs was US\$600 million. From out of this volume of funding, Bratton states (1989:571), 'a total of \$1 billion is thought to have reached Africa through combined NGO channels in 1986'.

The magnitude of these figures have been largely the result of a trend by northern governments to channel more of their aid budgets through NGOs. In response to the perception that NGOs are more effective at working amongst the very poor than the recipients of conventional aid, the World Bank, USAID (United States Aid) and the Overseas Development Agency (ODA, a department of the British government) have increased their allocations to NGOs. Broadhead (1987:103) states that Canada channels 45% of its aid budget through NGOs, and the US 20%. The British government announced an increase of 52% of its allocation to NGOs in the year 1988-1989 (Chalker 1989) to £64 million. As Guy Mustard of the ODA has put it (1990:113), 'non-government organisations have become "fashionable" with donor governments and multilateral agencies in the last few years'.

The advent of the New Political Economy of neo-liberalism at the beginning of the 1980s has strengthened this process (see Mosley, 1991). Through the policy of decentralisation and privatisation led by Thatcher, Reagan and Kohl, NGOs have gained much more funding from government, since the neo-liberal approach has emphasised the use of private institutions. While it is not true that northern governments give the bulk of their aid money to NGOs the share has greatly increased, and the British government, for one, promotes its image as a supporter of British NGOs doing work in Africa. In December 1993 the ODA published a briefing paper (ODA Support for Voluntary Organisations) in which it stated,

the British Government has strengthened its relationship with NGOs and channelled more aid through them. It recognises that NGOs are particularly well able to work with local communities on small-scale projects bringing economic and social benefits to the poorest people... The ODA's support for NGOs currently totals over £147 million.

In addition to government support most northern NGOs run well publicised fund-raising campaigns, many of which have become annual events. The public tend to respond generously to them; the British public for example gave voluntary agencies £215 million in 1991 (Donnellan 1993:30). Through their financial strength northern NGOs are in a strong position to act as donor agencies to southern NGO partners and to pursue their own agenda for development work in the third world.

In the north, therefore, there are some wealthy and powerful NGOs, which, building upon the tradition of NGO's promoting welfare and democracy, are in a strong position to launch such work in the 'third world'. By contrast, however, according to Hyden (1983:119) there are 'few indigenous organisations of any strength' in Africa. There may be many local, informal organisations, but since they are lacking in formal structure and financial resources they cannot grow and their influence remains insignificant. In most African countries, however, there are some indigenous NGOs that are well established through funding they have gained from the north. In addition to these, there are branches of northern NGOs. Kenya has the largest number of branches of northern NGOs - four hundred according to Michael Bratton (1989:571).

The language surrounding the relationship between southern NGOs and northern NGOs is one of equality - a terminology of partnership and common experience. The reality, however, is that a relatively small number of wealthy northern NGOs fund projects throughout the third world and Eastern Europe. While the northern NGOs need an environment in which to put their money to use, the number of applications received from southern NGOs is far in excess of what they can fund. There is, therefore, competition amongst southern NGOs, while northern NGOs have the freedom to choose from a number of countries and various organisations whom they will partner, and, within that relationship, which projects they will or will not fund. Thus despite the language of equality the reality is that the power clearly lies with the northern NGOs. The financial dependency is such that many southern NGOs are reliant upon the goodwill of their northern partners for their continued survival. David Bower (1990:18) estimates that southern NGOs are dependent upon foreign sources for over 80 % of their budgets.

The dominance of northern NGOs is not only financial, but also manifest in their setting the international agenda for NGOs. The co-ordinating bodies which northern NGOs have organised amongst themselves (such as the International Council of Voluntary Agencies formed in 1962 amongst Scandinavian and British NGOs (Gram 1978:55)) debate Third World issues, and establish criteria for what 'needs' to be done. Southern NGOs must keep up with this developing agenda, and the language which surrounds it, in order to bring their funding proposals in line with current trends in thinking. Southern NGOs lack sufficient co-

ordination to challenge northern thinking; as David Bower (1990:24) comments, 'those in the South (southern NGOs) have no means of exerting any degree of control over those in the North unless the North chooses to let this happen'.

Intellectual dominance puts northern NGOs in control of NGO activities internationally. The dynamics of this, as Vincent and Campbell (1990:99-109) point out, are generated because southern NGOs are rarely funded by block grants (which they could use as they saw fit) but rather on a project-by-project basis. Northern NGOs do this in order to account for the use of the money they send to their partners. This is particularly true where (as is often the case) the northern NGO receives funding from Government sources which demand careful accounting for the money they distribute (Riddell, 1990:69). Moreover northern NGOs need to fund specific projects which they can use in their advertising to promote their work (Dangor, 1990:155). These concerns effectively bind southern NGOs into a dependence relationship because they can only survive through gaining funding for projects, and they must tailor their projects to the criteria which are currently popular in the North. As Bower (1990:20) notes such factors inevitably effect the structure, organisation and activity of southern NGOs.

Kenneth King (1990:v) has called attention to the evolution of 'airport NGOs' which are more mindful of gaining international funding than of local needs. Such organisations are in danger, to use Odihambo Anacleti's phrase, of becoming 'non-grassroots organisations' (cited in King, 1990:v). As they become caught in the net of courting funding, project by project, they stand in danger of implementing northern notions of development in Africa. They may thus become expressions of the ideology of their northern NGO 'partner', ideologies which are the product of European or American political debate (Dangor, 1990:149-162). In this context it becomes plain how important the attitude of northern NGOs is for the work of southern NGOs.

The attitude towards South African NGOs in the 1980s, however, was different to that held towards other African NGOs. South African NGOs were in a 'bubble', sheltered from the pressures which are usually associated with African NGOs dependent upon northern NGO donors. Organisations like the SACC received funds from development agencies, such as ICCO in Holland, and yet they were not required to perform 'development' work, nor did they furnish detailed plans for projects in order to win funds. The donors understood that their work was primarily of a political nature.

The tradition of NGOs, which includes the promotion of democracy, and the strength of international opinion regarding the policies of the South African government, encouraged the SACC's donors to respond positively to the SACC's requests for large amounts of discretionary funding. It was because of apartheid that they regarded South Africa as a 'special case'. When apartheid receded, however, the reasons for treating South African

NGOs differently from others elsewhere in Africa diminished and the 'bubble' came under pressure. This will be discussed further in the following chapters.

2.6. Conclusion

The WPCC's development as an ecumenical 'struggle' organisation after 1976 followed in the wake of the pioneering work and the subsequent banning of the Christian Institute, and the SACC and its critique of apartheid, which, in turn, had been inspired by the stance of the World Council of Churches. The Black Consciousness movement, black theology and contextual theology were strongly influential upon all three bodies. The WPCC had emerged in its contemporary form principally in response to the deterioration of welfare due to political oppression, and in particular the suffering of the residents of Crossroads which had resulted from their clash with the apartheid state. The centrality of political policy to the welfare of the people of Crossroads became increasingly obvious to them. The WPCC could not escape the stark reality that the very survival of Crossroads depended upon winning political battles, nor that the government which caused such suffering was illegitimate and must be removed.

Once the principle of the centrality of political activism was established, then in all situations the WPCC would consider political activity to be the most fundamental response to problems. Hence the WPCC became an organisation concerned primarily with political activism rather than welfare work. Throughout the 1980s, while the WPCC continued to be involved in relief work and in various projects in poor areas, all of this was pursued within the context of strengthening local resolve as part of the 'struggle' waged against the prevailing political system.

The political stance of the WPCC was very clear, and it drew together those with a similar commitment from within the churches. It worked with other organisations which held a similar antipathy to the political system, in particular those associated with the United Democratic Front. It proved to be a leading 'struggle' organisation, especially because the church in the 1980s was one of the main vehicles of popular expression for the protest movement. In all of its activities the WPCC relied upon its co-ordination of a network of contacts, and these worked together in response to events in a 'crisis modus operandi'.

The WPCC was initially run by volunteers, but later by a large body of staff supported by funding derived from foreign donors via the SACC. The SACC's contacts with donors in Europe, gave the WPCC the financial support necessary to employ, at one time, twenty-five staff and to jointly own the large Woodstock community centre where it had offices (the SACC later provided the WPCC with other offices in Sybrand Park).

The WPCC did not appear in a vacuum. The orientation of the organisation; its size; its personnel; its work; its relationships - these were all the product of its context, a response to the existence and actions of the apartheid state. This response was generated by the intellectual position of the ecumenical movement and through the practical structures, as well as the inspiration, of the SACC, which brought in funds from supporters outside of South Africa.

Foreign funding came to South Africa in support of NGOs opposed to apartheid from government, inter-governmental and non-governmental sources in the 1980s. The international campaign against apartheid had led to large inflows of finance to non-governmental organisations in South Africa working to promote black welfare. The SACC benefited from funding given by the non-governmental donor sector. This sector was in a position to fund projects in Africa because of the popularity it has enjoyed in the last twenty years for its development work; popularity which has greatly increased its financial capacity.

South African non-governmental organisations, including the SACC, were in a 'bubble' regarding international funding during the 1980s. They were not subject to the usual 'development' expectations, nor the limitations of donor influence over projects, yet they also benefited from unusually large inflows of aid. Since funds were not sent according to the usual 'development' criteria, South African NGOs were free to pursue black welfare through the promotion of political 'struggle'. The WPCC was one such recipient which enjoyed large amounts of 'discretionary' funding, and which enabled it to promote a variety of campaigns, projects and events. The WPCC used its autonomy to pursue goals which were characterised by 'protest' activity against the apartheid state.

This 'bubble' of freedom which South African NGOs had enjoyed under oppression, however, began to come under pressure when in 1990 the South African government introduced changes which fundamentally altered the political situation in South Africa and in the eyes of the watching donors. Apartheid began to break down, and a period of transition began towards a democratic state. Funding criteria began to change as a result. The WPCC during this time of political transition is the subject of the next chapter, and the consequences of change upon funding the subject of the fourth.

3. The WPCC in a Time of Transition

3.1. Introduction

The period 1990 to 1994 was one of transition in South Africa as the apartheid system was forsaken by the government and a new interim democratic constitution was negotiated and introduced. The national transition was neither smooth nor steady. It was characterised by uncertainty and suspicion. The economic situation declined, bringing fresh problems to the fore, and terrible violence threatened to destabilize the country. Some major political parties threatened civil war if their demands were not met. Much of the violence however was mysterious, adding further to the tension. The conflict made the process of transition, which in itself was fraught with division, even more uncertain.

The changing political situation had a direct impact upon the South African ecumenical movement and upon the non-governmental sector in general. The WPCC itself underwent a process of dramatic change. For non-governmental organisations which had been at the forefront of the 'struggle' this period was particularly difficult. The 'protest' role which they had played in the absence of the liberation movements was now no longer necessary nor relevant. They came under pressure from donors and from organisations within South Africa to change their activities in order to retain relevance. They had to adapt to the transition period and consider their future role, and increasingly they moved towards a development paradigm. This chapter considers the WPCC during the period of transition and the nature and dynamics of its change between 1990 and 1994.

3.1.1. The Political Situation 1990-1994

In February 1990 F.W. de Klerk, the State President, announced the unbanning of opposition parties, the release of political prisoners and his government's intention to repeal apartheid legislation. Reforms had been expected, but nothing so dramatic. Nine days later Nelson Mandela, a symbol of the ANC, and in due course its leader, walked free from Victor Verster prison. Over the following months exiles returned and the unbanned organisations re-established their movements within the country. They remained fearful of a government plot or trap, and Sparks notes (1994:122) that they remained suspicious of the government's motives. The ANC retained its plans for military action, although it suspended its armed struggle in August 1990. The government, meanwhile, pushed ahead with its conciliatory image and laid proposals for a new constitution (still based upon ethnic groups), although this was unacceptable to the democratic movement which demanded non-racialism. However, formal negotiations were delayed amidst the tension and the time which it took for the

unbanned organisations to become organised and ready for negotiations, nor was the government inclined to hasten the process which would inevitably cost it power.

Tension between the opposing sides, however, was exacerbated in 1990/1991 not so much by policy differences as the spiral of violence which occurred in the country. The Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), formally a Zulu cultural group, proclaimed itself as a political party in 1990. Soon afterwards relations between the IFP and the ANC became extremely hostile, and the predominantly Zulu hostels in the townships around Johannesburg became the focus of much violence. The full reasons for the violence remain unclear, but political rivalry and ethnic hostility appear to have been stoked and fuelled by the activities of a 'third force'. There was a regular chorus of accusation that this violence was instigated by the government's security services, in order to desabilize the townships, divide black unity, split opposition parties, and thus slow down the transition. Such tactics were familiar to those who had experienced the oppression of the 1980s. This suspicion was fuelled since, as Sparks put it 'no arrests followed these terrible outbursts' (1994:138). Indeed some of the allegations were supported at the time by the investigations of Judge Goldstone (Sparks, 1994:173) and have also received some substantiation in subsequent press reports (for instance, Mail and Guardian vol.11, No.26 and No.27). Press reports in July 1991 had also revealed that the government had covertly supported the IFP financially and with military training (Sparks 1994:154). Many of those who had fought the government in the past gave little credence to its 'change of spots' and suspected guile in its conduct in the country and the repeated delays of the negotiations. Mandela himself accused de Klerk of 'bad faith' and of complicity in the troubles (Sparks, 1994:139).

The troubles became steadily worse. In a single night of violence in June 1992, 38 people were murdered in the Boipatong township. A further twenty died there the following day when the police opened fire on a crowd. Two months later Ciskei (an apartheid 'homeland') soldiers killed 28 and injured 200 ANC-Cosatu demonstrators. These particular events were symptomatic of a general state of conflict which increasingly affected every major area of the country and in particular KwaZulu/Natal and the Witwatersrand, where there were concentrations of IFP and ANC supporters. In KwaZulu/Natal political assassinations rose from 28 leaders in 1990, to 60 in 1991 and to 97 in 1993 (Sparks, 1994:168). In 1993 'politically related violence has reached unprecedented levels' (Seekings et al, 1993:1).

For the reasons outlined above, formal multi-party constitutional negotiations only began nearly two years after Mandela's release. The Convention Towards a Democratic South Africa (Codesa) first met in December 1991, but ended acrimoniously with sharp words between Mandela and de Klerk (Sparks, 1994:134). Codesa 2 began in May 1992 and worked on some of the important issues of the process, such as national unity, military

formations, and constitutional principles. However, it broke down over issues of power sharing and majority rule and amidst the violence referred to above. From June 1992 the ANC-Cosatu alliance applied pressure through 'rolling-mass action' - comprising strikes and protests - which brought the country to a standstill (ibid:140). Furthermore the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), a party associated with militant Black Consciousness, refused to negotiate with the government for much of 1992, and its armed wing, the Azanian People's Liberation Army, continued to launch attacks until the end of 1993. Some right-wing parties, such as the Conservative Party refused to negotiate, and the IFP also remained ambivalent about the talks, particularly given the tensions between it and the ANC.

Thus, in 1992 the political situation reached an impasse and the Codesa negotiations seemed hardly to have improved upon the lack of substantial progress which had marked 1990 and 1991. Bilateral discussions and agreements kept the process alive but there remained a lack of direction or clarity. Meanwhile the situation in the country continued to deteriorate. While the violence fuelled political distrust and uncertainty it also contributed to economic and other social problems. Cyril Ramaphosa, an ANC negotiator, summed up the situation in 1993 as, 'popular frustration, worsening unemployment, growing crime, a stagnant economy and an unspeakable death rate' (Robertson, 1994:45). The assassination of Chris Hani, secretary general of the South African Communist Party, in Easter 1993, aroused outrage at the failure of the transition process which threatened a dangerous explosion of resentment (Sparks, 199:26). It was only at this point that the negotiations, which had just restarted began to gather pace. It was, as Sparks has said, a 'crisis-driven negotiating process' (Sparks, 1994:132) which only overcame problems and gathered impetus when driven by pressure. The two major parties, the ANC and the National Party, fearing the consequences of further delays, reached broad agreement and forced forward the negotiations. In June 1993 the date for the first fully democratic election was finally announced, to be held on 27 April 1994.

The white right-wing, the Ciskei and Bophutatswana homeland leaders, and the IFP were fearful of this new hegemony, since change threatened their traditional power-bases. They formed an alliance, which they called 'the Concerned South Africans Group' (COSAG). Buthelezi, the leader of the IFP 'kept up a stream of invective against the talks, claiming ANC-NP collusion in violence against IFP members' (Sparks, 1994:27), and he demanded self-determination, and threatened secession from the republic and even civil war. It was not until 1994 when the homeland leaders were toppled from power, the white right-wing split, and finally the IFP joined the election process (just one week before the poll took place). Nonetheless the threat of violence from extremist groups continued to haunt the election and the subsequent inauguration of President Mandela.

Instability and uncertainty hung over the final negotiation process and the elections. In addition there were severe logistical problems which also came close to derailing the process. The scale of the election was unique in South African history. For the first time twenty two million people would vote, as compared to a few million whites in the earlier elections. Many of these were illiterate and unfamiliar with voting procedures. Robertson (1994:44) has noted that these huge problems were further complicated by the distrust of government departments, fearing that they would not be impartial. The negotiating parties therefore decided to establish new, independent structures consisting of representatives of various political backgrounds and respected members of the judiciary and civil society. In June the negotiating parties agreed upon a Transitional Executive Council (TEC), and under its authority an Independent Media Commission and an Independent Electoral Commission (IEC), which had the responsibility of running the election. In this way, as Sarakinsky noted, 'the TEC represented a compromise.. the government stayed in office but its power was limited by an interim body' (1994:68). While these structures helped to lend credence to the process they were also totally inexperienced in terms of organisation.

Preparation for the elections were severely hampered by disputes at the negotiations and the concern to make adjustments which might encourage more parties to join the process. The delays meant that the TEC did not meet until December 1993 and only then was the IEC established. Further delays meant that in some areas the IEC only established its structures in March 1994, a mere eight weeks before the poll. Given this time frame the IEC was in no position to do all the work surrounding the election, and in particular voter education and election observation (intended to guard against intimidation) was largely organised by private organisations (NGOs) accredited to do the work by the IEC.

The election process was further complicated by the announcement in early 1994 that two polls would be held to facilitate simultaneous regional elections. In part this was to satisfy small parties such as the PAC and the Democratic Party, but was also intended to win the support of the federalist parties such as the IFP and the Freedom Front. This 'double ballot' further strained the IEC and invalidated much of the voter education already conducted. In addition, the large numbers of parties involved (more than twenty five on some regional ballot papers) and the entry of the IFP one week before the poll were the cause of great logistical problems. Against all the tensions, difficulties and demands, the final outcome of the elections, which was declared 'substantially' free and fair, was remarkable despite much confusion and delays during the process. Nelson Mandela was inaugurated ten days later in Pretoria, to head a government of national unity.

3.1.2. The Transition for NGOs

Although the period of transition was slow and uncertain, and until 1993 seemed locked in an impasse, paradoxically it was also a time of great change, especially in the NGO sector. Walters has written of F.W. de Klerk's unbanning of the political parties on February 2 1990 that 'this announcement fundamentally redefined the terrain on which organisations that formed part of the democratic movement operated' (1993:7). The terrain changed in two important ways. The first was an issue of finding a role relevant to the new situation. Walters notes that 'the ANC, SACP and the PAC resumed the overtly political functions from the various religious and community organisations which had assumed them during their banning' (1993:9). As noted in the last chapter many 'community organisations' had operated as vehicles of anti-apartheid protest. Now the formal liberation movements were free to operate again, and indeed had committed themselves to a negotiated settlement with the government. The importance of the political role of locally based organisations was therefore diminished, as Walters notes, 'community organisations, many of which had had anti-apartheid work as their *raison d'être*, had now.. to reconsider their roles and functions' (1993:7). The 'political terrain' had been changed by de Klerk such that locally organised 'protest' work, characteristic of the 1980s, was now irrelevant to the political process which was focused upon the progress of the negotiations between the political parties.

The second 'terrain' issue facing NGOs was a consequence of the first. The networks of organisations in which they had operated rapidly changed. Some chose to close down. According to a survey conducted by Walters (1993) 102 community organisations closed or became defunct between 1989 and 1991 in the greater Cape Town area. She attributes this largely to activists leaving their bases in community organisations to join the unbanned organisations. Amongst these was the United Democratic Front which, as Walters notes, 'had been the major co-ordinating structure for ANC-aligned community organisations since 1983' (1993:9). It closed in 1991. In addition to the loss of some of the most important politically focused organisations there was a diversification amongst NGOs. Increasingly NGOs focused upon specific social issues which they made a 'niche' for their work. Some NGOs became involved in policy formation for the ANC (*ibid*:18), but others became increasingly involved in specific aspects of the broad 'development' field.

The rise of the 'development' paradigm has had an important effect upon the South African NGO sector. In 1991 the government made two billion rands available to the Independent Development Trust, which in turn funded community organisations to do 'development' work in South Africa. Community organisations were searching for a means to remain relevant to their constituencies, and to gain new sources of income. In the past they would not have received state funding, but since the Trust was one step removed from the government many

accepted funding from it and initiated development projects in their areas of operation. This process gathered further momentum as businesses also established 'development trusts' to make a contribution, and promote a positive image for themselves, in what de Klerk had called the 'new South Africa'. In 1993 Walters noted that 'community organisations... (are) beginning to talk about proactive engagement and about their involvement in the reconstruction of society'. In this way they were moving from a position of 'protest' towards a participation in development programmes for the sake of national reconstruction.

Probably even more significant than internal pressure upon NGOs was the reassessment of the South African situation by overseas donors. Given that the political situation had, to some degree, been altered, they began to put pressure upon the South African recipient agencies to shift towards a 'development' paradigm, which, as noted in the previous chapter, is their more usual funding concern. Walters notes that early on in the transition period donors began to launch seminars in South Africa with titles such as 'what is development' and emphasising the need for primary health care, small business development and 'women's development' (ibid.:17). Since the political situation was apparently out of their hands, and the local situation was becoming more desperate with poverty and violence increasing alarmingly, there were good reasons for NGOs to accept the funders arguments and switch towards a 'development' paradigm. Amongst these was the Kagiso Trust, the largest non-governmental funding agency in the country, which sought after 1990 to fulfil a new role as a non-governmental development agency (Seekings et al 1993:10). In turn civic organisations, many of which were funded by the Kagiso Trust 'became increasingly involved in development-related activities' (Seekings et al, 1993:21).

In addition to pressure from the donors to shift towards a 'development' paradigm, they also insisted that the covert funding methods used in the 1980s must now be formalised. As discussed in the second chapter, money had come to South Africa via certain 'clearing houses' such as the SACC and distributed with the minimum of controls. In part this was to allow for maximum flexibility but also to protect the recipients from the government's attention. This situation was no longer necessary, nor was it acceptable to the donors, who demanded that their funding be accounted for (Seekings et al 1993:3). In addition, as the transition progressed, donors made clear that money would not in future be granted for use on a discretionary basis but according to developmental criteria and accountability based upon evaluations of the NGO's work.

Yet, it is important to add that the period of 'special' donor support was not over quite yet. The transition, as noted above, was far from certain, and some donors were sympathetic to the position that the 'struggle' would not be over until the National party was out of power. Furthermore the situation in the country was extremely tense and some programmes had to be

launched in response to crises. Thus donors signalled a change in their funding arrangements with South Africa, but in practise some funds continued to flow which could be used at the discretion of NGOs. Thus it was a period of donor inspired change, and yet offered space for some continuation of the NGOs' discretionary activities.

The consequences of pressure from donors and the breakdown of the former 'protest' networks, have been described well by Walters, who, in conclusion, is quoted at length,

community organisations in South Africa were losing their special political status amongst funders and were being invited to join the world of 'development'. Community organisations were encouraged to no longer talk of protest or resistance politics but rather 'development work'. Motivated by the need to raise funds and the need to change the orientation of their work, many community organisations acceded to the pressure (1993:12).

3.1.3. The Ecumenical Movement and the Transition

The ecumenical movement in South Africa, including of course the WPCC, had to adapt to the new situation. They came under similar pressures as other sections of the NGO sector. Their rhetoric had to change particularly concerning the government. Tristan Borer noted in 1991 that 'this process of negotiation has presented somewhat of a dilemma both for the ANC and for the churches who have been forced to negotiate with a regime they consider illegitimate' (1991:37). Thus, while the position of the SACC, the WPCC and indeed the ANC was that the government was illegitimate, their support for the negotiations precluded the pure negativity toward it of the 1980s. They had entered a period where solutions were required rather than simply protest. Charles Villa-Vicencio put it like this (in conversation): they could no longer just say 'no' as they had to the apartheid government, now they had to learn to say 'yes' to some policies and 'no' to others. In an increasingly complex situation this required a redefinition of their position and reorientation of their policies. As Villa-Vicencio put it: 'they had to scratch their head hard after 1990' to find their most appropriate role for the transition and beyond.

In making its changes the ecumenical movement was subject to similar pressures as the NGO sector in general, which was discussed above. Their donors encouraged the SACC to shift towards a development paradigm; and the ecumenical organisations experienced a loss of political profile and the demise of their networks of operation. In addition many of the SACC's programmes, such as the Dependants Conference, and the purpose of its Funds, such as the Asingeri Fund, were no longer needed in view of the release of prisoners and the end

of the state of emergency. The new political situation, therefore, demanded a change in the activities of the ecumenical organisations.

The rhetoric of the SACC showed a marked change towards the language of nation building, such as 'reconstruction and development', as early as 1991. In that year it restructured its organisation, and these changes dramatically effected the WPCC which lost half its staff and likewise restructured its organisation. This shall be discussed below in greater detail. The WPCC was not only under pressure from the SACC, and therefore the donors, but it too had to hone its analysis of the prevailing situation and deduce its role and the application of contextual theology to the prevailing situation. For this reason a Theological Officer, Shun Govender, was employed early in 1992. With his help the Ecumenical Officer, Bennie Witbooi, helped lead the council towards a fresh analysis of the contemporary issues of nation building, development, civil society and economic justice. The other staff, meanwhile, proceeded with new programmes, largely in their traditional constituencies, which were relevant to the changing context. At the same time, with the loss of its traditional networks, the WPCC had to find new ways to produce its work and impact society.

This chapter provides a detailed analysis of the activities of the WPCC in the last few months of the transition period, which included the elections of 1994. It will be noted that some of the WPCC's activities still bore resemblance to its work in the 1980s, but that much was specifically related to the transition. Furthermore the WPCC's own movement towards a 'development' paradigm became particularly clear, especially in its work with women and in the 'Church and Development' conference which it helped to produce annually from 1992. The focus upon the church and development was also significant, and signalled part of a general shift in the WPCC's focus from the macro-political issues which characterised its thinking in the 1980s, towards the church and its role in society, to which the WPCC turned in the 1990s. In the 1980s the WPCC had concentrated upon issues such as the states of emergency, the Tricameral parliament, detentions without trial and so forth. In the 1990s these were replaced by topics such as the church and civil society, the church and development, and the social teaching of the church. Shun and Bennie focused their social and theological expertise upon these issues as a channel for their social polemics. In this way the WPCC retained its relevance and found a new niche for its intellectual work.

In practical terms the WPCC's continued to be concerned with the promotion of campaigns. During the transition, however, these no longer concerned strikes, boycotts and marches, they were now about the problem of violence experienced during the transition, and the practise of development and the running of the elections. These were relevant contributions to the period. In these it continued to work with its traditional allies, but as explained above changes in the entire sector had weakened the 1980s networks. Furthermore the WPCC also lost

much of the voluntary support which it had had in the 1980s, as Father Curran (former executive member of the WPCC) said, 'there's nothing like a bit of oppression to bring people together. When things got a bit better people tended to get on with their own work'. The imperative for co-operation had gone, and the outer fringes of the ecumenical movement returned to denominational issues and to the question of differences in ecclesiology and theology. The WPCC, however, found 'new' channels of operation including the use of 'official' channels of local government and increasingly it relied upon the few other ecumenical agencies in Cape Town. It also tried to stimulate closer relations with the church., particularly given its focus upon the activities of the church in society.

Nevertheless, despite changes, the WPCC in some respects maintained its traditional working pattern of working in response to crises. Only in its women's work did it become subject to fulfilling a pre-determined 'development' programme. Although it was aware that funding arrangements would change in due course, the staff continued to enjoy a large degree of latitude in their work, funded from the SACC by broad annual programme grants. Furthermore, it continued to regard the 'struggle' as incomplete and retained a hostile attitude towards the government. Although the WPCC no longer actively promoted the ANC, since it was now a political party and the WPCC wanted to promote an image of independence, nevertheless its sympathies remained with the ANC's cause and this helped to stimulate the WPCC's participation in the election process, which it regarded as the last great act of the 'struggle'.

This chapter explores the issues of transition for the WPCC. Much of the data used was gathered by participant observation between November 1993 and June 1994. The presentation of the material is intended to provide an ethnographic account of the organisation, and there is therefore an attention to detail to put 'flesh' upon a dry account of its work. The coverage of the material will also help to provide the background to the fourth chapter, which deals with the dilemmas which the WPCC faced following the elections.

3.2. Negotiating Political Change: The Restructuring of the SACC

Walters argued in 1993:

there has been a shift in funding from anti-apartheid activity to funding 'development'. The impacts of this have been far reaching. There have been reports of funds 'drying up' for several organisations... the Western Province Council of Churches (WPCC) and the Community Arts Project (CAP) are examples of local organisations that are forced to cut back on staff (1993:17).

The 'end of apartheid' announced in 1990 was followed by the demise of several non-governmental organisations most closely associated with the struggle against it, and amongst these the WPCC suffered a dramatic reduction in its staff and activities. Political change had forced a reevaluation by the SACC of its work, and of its relationship to the other organisations in the South African ecumenical movement. Many aspects of the SACC's work had become redundant following the release of prisoners, the ending of the state of emergency and the re-emergence of the political movements after their unbanning. Furthermore the SACC's donor partners also reviewed their commitment to South Africa. Funding issues at the SACC, and the wishes of its donors, together with its own intention to be relevant to the transition period, forced a re-analysis of the SACC's aims and structure during the first half of the transition period. Since the WPCC was entirely dependent upon SACC funding, and much of its work was performed on behalf of the SACC in Cape Town, these issues were of much consequence for the WPCC.

In October 1991 the World Council of Churches held a 'consultation' at a hotel in Sea Point, Cape Town, with the SACC, which the WPCC helped to host. The consultation 'Towards an Ecumenical Agenda for a Changing South Africa' was led by WCC General Secretary and leading liberation theologian Emilio Castro. The aim of the consultation was to assist the SACC to set its agenda for the future. Several key issues were raised upon which the South African ecumenical movement could focus in the future, these included: economic issues; political justice; violence; and education for democracy. The consultation had again 're-affirmed our commitment to critical solidarity with the poor and the oppressed'. It passed a resolution to continue a 'prophetic' role, to defend the rights of the poor and to build a perspective on constitutional issues and nation building.

Hence the ecumenical movement continued to identify its role in South Africa in the socio-political sphere, where it had worked in the past. As the SACC restructured in 1991 it tried to retain the vision of an active socio-political ecumenism. At the 1991 SACC conference, delegates referred to many issues which they wanted to see the SACC address: economic redistribution; the education crisis; violence; affirmative action; the distribution of land. In its *'Message to the Churches'* the conference called upon the church not to, 'vacate the thorny ground where political, economic and constitutional issues have to be debated and a prophetic word from the church be spoken' (SACC Conference 1991).

However, delegates were also aware that the SACC was under pressure from the donors and from some staff within the organisation to find new types of programmes. Some of its donor agencies began to question the need for the multi-million rand grants which the SACC received, indicating that political work by the SACC did not, in the new climate, justify the funding it received. The SACC, therefore, wanted to continue as before, but it had to adapt to

the new situation in such a way as to retain the necessary financial support to maintain its operations. Notably there was a shift in the rhetoric concerning the issues of debate at the 1991 conference which was no longer so much about 'protest', but now of community programmes for 'empowerment' to build a new nation - in other words the rhetoric of development and nation building rather than of political 'struggle'. Willie Engelbrecht, in his report to the 1991 national conference called for:

..a ministry of empowering the people so that they may shake off their shoulders this debilitating sense of dependency. I want to challenge the SACC and its member churches to design community programmes that seek to respond to the crises in our country as a preparation for a new South Africa. Programmes of education, reconstruction and reconciliation.

The SACC wanted to remain focused upon national social and political issues, as before, but the donors were indicating that finance in the future would be for 'development' work, and thus it was having to change its rhetoric and its approach to issues.

Furthermore, the SACC was put under pressure by its donors to alter its clandestine distribution of funds. During the 'struggle' it had been acceptable to distribute funds without many controls or records, for the sake of confidentiality, but this was now perceived as unaccountable and lacking in 'transparency'. The SACC decided in 1991, therefore, that it needed to rationalise and restructure its organisation in order to present a new image, to show increased accountability and to formalise the financial relationships between it and the smaller councils. Thus, at its 1991 National Conference the SACC decided that the regions, such as the WPCC, should lose their autonomy and become formal branches of the SACC. The SACC decided that it could no longer give block administration grants, but that all staff would be paid directly from Johannesburg as employees of the SACC. Furthermore, since there had been a decrease in funding, and there was an expectation of further reductions in the future, it further required that all the branches reduce their compliment of staff.

The SACC also decided upon a completely revised departmental organisation for the 1990s, and the branches were required to follow its pattern. The old committees and ministries were disbanded and three new departments were created, each of which had its head office in Johannesburg and regional offices acted as branches. In addition, the SACC itself also continued various other ministries. The nation-wide departments were Development and Training Ministries; Education and Renewal Ministries; and Justice and Social Ministries. In addition an SACC committee was proposed on Faith and Mission to reflect upon local and global issues from a theological point of view, and the Standing for the Truth campaign was

continued. Other task force committees were established to tackle the issues which had been identified during the WCC/SACC consultation held in Cape Town in October 1991.

The effect of the structural changes upon the WPCC itself were profound. The 1991 restructuring cost it its autonomy. The WPCC executive, under which the WPCC had grown and taken shape, became rather superfluous after this since the staff were now directly accountable to Johannesburg. The Dependants Conference, having completed a major programme to debrief and rehabilitate those released from prison, was finally closed down. The WPCC executive concluded that it had been, 'one of the most outstanding witnesses of the church in this region, nationally and internationally at a time when the forces of oppression and Apartheid were at their wildest' (Council meeting, 1991). Its closure marked the end of an important and prominent associate ministry of the WPCC. Some of the Dependants Conference staff took on the new ministries at the WPCC. A theological officer was appointed to assist the ecumenical officer to reorientate the direction of the Council back toward the church itself. However, since they chose to appoint Shun Govender (who has a strong commitment to contextual theology), he served to reinforce a society-focused WPCC and avoided any reorientation towards issues of doctrine or piety. His contribution has been to strengthen the WPCC's attention to analysis, particularly upon issues of justice, and these have been propagated through WPCC publications such as Eculink and Behold (see below). Since the WPCC had become constitutionally and financially bound to the SACC it did not have the freedom to compete with the SACC for funding or develop significant programmes unilaterally. SACC requirements forced the WPCC to cut its staff contingent from nineteen to nine, and by all accounts the retrenchments proved to be painful, and at times acrimonious.

During 1991/ 92 the WPCC took on its new structure with two officers, three ministry co-ordinators and four support staff as a branch of SACC. Only one new staff person had been appointed (outside of the WPCC/Dependants Conference): these were still the same people who had had sleepless nights fighting the government in the 1980s and had developed the WPCC into a prominent organisation in its own right in the kiln of opposition politics. It was not easy for the WPCC to adjust to the new situation: the organisation had been transformed since the pre - 1981 years of quarterly council meetings and there was no precedent for a WPCC outside of the 'struggle'.

3.3. The Organisation of the WPCC

The restructuring made in 1991 had left the WPCC's staff reduced to nine, and its executive superfluous to the running of the WPCC. Yet the executive continued to meet and to contribute to the WPCC, particularly helping Bennie and Shun to reflect upon the role of the organisation in society. The staff may have lost colleagues, and the 'enemy' of apartheid had

demised, but they continued to work with determination and commitment in a style which owed much to the 'crisis' approach of the 1980s.

The following sections are drawn from my ethnographic fieldnotes and I have used a descriptive style and first names, as I explained in the methodology, to bring this discussion of the WPCC closer to the reality of the organisation as I experienced it. This section concerns the organisation of the WPCC - its staff, executive, routine and organisational norms. Despite high levels of staff activity and independence, they nevertheless held a daily time of devotions, and the character of these meetings revealed the heart of the organisation. The section which follows this one concerns the activities of the WPCC.

3.3.1. The Staff

During the 1980s the WPCC's staff had risen to twenty-five, but there were only ten staff at the WPCC during the period of my research (November 1993-June 1994). Revd. Bennie Witbooi, the Ecumenical Officer, occupied the upstairs office with the large sitting room. Dr. Shun Govender, the Theological Officer had an office below, as had Priscilla Bennet the Financial Administrator. These were the most senior staff. One secretary, Elizabeth Schutter, worked for them all. At the far end of the building, off the board room, were the offices of Revd. Charles Williams, co-ordinator of the Education and Renewal Ministries department, and Moeketsi Ntsane, co-ordinator of the Justice and Social Ministries department. In the middle of the building, opposite Priscilla's room was the office of Nabs Wessels, co-ordinator of the Development and Training Ministries department. The receptionist, Pamela Crowley acted as secretary/administrator of the three departments, assisted by a volunteer, Chantal Fortuin. Betty Fransman held the responsibility to administer the resource room and photocopier, and to clean and cater. All of the staff were middle aged, excepting Chantal who was younger and Betty who was older. All had strong characters and acted with confidence both inside and outside of their working environment.

3.3.2. The Executive

While the executive and the committees played a useful intellectual role in the council, after the 1991 restructuring they lost the strength and importance which they had had in the 1980s. In part the employment of full time staff had reduced their importance, but it was the loss of autonomy to the SACC in 1991 which had made the role of the executive largely unnecessary. Furthermore, the enthusiasm to meet regularly had also waned by comparison with the 1980s when the executive and committees had met, at times almost daily, in reaction to political developments. The altered political climate; the breakdown of old networks; the

faltering progress of the negotiations; the increasing diversity and complexity of the issues under discussions... these factors mitigated against the role of the executive and the committees which they had fulfilled in the 1980s 'crisis modus operandi'.

During my period of research the WPCC's executive was led by Courtney Sampson, Anglican chaplain at UWC. Some of its members were priests, and others academics and community workers. They formed a type of 'eldership' for the Council and concerned themselves chiefly with the direction and future of the organisation, and developing a general critique of ecumenism in South Africa. Sometimes difficult and controversial issues within the WPCC would be discussed by the executive. However, by virtue of the prominent position of many of its members the executive found it difficult to arrange meetings and only a couple were held during my six months of fieldwork. An executive task force established to help Bennie and Shun plan the WPCC's future met more regularly, and Courtney Sampson played an important role in the running of the Council through attending staff meetings and offering to help resolve any problems. He fulfilled something of a pastoral capacity, particularly since he was somewhat detached from the organisation and yet well informed about its dynamics.

Other people were occasionally involved in the workings of the WPCC through departmental committees. Each department is intended to have a committee, drawn from the churches and other ecumenical organisations, to meet with the department co-ordinator and help him/her to critique what (s)he was doing and to plan future activities. Committees were also intended to be a pool of voluntary personnel upon which the co-ordinator could draw. There were some individuals who had had a particularly long association with one of the departments (or their previous equivalents) and tended to work regularly with its co-ordinator. These people were usually on the departmental committee, and perhaps the executive too. Full committee meetings were rare, since, like the executive, few members had the flexibility to attend meetings during the day, but there were some particular individuals, mostly retired or working for another NGO, with whom the co-ordinators did regularly liaise.

3.3.3. The Organisation - Camaraderie

The tradition of the WPCC had been one of camaraderie in the 'struggle'. The organisational character of the WPCC in the 1980s, the 'crisis modus operandi' - holding emergency meetings, working to the point of exhaustion, rapidly developing strategies to respond to the latest events - required teamwork, flexibility and energy. Amongst the staff at the WPCC their style of work bore many similarities to that of the 1980s. They continued to work independently of one another, like activists, yet with a sense of camaraderie. At the WPCC I found that there was a premium upon individual initiative and flexibility. The work was not highly controlled nor regulated; on the contrary the atmosphere was one of trust and non-

interference. The programme staff organised the work of their own departments and only sometimes co-ordinated with other members of staff. The 'WPCC' is the product of the whole, each department playing a different part, without interference from above. The approach allowed the staff a free hand to pace themselves, and provided them with the facilities and freedom to pursue projects which they were interested in.

The office worked to very few rules. Ultimately supervision lay with the two officers, Bennie and Shun, but neither liked a 'boss mentality'. They did not actively supervise the staff and only stepped in when it was necessary, and then with reluctance. Bennie described his method of leadership as 'laissez-faire' and he and Shun used the phrase 'mutual accountability' to define their ideal for staff relationships. The pastoral approach of the officers laid more emphasis upon oversight than management.

Although it was recognised that the officers were the senior staff, followed by the department co-ordinators and then the administrative staff, there was nevertheless a sense of communalism which overcame any feelings of an imposing hierarchy. Several factors have contributed to this. The tradition of the 1980s lived on in the way the staff carried on their work. Another reason for the sense of camaraderie was that there remained a remarkably homogeneous outlook on life in general, and of the work of the council in particular, due in part to there being only a few staff and all of them having come to the Council, originally, for the struggle and for ecumenism. Thirdly, all of the staff were, at the time of research, paid by the SACC in Johannesburg, and in a sense they were fellow employees of a far away boss. The SACC was regarded as having the responsibility for any problems concerning finances and authority structures. Thus while Bennie and Shun led the WPCC, and the executive continued to consider the Council's work, the blame for any long-term frustration could be directed towards Johannesburg.

The 'crisis modus operandi' was, however, in decline in the 1990s. The number of organisations participating in the WPCC's networks was in sharp decline. As already noted, over 100 organisations closed in the greater Cape Town area between 1989 and 1991 (Walters, 1993:9), and most of these were the WPCC's former UDF allies, including the UDF itself. Other organisations had concentrated upon advising political parties, particular charity work or in most cases development work. Thus the networks which had concentrated upon activism in the 1980s were in rapid decline in the transition period. Rapid reaction to issues, and the harnessing of popular sentiment, was also far more difficult to achieve when the issues in question were difficult, long term, and complex problems under negotiation. The polarised politics and the severe government repression of the 1980s subsided during the negotiated transition. In general, the nature of the transition period was not conducive to mass mobilisation by small community organisations and NGOs. The mass action which did occur in 1992 was under the leadership of the ANC and the Unions. The WPCC's staff still

tended to roll from grappling with one cause and onto the next, but the tempo of its work was becoming more regular and they began to deal with more long term issues as the transition progressed.

Amongst all of the staff there remained a strong sense of vocational commitment to their work, and from this stemmed a sufficiently strong work ethic to avoid any lethargy. At times, in fact, all members of staff worked far beyond the call of their employment conditions. However, while a sense of zest and security did characterise the staff, it did tend to abate when both Bennie and Shun were absent. Bennie and Shun have strong characters, and the administrative staff, in particular, were more confident and at ease when they were present to give leadership, answer queries and display enthusiasm. In their absence conflicts sometimes began to emerge.

The administrative staff supported the programme staff, and maintained the office. Since there were some specific expectations of each of them there was more room here for tension and conflict, which could occur between the programme staff (those who ran the WPCC's activities) and the administrative staff. The administration staff had to keep the office working well and honour their secretarial commitments. They stayed in the building all day while the others rushed to meetings. It was easy for them to feel disregarded, unsupported, and overloaded. In particular the secretary assigned to the three departments found, at one time, that the work load she was given was too great, and conflicts arose over whom she completed work for and whom she did not. When tensions became high, Courtney Sampson, the chairperson of the executive, came to chair a staff meeting where grievances were aired with considerable frankness and resolutions established. In general, however, all of the staff benefit from working in an environment which consciously works upon principles of understanding. The administration staff were not expected to do more than they could during the day, and the programme staff, rather, were expected to do any excess work themselves. Since the volume of work was large, all of the programme staff ended up doing much of their own administration.

Amongst the programme staff themselves there were fewer problems in terms of interpersonal conflict, and in fact the WPCC as a whole generally enjoyed much better relationships than other organisations which I have seen. In addition to the camaraderie, problems tended not to arise since the programme staff were often out of the office and preoccupied with other issues. Furthermore, the staff had been together for a long time, some for ten years, and a mutual respect had been established, forged in working together against apartheid. There were not any major differences over the direction of the organisation, in large measure due to the combination of the independence of each department and the taking of corporate decisions together in meetings. The staff held a common commitment to the sort of work they were doing and how it was to be done and so major problems were avoided;

where there were clashes these were over procedural issues. On several occasions attempts were made to begin a weekly staff meeting to address such issues, but the unpredictable nature of the work of the programme staff meant that these never become regular.

3.3.4. Daily Devotions

Devotions represented an important time of the day for the WPCC because it set the tone for the organisation and was the only regular meeting which brought the staff together. The rationale which gives coherence and reason to the activities of the WPCC is the form of Christianity to which it holds as an ecumenical organisation, which was outlined in the first chapter. Each working day the WPCC holds a short period of devotions which reflects and reinforces its creed. Devotions provided a revealing opportunity to gain insight into the thinking of the organisation during the transition.

The WPCC's day began with devotions at 8.45am . Some staff may have come in prior to this time, but all were expected to attend devotions. In practise, however, if a staff member had other engagements they did not attend. Nabs was seldom there, for instance, since she often ran workshops in the mornings. Generally there were no more than five staff present. One person would read out loud the day's reading from the WPCC's devotional booklet Behold, I make all things new.

Behold is a small publication; each edition contains daily readings sufficient for two months, each of which reflects briefly upon a verse of scripture. It is produced by Bennie and Shun, and they encourage staff, executive members and friends to contribute entries. It was intended to be different to other daily devotional Bible notes available in South Africa, produced by groups such as the Scripture Union, Bennie and Shun argue that the 'evangelical' notes tend toward 'pietism' and, says Bennie, they, 'fail to address the context... a lot of the spiritual stuff is out of touch with reality'. Until there was an alternative publication, Bennie and others had nothing to offer their congregations. There was he says, a 'gap'. So the WPCC produced its own ecumenical notes as daily reflections which focus upon societal issues. Its design relates a daily bible verse, which appears at the top, to context through the commentary below. It is intended as a vehicle of community development rather than primarily spiritual (although, Shun argues, the two go 'hand in hand'). Shun says that it is, 'not something hanging in the air, 'too spiritual', but something grounded in everyday life'. As the title suggests, it's ultimate focus is upon bringing in 'the kingdom' (as defined by contextual theology). For this reason it is not, they say, liked by 'conservatives' but does go down well in the townships. Payment for the booklet, at R1 per month, is upon receipt. However, since so few recipients pay, it has run at a substantial loss since it began, and the costs are becoming prohibitive. At one time 10,000

copies per month were sent out, but by mid-1994 this has been cut to a bi-monthly edition run to around five thousand copies. The booklet is sent internationally, Bennie and Shun are delighted to tell, to the WCC chapel; the Ghana Council of Churches (apparently for use by Ghanaian parliamentarians), and to seminaries in India, the United States and Europe.

Most of the readings are written by Shun or Bennie and conclude with a short prayer. After someone has read the prayer would usually be said together. After this there was the opportunity to 'share'; the intention being to discuss the significance of the reading and anything else of particular concern. It was very unusual, however, that the reading was discussed, although if one of the two officers was present they usually added something (since they tend to write the pieces). Instead one would find that the reading sparked a current affairs discussion. For instance, a reading which mentioned 'Christ our refuge' led to a discussion about refugees coming to Cape Town; or a passage entitled '*welcoming strangers*' led to discussion about the plight of street children. Thus when the devotional reading did stimulate discussion it was invariably about social problems, and those in turn were related to the 'apartheid regime'. It always surprised me that there was virtually no discussion whatsoever of theological issues. Even those which arose directly from the reading and seemed purely spiritual in concern were 'materialised' and taken as a motif for social problems.

In prayers and discussions there was the use of biblical motifs but with them a certain defensiveness. On the rare occasions that discussion did enter theological ground, efforts were made to explain away references to the miraculous. The Red Sea did not part, for instance, rather Moses knew a route across to the north, or he had been aided by a particularly strong wind. Daniel was not eaten by the lions because 'they were well fed'. The fiery furnace proved harder to explain but was attributed to 'wisdom literature'. Spiritual experiences, of evil or poltergeist, which several said that they had had, were similarly shrugged off and put down to psychology or left unexplained. In prayer too they tended to avoid expectations of divine intervention. Once Bennie prayed about a sick person, but said in his prayer 'we cannot pray for physical healing at this stage..' but asked the Lord to heal '..in the many other ways you heal'. In effect the periods of devotion reinforced a demythologised Christianity which plays down the spiritual and encourages a concern for the material, particularly the needs of the poor. Furthermore, devotions tended to emphasise rationality and human responsibility and to veer away from notions of dependence upon divine activity.

Following the reading the staff sometimes shared particular concerns about their community or family. All of the staff were involved in community organisations of various sorts - trade unions, churches, the ANC, community liaison committees, civic associations and so forth. They described these as 'grassroots organisations', emphasising their role in activism and community politics. Drawing from their involvement in these organisations they kept one

another up to date with events in their localities. Occasionally, when a particular concern was shared of a personal nature, if Shun, Bennie or Charles were present (all are ministers) they might say a prayer about the issue. This was done in a rather formal manner using a sober tone and impersonal language, in the Anglican and Reformed tradition these men come from.

The character of devotions reinforced a distinctly unpious atmosphere at the WPCC. The WPCC is not a place for religiosity or sanctimonious comments, sometimes, in fact, the language was somewhat coarse and the air thick with cigarette smoke. Yet there was a strong morality: an ethic of justice; disgust at what offends people's dignity; a concern for the 'community' and for people's well being. This was evident in a concern for me as a person, and indeed for anyone who came through the door, (although it must be said that they struggled to respect those with more politically conservative views than their own).

The ideology which was apparent from devotions clearly showed that the concerns of liberation theology, and of bringing in 'the kingdom', were as strong as ever. The demise of apartheid may have weakened the focus of their analysis, but it had not altered the strength of their commitment to the advancement of 'the kingdom' in society. What had happened, however, was that with the breakdown of the 'crisis modus operandi' the WPCC had refocused its message of the 'kingdom' away from the political environment towards its church constituency, however the reorientation of the WPCC towards the church will be discussed again below.

3.3.5. Daily Routine

Devotions was the only routine feature of the WPCC's corporate organisation. The style and nature of its work led to great diversity in what happened at the WPCC during the day. Once devotions were over the programme staff went their various ways to pursue their own agenda for the day. Yet the WPCC was an important base for them, which provided them with a focus, an identity and resources for their work.

After devotions the five administrative staff worked in their different areas. The programme staff sometimes stayed to work on a report or to make phone calls, but usually they would quickly left for a meeting, or possibly to host one at the WPCC. It is hard, therefore, to describe the atmosphere at the WPCC during the day. Sometimes it was very quiet indeed, just a silent building with isolated spots of industry at computer screens with most office doors shut. At other times the small corridors of the WPCC were packed with all manner of people: - Angolan refugees; American 'exposure' visitors; church or NGO people arriving for meetings, and possibly backed by a hub-bub of discussions amongst the staff in the kitchen. It all depended upon what was going on. There were indeed all sorts of people who passed

through the door of the WPCC. There were many visitors from overseas. These people tended to have some link with the ecumenical movement, perhaps another Council of Churches elsewhere or a donor agency in Europe. The officers always tried to give visitors a presentation of the council's work, and Moeketsi was often asked to show them Cape Town, its beauty, its wine and its poverty.

Others who came to the WPCC were refugees and the desperately poor (or their pretenders) who came to the Council of Churches looking for help. The ANC and other offices tended, at one time, to redirect those who came to them for help to the WPCC. For a while the WPCC also distributed UNHCR (United Nations High Commission for Refugees) grants. Almost daily refugees, particularly from Angola, arrive in Cape Town. Priscilla, who would not suffer fools gladly, met with those coming for help and tried to establish their real needs. Generally she requires a letter from a local priest and liaised with him about what could be done for the person(s). Priscilla gave advice, primarily, but also food. In June 1994 she began a refugees project, and the chapel was turned into a sewing workshop supervised by a Portuguese lady from Sea Point. The intention was that the refugees should sell what they produced and so become free of dependency upon WPCC hand-outs.

Much of the life of the WPCC revolves around meetings, some of which are held at the WPCC in the board room or the lounge adjoining the office of the Ecumenical Officer; and it is to the external activities of the WPCC to which the discussion turns.

3.4. The Activities of the WPCC During the Transition

'We have sought and continue to seek how best we can serve our society as the ecumenical movement in the Western Province. Our role includes the need to reflect the different sectors of our constituency. These are marked by the following: The people in the pews, the heads of our churches, the Christian activists, the various theological institutions around us and those who are victims of our society in their misery of poverty, homelessness, illiteracy, hunger, unemployment etc.' (Courtney Sampson, Foreword Ecumenical Ministries in the Western Cape WPCC Booklet 1992)

The following section seeks to present an ethnographic account of how the WPCC sought 'to serve our society as the ecumenical movement', particularly in the months leading up to the elections in April 1994. Throughout, this section focuses upon the ways the WPCC's activities were changing in relation to the transition period. In some ways these reflect its traditional patterns of organisation and its interests, but also its adaptation to the issues of the transition such as peace and election work; and more important still a longer-term shift back towards

the church as an institution, and propagating within it a concern for contemporary social issues according to the tenants of contextual theology. In particular the theme of development became more important at the WPCC as it sought to be relevant to the emerging context for it and the nation. Development also became the main polemic in its work within the church.

3.4.1. Cape Town City of Peace, a Campaign

During the 1980s the WPCC launched campaigns in reaction to events. During the transition they continued to co-ordinate campaigns. In the 1980s activists approached the WPCC to help them launch boycotts, demonstrations, strikes and marches. By 1993, however, the WPCC was assisting in the promotion of peace and reconciliation. In the introduction to this chapter the high levels of violence which haunted the transition process were discussed. This violence threatened to destabilize the country and sabotage the precarious constitutional negotiations. The WPCC's concern was that violence could indeed derail the progress towards democracy. Their response was therefore enthusiastic when Margaret van Leerop approached the WPCC looking for help to launch a peace campaign.

Margaret van Leerop is a highly enthusiastic, indefatigable woman. She attends St. Ignatius Catholic Church in Claremont. Educated in a convent, the child of staunch, Catholic parents, she was brought up to have a strong desire to help people. She has not lost this and believes that to do so pleases God, and that he helps those who try to help others. In 1965 Catholics in the United States began a programme called 'Renew'. It was formulated to bring small groups of people together to discuss personal and community issues and to pray together. These groups were encouraged to plan, over a six week period, a community project of some sort and then to carry it out. 'Renew' has spread to over twenty seven countries and was introduced to South Africa by Archbishop Napier a few years ago. In 1993 Margaret became involved in 'Renew' at St. Ignatius. During the planning phase of her group the Cape Town taxi violence of September and October 1993 flared up. Her group wanted to do something for 'peace'. South Africa was in the grip of what commentators described as a low intensity civil war, and there was much concern to promote a culture of peace in the country, which seemed to be on the edge of catastrophe. The group had recalled that during the Second World War church bells had been rung every Friday lunch time to call for prayers for peace. Margaret committed herself to leading a campaign to restart this practise, and approached the Cape Times newspaper for advice upon how to do so. They told her that it would need the backing of a major religious figure to gain coverage. She turned to the Catholic Archbishop, but he felt that his support might alienate other churches from joining in, and he encouraged her to try the WPCC instead.

In mid-November 1993, Margaret approached the WPCC, although with some caution since she had heard that they were all 'communists'. Following her first meeting with Bennie and Shun she was full of praise. Not only did they agree without hesitation to serve as an umbrella body, but they immediately started to offer her suggestions. They rapidly had and developed the idea of an inter-faith 'Carols by Candlelight Service for Peace' on the Parade. They imagined that all the religious communities and their leaders could be involved in the service. They would use their relationship with Inter-Denominational African Ministers Association of South Africa to involve the black churches and organise bus companies to transport hundreds of people from the townships. They would use their contacts in the media to make press releases, and publish the arrangements in the WPCC's newsletter Eculink, which is distributed to 500 churches and organisations. Special T-shirts would be printed for free distribution, and musicians approached to play, including the symphony orchestra and township bands. Sponsors would have to be found, and they suggested the oil companies whom, they said, were keen to be identified with peace campaigns. Speakers, diplomats, and VIPs would be invited; the airforce could make a flypast. A free booklet on the campaign would be distributed, and a statement drafted for the religious leaders, dignitaries and then the crowd to sign. Bennie and Shun envisaged an event for thousands, an all inclusive opportunity for Capetonians to stand together to declare 'Cape Town a City of Peace'.

Bennie and Shun bounced ideas back and forth, each one bigger than the last. Margaret had come asking how church bells might be rung on Fridays and came away with visions of one of Cape Town's biggest and most historical events unfolding in her mind. The two WPCC officers had spoken with confidence indicating that they had all the necessary contacts to bring it off, and setting a date of the 8th of December twenty-three days later. Bennie and Shun were very keen to do something big, as they explained to her, 'there is mischief going on even now and it will get worse in February and March - which is precisely why we need these initiatives now to squash it'. They saw the campaign as a way to mobilise public opinion so as to isolate the activities of the 'third force' which they perceived to be planning trouble prior to the elections.

Bennie and Shun were confident that they could involve religious leaders across the religious spectrum, and they assured Margaret that 'they know us and they will come'. However they were also aware that any campaign or event led by the WPCC could be perceived to be slanted towards the ANC, because of their reputation as a pro-ANC organisation. They wished to include political groups, but they feared that the campaign might be hijacked for party political purposes. They resolved, therefore, to approach the Mayor and ask her to be a neutral figurehead under whom the rest could join in. The Mayor was new to her post, and they believed that she would be keen to have a campaign to lead, and also the opportunity to build up an alliance with the church. The four of us, with Father Peter-John Pearson (Deputy

Chairperson of the WPCC executive), met the mayor three days latter. She said how delighted she would be to head up the campaign, and how 'very humble' she felt. Like Bennie and Shun she started to offer her suggestions and her contacts - through the use of her press secretary - and her experience and friends in the business community for sponsorship, the design of logos and so forth.

Bennie set about preparing a peace statement to be signed at the event. He called a meeting of the religious community which included Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists in addition to the WPCC's member denominations. With only three days notice all eighteen religious leaders invited met at the WPCC and gave their backing to the campaign but, with Bennie, they wanted the concept of 'justice' to be included alongside that of 'peace'. The statement which Bennie prepared reflected this, emphasising that peace and justice are inseparable. This proved difficult for Margaret, who feared, along with the Mayor, it sounded too 'political'; eventually a compromise was reached and the wording toned down.

In due course, however, the plans were changed. The event on the Parade was judged to be too close to other carol evenings to be successful. Time pressures also were against it, particularly with Bennie and Shun away much of the time. Furthermore, the Mayor's office, began to own it as 'The Mayor's Campaign' and they planned, in consultation with Bennie, Shun and Margaret, a media launch in the civic centre on human rights day, December 10th. Bennie and Shun came up with the idea of a Peace Candle and for the Statement to be signed and launched at this event and then copies subsequently distributed around the city for signatures from the general public

The launch was held but it was very poorly attended, due largely to problems in the Mayor's office over the sending out of invitations. However, the Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu spoke, Catholic Archbishop Henry lit the Candle, various religious leaders said prayers, and the Mayor and the exiled Princess Irene of Greece (on a visit to Cape Town) said some words. It was followed by a pleasant 'finger lunch'. The event was featured on CCV and TV1 news, and part of an interview with Tutu featured on CNN. It was also covered by World Television News. The Cape Town papers did not feature it very highly, apparently in reaction to some differences with the Mayor.

Following this launch the candle, which was very large, was moved around various venues and proved to be in great demand. It was taken to churches and religious places, and the Mayor took it to the Mount Nelson Hotel, on board the QE2 cruise liner and to the Waterfront for events such as the Rothmans Yacht Week. The statement was distributed and although civic structures refused to promote it, through distribution in the churches in excess of 200,000 signatures had been made by early April. The Mayor is said to have had much mail

praising her campaign for peace; and I was told that Peter Mokaba (the ANC Youth League famed for his use of the phrase 'kill the farmer, kill the Boer') approached her prior to the election offering to help lead it. Civic leaders were apparently not impressed by this suggestion. Margaret has carried on working with the Mayor and devising new projects, including peace bumper stickers and T-shirts, and ideas for Khayelitsha feeding schemes. They also launched a campaign to make gifts of peace candles, as reported by the *Weekend Argus*, which said, under a picture, 'Cape Town Mayor Patricia Kreiner and the Cape Town City for Peace committee have launched a Candles For Peace campaign to encourage people to think about peace' (*Weekend Argus*, April 23/24 1994).

Margaret remains full of praise for the WPCC, and she gives them the credit for advancing her committee's work; she told me that, 'without the WPCC I could never have opened the doors which they did for me...you have no idea how these gentlemen have helped, since I came to them this has just mushroomed.' The Mayor should likewise have reason to be grateful.

In some respects this was a classic example of the WPCC at work. An outsider wanted to launch a campaign and came to the WPCC for help, in much the same way as activists and trade union leaders had done in the 1980s. The staff at the WPCC, in turn, generated the ideas, the plans and the contacts which set a campaign in progress. The process was marked by characteristic enthusiasm and vigour, and acted upon with great haste. Furthermore, the campaign was enacted with reference to the wider political context, in this case to alienate the 'third force'. The 'third force' represented conservatism and the preservation of the apartheid system.

The reaction of Bennie and Shun to Margaret's requests was to enlarge it and turn it into a mass demonstration, working on the principle drawn from their experience that mass demonstrations are most effective in generating change in public opinion. It was also characteristic of the WPCC that they pursued the campaign through 'networking', gathering a broad front of support together for the campaign. In doing so they allowed the WPCC to be eclipsed, but their concern was for the cause rather than their own reputation *per se*.

In these respects the WPCC's officers were pursuing this campaign much as they would have mobilised a campaign in the 1980s. However, there were some important differences. Despite the incorporation of many religious organisations the original plans gained little support or momentum - the networks, which had been effective in the 1980s, now lacked coherence and vigour. The use of the mayor was also uncharacteristic. She represented authority structures which the WPCC might have avoided during the 1980s. The result was that the campaign was not a mass demonstration but, essentially a media event launched through the powers of

influence. The mayor's management of the campaign tended to concentrate upon 'high society' and the media. The statement and its distribution in the churches were much more 'populist' in approach; but this was not the work of the mayor, whose civil structures failed to support the mass campaign.

The WPCC thus still approached this campaign in its traditional mindset, but the realities of change had disabled the formation of a mass campaign and the WPCC was adapting instead to the use of 'official' and media channels. Bennie and Shun, however, showed themselves to be adept at utilising these channels to sparking a campaign.

3.4.2. The Umtata Raid - A Demonstration

The WPCC in the 1980s was a pivotal organisation for organisations such as the UDF wishing to organise campaigns to demonstrate against the brutal actions of the government and its security forces. The WPCC used its networks in the churches and in the NGO sector to mobilise mass campaigns of protest. The 'crisis modus operandi' was very effective because the networks co-operated very closely and they reacted quickly to events with a great deal of commitment. They also had a great deal of popular energy upon which to draw. During the transition, however, popular mobilisation declined as negotiations faltered towards a settlement. The networks broke down as the interests of organisations diversified. The WPCC's attempts to respond to the Umtata raid by the South African army demonstrates how weak the 'crisis modus operandi' had become by the end of 1993.

On September 18th 1993 the South African Defence Force launched a raid in the early hours of the morning upon a house in Umtata, the capital of what was still the Transkei homeland. Five youths were shot dead by the soldiers, apparently in cold blood. The government claimed that the house was a PAC military base. The soldiers were not charged and appeared to have been acting under orders.

Following this the WPCC communicated by fax with both the SACC and the Transkei Council of Churches to draw up a response, although on this occasion neither were particularly forthright. In spite of the apparent lack of interest in Umtata and Johannesburg the Justice and Social Ministries committee of the WPCC met to discuss the Umtata incident. There was no question in their minds that the raid had been authorised by the South African government. Nor were they slow to assert that while de Klerk had been recently nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize 'he sent a bunch of murders to kill the innocent in Transkei'. The committee sought ways to highlight their outrage, and so counteract, 'the mileage the NP and white press will try to make out of this' (i.e. the winning of the Nobel Peace Prize).

The committee decided to launch a demonstration on December 10th to bring to the public's attention the 'issue of credibility, insincerity and hypocrisy of Mr. de Klerk'. The tenth of December was not only Human Rights Day, but was also the day on which the Nobel prize was to be awarded. It was also the same day as the 'City of Peace' launch, but they were organised separately. The committee decided upon a service at St. George's Cathedral at lunch time to mourn the 12,000 dead victims of political violence since 1990, followed by a march and wreath laying ceremony outside Parliament for the Umtata youths. So Moeketsi contacted various organisations to promote the event - Black Sash, The Ecumenical Action Movement, Lawyers for Human Rights, the Civil Rights League, Women's groups and church denominational justice departments.

On the day no more than fifty people gathered at St. George's. Speakers tended to focus upon the Umtata Raid, by then almost three months previous, accusing the Government of 'snuffing out life' and encouraging those gathered to keep 'marching for justice'. It had all the rhetoric of a 1980s WPCC June 16th service (see the following chapter), but without the teeming thousands and police entourage, and somehow it sounded hollow, just four months from a general election. The calls to 'salute the heroes of our struggle' were understood, but it seemed to me now in remembrance and no longer in the present. It seemed a service for old times' sake. Afterwards those gathered marched around to the front of Parliament, numbers swelled by intrigued and delighted tourists, excited to see some South African 'struggle', and a few Black Sash ladies who had been engaged in another demonstration. The marchers held a banner demanding respect for human life and carried placards reading 'Umtata Raid = Nobel Prize ?'. In front of parliament they laid wreaths in memory of those who had died. A few police looked on nonchalantly, the Weekend Argus carried a small picture on page five, Mr. De Klerk remained oblivious, award in hand. Moeketsi lamented to me, 'a few years ago the whole of Cape Town would have turned out'. A member of the Theological Exchange Programme later derided those churchmen who had rather attended the City of Peace launch for bowing to 'the golden calf' and it was 'a sign of the times' - to be the champion of 'middle class' calls for peace while neglecting the work of calling for 'justice'.

The disappointment highlighted a telling change which had occurred since 1990. The demonstration service had been organised in much the same way as, for instance, a June 16th service had been in the 1980s: a committee met; consultation was made with other organisations; and the details were circulated amongst the WPCC's network of organisations. Yet, while in the 1980s such methods had produced massive response, in the 1990s there was a mere handful. There are several reasons for this. The momentum of protest had been lost, the response to the raid was very slow. Secondly, the failure of many organisations to even attend, let alone organise large numbers, showed that they had lost either the interest, or the capacity to pursue the style of political protest as they had in the 1980s. More fundamentally

perhaps, the language of 'struggle' had become hollow; those still using it bewailed the lack of response it had generated, not realising that with an election only four months away the character of South African politics and the prevailing rhetoric had left them behind.

The contrast in approach could not have been greater, that at the same time, on the other side of the city Bennie and Shun were launching the 'City of Peace' campaign through a media launch at the civic centre. This campaign, launched through 'official' channels and using the rhetoric of 'peace' gained international attention and 200,000 signatures. For those still talking of 'struggle' this may have been a bowing to a 'golden calf', but the reality was that the 1980s style of organisation and rhetoric no longer worked, but the 'City of Peace' had indicated new ways for the WPCC to network and campaign.

3.4.3. International Ecumenism

In a very clear way the contemporary character of the WPCC was inspired by the international ecumenical movement. The stance of the World Council of Churches against apartheid had been clear and emphatic; this had deeply influenced the South African Council of Churches, and had helped to inspire the Christian Institute. In turn these two organisations inspired and enabled the activities of the WPCC after 1977.

The intense concern of international ecumenism for the South African movement helped to encourage donors in the north to support the SACC, which in turn was of great benefit to the WPCC during the 1980s. Furthermore, interest in South Africa has made its ecumenical movement the destination for many international visitors keen to see the situation and the work of the ecumenical movement first hand, and this was particularly so during the transition period. Visitors gave the WPCC exposure to people from across the world, and many helpful contacts as a result. However, visitors were also been a burden to the Council. They tended to disrupt the WPCC's work, and incur considerable costs upon it not only in terms of time but also financially.

Visitors come, principally, from organisations and donor agencies with which the WPCC is associated. The WPCC has contacts with a large number of ecumenical organisations, not only through its own links, built up principally during the 1980s, but also through its close association with the Ecumenical Foundation of Southern Africa, the Theological Exchange Programme and the SACC. The staff at the WPCC are generally sceptical about the motives and intentions of those from the north, but some have won their trust and become highly regarded. Hans Ingle, of Sweden Church Aid, for instance, was introduced by Courtney as 'a big friend of the church's struggle for freedom'.

Since the early 1980s the WPCC has received many visitors keen to hear about and to see the effects of apartheid in Cape Town. Father Curran told me that at times in the 1980s the pressure of entertaining these visitors had been to the detriment of the Council's work. Between January and June 1994 the WPCC hosted visitors from: the WCC; Christian Aid; the Hong Kong Council of Churches; Swedish theological students; students from the USA; aid workers from the USA; activists from an international women's movement; and a group of Germans from a parish in Berlin. In addition the WPCC received visits from: representatives of the European donor agencies that funded the SACC; monitors from the United Nations during the elections; priests involved with SACC exchange programmes; various students; and a BBC reporter.

Generally a visiting group numbered ten people, sometimes several more, and stayed for around four days. Depending upon the trip it was sometimes necessary for the WPCC to find them accommodation, which was usually the Lutheran Youth Centre in Belgravia, and to transport them around the city. Bennie and Shun always organised quite extensive meetings for visitors, firstly with themselves and then with the other programme staff. They sought to give the visitors a thorough insight into the work of the council and to reply to their questions about South Africa. Furthermore, Bennie and Shun also organised further meetings as requested; the Hong Kong delegates, for instance, were particularly keen to meet Alex Boraine, the head of the Institute for a Democratic Alternative in South Africa, John de Gruchy at UCT, and to visit the ANC provincial headquarters, where the WPCC had arranged for them a meeting with Chris Nissen, now a member of Parliament and the ANC's regional chairman, only a few weeks prior to the election. The WPCC can organise these kind of meetings through old contacts: Nissen, for instance, is a priest who used to conduct his 'struggle' activities from the WPCC, and Boraine is a former President of the Methodist Church; while de Gruchy has had a long involvement with the SACC.

Visitors also request to see particular places or projects. In fact with little prompting Moeketsi or Bennie will give them a full 'WPCC tour' of Cape Town, from the Point, to the Cable Car, to Khayelitsha. The tour is intended to give a full picture of the extremes of the living conditions which apartheid has generated. In the townships the WPCC has links with several welfare projects and with priests who will describe with passion the plight of their people to interested visitors. The people who are coming to the WPCC are generally those seeking 'exposure' to South Africa's situation and they are given a very thorough one, and, in general, seem grateful for the scope of what they are shown.

In one sense all of this is good public relations for the WPCC. Every visitor leaves with a strong image of the WPCC as a very active organisation, and all are given a large bundle of WPCC publications to take away. Most of those visiting the WPCC are linked in some way

or other with overseas donor agencies. One of the ways donor agencies 'reward' their volunteer workers is to organise trips overseas for them to visit the projects they fund. Ultimately it is these funders which keep the WPCC working, and thus it is sensible to treat their people well. It would be wrong, however, to suggest Bennie and Shun are merely concerned with ulterior motives since every visitor from overseas is given the same treatment. There is a desire to share Cape Town, and all its contradictions, in order to sensitise visitors to the existence and realities of injustice, and to give credit to the efforts of those trying to right the wrongs. Those working at the WPCC took great offence at apartheid, in all cases through bitter experiences, and they have not lost the urge to point out its evils nor exalt the attempts to overcome them. Furthermore Bennie and Shun both like to be globally minded, and they are excited by a group such as the WCC one, consisting of people as varied as from Korea, Panama, Ethiopia, Ghana, Burma, Trinidad and India. They like to enquire of the issues which are being tackled by the ecumenical organisations in each country and invariably become involved in discussions about international politics, development, health, literacy, the strength of civil society/ NGOs, and 'capitalist imperialism'.

Receiving visitors, on the other hand, is also costly, in terms of both time and expenses. It is rarely convenient for staff to interrupt their schedule to talk to enquiring visitors, although once they are talking about their work they do so with much excitement and conviction. Driving around is particularly time consuming and expensive. This was usually Moeketsi's job, since he knew the townships best, but others had to fill in for him over the several days a full tour takes. In total the WPCC kombi was driven 1700 km. during the visit of the WCC delegates alone. Visitors are not always particularly co-operative and sometimes arrive before they are due. On occasions, and I was told that this was particularly true of the WCC Cape Town conference of 1991, the WPCC is left accountable for large phone bills, hotel and car hire bills and must sometimes wait months to be reimbursed from Geneva or Johannesburg.

There are other times, however, when the generosity pays off. One American lady was so inspired by the WPCC's tour, in particular a visit to the SHAWCO (Student's Health and Welfare Centre's Organisation) centre for abandoned mothers, that she has begun fund raising for them in the USA and has already sent some supplies from well-wishers. In addition, many of the WPCC staff at some time have been overseas on ecumenical work. Elizabeth worked at Christian Aid in London for a month on an exchange visit, and Moeketsi often spoke of how impressed he was by Canada, where he once attended a WCC gathering, not only for its technology and the welfare system but, profoundly, because he found that everyone treated him with respect, which he told me was a revelation for him after a lifetime living as a black person in South Africa.

The WPCC has also, since the 1980s had links with donor agencies in Scandinavia, as well as other parts of Europe, and Shun was asked to address an ecumenical conference in Sweden in May 1994. At the same time Bennie delivered two papers at a conference in Ghana on civil society, organised by the Ghanaian Council of Churches and funded by the American National Christian Council. Bennie is part of MWENGO (the Reflection and Development Centre for NGOs in East and Southern Africa), which has a centre in Harare and is an organisation established to conduct research and reflection, training and advocacy for NGOs in East and Southern Africa. MWENGO began in 1992 in association with the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC). As part of a MWENGO task force Bennie is called upon to speak on civil society, and it provides him with contacts for the planned WPCC/ TEP (the Theological Exchange Programme) initiative on civil society. Periodically there are AACC meetings in the sub-region or elsewhere on the continent which Bennie attends. Nabs was away for several weeks during March in Israel at a course organised by the Israeli Government to present their development projects. She also travelled to Kenya in June for a conference organised by Sweden Church Aid. All of this international travel comes as a direct, or indirect, result of contact with the broader ecumenical movement - so the giving of hospitality in Cape Town is often reciprocated elsewhere. It should also be noted that when the WPCC becomes independent of the SACC, which shall be discussed in the fourth chapter, the WPCC will have to utilise all of the international financial contacts which it can in order to survive.

3.4.4. Academia

Throughout its history as a council of churches the WPCC has been a forum for reflection and has promoted ideas within the churches, contributing to the churches understanding, particularly in terms of the interaction of the church with society. This work became particularly important in the 1980s as it motivated the church to become involved in the 'struggle'. Its strong intellectual tradition, however, continued in the 1990s as the WPCC harnessed intellectual opinion ('impulses'), focused its polemics upon the church, and tried to propagate its analysis.

During the 1980s academics from UCT such as Charles Villa-Vicencio and Lionel Louw and ministers such as Allan Boesak, provided an intellectual colouring at the WPCC. They helped to stimulate the thinking which provided the critical rationale behind the WPCC's support for the liberation movements. The WPCC has developed a rich tradition of critical analysis, which was not only powerfully presented in Crisis News, but should be seen to have coloured all of the WPCC's activities particularly in the 1980s. Intellectually, the WPCC was both strong and influential. Villa-Vicencio (former WPCC executive member) and de Gruchy are both still at UCT, and Barney Pityana, the Black Consciousness leader who headed the WCC's Programme to Combat Racism, is now a Senior Researcher there, also in the department of

Religious Studies. De Gruchy played a significant role in the thinking of the SACC, although he was not directly involved in the WPCC. Stellenbosch and UWC likewise have prominent academics, in theology and in other departments, who have at times worked with the WPCC.

In 1992 Shun (a doctor of theology) was employed; and Bennie too has an academic background. Furthermore members of the executive are staff members at UWC, and the chairperson is the UWC chaplain, Courtney Sampson. The WPCC therefore was able to retain in the 1990s contact with a network of academics. Although I observed relatively little official contact between these people, they are friends with a long history of working together and retain a keen interest in the work of the ecumenical movement. Their interaction happens at conferences, over the telephone and in homes. Both Bennie and Shun, however, spoke often of the strategic importance of the WPCC's proximity to the three Western Cape universities. It allows the WPCC's officers to remain in regular contact with current debate, and it hones and stimulates their own thinking. Furthermore, through these contacts there are links created between the academic departments, the ecumenical movement, and the church.

One of the few instances of formal contact between the WPCC and the universities during my research was on the 17th November 1993. The UCT Department of Religious Studies hosted a 'Theological and Economic Justice Group'; the aim of which was to research what values are used by the 'grassroots' in making economic decisions, and the ethical and theological issues which these might raise. The programme proposed would aim to stimulate discussion groups in all sectors of society on the subject of economic justice. I was impressed by the list of names involved, although not all of them were present. They included various professors, specialists and activists from the religious, development, economics, business and woman's sectors. Shun and Bennie participated in the debate and advised ways in which the church could best be involved, recommending the use of existing bible study groups. Over some pleasant cocktail snacks and wine, the group helped to advise upon the plan which in time led to the formulation of a grant proposal and, in August 1994, to Barney Pityana setting up the programme to run from UCT.

UCT, in collaboration with the SACC, was responsible for hosting a conference entitled 'Whither the Ecumenical Movement' (31 January to 4 February 1994) at which Konrad Raiser, WCC General Secretary, Frank Chikane (former General Secretary of the SACC) and two other prominent WCC officials were the keynote speakers. The WPCC helped to act as hosts to the visitors. Shun addressed the conference, offering a critique of ecumenism. He argued that it had, particularly in South Africa, lost its critical edge and sense of direction and had become vulnerable to being taken over by 'reactionary' church groups. Bennie also spoke as respondent to one paper, re-iterating his oft-stated position that ecumenism must be rooted in action and must look for what unifies in action rather than trying to establish doctrinal unity.

Bennie and Shun also oversaw the research of a group of Swedish students and of Miriam van Donk, a Dutch woman who was sponsored by a Dutch ecumenical group, Kairos, to research the ownership and use of land by the Dutch Reformed Church. In consultation with a Swedish university Bennie and Shun co-ordinated the visit of eleven students and supervised their research on various aspects of the church in South Africa. The WPCC did much to facilitate their work and acted as a base for them.

Miriam worked from the WPCC for many months and produced a large research paper in early 1994. Using other materials it had previously had researched, the WPCC launched this work as part of a series of readers on the question of land in South Africa, particularly its distribution and the history of forced removals. The launch was held at UWC (University of the Western Cape), on Friday 22nd April. After a finger lunch Shun, Bennie and Courtney addressed the meeting, touching on issues of reconciliation (through righting the wrongs of the past, not trying to forget them) and of the future of the WPCC and ecumenism. Others who addressed the launch included David Mason of the Surplus People Project who called for the church to repent of its acquisition of land through the apartheid system, and Weli Mazamisa of UCT who contributed some theological ideas concerning 'the land'.

In general terms, both Bennie and Shun could be considered academics. Bennie was a lecturer at the Federal Seminary in Pietermaritzburg and has an MA in Systematic Theology from Berkeley, California. He has a paper on the role of Christianity in the demise of the Khoikhoi at the publishers. He plans, in due course, to do a PhD on the topic of the church in civil society. Shun has a Doctorate in Theology from a Dutch university which focused upon the relationship of black theology to Marxism. Shun lectures at Stellenbosch and UWC on other religions, and he writes and speaks on issues of economic justice. Their academic backgrounds are reflected in the nature of their activities at the WPCC. Shun and Bennie work closely together reflecting upon developments in current affairs and the 'impulses' of the time; in other words the issues under discussion in academic and ecumenical circles. Both present papers, of various titles, to conferences and workshops quite regularly. The titles which they have regularly spoken on include 'Reconstruction in South Africa'; 'Democratisation in South Africa'; 'the role of the Church in a Post-Apartheid Society' and the 'Church and Education'.

The staff at the WPCC retained their preoccupation for current affairs, viewed from an ecumenical perspective. They continued to grapple with the issues which arose after 1990 during the transition, such as reconstruction, democracy, land rights and so forth. The thinking of the WPCC, however, became eclipsed by the unbanned political parties involved in the negotiations. The WPCC's intellectual output remained relevant only to a specialised and predominantly theological and academic audience. Such exposure cannot be compared

with the profile of its publications in the 1980s. The loss of profile was also exacerbated by the increasing complexity and the sheer number of issues under discussion regarding South Africa's future. This required specialisation, and during the transition the WPCC intensified its concentration upon certain specific issues relating to the church and its place in society. The theological emphasis had been strengthened by the appointment of Shun as a theological officer during the transition. Furthermore the WPCC was able to work closely with two other ecumenical theological organisations, TEP (the Theological Exchange Programme) and EFSA (the Ecumenical Foundation of Southern Africa).

3.4.5. The WPCC and Local Ecumenical Organisations

During the 1980s the 'crisis modus operandi' gave the WPCC a broad range of contacts with which to work in promoting its analysis of society. In the 1990s this network had dwindled and the WPCC concentrated upon two other ecumenical organisations in the promotion of its work, particularly its work with the church. The WPCC, TEP and EFSA helped each other to promote their common analysis through conferences and mutual assistance. The church became increasingly important as an arena for their work as the unbanned political parties overtook their influence in the political arena itself.

EFSA, otherwise known as the Institute for Theological and Interdisciplinary Research, was started by Renier Koegelenberg in 1989 in co-operation with the WPCC and the University of Stellenbosch, UCT and UWC. The Institute is modelled upon the German 'academy', and it exists to facilitate debate and to make funds available for the research of topics drawn up by the institutes board, and supervised by committees which are made up of academics from the three universities. Shun and Bennie are in regular contact with Renier and attend board meetings (Shun is its Chairperson). EFSA primarily focuses upon development issues, and particularly their relevance for the Church. EFSA regularly publishes booklets on development issues, such as the ideas of the South American development theorist Manfred Max-Neef, and, with the WPCC, organises the annual Church and Development Conference, which shall be discussed in more detail below.

There were plans laid early in 1994, for the WPCC to collaborate with TEP to launch an initiative concerning the church and civil society. TEP is an ecumenical organisation in Athlone, which adjoins Sybrand Park, set up to facilitate international 'South-South' dialogue. It publishes a magazine, 'TEP Update', now in its seventh volume, which analyses current affairs and publishes articles on Third World issues. One of its prominent members of staff is Revd. Charles Martin who was associated with the WPCC in the 1980s, and is now on its executive and closely involved with the Education and Renewal Ministries and Justice and Social Ministries departments. Bennie and Shun have planned with him a joint TEP-WPCC

effort to generate a debate around the church in civil society. The TEP-WPCC initiative is designed to establish a critique of the church: that it has not considered whether it constitutes being an NGO and what part it plays in civil society; whether in its piety it has not tried to be separate from society and hence only acquiesced to the status quo. To facilitate a debate around this critique, WPCC and TEP intended to set up a conference preceded by some seminars to stimulate an initial debate about the issues to be discussed.

TEP had already had a plan to set up a conference on 'the Social Teaching of the Church', and the WPCC-TEP meetings began to explore combining these two issues. With considerable excitement, which characterises such planning sessions at the WPCC, the three men started to consider weekly planning meetings at the WPCC to consider speakers and plan the seminars and a conference. They further decided that any resolutions which these generated could be used for publications, with a view to collaborating in the organisation of a large conference in 1995. They hoped that longer term groups could then be established, building up many groups over the following five years throughout Africa, resulting in further publications to synthesise 'the social teaching of the African Church'. Bennie and Shun, keen to set the ecumenical focus upon praxis, saw this work as a potential contribution to world-wide ecumenism and the basis for a new ecumenical paradigm.

As I have previously indicated, Bennie and Shun are not inclined to think small. What is important to note here is that this communication between two ecumenical NGOs generated bigger ideas than either had intended, and just as intellectual resources are doubled so too is the organisational capacity. It is precisely this kind of process through which the WPCC and EFSA came to mount the annual National Church and Development Conference. There are also plans to bring EFSA into the 'Church and Civil Society' initiative, and perhaps to link it up to the WCC (World Council of Churches) programme which intends to prepare a conference on the subject to be held in South Africa in due course. They believe that funding may be available from Germany. For the moment financial uncertainty has left such plans in abeyance.

The employment of Shun as theological officer in 1992, and the close working relationship he has developed with Bennie and they with EFSA and TEP have helped the WPCC re-focus upon a new set of issues for the 1990s. The polemic of the 1980s were concentrated upon contemporary political issues such as the Tricameral Parliament; the survival of Crossroads; the legitimacy of the state; political prisoners; detention and the State of Emergency. During the transition the WPCC concentrated upon issues such as the church and development; the church and civil society; the social teaching of the church; the church as an NGO and so forth. These were, according to Bennie and Shun, the 'impulses' of the period. It will also be noted that they anticipated the debates concerning nation building and development which became

so important during and after the election. In this way the WPCC was changing the issues under its consideration in order to remain relevant. It will also be noted that the WPCC specialised much more upon the church and its role in society.

3.4.6. The Church

As the WPCC lost its networks, and lost profile in the political arena, so the church as an institution became, once again, a major focus of the WPCC's analysis and as its principle constituency. The WPCC, its own capacity to influence society diminished, focused upon the institution of the church and sort to influence it to become a vehicle to impact society and change it. In addition to the church and development and other conferences, the WPCC produced publications, which aimed to propagate its thinking within the church, and it increased its efforts to liaise with church leaders and tried to maintain the 1980s tradition of issuing statements on current affairs in their name.

The WPCC has a network of contacts around the churches which stems not only through the church leaders meeting, but also the departments of the various churches with which they have had traditional links, such as the Anglican Board of Social Responsibility and the Methodist's Christian Citizenship Department. In some areas there are Church Minister's fraternals, and these can be quite strong, such as the one in Mitchell's Plain. Their leading figures, being ecumenically minded, also tend to be in contact with the WPCC. Furthermore, the WPCC has its own mailing list which includes several hundred individuals and many churches, which is derived from those who receive the daily Bible Reader 'Behold I make all things new', which has a distribution of 5000 copies, and the WPCC's newsletter on current affairs Eculink. Sometimes churches in the townships approach the WPCC to help them draft and print liturgies for special services, or to help arrange meetings - some Zionist churches, for instance, have asked the WPCC to arrange meetings with the theological departments of the universities.

Most of the WPCC's church contacts are in 'coloured' areas. I was given to understand that traditionally most of the churches in the white areas were not receptive to the work of the WPCC because of its political stance. Black areas also tended to work in their own ecumenical fraternals, such as IDAMASA (the Inter-Denominational African Ministers Association of Southern Africa), which does have contact with the WPCC and acts as something of a bridge between the WPCC and the black areas. There is not an absolute distinction, since ministers from white areas such as Douglas Bax or ministers from black areas like Revd S Xapile are regularly involved in the WPCC's work, but, by and large, the WPCC relates mainly to the major denominations in the coloured areas.

The staff at WPCC are involved in a spectrum of the churches (Anglican, Reformed, Catholic and Moravian). Both Bennie and Shun work part time as assistant ministers. Ultimately the circle of people with whom the WPCC has regular contact are personal ones. As I saw regularly, including in the preparations for the elections, organisations are built around friendships and family contacts. The WPCC is no exception and its strength lies in the large number of personal contacts which the staff have around the churches. These tend to be with people who they met through the WPCC's work and with whom they worked to fight apartheid; and also through the National Youth Leadership Training Programme or at the Federal Seminary. All the staff are extroverts, and all have been involved for a long time in various forms of activism. Naturally, they still tend to use the same core network of people now which they did in the past. This also means that the WPCC remains associated with a particular wing of the church and its thinking (that of contextual theology).

The WPCC had the financial capacity in the 1980s to be quite independent of the church, and at times, such as the 'call to prayer' put the church into controversy which the church leaders found very awkward. There have been efforts, since 1990, however, to involve church leaders more in the life of the WPCC and so to try to re-integrate the WPCC into the main body of the church. The WPCC claims to have set up 'dialogue meetings' with the non-WPCC church leaders, such as the Dutch Reformed Church and the Evangelical Lutherans, and also with minister's fraternals, particularly the IDAMASA (Inter-denominational African Ministers Association of South Africa) network. I saw little of this work happening during my period of research, although representatives of these groups did attend some meetings. Once a month, officially, the WPCC holds a breakfast meeting for church leaders which includes Bishops, and their equivalents, from the various member churches. These include the Methodists, Anglicans, Moravians, African Methodist Episcopal, Quakers, Catholics, Volkskerk, Congregational, Evangelical Lutheran, Presbyterian, N.G.Sendingkerk and N.G.Kerk in Africa and an observer from the Lutheran church. Attendance varies but is generally good, although finding convenient dates is more difficult and the meeting does not happen every month.

These breakfast meetings last about two hours. After one of the ministers leads a devotional time in his or her own tradition, explaining its significance. Then Bennie, Shun or Courtney lead an agenda which they have drawn up. The business can be quite varied. It may concern local issues such as racial tension or community problems; forthcoming events in which the churches are involved (such as 'City of Peace'); national issues upon which the WPCC had drawn up a statement and which they would like endorsed; and discussions around the future of ecumenism in South Africa and abroad.

The issuing of statements has been a particular concern of the WPCC since the 1980s when statements were made to express opposition to government policy. 'Church Leaders' statements are a means for the WPCC to project its critical analysis of current affairs (subject to the approval of the church leaders). Shun and Bennie continued to issue statements in reaction during the period of transition. For instance they made a statement at the time of the General Amnesty Bill. A Bill had been passed by F.W. de Klerk's President's Council perceived to be an attempt to ensure that he and members of his administration were absolved from criminal responsibility for their past actions. The statement was drawn up by Bennie and Shun and submitted to the church leaders for revision and then distributed around the denominations and to the press. The WPCC's statement declared that, 'we the Church Leaders... reject the amnesty proposed by the government... such legislation is morally and theologically illegitimate.'

The statement gave reasons in support of this stance, and stated that they would support a future government overturning the legislation. The thrust of the pamphlet was that the government had committed atrocities in the past and had no right to grant itself amnesty. In this case it was also made into an 18 page pamphlet featuring articles by Bennie and Shun, Russell Botman (a theologian), Michael Lapsley (the former ANC Chaplain in Zimbabwe), and writers from the Black Sash. Shun and Bennie also drew up the statement for the launch of the 'Cape Town City of Peace' campaign in December, as I have indicated, and a 'Message from the Church Leaders' at the time of the elections urging people to vote 'prayerfully' and to abide by the results.

Prior to the '94 elections there was some concern over racism in the campaign, particularly over a comic book issued by the National Party which depicted black people as anarchic, violent, God-hating and communist. The WPCC was planning to make a statement on this, but Archbishop Tutu called a meeting of religious leaders at Bishops court to discuss the problem and make a statement about the election process. Tutu's press secretary drew up the statement at the meeting, strongly condemning 'the racial polarisation which is being promoted' and declaring inter-faith days for prayer and fasting for the election. He further organised a press conference for that afternoon, which was attended by a small group of local and international press and received some coverage. Tutu chaired the discussions and the press conference but others, including Bennie, participated. The WPCC distributed the statement in the form of a poster to various churches and to the church leaders.

There were occasions during the period of transition, therefore, when the WPCC used its contacts in the church to gain exposure through publishing statements upon public affairs, much as it had done in the 1980s. After 1990 the WPCC tried to improve its communication with the church, in order to extend its influence upon it and to lend authority to its statements

and its work. This should be seen in the context of the WPCC's re-orientation towards the church and its focus upon the church's work in society which developed after 1990. In keeping with this the WPCC also produced new publications aimed specifically at the church.

The WPCC had produced Crisis News in the 1980s in response to the states of emergency which came to an end in 1990. Following the appointment of Shun two new publications were launched. One was Eculink, which was a bulletin of reflection upon contemporary issues. The WPCC also launched a daily Bible Reader entitled Behold I Make All Things New which has been considered above. They are both edited by Shun and Bennie. In Eculink, Bennie says, they are 'trying to be as contextual as possible'. It is produced for special occasions, such as June 16th (the anniversary of the Soweto uprising), and an edition was planned to be produced for the elections featuring stories and statements and appeals. Financial and time problems scuppered this edition. At one time it was produced almost monthly, but now with reduced staff and finances, it has appeared quarterly at the most. As Bennie's statement implies, the Eculink is the means by which the WPCC broadcast their analysis of current affairs, and share, in plain language, what they regard to be the current intellectual 'impulses' at large. There is very little about the church as such, the focus is decisively off the institution of the church and onto current affairs, but it is distributed to the churches. There is quite a lot about the aims and work of the WPCC and of the ecumenical movement in general, and a clear bias to liberation theology and black consciousness thinking. It is conscious of class issues and critical of capitalism and the apartheid system; in the past it promoted the struggle but more latterly development work. Through Eculink the WPCC seeks to expose the problem of poverty and to encourage the church to address issues such as land redistribution and to generate debate around current issues, such as the granting of amnesty.

The WPCC would like also, if finances were less constrained, to produce more reports and monographs and papers. To some extent this desire is channelled through the work of EFSA. The WPCC's own project, 1993-1994, was Miriam van Donk's study on 'The Land Question in South Africa' (mentioned above). The report documents the history of the struggle for land in South Africa, an analysis of the contemporary situation and various case studies. Some of these case studies illustrate examples of the church returning land to the 'original' occupants, others of the church retaining control. The report was particularly concerned with the acquisition of land by the Dutch Reformed Church, the scale of its ownership, and of its land policy. The document is a challenge to the church as a whole to reconsider its ownership of land in the light of its own rhetoric on land redistribution. The WPCC hoped to produce several hundred copies of this work and follow it up as part of a series of documents on the land issue.

The relationship of the WPCC to the broader church is a complex one and could be the subject of a thesis in itself. During the 1980s there were occasions which brought considerable tensions between the WPCC and the churches, such as the WPCC issuing the call for prayer to end unjust rule. In the 1990s such problems are not warranted; but the former strains have not been replaced by a close or active relationship. Financially there is little the churches can do for the WPCC, nor is the WPCC lacking in theological inspiration. However, the WPCC as has had to re-focus upon the church as its political role has declined. This shift, however, has been exercised with caution. Bennie, in particular has been keen to avoid the WPCC becoming distracted from practical social action by doctrinal debates or issues of 'piety'. The WPCC's aim, in focusing again upon the church itself is to encourage a stronger emphasis upon practical social activism, in contemporary society. The conferences and publications produced by the WPCC since 1991 have been geared to this.

3.4.7. The Community

Rather like its contacts amongst academics and the churches, the WPCC has numerous contacts in the ANC, civic organisations and within the union movement. Moeketsi, Nabs and Charles have all worked on programmes, and responded to events in the townships during the 1980s. Their experience of the social dynamics of these areas, in addition to the contacts which they have built up during the 'struggle' era give the staff of the WPCC a large but informal network of contacts which are used as needs arise. In the 1980s the WPCC had much contact with the union movement, to which I referred in chapter two, but these contacts are no longer regular maintained since the unions have no need of the WPCC's support and, for its part, the WPCC does not wish to be too closely aligned to the ANC/ Congress of South African Trade Unions alliance for fear of confirming suspicions of a political bias. The WPCC's staff also tend to become involved in a broad range of ad hoc assistance for various individuals. For instance, the WPCC sometimes became involved in the publication of the pictures of lost children, or counselling in cases of domestic strife. However, in addition to these the WPCC has various long term commitments.

Since its campaign for Crossroads started in 1981, the WPCC has had a commitment to the plight of Cape Town's squatter communities. The situation in the squatter areas remains bleak; accurate statistics are not obtainable but a conservative estimate would be that well over half a million people live in conditions of extreme poverty around Cape Town, principally in Khayelitsha, but also in many other areas. There are numerous problems which regularly affect these communities, amongst them conflict, and various disasters, especially regarding fires. Moeketsi has been a great asset to the WPCC in that he has a very large network of contacts within the black community and the language skills and 'savoir faire' required to approach a situation appropriately.

3.4.8. Fires and Floods

The heavy winter rains in Cape Town leave some areas permanently flooded. In 1994, some parts of the Cape Flats were regarded as disaster areas after heavy storms at the end of June. Living conditions rapidly deteriorate in such conditions. By contrast there is also the problem of fire. In the first four months of 1994 in excess of five hundred shacks burnt down in the Greater Cape Town area. According to Moeketsi some of these fires were started deliberately as acts of violence, such as by a husband who came home to find his wife with another man and proceeded to set light to the shack. Other incidents of fire are started by accident, particularly due to the use of paraffin burners. The vast majority of shacks burn down because fires spread rapidly in the overcrowded conditions in the informal settlements. Since there are no fire hydrants in many areas, and the shacks are built extremely close together, it is possible for one fire to destroy as many as eighty shacks, as occurred in Khayelitsha over the weekend 22nd-23rd January 1994. As many as five hundred people can be left homeless by such an event. Since Moeketsi lives in the Guguletu township and has contacts in the churches, the civics and the ANC, he will usually hear of such fires, floods and other disasters very quickly.

In the event of such problems Moeketsi would first go to the area to see for himself what had happened. He would ask, if he did not know, who the local civic leader was. Once he had found his house Moeketsi spent some time greeting the person and discussing mutual friends or events. The WPCC is well known, it seems, in the informal settlements and Moeketsi was well received. The civic leader would then take Moeketsi to see the situation and to discuss with the people what had happened and what was being done to help them. Upon returning to his office Moeketsi would make contact with the Red Cross, SHAWCO, local ministers and nurses or other appropriate organisations, as had been agreed with the people and their civic leader, to formulate a joint response to the situation. Using the WPCC bakkie or Kombi he would then drive back to the place with blankets and rolls of plastic sheeting with which to construct temporary shelters; these blankets and materials were given out freely. The blankets were bought in large quantities from Zimbabwe and stored at the WPCC. The WPCC hopes that the Hong Kong Council of Churches will sponsor the continuation of this relief work.

Moeketsi's work in the informal settlements is a continuation of the earliest work of the WPCC, its assistance of the Crossroads squatters. But the nature of the 1980s made the work in Crossroads political activity, since such 'relief' work strengthened the community and its ability to remain in the area against the wishes of the state. The WPCC protested against the establishment of Khayelitsha, since this was a policy of government 'reform'. Yet by 1994 the WPCC's relief work was predominantly in Khayelitsha. The wheel had turned full circle and the WPCC was involved in relief work for purely humanitarian reasons. The difference was

that the politics concerning informal settlements had changed. The abolition of influx controls and the Group Areas Act, and the changes in the government's attitudes meant that the existence of these areas was no longer a political issue. Their future was a subject of debate, but not their existence or their need for improvement. The future of such squatter areas now depended upon long-term policies connected with the complex issues of nation building, reconstruction, development, economics and planning. Such changes pended the outcome of the election.

3.4.9. Conflicts, Peace and Monitoring

The above argument notwithstanding, the WPCC has continued to work specifically with the Crossroads community, partly as a result of the relationships it developed there in the 1980s. The first I ever heard of the WPCC was upon returning to my room at UCT one day to find a poster on the door entitled 'A cry from the Mothers of Crossroads'. How it got there I have no idea, but it was a WPCC statement about the violence in Crossroads, describing the 'unbearable situation' and calling for help from organisations and religious groups, and a change in attitudes on the part of the police. It announced the holding of an ecumenical peace service at St. George's Cathedral to be led by church leaders and the Mothers of Crossroads. I believe that this initiative came out of a meeting called by the Western Cape Regional Peace Committee of which the WPCC is a part.

Conflict is a serious problem in the informal settlements. Moeketsi attributes this to the effects of poverty. He argues that in a situation where people lack the security of home ownership and where facilities are lacking and conditions poor, people look to strong, charismatic leaders to fight for their cause. But competition for leadership tends toward conflicts and organisations and individuals jostle for authority and control of the few community resources available. Moeketsi has close links with the Nyanga-Crossroads Peace Committee, which facilitates meetings between different organisations and in times of conflict tries to mediate a settlement. It is one of the most active and respected of the peace committees in the Western Cape. Moeketsi always tries to take visitors to its offices in Nyanga to meet its workers. Keith Benjamin, a minister in Mitchell's Plain and member of the WPCC's executive, is very active in the peace committees movement and represents the WPCC on them. At a national level Moeketsi was also involved in meetings at Bishopscourt (Tutu's residence) and at the SACC's offices in Johannesburg, concerned with bringing together the various black parties, such as the IFP the ANC and the PAC.

There has also been considerable strife, sometimes violent, over a long period of time between the two taxi associations, Lagunya (Langa, Guguletu, Nyanga) and WEPTA (Western Cape Taxi Association). Lagunya had, as the name implies, licenses to work

between Langa, Guguletu and Nyanga. However the routes to the city, licensed to a more recent organisation, WEPTA, proved more lucrative, and Lagunya accused the transport police of discriminating against them, and indeed of owning the WEPTA taxis using the best routes. In the ensuing conflict the police were perceived to take WEPTA's side. At times fire fights occurred around the Nyanga taxi rank. In response the Mayor, Desmond Tutu and the WPCC held meetings to analyse the situation and they facilitated further meetings to try to help diffuse it. Out of these came ex-Mayor Frank van der Velder's initiative to hold regular liaison meetings between the police and the taxi associations. This work goes on and Moeketsi has remained involved. He has also been involved with discussions around the long running intimidation of bus drivers, which kept buses out of Khayelitsha for several months. On Tuesday May 17th 1994 this was called off and Moeketsi, with a member of his Justice and Social Ministries committee, spent the day observing the situation and organising ministers in the area to do the same.

Monitoring has been an important feature of Moeketsi's work. Initially he worked at the request of the SACC, observing some of the worst of the taxi violence in Nyanga and drawing up reports of what he saw. Some of these reports were published in the media around the world. Concern amongst NGOs over such emerging conflicts led to the formation of the Urban Monitoring and Awareness Committee, and that became part of a broader network known as NIM, the Network of Independent Monitors which was started, primarily, by the churches. The WPCC was invited to be part of NIM from its foundation, since the involvement of the Council of Churches in the Network not only gave the Network more contacts but also greater legitimacy. NIM has spread and it has centres in Durban, Johannesburg and in the Transkei. Moeketsi has remained an active participant in NIM and when time permits he attends rallies and events as a monitor. Everywhere he goes he keeps his NIM identification badge and overalls in his car.

Moeketsi, while at the WPCC, kept in contact with the Minister's Fraternal in the townships as well as with ANC branches and civic organisations. At times he becomes involved in local issues. Disputes arose in Langa, for instance, between those who had been released from prison after many years, and all the 'newcomers' who had become politically active in the area in their absence. Moeketsi joined an ANC team to diffuse the brewing conflict. He was able to relate developments to the priests in the area and thus to involve them in seeking solutions. This is a good example of the unique church co-ordination work of the WPCC, since the problems had the potential to effect all the churches, but were bigger than any single one could address. Moeketsi was a vital link between the ministers fraternal in the townships and the WPCC.

Moeketsi retained some activities in the prison sector, having been very involved in supporting prisoners through the Dependants Conference in the 1980s. He continued to endeavour to arrange prison visiting and chaplaincy by ministers. At times, in the event of circumstances such as the death of an inmate, Moeketsi was approached by concerned relatives or friends to investigate the full causes and to apply to the SACC for a grant to help pay for the funeral. When Nelson Mandela went to Victor Verster prison, early in February 1994, to light a remembrance flame with other former prisoners, Moeketsi brought out large numbers of WPCC blankets for those who had participated to sleep under overnight. This kind of ad hoc assistance went on regularly as needs arose.

Conflict was a pervasive and disturbing aspect of the transition period, as discussed in the introduction to this chapter. Violence was a threat not only to the political opposition but also to the transition itself, for without peace the negotiations and later the elections, could not be successfully held. Organisations such as NIM tried, through monitoring, to bring some clarity and accountability into the situations of violence. The peace committees endeavoured to bring some order into the resolution of conflicts. The work of civil society (NGOs, universities, unions etc.) to promote peace through monitoring and conflict resolution were features of the transition period and the WPCC engaged in this movement wholeheartedly for the sake of progress towards a fully democratic state.

3.4.10. *The WPCC and the Elections*

3.4.10.1. *The Programme of the WPCC*

The elections provide another example of the WPCC playing a 'transition' role. During the 1980s the WPCC had sought to discredit the Tricameral Parliament and had helped lead the boycott of elections for it. The elections of 1994, however, involved an extraordinary effort by the WPCC, amongst many organisations, to ensure that the electorate were well prepared for the election and that polling occurred smoothly and successfully. For the WPCC, as for many NGOs the 1994 elections were of particularly great significance as the closing chapter in the struggle for democracy. All of the staff of the WPCC became involved in the election process, and seemingly all of those organisations associated with the WPCC too. The council was represented in many of the major structures which prepared for the elections and administered it.

In contrast to the election boycotts encouraged by the WPCC in the 1980s, therefore, the WPCC showed a remarkable commitment to the 1994 elections. The elections in the 1980s had sought to entrench a fundamentally unrepresentative system; but the 1994 elections promised full democracy and a government pledged to a just, non-racial, non-sexist and free

South Africa, and a new constitution based upon these principles. However, since the government structures in authority were not regarded as impartial, and the transitional period had been marked by such violence, the WPCC set out to try to ensure that the election process was safeguarded. Furthermore, since the electorate most likely to vote for the parties previously in opposition were unfamiliar with voting procedures, election education was seen as important too to promote change in the country as well as to produce a fair result. In pursuit of the goals for which it had laboured for thirteen years the WPCC saw the elections as its final act of 'struggle'. The involvement of the WPCC and so many other organisations in the election process, however, was also another 'transitional' role, uncharacteristic of its work in the 1980s and unlikely to be required in a fully democratic state.

The WPCC's attempts to co-ordinate 'civil society', however, were hampered by various problems. It tried to help set up two inter-NGO structures in the Western Cape, one for election education and the other for election monitoring. These were, however, both beset with problems which hampered their work. Some of these problems might occur in any inter-NGO structure at any time, but many of the particular problems were associated with the pressures of the election period, and the peculiar shifts within the NGO sector at that time as individuals and organisations jostled with a view to their place in the new dispensation.

a) Education for Democracy

The Education and Renewal Ministries department of the WPCC, headed by Charles Williams, is usually quite active, working amongst the churches to stimulate youth work and Aids education, and with community organisations concerned with education and primary health care programmes. A full eighteen months before the elections took place, the WPCC was active in voter education through its 'Education for Democracy' campaign, and particularly during the six months I was at the WPCC the overriding concern of the Education and Renewal Ministries department was with the elections.

Charles, in association with Charles Martin of TEP produced a theological rationale which presented a biblical basis for supporting a participatory democracy. In addition they wrote a short document entitled 'The Christian Role in an Election'. This information, plus in due course formal voter education, was presented at minister's fraternals and subsequently to church meetings by invitation, and such invitations came in quite large numbers in the three months prior to the election. Two student volunteers, Mary Caesar and Johan Maggerman did much of the presentation work in the churches. They knew Charles from his previous parish, and Johan receives a bursary from SACC for his studies at UWC.

The WPCC believed that an education for democracy campaign in the churches was important since they feared that some Christians are politically reserved, and hence liable not

to vote at all. The WPCC wished to make a link between their faith and the need to participate in an election. Furthermore the material sought to encourage Christians to apply certain 'Christian' criteria to their choice of who to vote for. It was not a pro-ANC piece, in essence, indeed in my experience the staff at the WPCC always attempted to be non-partisan in their presentation of any particular party, but, on the other hand, it did call upon Christians to vote for those who would 'redress the evils of the past' and to, 'watch out for wolves in sheep's clothing' since 'yesterday's oppressor will not liberate you tomorrow. The promises of an unrepentant sinner will not secure the rights of those whom he has wronged' (point 14 The Christian Role in an Election, WPCC 1993). Moeketsi joined in this programme of voter education before the end of 1993.

Probably the most important election work which the WPCC performed during this early period was to work with the other councils of churches in the Western Cape, church organisations and minister's fraternals, to train individuals to teach the Theological Rationale and voter education (as it was understood at that time). These were amongst the earliest attempts to involve church people in the election process. In all 264 people were trained by the WPCC to be trainers. The WPCC also gathered some background to the difficulties of preparing for an election through a TEP programme which had brought a delegation from the Philippines to Cape Town to share their experiences from the Filipino elections. The visitors had emphasised the vital need for the church to take a lead in voter education, monitoring, mediation and enhancing goodwill.

Nabs, for her part, worked alongside the women at Catholic Welfare and Development to draw up a thorough, but concise chart of the different party policies on the various major issues. It was a comprehensive piece, giving details of how to vote, statistical data on the state of the nation (with much reference to inequalities), and introductions to the parties, their histories and their policies. This information was derived from party materials and from extensive interviews. The women approached the Argus newspaper which made it into a four page pull out special section and published it, I believe free of charge, in the lead up to the election. They also published tens of thousands of extra copies in Afrikaans, Xhosa and English. Large quantities of these were stored at the WPCC, and their availability there was advertised through the paper. The WPCC thus became a store house for these and other voter education materials especially in the month prior to the elections. WPCC vehicles were used to help distribute this information to shops and shebeens in the townships in a joint WPCC-IEC (Independent Electoral Commission) distribution plan.

Moeketsi and Charles became well known for their voter education presentations. Mostly these presentations were in churches, but they also worked in other settings. Moeketsi led a very large event in Kraaifontein with music and drama, organised by the local civic

association, and on another occasion he made a presentation for several thousand municipal workers in Guguletu. He also led voter education in nursing homes and old age centres; outside supermarkets; in hostels and on farms. He worked closely with Thandi, a voter education officer for the IEC. They had been at school together, neighbours in Guguletu and co-workers in the Dependants Conference. Moeketsi enjoyed the work very much, it became a passion for him and preoccupied all of his weekends leading up to the election. Charles appeared on KFM radio on the fourth Thursday of each month for several months prior to the elections to speak about the election process and to answer telephone calls on air. This was part of the Democracy Education Broadcast Initiative (DEBI) initiative paid for by IFEE (Independent Forum for Electoral Education).

b) The Religious Community and the Elections

Since they were set upon trying to ensure that the elections not only happened, but were given overwhelming support, the WPCC did all they could through their publications, at church leaders meetings and through minister's fraternals to inform and encourage involvement by the church in the election process. In the build up to the elections there was some concern expressed that certain denominations would not encourage their members to vote. In fact rumours abounded that some township church leaders were telling their thousands of followers that Christians must not vote. The WPCC followed up such stories and made contact with Zionist and Pentecostal groups, in particular, to encourage full participation.

The WPCC also used its contacts amongst the other faiths too. Its network of contacts included the Muslim Judicial Council (which is not the only Muslim co-ordinating organisation but is the one the WPCC has traditionally worked with), a leading Buddhist lady in Stellenbosch, and also with Hindus and Jews (although they did not often attend meetings). Such meetings with the other religions were not regular, but the channels, which were used for inter-faith activities during the protest campaigns of the 1980s, had remained open and were put into use during the build up to the election.

During the period of the election the Panel of Religious Leaders for Electoral Justice, which was established for the elections, issued statements urging people to vote, and published a special inter-faith liturgy for use at election services. They denoted the weekend of the 22nd-24th April 1994 as a weekend of inter-faith prayer. This information was sent to Bennie and Shun who duly informed the church leaders and made the information available. A joint Church and Religious Leaders meeting was convened by the WPCC on the 15th March and addressed by a Hindu lady from the Panel of Religious leaders. The role of the religious community in the elections was discussed and the various dates for prayer agreed upon. Election workers from NEON (National Election Observer Network) also informed the

meeting of the need for monitors. The leaders were informed of events such as the 'all faiths peace concert' in the city hall the Sunday afternoon prior to the elections, which Bennie had been involved in setting up through his involvement with the Cape Against Racism organisation.

3.4.10.2. The Election Niche

A very large number of other organisations were involved in the elections. A political decision had been made at the multi-party negotiations that the first fully democratic elections could not be trusted exclusively into the hands of the Department of Home Affairs. The politicians set up the TEC (Transitional Executive Council) in December, and this in turn set up the IEC (Independent Electoral Commission). It was the middle of February before the IEC set up its first operations in Cape Town, just ten weeks before the election. As became evident at the time, particularly with the confusion over which parties would or would not contest the elections, merely the setting up of the practicalities of the elections was too ambitious a task for such a short period of time, and the chaos which at times did characterise the elections was relatively small considering the pressures the IEC was under.

It was understood from the time the date for the election was set that 'civil society' (churches, unions, NGOs etc.) would need to play a vital role in the preparations for and the running of the elections. If possible every adult in the country needed to be informed of the election process, preferably through voter education; all political gatherings monitored for incidents of violence; and the election days themselves run in an orderly, free and fair manner and overseen by impartial observers. A network of organisations was required which could mobilise large numbers of able people to rise to this challenge in every area of the country. Money for such work was available from American and European sources. A large 'niche' for NGO work was thus created.

Some organisations were motivated to be involved in the election process for ideological reasons. What characterised many of the organisations involved in this kind of work was that they were the ones who had been most involved with fighting the National Party government, and were now most keen to see a free and fair election with the maximum of participation. The WPCC, for instance, had started voter education programmes even before the date of the elections had been announced. The chief concern amongst such NGOs was that the black and coloured communities, most of whom had not voted before, should be excited about the vote and very clear how to complete the ballot paper properly. It had not escaped the attention of such organisations that participation by black voters, in particular, and coloured voters (inaccurately, as it turned out), would increase the ANC vote. The Western Cape was always seen as in the balance between the National Party and the ANC. As one person put it to me, 'the NP organisers will ensure every NP voter will be out in the Cape!' Thus, to improve the

ANC's chances of victory a high turn out was required in its traditional areas, and for this there had to be excitement, clarity and safety. There was much concern expressed about apathy in former UDF strongholds like Bonteheuwel, and concern also about intimidation of voters by gangsters. In a sense voter education and effective monitoring were the great final cause in the fight against apartheid and the National party.

There were a number of organisations with a 'struggle' background which therefore became involved in the election process, such as the Black Sash; the Legal Education and Action Programme (a UCT based legal advice organisation very active in the 1980s in aiding individuals and communities to know their rights and for the monitoring of oppression); Lawyers for Human Rights; the Institute for a Democratic Alternative in South Africa and church denominational groups such as DOVE (Diocesan Organisation for Voter Education) and Catholic Justice and Peace. All of these organisations wanted to be involved in the election process and devised programmes for voter education.

There were other, more recent NGOs which also focused their efforts upon the election. These included the institute for Multi-Party Democracy (MPD), Project Vote and the Matla Trust. Project Vote was created by the Centre for Development Studies at UWC to promote voter education. It was headed by Revd. Mike Wheeder, a veteran anti-apartheid activist, and supported by funds and consultants from the United States. The Matla Trust was established in 1991 by Nelson Mandela from funds which he had raised overseas for the 'empowerment' of the South African people. Of the work of the Matla Trust during the election, the Mail and Guardian wrote,

Factoring in the fear of a low turnout and a high number of spoilt votes could have a significant impact on the outcome of the election, Matla's work has become politically loaded. Its director is Billy Modise, formerly the African National Congress' representative in Sweden. (Supp. 04. 94 p.7)

Matla staff, conspicuous by their youth, sharp suits, briefcases and glossy materials, sharply contrasted with the 'ethnic', middle-aged seasoned protesters of the older NGOs. The later did not appear to feel at ease with these 'young messiahs' but the patronage of Mandela made Matla a leader in the NGO field, and particularly during the elections one with whom the WPCC and others had to work.

Organisations which were particularly resented by older NGOs were those which had no history in the 'struggle' or in the NGO sector at all. During the elections a number of organisations appeared doing voter education which had previously conducted very different kinds of work or had not existed at all. Of these Bennie said, 'people think there's easy money

to be made'. Such groups gained from the available funds for voter education, and some in fact charged, particularly in the business sector, to give seminars on the elections, which the other organisations did not. Such money grabbing debutantes were not welcome amongst NGOs, but nevertheless gained access to the election niche.

3.4.10.3. The WPCC and Election Networks

The WPCC was instrumental in the establishment and running of two key election organisations, IFEE and NEON. It had hoped that these structures would co-ordinate the work of election education and the training of election observers, and thereby enhance the contribution civil society could make. Its commitment to these organisations proved to be its greatest preoccupation prior to and during the elections.

a) IFEE

A conference had been held in Johannesburg in April 1992 to establish an umbrella body for NGOs wishing to participate in the preparations of the election. It established IFEE - the Independent Forum for Electoral Education. The body gained recognition from the Negotiating Forum at Kempton Park and was requested to work with the IEC (Independent Electoral Commission) as its NGO co-ordinating body. Funding was made available by the European Community and then, with varying degrees of success, NGOs around the country were asked to co-ordinate regional groupings. A regional executive was established in the Western Cape, which included Charles Martin (of TEP), Charles Williams and Moeketsi, and then a Trainers Commission for voter education of which Moeketsi was appointed convenor. A Media Commission was also established of which a publisher, Toby Wrigley was appointed convenor (he tended to work very closely with Moeketsi) and a Monitoring Commission of which Charles Williams was appointed convenor. A mobile video unit (a van full of expensive equipment used to present audio-visual presentations of voter education and intended for presentations in the outlying areas) was sent to Cape Town by IFEE National and put in the charge of Matla trust, although, theoretically, its use was subject to the Media Commission in conjunction with the Trainers Commission.

It will be evident that the WPCC played a prominent role in the organisation of IFEE in the Western Cape, its staff directly heading up two of its three commissions. Toby Wrigley was also an associate of the WPCC, having formerly been very involved with the Anglican Board of Social Responsibility. The WPCC's fax and telephone facilities were used to keep the various organisations informed of forthcoming meetings. WPCC facilities were initially used for meetings, although these moved to MPD in due course.

The purpose of IFEE was to co-ordinate the efforts of the various organisations working for the elections to avoid the duplication of their activities. IFEE organisations chose different

sections of society upon which to focus their efforts and kept records of their work in order to establish, for instance, any gaps in the delivery of voter education or the deployment of election monitors. The different organisations worked with their traditional constituencies: in voter education, for instance, the Legal Education and Action Programme worked in the rural areas as it had done since the 1980s; MPD specialised in the public sector; the WPCC in the churches, and so forth. Some organisations, particularly Project Vote, produced vast quantities of voter education materials, and these were distributed through IFEE organisations. It was hoped that in this way there would be economies of specialisation and strategy. The intention was that through weekly meetings of the IFEE organisations, information could be shared and gaps in the provision of voter education and other problems addressed. The co-ordination of the IFEE Trainer's Commission and of the mobile video unit, and liaison with IFEE national and the IEC, became the major preoccupation of Moeketsi's work in the months prior to the election. Charles Williams, however, decided upon a somewhat different course of action..

b) NEON

In December 1993, Charles and some friends, such as Charles Martin, held a conference in Johannesburg to discuss monitoring during the elections. They then approached the TEC (Transitional Executive Council) to approve a new structure - a National Election Observer Network (NEON). Early in February Charles started work setting up a branch of this new structure in the Western Cape. Working extraordinarily long hours, and sometimes sleeping in his office, Charles put together a conference at a hotel in Brackenfell under the name of the IFEE Monitoring Commission for the weekend 11-13th of February. Charles not only invited IFEE members but also representatives of business, civics, and the unions - a whole spectrum of civil society. It was a considerable achievement to organise in one week a conference which was attended by 137 people. The conference informed the delegates of the election process, as it stood at that time, and in particular the Observing and Monitoring plans of IFEE and the IEC. It was an unusual conference because it not only informed but it successfully established a whole new structure in a single weekend - NEON Western Cape. NEON was set up simultaneously in other parts of the country in the same way. The conference appointed interim convenors and committees to establish an office and five sub-regional offices in the Western Cape.

The concept was that one network should cover the whole of 'civil society', of which the IFEE Monitoring Commission would be a part. In effect, however, NGOs now related directly to NEON rather than the IFEE Monitoring commission, which effectively ceased to exist. Charles continued to work to establish NEON in the Western Cape as its co-ordinator, and he was officially seconded from the WPCC to NEON. He drew alongside him a team of people whom he knew from the Church and the labour movement. A management committee

was established with representatives from the different sectors of civil society. Money was made available from the IEC, the business sector and donors. Furthermore, USAID (United States Aid) pledged US\$8 million, and the European Community and various embassies also made pledges to the national NEON structure.

The work of NEON was ambitious. For the short period of its existence it had to set up provincial offices to recruit, train and deploy enough independent observers to fulfil the IEC's plan of three impartial, respected persons to be present as observers in every voting station with, preferably, more outside. In the Western Cape alone there were nearly 900 voting stations. An office was set up, initially on one side of the WPCC's building and on March 11th the regional staff moved into a building in Athlone. The Cape Town office continued to work from the WPCC until the election. Sub-offices were also set up in Oudsthoorn, Worcester, Beaufort-West, and Vredenburg. Some staff were seconded from other organisations and others were employed as news about the availability of jobs spread through friends in the NGO sector. Initially through word of mouth, but later through public advertisements, NEON called for members of the public to volunteer as election observers and NEON sought to arrange their training through its contacts in organisations such as IFEE. At the time of the election they issued the necessary documentation and directed the volunteers to their stations.

3.4.10.4. The Problems of the IFEE Structure

I described above the process by which the IFEE structure was established at a conference in Johannesburg, in April 1992, to co-ordinate the efforts of NGOs. The concept was to form a structure of NGOs to facilitate joint planning, to utilise centrally raised funds and equipment, to share materials, to co-ordinate and rationalise their efforts and to distribute accurate information. As I pointed out the WPCC was instrumental in creating and sustaining the regional IFEE structure in the Western Cape.

The various organisations entered IFEE for a variety of reasons. For many there was the ideological commitment to the election process to which I have already referred, together with a belief that through co-ordination the work of voter education could be carried out more effectively. A structure brings together different organisations, and with them their various strengths, networks, specialities, resources and personnel. The WPCC itself practises a general principle that it is better to work through structures than apart as single organisations. This was a product of the 1980s - to form a united opposition, and it was a feature of the WPCC's 'ecumenical' frame of thinking. It is noteworthy that other organisations looked to the WPCC to provide the co-ordination of IFEE, this derives, at least in part, from the traditional role of the WPCC in the 1980s as a co-ordinating body. Different organisations have their individual agendas, but the WPCC to its very core is an ecumenical

organisation. Its rationale is to bring people together for a common cause and that spirit has always been evident in its approach to NGOs as well as to the churches.

In addition to the principle of NGO co-operation and the ideological commitment to the election process there were other motives at work in the establishment of IFEE and other such structures. An individual NGO, or an alliance of NGOs, can increase their sphere of influence if they can attain a dominant position within a structure. If an NGO enters a structure with a particular agenda it can attempt to swing the efforts of many NGOs to its purposes if it can achieve a dominant position. Furthermore, kudos is available for organisations and individuals seen to be the power behind a successful structure, and hence through a structure an NGO can gain prominence in its own right. Certain individuals can also seek to win a positive reputation through their role in a structure to beneficial their own career prospects

A structure may be in a better position to win funds than any individual organisation would be. The IFEE structure is said to have gained a grant of R20 million from the European Union for the work of its member organisations in the election. In the longer term a particular NGO may derive funding if it has been seen to be a major initiator of structures. Of the Matla Trust the Weekly Mail and Guardian reported,

It is seen to be the driving force behind the Independent Forum for Electoral Education (Ifee) an alliance of over thirty organisations involved in democracy education. Matla, through Ifee, also made substantial submissions to the negotiations forum on how the elections should be run. (Mail and Guardian Election Supplement April 1994:7)

Such advertising for the Trust reflects well on its contribution to the election process and thus upon its donors, who themselves wish to report back to their constituency (in this case governments and business) that their money is well placed.

It was therefore with these various motives at work that the IFEE structure was established, with the WPCC playing a leading role in its co-ordination. It became quickly apparent that in view of these various mixed motives the co-ordination of the structure would not be as straightforward as it might at first have been hoped. There were several major problems which emerged; the first was that the IFEE structure was of different importance to varying organisations; the second was concerned with finances and also with communications, and the fourth with issues of kudos.

a) *Commitment*

The smaller organisations, saw great financial benefit for them in the IFEE structure, and this included the WPCC since it had no money of its own for programmes, for reasons I shall return to in the next chapter. IFEE offered them the potential of 'piggy-backing' on a larger organisation: not only did the IFEE structure have financial resources of its own to draw upon, but it also put the smaller organisations into a network with groups like Matla who could supply them with materials. Such concerns, however, were not so pressing for organisations like Project Vote which had the resources to be self-sufficient and still produce an impressive amount of work. It was not that these organisations rejected IFEE, but simply that in terms of priorities they tended to put the running of their own programme ahead of working to establish IFEE programmes. Likewise there were other NGOs which had funding to fulfil a specific task, such as the production of a voter education comic book, and neither did these have a specific need to prioritise the larger concerns of IFEE.

This lack of commitment on the part of some members became, and I write from experience, highly frustrating since there was rarely a quorum present at IFEE meetings. There were some organisations represented at every meeting, but the rest were unpredictable. Often Moeketsi would bemoan all the time that he spent informing the IFEE network of meetings and attending them himself, only to find a few organisations there. In effect it became a waste of time, and this itself pushed organisations away from participating. Moeketsi himself wanted nothing more than to be out doing voter education, but much of his time was spent, and wasted, in and around IFEE meetings in both Cape Town and Johannesburg.

b) *Funds and Communication*

Two other major problems for IFEE Western Cape concerned the acquisition of information and finances. During the chaotic build up to the elections, and the considerable confusion that had resulted, it was very difficult, particularly over the double ballot debate and the IFP's participation, for the voter education trainers 'on the ground' to have any clarity about what to teach (in fact there was much disdain amongst trainers when the double ballot was finally announced because it invalidated what they had previously taught and the materials they had produced). To gain clarity about the election process IFEE National had to liaise with the TEC/IEC. IFEE then had to liaise back to its regional structures, and these to their members. Often groups like Matla were informed of decisions far quicker by their head office than by IFEE. The IFEE structure thus became irrelevant to the process of information distribution concerning national issues.

There were also procedural problems within IFEE, particularly over the Mobile Video Unit. It remained very unclear what the divisions of authority were between Matla, who managed it, and the IFEE structure which owned it. There was considerable acrimony, and Matla was

accused of using it for its own programmes. Since Matla were frequently not present at meetings this too led to further suspicion. They were also accused of spreading derogatory rumours about IFEE Western Cape. It will suffice to say, and this is my point, that a remarkable amount of internal politics developed very quickly in the IFEE structure, and they grew because of a lack of clarity over procedure, which led to more conflicts which further hampered communication and co-ordination.

The final factor concerning IFEE National was that they held the purse strings. The WPCC initially bore the costs in terms of phone and fax bills to initiate IFEE, and it continued to sign requisition orders and use its own bank accounts for IFEE, but it did not receive repayment quickly and nor was IFEE Western Cape given its own financial base. It became evident that the Trainers Commission in Cape Town would need an office and a full time co-ordinator and its own trainers if the IFEE structure was really going to be effective in voter education. This kind of organisation had been envisaged for the IFEE regions but nevertheless it was necessary for the IFEE regions to draw up their own budget proposal, which in itself took a long time to facilitate, send it to Johannesburg, and await the approval of head office and the dispatch of the money. As one person commented, 'funding takes months and you get let down'. In the end the IFEE Trainer's commission office was set up only one month before the election, and then there were more problems training, motivating and supervising the trainers who were employed.

c) Hunting Kudos

The fourth major problem for IFEE, both regionally and nationally was the competition for kudos which went on. While this generally appears to be a problem within structures, it was particularly intense around the time of the elections. It was widely believed that the new government would be offering vacancies in high positions to those who had made a successful contribution to the administration of the elections. Some people went to great lengths, therefore, to be *seen* in Johannesburg. There was much manoeuvring, at times, as to who should represent IFEE Western Cape at the Johannesburg central meetings. On occasions individuals would themselves turn up at conferences and participate, without having been sent by the rest of IFEE regional. Needless to say this led to some conflict and confusion. Further problems for the entire organisation were also generated by the reported divisions within IFEE national, and also within the IEC.

Furthermore, since some particular organisations and individuals wished to be seen to be the driving force behind the structure they resorted to various means to dominate. In this climate gossip and rumours flew. Moeketsi and Toby Wrigley were at one stage scandalised in Johannesburg for their leadership of IFEE, and referred to, ironically enough, not only as 'saboteurs', but also as 'traitors', 'counter-revolutionaries', 'reactionaries' and 'no friends of the

struggle'. They were even threatened with physical reprisals. In another structure set up during the period of transition, this went beyond gossip and organisations try to collapse the structure because things were not going their way by encouraging non-participation amongst a caucus. Competition develops, particularly over the use of equipment and the management of significant projects. Sometimes organisations belong to several alternative structures, and pull out of them as it transpires that the one structure is not going to be as prominent as another, or they as an organisation will not be so prominent within it. For similar reasons individuals sometimes left their NGO in order to move to another.

Since structures like IFEE were very significant in the build up to the elections, to dominate the structure was a means to try to exert influence upon the election itself. A bid to manipulate the IFEE structure was a means to try to impose a particular agenda upon the preparations for the elections. As Charles put it, 'certain organisations want to control the elections'. The organisation of IFEE determined *who* received voter education, and this was believed to be influential on the result. Different organisations had different priorities over which groups were the most important to reach. Furthermore, the use of IFEE equipment and resources was also at stake, and access to resources and decision making are power, and a dominant position gave control and the potential to gain the maximum kudos. Not only were such issues relevant for the period of the campaign, but they might help an organisation with fund raising for years to come.

It is very difficult to judge whether the benefits of IFEE outweighed the stress that it engendered and the time which it consumed. Contacts, materials, training and records were shared, strategies were implemented and some of the finances from IFEE did increase the work completed in the Western Cape. Certainly IFEE could have been a very effective way of multiplying resources and rationalising the huge task of voter education, and in some respects it was, but ultimately the pressures surrounding the election added to the various mixed motives and problems associated with any structure and debilitated it.

3.4.10.5. Problems for NEON

The Trainers Commission was not the only section of IFEE, there was also the IFEE Monitoring Commission, initially co-ordinated by Charles Williams. Charles, presumably because he saw problems coming, lost faith quite early on in the capacity of the IFEE structure to successfully monitor the elections. In collaboration with colleagues around the country he pursued a rather more ambitious course.

I have described how Charles, with various colleagues, had established NEON at a national level, and how the structure attracted resources from foreign donors. The purpose of NEON was to provide a structure to co-ordinate recruitment, training and the deployment of

observers for the election. The structure was intended to co-ordinate not only NGOs but 'civil society' in general, including the business sector, unions, civics and churches. Unlike IFEE, NEON was not a 'forum' of affiliated organisations, but an organisation in its own right which attempted to co-ordinate many others.

In practise NEON shared similar problems to those of IFEE in addition to some more of its own. NEON was also hampered by communication problems and struggled to find out from the authorities the exact procedures for the elections in sufficient time to train people as observers. The network itself, even though it was so large, proved to be ineffective. For too long NEON relied upon the members of the network to come forward with the names of people they would endorse as observers. But no part of civil society reacted with sufficient haste or enthusiasm to generate the numbers required in time. As the election date drew close NEON was forced to advertise through the newspapers, which yielded a large response, but was regrettable since NEON had hoped to draw its personnel from its own accredited network of organisations. The large numbers created confusion with which the young organisation could not cope. Uncertainty over pay, training and deployment set in and there were people who did volunteer who were never contacted, and others trained who were never deployed. Consequently over the days of the election the number of observers fell far short of that desired.

Financially, rather than wait for funds to arrive NEON actually operated on credit, a risky but it was felt a necessary strategy to try to be ready in time. Amidst the confusion over the budget and numbers, some of the volunteers claimed to have been given the impression that they would be well paid for their services and came to NEON demanding wages for their work during the election. Charles himself became the subject of a long, armed, hostage drama after the elections by disgruntled observers. In other parts of the country there were sit-ins and angry demonstrations. Charles spent a considerable amount of time after the election trying to placate those who were angry, and raising money to cover NEON's excess costs.

One major problem, and this effected a variety of NGO operations which I saw, was a racial one. It was felt by some that the NEON head office was run by coloureds and whites while the black staff were left with 'just' the Cape Town office. In a sense this was accurate, and it is a product of apartheid that those Charles knew and trusted were coloured. As the work pressures became extreme so too did hostilities, and there was a walk out by black staff just prior to the elections which left the Cape Town office barely functioning.

While some blacks had grouped whites and coloureds together, others alleged that NEON had sidelined 'white' NGOs and deliberately not employed whites in senior posts. It was expressed to me, by one coloured person, who refers to himself as 'black', that whites could

not be seen to run 'our' elections, that the skills 'they' have by which 'they' lead were the products of apartheid privilege and that, if whites were to be involved it should be in a supporting capacity only. There was a suspicion amongst some NGO staff of white 'liberals', and a genuine fear too of Military Intelligence spies. These kind of suspicions come directly from the fear generated in the 1980s and the person concerned made reference to his attitude being 'the UDF's policy'.

However, despite the various problems, not everyone was negative about the success of NEON, as Mr. V. Clifford of Somerset West wrote to the Weekend Argus,

There were many hitches, uncertainties, midnight phone calls, decisions reversed. But at the end of it all, this group of volunteers had a better training and knowledge of proceedings than many of the official IEC observers... congratulations on a job well done in very trying circumstances (7th/ 8th May 1994).

Mr. Clifford reminds us that the NEON organisation did have some impact, as did IFEE, but behind the scenes the 'trying circumstances' of the time and in the co-ordination of the organisation, indicate the difficulties Charles faced at NEON.

3.4.11. *The WPCC and Development*

The ad hoc assistance of development projects is a long standing feature of the WPCC's work. However, during the transition period an important shift in the WPCC's focus as an organisation became clear. The intention to publish an ecumenical journal on the Church, Theology and Development; the launch of the annual Church and Development conference; and the participation of Nabs, virtually full time, in a women's 'development' course (more accurately described as an 'animation' course) marked a shift away from a concentration upon political issues *per se* and towards issues of reconstruction, nation building and development.

The shift in focus occurring at the WPCC towards a 'development' paradigm was part of the broader shift which occurred during the time of transition throughout the 'struggle' NGO sector towards development. I have already noted that the SACC introduced the language of 'empowerment' and reconstruction in 1991. The NGO sector too has been affected by changes in donor funding towards development criteria. The shift towards development by the Kagiso Trust, a vital channel of NGO funding in South Africa, increased its funding dramatically from R30 million in 1989 (Price, 1991:234) to R300 million in 1992 (Seekings 1993:9). The impact of the Independent Development Trust and other trusts established by business also helped to draw the NGO sector into 'development' work.

For some organisations the shift to development was an expedient move to curry favour with its donors, who were becoming reluctant to fund 'political' work after 1991. The next chapter returns to these funding issues. For the WPCC, however, although the issue of funding is crucial and will be seen to have become highly influential in the next chapter, yet the move towards development was also a logical progression of the WPCC's ideology and a vehicle to express it in the 1990s.

3.4.11.1. Relating to Projects and Communities

Since the 1970s, the WPCC has been involved with assisting and funding community projects through the SACC's Inter-Church Aid fund. Nabs continued to screen requests for funding from projects in the Western Cape destined for consideration by the SACC; and at times WPCC staff do become involved in helping particular projects, sometimes in a personal capacity. During the period of fieldwork Nabs helped to establish a brick making co-operative, which pays its workers R100 per week, and Moeketsi spent some time helping a crèche to find funding. The WPCC does play an advisory and facilitation role when approached, putting projects in touch with NGOs which can be of assistance, such as the crèche support group 'Grassroots'; or with local ministers, especially for the use of church halls; and also with business, donor agencies and trusts.

An illustration of the kind of relationship which can develop is that of the WPCC and the SHAWCO (Students Health and Welfare Centres Organisation) Nyanga centre for destitute mothers. SHAWCO approached the WPCC for financial assistance several years ago and there emerged a partnership between the two organisations. The social worker at the centre has become involved in the work of the WPCC, and the WPCC takes its visitors to see the Nutrition centre as an example of a local development project. The lady who runs the centre is very eloquent, and the gathered mothers obviously in desperate need. This 'exposure' has in itself yielded assistance from overseas for the clinic. However, plans emerged for the WPCC to set up its own ambitious project for these mothers, funded from Germany. The details of this shall be considered in the next chapter.

Relationships had also be formed with community leaders. The civic of the Kleinvlei informal settlement, for instance, requested Moeketsi to come to teach them how best to set up community structures, such as a pressure group to press for drainage in the area, and a training programme for cement making to lay solid bases for their shacks. He suggested to them, in addition, to request St. John's ambulance to come to give first aid training in the area. The WPCC has done this kind of advice work before for informal settlements, and it was particularly involved in the controversial establishment of the Hout Bay informal settlement. The WPCC did work to set up committees consisting of NGOs and the squatter leaders, and to help start various development projects. Through an SACC scheme the

WPCC also helped to establish an exchange programme between the Hout Bay squatters and congregations in North America. In the end the squatters won their right to stay in Hout Bay. As we have seen the WPCC continues to fight for the right of communities to have access to land, and they work with NGOs such as the Surplus People Project in the consideration of land redistribution in the 'new' South Africa.

3.4.11.2. The Church and Development Conference

In 1992 detailed plans were drawn up by the WPCC for a quarterly publication of an ecumenical journal on Church, Theology and Development. An editorial board drawn from the three Greater Cape Town universities was envisaged and an initial circulation of 5000 copies to academics, clergy, church members and NGOs. The intention was to generate ecumenical thought and debate around the development issue, to form a theological rationale for development work, and so mobilise a commitment from the church to contribute to the national development process. The publication, which was estimated to cost R80,000 per annum, however, was not funded by the SACC; but it shows the WPCC's design to encourage development activity and reflection. What has proved more successful have been the annual 'Church and Development' conferences which have been an annual event since October 1992. It organised chiefly by EFSA and WPCC and marks a concerted attempt by them to put Development and national reconstruction onto the Church's agenda.

I attended the October 1993 conference, which was held at the Nasrec centre outside Johannesburg around the theme of 'the Church's vision to heal our land'. Sponsorship brought the entire cost down to R200 per person, including transport from Cape Town to Johannesburg, food and accommodation. Speakers included Canaan Banana, former President of Zimbabwe; Manfred Max-Neef, a Chilean academic; Wolfgang Thomas, Francis Wilson of SALDRU (South African Labour and Development Research Unit, UCT) and Vivienne Taylor of SADEP (Southern African Development Education Programme, UWC). Other speakers included representatives of the Congress of South African Trade Unions, Kagiso Trust and the Development Bank of Southern Africa, and several church leaders including the President of the SACC, Dr. Mgojo, and its acting General Secretary Brigalia Bam, and also Barney Pitso. In addition the conference also featured a large fair in which many development organisations from across the country set up stalls for the four days of the conference displaying what they are doing.

The first conference, in 1992, was attended by 100 people and the second (1993) by 500. Initially plans for 1994 were to host 5000 people, but those plans were scaled down due to uncertainties with regards to funding. The conference planned for October 1994 was to focus upon the government's Reconstruction and Development Plan, and the one in 1995 upon the Land question ('the legacy of apartheid'). For these conferences the steering committee

(which included both Shun and Bennie) planned to involve senior members of government. For 1994 they invited, amongst others, Nelson Mandela, Jay Naidoo, Tokyo Sexwale, and also Desmond Tutu, Julius Neyerere (former President of Tanzania) and Kenneth Kaunda (former President of Zambia). The ANC ministers would, I expect, take a similar position to that of the Revd. Chris Nissen, a prominent ANC parliamentarian and leader of the ANC in the Western Cape after the election, who, speaking shortly before the elections, argued the need for the Church to continue to play a role as 'an NGO in society', to make people feel a part of the reconstruction and development process and for the church itself to work in co-operation with the government in development projects (17.03.94 St. Martini Centre).

It is a measure of the confidence, capacity, and reputation of the WPCC, that they organise events of this scale which involve prominent international speakers, and draw organisations and participants from nation-wide. They have been able, furthermore, to win the sponsorship sufficient to minimise the costs. Partly this is through the WPCC's links with SACC, but also because the WPCC itself has earned a reputation in its own right from the 1980s as an organisation committed to changing South Africa. This leaves it well placed to be an appropriate platform upon which its former allies may speak of the future.

3.4.11.3. Women's Development

While over the past few years Nab's Development and Training Ministries department has taken a decreasing role in 'development projects' per se the kind of 'development' work she has pursued has been increasingly concerned with women. Nabs is seldom at the WPCC because she is primarily involved in the various women's programmes which are being run from the offices in Cape Town of Catholic Welfare and Development (CWD). These are led by Anne Hope who, with Sally Timmel, has written a few books, amongst them 'Training for Transformation' (1984) which was banned in South Africa. Her methodology relies quite extensively upon the 'animation' techniques of Paulo Freire (to whom I have already referred in the second chapter).

Delta

'This new way to look at things changed my future' (lady on Delta course)

Anne Hope works at CWD and lectures at SADEP (Southern African Development Education Programme, UWC), but prior to her return to South Africa she worked in Zimbabwe, Kenya and in other parts of Africa pioneering the Delta (Development Education and Leadership Teams in Action) programme, which is now being run in 17 African countries. I shall consider the Delta programme more closely below. It is the establishment, running and propagation of this programme to which Nabs dedicates most of her time. She works in a team with a Xhosa lady and a French woman. During the first half of 1994 one course was

held in Langa on Mondays and another in Nyanga on Wednesdays. The meeting in Nyanga was made up of women from the local churches and unemployed ladies. The one in Langa, which was English speaking, was attended by women who are members of various organisations, including NGOs, such as the Quaker Peace Centre; Use Speak and Write English, a literacy organisation; CWD, and others from the ANC's Women's League and from community health and welfare projects. Nabs is involved in trying to spread the use of the Delta course. She spent some time in Worcester with a community worker she knows 'through political circles' trying to find people who would be suitable trainers for a preliminary Delta project in that area. In January of 1995 she planned to be going to Namibia to train trainers there to start a course.

I attended some of the Monday Delta meetings, held in the 'Men's Club' in the St. Francis centre in Langa. According to Wolpe 'the CWD's Delta Training is aimed at informing women of how to address their needs' (1994:34). There were twenty women in the group. Such meetings take the following form. The meeting starts at 9.00am and finishes at 4.00pm, the ladies taking it in turns to bring food for lunch and tea. The meetings open with songs and then a prolonged sharing time called 'joys and sorrows'. I was surprised to find, two months after the course had begun, that the women were very open with one another and shared about a range of personal events which had occurred during the previous week, as well as comments about current affairs, political and community issues. The atmosphere was relaxed and open, and the women gave one another sympathy, support and encouragement. There usually follows one of Hope's methods to stimulate debate called a 'code': groups are asked to make up a play around an issue, such as a customary law marriage not being recognised by management upon the death of an employee. Over time the women became adept at generating lots of issues in the codes, as well as in having fun. The play is then analysed using various questions -

What do you see ?

Why is it happening ?

Does it happen in reality ?

What are the root causes ?

What problems does this lead to ?

How can it be solved ?

The women then debate these questions in small groups, the play having energised some debate. The same effect can be achieved using stories or pictures. Through this the women are invited to consider issues relevant to contemporary South African society.

The organisers of Delta also bring in speakers, amongst them Anne Hope, to discuss issues. Matla was also invited on one Monday to give a day's workshop on voter education. Speakers take a wide range of issues, including environmental awareness and issues of women's legal rights, development issues (using Max-Neef, as adapted by Anne Hope), gender analysis, culture, and race. They also receive instruction on how to start and run groups, Friere's principles of education, and effective means to work for social transformation including aspects of organisation, fund-raising and activism. Furthermore, as the course goes on the women are expected to start using the principles they are learning within their own organisations; indeed they do not qualify from the course unless they do so. The leaders, such as Nabs, offer to help them in this process.

Delta is not the only work Nabs does. She also promotes the Gender Advocacy Programme (GAP). GAP is much like Delta, but it tends to focus more upon government policy and the advocacy of women's rights to address the 'gaps' between men and women in society, particularly in terms of education; influence; opportunities and so forth. In addition, the Ecumenical Women's Consultation (EWC) is a WPCC programme run by Nabs in which women in leadership in the church meet together to discuss pertinent women's issues and ecumenism. In the past Nabs has led EWC discussion groups, workshops and bible studies, and an EWC study guide was published by the WPCC in 1992 and over 500 copies have been distributed. This bible study emphasises the oppression of women in the first century, but argues that Jesus was different from the other men of his time and identified with women 'in their struggle'. It emphasises too that women were loyal to Jesus when men were not; that sometimes Jesus used women first; and that he respected them; trusted them; received from them; and cared for them. The implication, I presume, is that Christians today should side with the cause for 'women's rights'.

I regret that I was unable to follow the networks and activities of these various groups, or to see much behind the workings of Delta. Partly this was because Nabs was away so much, but also because I was not permitted to attend women's meetings (other than Monday Delta), nor the planning sessions at CWD. Nabs herself was very supportive, but not all the women in this work seemed at ease with a male social scientist. A woman would be in a better position to study this network of women's programmes which appears to be a growing and potentially a quite militant movement across Africa.

3.4.11.4. Contextual Theology as Development

In the first chapter the basic tenants of contextual theology were discussed, and it was noted that they tend to emphasise social equity and justice indicated in the phrase 'the kingdom of God'. In the 1980s the pursuit of these values encouraged the WPCC in its opposition to apartheid. In the context of the 1980s the language of protest best expressed their application

of contextual theology. Following the demise of apartheid the WPCC had to re-apply its values to a changing context. Increasingly the language of 'development' was used as a vehicle to express its goals for society.

During the 1980s the WPCC identified itself clearly with the liberation movements. In the light of their analysis of the prevailing economic, social and political structures they regarded these movements as better advocates of 'the kingdom' than the National party government. Indeed their faith required them to fight the policies of National party at all costs, as they did, and to actively support the liberation movements, as Shun believes, 'the only party with a real history of non- racism is the ANC'. For this stance they were perceived as 'the ANC at prayer' and as 'communists', and this remains the perception of many priests, including some leaders, and of much of the Christian general public. Their hope for society, however, never, in fact, rested with any political party

The staff at the WPCC, to borrow a phrase used by a German visitor to the WPCC, think, 'as theologians... as pastors of the society'; they feel a responsibility for the welfare of all of its people, to be amongst them and part of their struggles. At the same time they seek to have a global overview of the society, to be its oversight, to denounce its ills, to be progressive, giving leadership for the way ahead. As Bennie puts it, in an Orwellian way, 'we are neutral as a council, but we are progressively neutral'. The 'prophetic' aspects of contextual theology, its emphasis upon outspoken calls for justice, lead to such a stance.

Speaking at a WPCC service in St. George's Cathedral on December 10th 1993, Human Rights Day, the Vice-Chairperson of the WPCC, Father Peter-John Pearson, said 'we used to cry 'freedom or death, victory is certain', but now that the fruits of that struggle were being seen in the improvement of human rights, he said that the time had come to work for a culture of love, unity and sharing, 'so the kingdom of this world becomes the kingdom of our God'.

As I have previously noted, establishing of the 'Kingdom of God', is the key to feature of the WPCC's world view. The WPCC understands itself to be existing to build this kingdom; it is the goal of their faith. Apartheid had represented a barrier to 'the kingdom', but they never believed that its removal would constitute the coming of the kingdom. That is a larger task which is still outstanding. To illustrate this it is worth quoting at length from the WPCC's devotional reading of March 22nd 1994,

This is the kind of faith which we need in Africa! Faith which can remove the barren hopelessness in the souls of people on the continent. Faith which can make the deserts become green to feed the hungry. Faith which can tame wild soldiers and corrupt politicians so

that people may live in peace. Faith that believes that black is beautiful, not second or third class. Africa will not be able to rise from her death without the faith of God's people coming into action. Shun Govender.

The 'faith' is in a liberation whereby 'salvation' is the release of people from all economic or social deprivation. The faith is that one day the 'people of God' - all who strive to promote liberation - will finally succeed and the Kingdom of God shall be established and so 'the kingdom of this world' becomes 'the kingdom of our God' and all shall enjoy 'abundance of life'. Hence, according to Canaan Banana in his key note address to the Church and Development Conference October 1993, 'the kingdom of God is about land, education, freedom, salaries'. To this list we might add every ideal of equality, tolerance, understanding, peace, reconciliation, and sufficiency. Dedication to such concerns has characterised the WPCC since its inception as an organisation in 1981, as Courtney Sampson once said, 'The WPCC has consistently shown its commitment to justice and peace. We have held to a vision that God wills all people to live in harmony and peace. A vision that at the end of the day is Jesus Christ'.

In their analysis of the many structural problems and imbalances in South African society in the 1990s, the WPCC continues to firmly and consistently lay the blame at the door of apartheid, and behind that the global factors of which they are critical - the economic order, neo-imperialism, racism and sexism and so forth. The result of these, they argue has not only been physical poverty, but also a 'dehumanisation' of people, by which the prevailing structures of society, in this case those of the National party government, have left them 'disempowered'. Apartheid policies have left people without skills and opportunities to work, living in poor environments, the recipients of inferior education. At a deeper level the people have been forced to be content to live in poverty and lack the confidence and will to strive for anything better. Women, in particular, are said to have been pushed into a lifestyle of subservience. Hence South Africans have been 'dehumanised' because they are forced to accept indignity, and disempowered because they lack the personal and physical resources to change their situation. The WPCC, in Bennie's view, therefore has an obligation in the 1990s to work on effective 'development' programmes which transform society's ills, to liberate people from disempowerment and dehumanisation and thus bring in the Kingdom.

There has thus been a steady shift since 1990, at the WPCC, towards a rhetoric not of political 'struggle' but of 'development'. This has been particularly evident through the church and development conferences. While the familiar language of 'struggle' was evident at the October 1993 conference, the 'fight for justice' was now constructed no longer in terms of political rights but in terms of 'grassroots' empowerment' through 'development'. Canaan

Banana proposed the 'sacred values' of 'self actualisation' and 'self reliance', while Manfred Max-Neef advanced his paradigm of 'human-scale development' through which groups of people are 'empowered' through the identification of their 'unmet needs' and local organisation to attain them.

A shift of focus has thus taken place whereby 'struggle' is no longer construed so much as a national political issue, but now a local organisational one of 'development'. The commitment to the poor, thus reworked, demands support for any measures which alleviate social problems. The WPCC has retained its commitment to transform society and hence remain true to the heart of liberation theology, but, in view of the changing political context, this has been reworked from political liberation to 'development'. Its rhetoric around 'Development' has taken on that of a crusade. The *Women's Creed* used at the *Church and Development Conference* in 1993 declared, 'we stand on the brink of a new struggle for peace, democracy and development... we commit ourselves to the service of God and our people in a new South Africa'. Similar sentiments were expressed in the WPCC's daily devotional reader,

The Spirit of the Lord is upon us. God has chosen us to solve the spiritual and material problems of poor people, to release all those who consider themselves in one form or other of bondage, to bring light to the eyes of our people, to work for the liberation of the really oppressed folk of our land, to announce in the Name of our Lord that the kairos of God's salvation has come for all of us (Behold 26. 2. 1993, 'Jesus' Nazareth Manifesto').

The issue of South African development is seen at the WPCC as a profoundly theological one and the means to full liberation. It is the responsibility of Christians, it is their duty to bring people to their 'full humanity', since this is God's glory; as they maintain, 'The glory of God is the human being, all human beings - fully alive' (devotional document, *Church and Development Conference*, 9.10.93). Hence the rhetoric in common use at the WPCC in the 1990s concerns striving to promote measures to 'educate and empower' people; to 'conscientize' people to their plight and to give them 'literacy' in economics; social analysis; environmental awareness; power relations... in general to encourage a 'humanising process' by which people are 'healed' of their psychological scars. As Father Peter-John Pearson, Vice Chairperson of WPCC once put it, 'engaging one another... in a policy of development to overcome the poverty from the misrule of 300 years... to discover the abundance of life...to put away discrimination and establish human rights... a liberation from fear and war... a psychological healing... to hear the cry of the marginalised'.

3.5. Conclusion

The period 1990 to 1994 was one of political transformation in South Africa during which the various political parties negotiated a new political dispensation, culminating in the general election of April 1994. Similarly, the WPCC progressed through its own transition during this time. Its transformation was in part generated internally in an attempt to remain relevant to the changing debates. Other changes were forced upon the WPCC by external pressures, such as a breakdown of the former 'struggle' networks and the restructuring of the SACC. These external pressures were driven to a large degree by the changing attitude of donors to the South African situation.

The 'crisis modus operandi' demised as the 'struggle' organisations diminished in number and diversified following the unbanning of the political movements. The Church and the NGO sector lost much of its political profile after 1990. During the period of transition the WPCC found that its traditional aims and means of operation no longer generated the support or the interest which they had done previously. It had more success, however, engaging in activities particular to the transition period, such as the monitoring of violence and the education for democracy campaign. The WPCC also benefited from an increasing use of 'official' channels as old 'struggle' forms of campaigning lost their effectiveness.

The intellectual focus of the organisation during the transition retreated from the language of 'struggle' and its focus upon apartheid which was characteristic of the 1980s, and began to use the terminology of development to convey its analysis of society. The WPCC, having lost its political profile returned to a focus upon the church as its primary constituency. It used publications and conferences and church leaders meetings to convey to the church its analysis of society, and increasingly used the language of development to do so. It sought to promote its thinking through concentrating upon the church and its role in society. New conferences, publications and programmes were launched to promote this new focus. Throughout the period the WPCC retained a fidelity to the tenants of contextual theology which gave the WPCC continuity during a period characterised by difficult and complex changes.

4. Facing the Future

4.1. Introduction

The speech made by F.W. de Klerk on February 2nd 1990 which unbanned the ANC marked a definitive break in South African history, and had begun a period of political transition. The elections held at the end of April 1994, and the subsequent inauguration of the new government, marked a further watershed and the beginning of a new era. An interim constitution came into force and the country was divided into nine new provincial areas, each with a new structure of government. A new flag and anthem were also introduced. Most importantly, 'substantially free and fair' democratic elections brought to power a representative Government of National Unity headed by erstwhile state prisoner Nelson Mandela. Not only had the old finally and indisputably gone, but the new had finally come. The ANC led government came to power on a manifesto of Reconstruction and Development aimed at the 'empowerment' of the previously oppressed. The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) formed the centrepiece of the new government's policies. It aimed to uplift the poor through costly schemes aimed at many sectors of society, including housing, education, health and employment.

The previous chapter demonstrated how the dramatic political changes in 1990 had led, in less than a year, to a major process of restructuring at the SACC. This had effected the WPCC greatly, causing it to lose staff, autonomy and various programmes. The watershed in 1994 was not so unexpected, the negotiating parties had agreed upon the date of the elections in June 1993, and the major features of the new dispensation had become clear as the negotiations had progressed. The WPCC had been consciously adjusting its activities since 1990 in preparation for this new era, as the previous chapter showed. Nevertheless, pressure upon the WPCC to change increased dramatically in January 1994, as a financial crisis at the SACC denuded it of funds. The choice between drastic change or closure was staved off by the WPCC's involvement in election programmes, but once the transition was over the need to restructure became overwhelming. As soon as the inauguration of Mandela was complete the pressures upon the WPCC became such that it had to 'adapt or die' (to borrow the phrase used in 1979 by former President P.W. Botha of apartheid (Price 1991:28)).

It was ironic that as the era of democracy dawned the WPCC found that donors were no longer willing to fund the organisation and activities which had helped to bring the political transformation about. When the installation of a democratic and welfare oriented government became imminent the donor agencies ceased to consider South Africa a 'special case'. Their funds were reallocated to other areas of the world such as Eastern Europe, which had gained increasing interest and importance in Western Europe, or to organisations in South Africa

associated with programmes of development, in particular the implementation of the RDP plan. Organisations such as the SACC, which had been associated with the 'struggle', lost out in this funding shift to South African 'development' and other areas of the world. Frank Chikane, in conversation, confirmed this paradigm shift, he said that once the struggle was over South Africa's status among donors changed and there was 'a shift from special category to general category'. This general category of funding was discussed in chapter two where it was argued that in general funds flow to Africa for the implementation of development projects.

The funding 'bubble' which had so strongly supported South African NGOs as 'struggle' organisations in the 1980s, having come under pressure after 1990, burst in 1994. A development paradigm of funding took its place, in accordance with general patterns of funding. As a consequence it appears that many organisations shifted their rhetoric to 'development'. Press reports indicate that other 'struggle' organisations also witnessed a similar decline in funding during this period and began turning to the RDP and foreign donors for development funding following the elections. The Kagiso Trust, which had adopted a development paradigm at the beginning of the transition era, had, by contrast, grown markedly since 1989, further indicating the shift in funding.

Villa-Vicencio and Louw also confirmed in conversation that they perceive that in terms of funding and in the focus of organisations a shift from 'protest' to 'development' has occurred. Villa-Vicencio noted that the shift was particularly extreme for the SACC. It had been a channel of funding through which many 'struggle' organisations had gained funds. Its budget had therefore been very large and it had had a strategic importance in the 1980s, it was also given much discretion in its distribution of funds. In the post -1994 democratic situation, however, Villa-Vicencio said that 'funding is of a different kind and is not left to the discretion of the council of churches - it must now be specific [about the projects it wishes to do] and compete with many other good organisations in South Africa seeking to do development; nor is South Africa the only area of development'. The SACC's unusual position among funders in the 1980s has been lost, and it must now compete with development agencies in South Africa and elsewhere to win funds to launch projects approved of by donors.

The SACC received only 60% of its asking budget for 1994, and it cut its funding to its branches at the beginning of that year. It informed its staff that each branch would have to survive on its own fund-raising ability in the future. The staff of the WPCC had to come to terms with this new situation. During the transition a development paradigm had emerged as an expression of the WPCC's aims. The nature of the shifts in donor finance made a full transition to a developmental focus the most obvious option for the WPCC, and they began to pursue this directly after the 1994 elections.

In many respects the WPCC's experience as an organisation fits it well to become a development NGO: it has a proven record of commitment and effectiveness in its work among the poor, which could appeal to donors. The choice to change into a development organisation nevertheless required each member of staff to face a number of personal and organisational issues. Amongst these issues the staff at the WPCC had to consider what work they would wish to promote in the future, and whether these could be pursued as 'development' projects. Plans for these projects, their costs and the manner of their implementation would have to be devised and presented to donors. This brought into question the WPCC's relationship with donor agencies. Since the WPCC could no longer rely upon the SACC it had to, for the first time, consider how to win its budget direct from the donors. A third dilemma concerned the WPCC's relationship with the new government. The staff all held an affinity with the new government, yet their principled stance had always been to defend the independence of civil society, particularly in order to fulfil their theological imperative for 'prophetic' analysis of society. Yet, against this caution they wished to support the RDP, and furthermore it held the potential to relieve their financial problems.

Whether in the new context NGOs turning to development work from 'protest' is a strength or a weakness is debatable, and it is not within the scope of this thesis to argue either way. However the development paradigm is undoubtedly very different from that of protest. In fact it can be seen as the inversion of political struggle. Development tends to present an 'apolitical' impression of the problems which people face, locating their needs in self improvement. The protest work of the 1980s located problems in the political system and the failings of political leaders. Protest demanded political change as the way to improve life, but development emphasises change in other factors. It may therefore be argued that South African NGOs which fought for the 'struggle' belie some of the basic principles upon which they have operated as they turn to a development paradigm. The funding situation, however, leaves little choice to do otherwise if they wish to survive at all.

The staff at the WPCC wrestled as individuals and as an organisation with a maze of dilemmas concerning their ideals, principles, beliefs and the hard realities of the new era. It was a difficult time; nevertheless all but one of the programme staff decided to stay, and the WPCC emerged after the elections seeking funding to complete several development projects, although still unclear about its future relationship with the government.

4.2. The Cessation of Funding for the WPCC

In the second chapter the SACC's growth during the 1980s was discussed. As the SACC's financial strength grew so it was able to increase its funding to the regional councils such as the WPCC, and to other organisations. In the third chapter it was shown that the SACC began to encounter financial cut-backs as the transition began. In 1991 it was forced to restructure the organisation and reduce the number of its staff. At the 'round table' meeting with its donors in October 1993 the SACC proposed a total budget requirement in excess of R33 million. Only R19 million was granted. Its international donor partners no longer believed that the situation in South Africa warranted such large donations to the SACC. The donor agencies, aware of the implications of their stance, offered to pay for redundancy packages.

The WPCC was not directly represented at round table meetings. Although it was aware of possible funding shortfalls it was not prepared for the news of cutbacks which arrived in early January 1994. The departments had been asked to submit their budget proposals to the SACC as long before as June 1993, and they had made their plans and commitments for 1994 based upon these proposals. The brief and somewhat understated fax that appeared on the 4th of January informed them that there would be no money for the programmes of branch departments in 1994. The significance only gradually became clear that, though they would be paid, the staff would not have any money for their programmes, or indeed to do any work at all. They therefore had to pull out of commitments and cancel the conferences and other projects which they had initiated. The plans they had so carefully arranged had to be put back in the files.

For a while there was a thick sense of despair and disillusionment at the council, mixed at times with anger at the way they felt treated, and fear as to what this might mean for the future. Above all there was a sense of frustration that so much which they had wanted to do now had to be cancelled. Shun described the feeling in the ecumenical movement across the country as, 'a lot of unease and uncertainty'. However, particularly with the elections coming up, the staff did their best to find alternative sources of finance for their work. Moeketsi and Charles gained money for their work as IFEE convenors from the other IFEE members, and later Charles was seconded to NEON. One secretary, Pam, was seconded to the IEC. Nabs continued her work with Catholic Welfare and Development and was not seriously effected. Bennie and Shun pursued their reflective work, but had to cut down on their publications, catering and transport costs. Their ambitious plans for a series of conferences were all shelved. The grandiose plans for the following Church and Development conference, for 5000 people, were drastically down scaled particularly as funding cuts had also effected EFSA and various Trusts which they had hoped would sponsor the event.

As soon as the elections were over it became clear that the SACC planned to change its constitution and to phase out its support for the 'branches', which, it concluded were, 'formed mainly as a focus for the work of the Dependents' Conference, caring for detainees and political prisoners and their families' and further concluded that 'their function now needs re-examination' (*Towards a new SACC*, draft 1994:3). The SACC therefore laid plans to rationalise the twenty-two 'branches' into one per region later in 1994, and to expect them to become independent of the SACC in 1995, with no branch having more than ten staff in the interim (although the SACC itself planned to continue to operate with a staff complement in excess of 68). Retrenchment packages, which were regarded at the WPCC as very fair, were offered as an incentive for staff to leave voluntarily. Otherwise staff could remain until the end of the year (1994) before their employment was reconsidered.

Thus, the WPCC, during the period which brought to pass the successful culmination of its campaign for a democratic South Africa, was beset by a financial and constitutional crisis which threatened the position of every single member of staff and the future of the organisation itself. Each staff member had to decide his or her own future plans, whether within or outside of the WPCC. Collectively they also had to discuss the future of the organisation. In facing this challenge they were forced to consider the difficult questions concerning the future purpose of the WPCC; its place in the new political dispensation; and also the source, and availability of funding which it would therefore require.

4.3. Staff Experiences and the Influence of Liberation Theology

As the WPCC's staff considered the future, they primarily did so as individuals. The WPCC in the 1980s had allowed staff a great deal of personal independence to conduct their activities. This was part of the camaraderie and 'crisis modus operandi' which was referred to in chapter two. As has been pointed out in the last chapter that style of work was not interfered with in the 1990s, and each member of staff to a very large extent conducts his/her own department's affairs. Therefore it was left to individuals to decide their future and that of their department should they remain, and the future of the WPCC would be determined by their choices.

Another product of the 1980s which remained apparent in the 1990s was that the staff were highly committed to the work that they were doing. The WPCC's staff were motivated by personal drive rather than by organisational demands. The WPCC allowed them flexibility to pursue the goals which they wanted to see in society; and each member of staff had a strong drive in this regard. They each had a clear image of the society they wished to see, and the problems which had to be overcome to achieve it. This was expressed in overtly religious language by some members of staff, who wanted to see the 'kingdom of God' established, for

others the terminology was different, but the essence was the same. The staff were all social activists, rather than just 1980s political activists. Secondly their vision for society was driven by emotional strength, which again was honed by their experiences of an oppressive society, which were very traumatic. Thirdly, the 1980s style of work was very demanding and the staff had not lost their attachment to working in the excitement of the NGO sector and addressing grand social problems.

These personal issues are of vital importance for each individual. The choice for each of them, whether to stay or go, involved personal question of values and beliefs and of their vision for society. They also had to consider their own future, which involved financial considerations and career options. The future of the WPCC depended upon how each of the staff dealt with these issues. Other councils in the Western Cape lost all their staff, and closed as a result. It was the commitment of the staff to the ideals of the WPCC which kept it open, and explain why, in the face of uncertainty and financial problems, most of the staff of the WPCC did not choose to leave. This section therefore considers some of the biographical details of the programme staff to illustrate the experiences which led them to the beliefs, values, personal aims and social vision which kept them at the WPCC and which will help to shape the organisation in the future.

4.3.1. Biographical Details

Bennie Witbooi (Ecumenical Officer). Bennie often tells visitors, in his constant desire to be jovial, that he is misnamed. He is neither 'white' nor a 'boy'. In fact he will tell you that he is black - a pure blooded Khoi in fact; although the previous government would have called him coloured. As such, in the 1960s and 1970s, there were few job options open to him as an ambitious and intelligent student. He could have become a teacher, or he could have entered the police or the armed forces, but such careers did not appeal to him. Rather, having been inspired by priests as a boy, he attended a selection conference of the Anglican Church. They accepted him, on the condition that he attained a degree. He attended UWC and became involved in the South African Students Organisation where he was strongly influenced by the black consciousness movement (BCM). Having subscribed to BCM thinking, he adopted black theology and began to advocate that the church had a role to play in the struggle. With this in mind he went straight to FedSem, the Federal Seminary which was for the training of Anglican, Methodist, Congregational and Presbyterian clergy. It was to be a long association.

FedSem was initially located near the University of Fort Hare at Alice, in the old Ciskei homeland. The Seminary was used as a place of shelter and sanctuary by students escaping the police during times of militant protest. In 1974 FedSem was told by the Ciskeian authorities to move and its land was expropriated. The college was re-established in Umtata

using prefabricated buildings and the conditions were very poor. After only a few months the Transkei government also forced the seminary to leave, and it moved to Pietermaritzburg. These experiences not only reinforced Bennie's antipathy to the apartheid regime (which he held responsible for the disruption), but it also left with him a deep impression of ecumenism in action, since students from different denominations worked together to resist the removals and to persevere together.

Having attained a Masters degree in Theology in the United States (Berkeley) Bennie returned to FedSem as a tutor, helping to resolve denominational conflicts and conduct practical projects. He was also the director of a development and educational trust. Having worked as a parish priest in Port Elizabeth for two years, where he tried, with difficulty, to establish ecumenism amongst the churches, he came to the WPCC in the late 1980s and took over from Leslie Liddell as ecumenical officer when she left.

In many respects Bennie remains an academic. He has written several papers, particularly on the church as an NGO and the church and civil society (he is planning a PhD on this topic in due course). He regularly travels to deliver papers at conferences in Africa and Europe and belongs to various research groups in Cape Town and in Southern Africa. He is hungry for new concepts and models and excited by reading new papers. He is always hospitable, keen to meet those from overseas and ask 'how are things on your side?' Bennie is also a man of action, and there is an excitement in his eyes when setting up a conference or planning a statement. He is in his element in a meeting, discussing issues and strategies, 'We must start drawing up plans.. (smiles) '.. preparing a document..(smiles)'. .. bringing together a conference!' (smiles). For Bennie action is the imperative. He cannot abide mere classroom debate. As he puts it, 'Theology is the second step, commitment comes first'.

He places a high emphasis upon social analysis and upon reflection, but it is orthopraxis - in other words reflection upon action but in the light of the doctrines of the church; although he is quick to add that church tradition and scripture must themselves be set in their context and subjected to critical analysis and re-interpreted for our times; they are a source of principles for him, but not of absolutes. He remains faithful to Black consciousness, and his methodology is that of contextual/liberation theology. He is primarily concerned with the contextualisation of Christianity and for liberation from all poverty. Bennie regards political change as vital, but not enough. For him 'liberation' will only come when there is perfect justice and every person enjoys 'full humanity'. Until there is peace, equity and tolerance - which he equates with the values of the kingdom of God - the work of liberation will not have been made complete, as he emphasises, 'my theology talks about the liberation of human beings, that doesn't stop when (political) liberation is gained'.

Shun Govender (Theological Officer). Shun is originally from a Hindu background, but his family became Christians through the influence of a Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) evangelist when Shun was 15 years old. He decided to become a DRC minister and indeed he did, but he has some vivid memories, which he prefers me not to relate, of the way he and his family were treated which obviously had a cumulative effect upon him. In 1975 feelings of alienation began to take shape, particularly during a debate in Holland on the WCC's Special Fund (part of the Programme to Combat Racism) in which he found himself in strong disagreement with his white DRC colleagues and the DRC's support of apartheid. His youthful enthusiasm was finally gone, and with it his trust of missionaries and the white DRC.

Unable to remain within the hypocrisy he perceived of the white DRC he left to study in Holland where he gained a Doctorate focusing upon the relationship of black theology and Marxism. In 1982 he was part of the delegation headed by Allan Boesak which successfully called for the white DRC to be excluded from the World Alliance of Reformed Churches. Upon his return to South Africa he became active in the SACC, the publication of the Kairos document and principally in the establishment of the Burinderkring - a confessional group within the DRC inspired by the example of Bonhoeffer. Shun set up and ran the Cape Town office of the Burinderkring but joined the WPCC to stimulate its theological work in 1991.

Shun continues to write papers and, like Bennie, travels regularly to speak at conferences, including ones in Europe. His current concern is a study of theology and justice, particularly the ethics of international economics. Shun lectures at Stellenbosch and UWC on a weekly basis. He takes some dry delight in giving young white 'conservative' DRC students exposure to other religions. However, his central concern is for ethics. Like Bennie his methodology is that of contextual/liberation theology, but his emphasis is more simply upon praxis rather than orthopraxis. Perhaps because of his Reformed background he has little concern for church traditions, they are for him the product of a previous struggle. The church exists not for itself or its traditions but to respond to the challenges of its own time. All ideology must be subjected to a thorough critique and ideas must be tested and understood for 'who owns them'. Only ideas which provide a useful critique to inspire commitment in the current context are appropriate - and for him Marx's critique of capitalism provides the best methodology for social analysis in the current context.

The 'gospel', for Shun, does not exist outside of action. There is, for him, no such thing as propositional truth, there are no principles which can always be applied through deductive reasoning to any situation. The gospel is, rather, action which liberates people from whatever binds them, whether it be poverty, indignity or whatever. A Hindu practising such principles would be closer to God, and more of a Christian, than a so called 'Christian' who does not. Shun, in fact, has great misgivings about 'Christianity', it is, he argues 'the most aggressive religion of the twentieth century' which has earned no right to enter the twenty-first century

since from it has come war, conquest, the atom bomb, racism, environmental destruction and capitalism. He sees it as being the carrier of a European world view bent upon absolutism, lacking the will to accept greys, it seeks to crush and destroy what is not of it. It is an imperialist religion and its Western culture has produced the absolutism of Hitler and apartheid. For him 'the gospel is against Christianity, Jesus is not a Christian.' Rather than the traditions of Christianity he wants to see a new global ethic, more deeply rooted in indigenous principles, those more respectful of nature, like that of Hinduism or Rastafarianism; a radical new ethic of harmony and peace.

Moeketsi Ntsane (Justice and Social Ministries) grew up in Guguletu (a black township in Cape Town), and rather like Bennie was faced with few promising job options, particularly due to Cape Town's designation as a coloured preferential area. Two years before he matriculated, while at a Catholic youth group, some members of the ANC took him aside and explained who they were. He became involved in the ANC and was inspired to care for people in the community - a practical form of defiance to a dehumanising system. Had he been allowed to, he feels that he would have gone to University and pursued a career in information or communications, but the opportunities were blocked by the apartheid system. So he became an activist, principally in welfare work and literacy projects, but also in the more defiant work of distributing the names of detainees 'for prayer'. He lived in an MK safe house, and was once arrested for his work in the Catholic Church on behalf of detainees, although he was never charged.

The need for some job security led him in 1980 to become involved with Cowley House and the Dependants Conference (DC). The DC helped to accommodate and support the families of prisoners. It was associated with the SACC and worked under the auspices of the WPCC. In 1991 the DC closed and Moeketsi became the WPCC's Justice and Social Ministries co-ordinator. His contacts in the Cape Town black community and his association with the ANC have remained strong, and the latter was particularly reinforced during his work at Cowley house - he was Winnie Mandela's driver in Cape Town and worked closely with the Sisulu family amongst many others. He is a gregarious character, more fond of stopping to talk than of administration. That is why he seems to have contacts in every quarter and was well suited to the work of the Justice and Social Ministries. His passion remains South African current affairs; when I first introduced myself to him he quickly and passionately presented me with a long analysis of the Umtata Raid.

Nabs Wessells (Development and Training Ministries) is the most private of the programme staff. Her father and husband are prominent ministers in the Moravian church and well known

anti-apartheid activists. At the UCT conference in February 1994 'Whither the Ecumenical Movement', her father Chris Wessells stated that the coloured people were likely to vote for the National Party because they had been subjected to apartheid propaganda, and there was hence a need for a programme to 're-educate coloured people'. Their antipathy towards the apartheid government of the National party led to the arrest of both Nabs and her husband for their activities. She worked as a volunteer for the Dependant's Conference from the early 1980s and was chairperson of the steering committee and its international representative. She became a paid worker of the Dependants Conference from 1988 until its closure in 1991 when she took on the Development and Training Ministries.

She was attracted to remain at the WPCC because, she maintains, 'the ecumenical movement was a movement for social justice, the mouthpiece for all the oppressed people'. Nabs has tended to focus her department upon women's issues, rather than the development projects which the WPCC was formerly involved with. This is due in part to declining finances, but more because Nabs perceives development should be 'people centred' and she particularly believes that women have a great deal to contribute to the 're-weaving of the social fabric'. She emphasises that women have qualities of love and gentleness and that, 'if women were more in control we might have less spent on war and more spent on caring'.

She believes that women themselves need to be 'developed' in order to fulfil their potential. This development involves, 'liberating people from all that holds them back from a full human life', and she adds that, 'the bonds of poverty and oppression make the lives of large numbers of people less and less human'. Currently she is very involved with various programmes to help women gain confidence and skills, particularly those of critical analysis and community organisation. She enjoys adult education and believes that the work is important for society.

Charles Williams (Education and Renewal Ministries) has particularly painful and emotive memories of apartheid and the toll which forced removals had upon his own family. They were removed from Simons Town and he attributes the following family dysfunction and his father's death 'of a broken heart' to this experience. He grew up opposing apartheid and was imprisoned, for the first time, in 1976 for his part in the uprisings of that year. He was part of the NYLTP (National Youth Leadership Training Programme), an ecumenical programme organised by the SACC to bring youth together across the racial spectrum to live in community and consider the evils of the social order. He was on the same course as Charles Martin of TEP (Theological Exchange Programme), and like Martin and 40 % of those on that particular course, he decided to become a priest. In 1981 he was appointed Youth director of the Anglican Cathedral in Durban and Pietermaritzburg and was concerned that the children learn, as he had come to believe through NYLTP, that God is a God of the poor,

teaching them to use phrases such as 'my God is black'. Following this he attended the Anglican Seminary in Grahamstown and was particularly influenced by the teachers who used Marxist social analysis and emphasised the need to make theology relevant to context. Along with a number of other ordinands he took a conscious decision to discard 'western' theology in favour of Contextual theology. He also opted to do his practical work as a youth worker in the Ciskei.

Upon his return to Cape Town, Charles became a minister in the radicalised area of Bonteheuwel, a UDF stronghold. With like minded ministers he established a wing of the ICT (Institute of Contextual Theology), which in due course evolved into the Theological Exchange Programme (TEP). He then pursued parish work in Mitchell's Plain and later the Platteland, while remaining active in the UDF. He worked hard mobilising marches, many of them illegal, and he was frequently detained. After a six month break from the ministry he joined the WPCC to head up the Education and Renewal Ministries department in 1991, brimming over with ideas, and he soon set up several committees. His primary concern was AIDS education, for which he attended University courses, and has since become involved with several related committees and organisations. He set up a WPCC committee on AIDS education, another on youth and a third for women. But all of these fell by the wayside in pursuit of the fourth - Education for Democracy. He channelled all of his efforts into trying to ensure that the elections were concluded free and fair.

Perhaps of all the staff Charles had been the most active in directly mobilising grassroots resistance, but nevertheless he is the one who was most keen to encourage a spirituality in the WPCC and was the only vocal advocate of prayer, singing and more personal reflections in devotions. This stems from his background in which liveliness and the supernatural are taken as the norm for Christian worship. In his parishes he organised 'healing services'; but these were not pietistic, they included catharsis and prayer for those in need of 'political healing' resulting from their experiences. He, along with others at the council, placed a strong emphasis upon 'theologising' ones context, in the tradition of contextual theology. Of the three priested staff he is the one who hankers the most to get back to parish life, for its spirituality and for the opportunities to 'theologise' people's experiences with them.

4.3.2. A Sense of Identity

The staff at the WPCC have much in common, which helps them to work as a homogeneous group. As they faced the future their sense of identity as individuals and as an organisation became important factors for the future of the WPCC. They share a common commitment to the tenants of liberation theology, and their convictions are deeply held since they are the product of their experiences of apartheid. Concomitant with this is their strong loyalty to the ecumenical movement. No denomination is as fully identified with liberation theology in the

way that the ecumenical movement is. While each member of staff has a different field of interest (Nabs with women's 'development', Shun with global harmony etc.) all of them derive their analysis from contextual/liberation theology.

Each member of staff, furthermore, particularly by virtue of their long-standing commitment to the anti-apartheid struggle, has developed a career in the non-governmental/church/academic sectors, and they are confident and recognised in these areas. They are all people with a desire to promulgate and work for their particular notions of desirable social change. They all have personality types which are 'cause driven' (a personality which is attracted to serving other people through championing a cause). Through many years they invested a great deal in the promotion of change in South Africa, often at personal cost and for little reward.

Their 'causes', as the last chapter made clear, go beyond that of the end of apartheid; their goals concern more global aims. They are under no illusions that in South Africa those goals have been achieved. At the very least the promotion of a fully just, non-sexist, and non-racist democracy still has plenty of scope for their work before they are satisfied. Apartheid was a hurdle, but that it has been overcome leaves only new opportunities to promote their beliefs. There is not amongst them even a hint of staleness nor of triumphalism.

The possible exception to the above analysis was Moeketsi, whose involvement with the ecumenical movement had not derived from a theological position per se but from his involvement first with the ANC and then with the Dependant's Conference, which supported prisoners on Robben Island, but fell under the auspices of the WPCC. Also, some of the administrative staff had not been in the ecumenical movement for so long or for particularly strong theological views.

The way that the WPCC had refocused its work in the early 1990s, showed that the WPCC were not just an organisation of political activists, 'the ANC at prayer'. Their commitment had been derived from a larger vision of society than any political affiliation. The end of apartheid had not, therefore, left them lacking an ideology. The reality, however, was that they had been funded for their struggle work and the funding of the organisation would end completely by the end of 1994. It was a bleak situation, and not without irony Priscilla commented, 'we worked our butts off for years to get Mandela released and now he's sitting pretty and we're out of work'.

Staff at the other councils of churches elsewhere in the region (West Coast and Southern Cape) chose to accept the SACC's redundancy packages and thus their councils were closed down. However, at the WPCC a strong sense of self identity meant that they saw the council

as more than just a 'branch' of the SACC which existed for the Dependant's conference (in other words, anti-apartheid work). Visitors to the WPCC were often told that it is 'more than just a region' (of the SACC). As Bennie put it to two United Nations officials, 'we have a life and ethos of our own... the WPCC has ecumenical credibility... we have a history of autonomy'. Bennie and Shun emphasise the unique location of the organisation - in the 'mother city'; close to three universities; the headquarters of several denominations; amongst a large number of NGOs and religious organisations. They gently boast a sizeable network in various sectors and amongst 'the grassroots' too. They are poised, they say, to lead a vibrant new post-election ecumenism in Cape Town, given the opportunity.

There is an awareness amongst the executive and staff that it was not so long since the WPCC was much larger, and was internationally recognised as a leader in the struggle for justice. As Bennie put it to some British visitors, 'we were vocal in our opposition to them (the government) in the past', and he maintains that the ecumenical movement, as expressed through the WPCC, was, 'very, very effective, recognised by the world as a very important tool to combat the state and apartheid'. The times have changed, and apartheid has gone, but the legacy of problems remains and all of the staff believe they can do much in the 'new' South Africa. There is, indeed, a sense of compulsion to achieve the ecumenical dream of a just, non-racial, non-sexist democratic society. As Shun expressed it, on several occasions, 'we must deliver it' and, 'it's inconceivable we shouldn't have a vibrant ecumenism in this region'.

The WPCC is seen by staff, and by its associate organisations, as a vital organ for the work they want to see happening in South Africa. This is, as Courtney Sampson, the Chairperson of the WPCC wrote in the WPCC introductory booklet, 'the continuing struggle for a just, non-sexist, non-racial and democratic society [which] lies at the heart of our existence as a council of churches' (Ecumenical Ministries 1, WPCC, 1992). They feel a sense of challenge, what Charles Williams calls 'God's excitement', to utilise the freedom which was hard won by their activities in the 1980s. They believe that they have only just begun. Thus, with this strong will to go on, when in January operational finances from the SACC came to an end and it became clear that the WPCC could no longer rely upon the SACC for its survival, the executive established a task force to consider the options for the future and Bennie, Shun and Priscilla began to look for ways for the WPCC to gain funding.

The church leaders were kept informed of the crisis, but there was no faith in the church financing the WPCC. The future of the WPCC was the focus of several church leaders meetings, but it appeared that the church leaders preferred not to become too involved. The Church leaders did not really initiate the WPCC, and they do not seem to have a sense of ownership of it. The WPCC grew out of local and international ecumenism, and was financed from overseas. It did not appear that the church leaders were keen to inherit a structure that

had been created in opposition to apartheid. While they attend the WPCC's meetings and participate in the discussions and the issue of statements, in terms of financial commitment and involvement, however, they displayed little enthusiasm. Previous requests for just one more secretary had fallen on deaf ears.

Bennie told the staff, as early as January, 'our destiny is in our hands'. Shun and Bennie began work on detailed documents to present the WPCC's projected analysis of South Africa over the following five years, and to suggest areas of need which the WPCC could fulfil. Priscilla, meanwhile, found means to generate income for the short term, principally through the hosting of NEON staff and also of the IEC Recruiting Office which operated from the WPCC while it was being established. Privately the WPCC also began to make contact with friends in European donor agencies to investigate the possibilities of the WPCC once again receiving direct funding. Several were invited to visit the WPCC as soon as possible.

4.4. Sources of Funding

As the WPCC considered its survival, there were two major sources of funding from which it could benefit. The first were the WPCC's traditional sponsors, the non-governmental donor agencies which had previously worked with the SACC. The second was the new government. In the first half of 1994, however, the new government was not established, and was therefore not an immediate option. Furthermore, for reasons of non-governmental independence which shall be discussed later in this chapter, the WPCC were initially hostile to reliance upon the state. Fund-raising from the public or from corporations was never seriously considered, presumably because they were not regarded as holding sufficient financial potential to maintain the organisation. Thus the most pressing question in early 1994 was whether international funding would be available to the WPCC in the future.

4.4.1. The WPCC as a Development NGO

Although the WPCC is specifically an ecumenical organisation, it will now be clear that it operates in society in the way of an NGO. The experience it has gained since 1977 of working in society place it in a strong position to project itself as a development NGO fit to receive funding in the new era in South Africa. While its work in the past was focused upon 'protest' nevertheless in many respects it has become an organisation which donors could regard as well suited for 'grassroots' 'developmental' work. In order to illustrate this, the points made by Hyden, in chapter two, will be useful in considering the WPCC as a contender for 'development' funding.

Hyden argued that NGOs are 'close to the poor'. Within NGOs there is believed to be an appreciation of local customs, attitudes, desires and so forth which help them to avoid the pitfalls associated with many imposed development projects. All of the staff at the WPCC work amongst 'the poor', Bennie and Shun as ministers in churches, and the other staff through where they live and the nature of their work at the WPCC. Furthermore, they all have a background philosophy which considers issues from the perspective of class struggle, a perspective grounded in their own experiences. So while the WPCC is an institution rather than a community based organisation there is good reason to argue that it is likely to retain some affinity with the poor. This is, however, subject to some conditions. The loss of Moeketsi from the staff was a blow to this aspect of the WPCC and the failure to employ people from the black townships will open the WPCC to the charge of becoming a middle-class 'coloured' organisation. Secondly there will need to be a constant revision of the rhetoric of the WPCC if it is to continue to genuinely express local sentiments in a new situation. It may well be the case that the unanimity of attitude found in local communities during the struggle will not last in the advent of political pluralism. Under these circumstances it is difficult to see how an NGO is supposed to advocate the attitudes of the poor. It is unlikely that there will be the same clarity in the years ahead as there was in the 1980s.

NGOs are described as motivated and altruistic. I suggest that this is certainly true of the WPCC. The primary motivation for those at the WPCC, including their associates and executive members, was their philosophy rather than financial gain. The staff continued to work despite a lack of funding from the SACC at the beginning of 1994, sometimes covering costs personally. The staff do not work to set hours but to a purpose, sometimes working through the night and at weekends. There was no financial gain to be made from overtime. Their attention is upon what they want to see achieved rather than personal profit. Likewise while they are not slow to promote the organisation, nor do the staff laud the WPCC over other organisations. Bennie and Shun played a large part in establishing the City of Peace campaign, yet they received little public credit, which the mayor took. This did not seem to concern them since their chief concern was to see the campaign prosper rather than to specifically advance the WPCC. The WPCC's commitment is to work according to principles and this motivation is also found in other South African NGOs, generally those which evolved during the struggle to fight the injustices of the apartheid system. However, this principle-motivated altruism is not necessarily true of all NGOs, and particularly not of those more recent South African NGOs set up to cash in on the democratisation process. There are no guarantees that NGOs will necessarily be motivated by altruistic principles - clearly some of those involved in the elections were not. I suggest that the more money which is channelled into NGO activities the less NGOs will be characterised by altruistic motivation, even if they portray themselves as such.

NGOs are praised for operating without waste, and they are regarded as efficient and economical. In the case of the WPCC it had no money to waste, every cent was needed for its continued operation. To argue that this is a strength of NGOs is misleading, because it in fact advocates a situation of underfunding. The WPCC was understaffed and the programme staff were tied down with administrative tasks for which they were not qualified, to the detriment of their work. The financial constraints imposed upon the WPCC hinder its operations which leads to inefficiencies in the use of time. A lack of funding makes NGOs even more dependent upon courting donors, and it takes large amounts of time and effort to convince donors to give, and often an even longer time to receive from them. In all events, it is dangerous to assume that NGOs should be considered less wasteful than, say, government departments. The latter have an accountability to their elected masters which should reduce waste. NGOs often have no such accountability, and their organisation tends to be very loose. NGOs are not by nature immune to wasteful practises nor fraud.

The looseness of organisation found in NGOs is in fact praised by Hyden and others because it offers flexibility. Certainly this was a feature of the WPCC. NEON was rapidly established in order to meet a perceived need to establish an organisation for the recruitment, training and deployment of election observers. Although its final achievements are debatable, the ability to create a nation-wide structure within a few weeks, while lacking any certain finances, was remarkable. The WPCC did exhibit the capacity to quickly set up a campaign, to issue a statement or to provide materials to victims of fire or floods. Without question this style of operation was perfected in the 1980s as the WPCC responded to crises as swiftly as possible. A new era, however, may require programmes which are run consistently over a long period, such as the Delta course. The ability to act fast is dependent upon sufficient amounts of discretionary finance and the willingness of the WPCC's contacts to also respond with speed. However, future funding requirements may lock the WPCC into the running of specific projects, and the freedom to be flexible was a feature of the period when the WPCC was funded to continue the struggle. Flexibility will be much more difficult in the future if it raises finances for the execution of particular projects, and as NGOs move from the struggle to concentrate on different niches. The flexibility of NGOs must be seen in the light of the requirements made of them by their donors and the constraints imposed upon them by civil authorities.

NGOs are purported to be very effective in harnessing voluntary support and establishing local organisations. The WPCC does work 'locally' through its relief work and Delta, but neither were started nor sustained by local initiative, although the Delta course may produce local organisations as a spin-off of the course. The WPCC itself does not rely upon local volunteers, and its work is not based upon using local resources, but rather international ones. The activities of the WPCC transcends different classes, working with groups ranging from

refugees to prominent leaders. Thus it does not fulfil the image of a locally based southern NGO using volunteers; rather it is an institution one step removed from local organisation. As such it is able to work on a broader set of concerns and support small local projects, such as the Crossroads centre for single mothers; and large campaigns such as the kind mounted for the elections. The demanding nature of this kind of work, however, preclude the use of many volunteers and the concentration required to initiate local groups.

The attention given to NGOs, particularly in development work is due to the perception that they generate 'participation' in their projects. NGOs, however, do not create 'participation' by local people out of a void. The ability of NGOs to generate 'participation' is through their knowledge of existing networks of people which they can co-ordinate in pursuit of a common goal. The significance of this, in the case of the WPCC, is that the ability of the WPCC to generate this 'participation' has begun to falter as the old 'struggle' networks have broken down. The election was probably the last occasion its old network could be effective. Nevertheless, since 'networking' is the method upon which NGOs operate, new networks may be found if NGOs seek to work together in the future.

A feature of NGOs, and their appeal to some theorists, is that they are separate from government. The tradition of the WPCC demonstrates that an NGO can work effectively in opposition to government policies and help to stimulate a critical debate of government policy. However, by definition, NGOs exist in relation to government. Without government there could be no 'non-government' organisations. The experiences of the WPCC clearly illustrate that the activities and even the existence of an NGO is related to the prevailing political environment. The 1980s struggle against the National party's apartheid government gave a context for the WPCC which framed and referenced all its activities. Through the complex processes I have sought to illustrate, the changes in South African politics in the 1990s have had a major impact upon the WPCC, forcing it to make far reaching changes to its structure and aims. NGOs cannot be seen as somehow separate from the world of politics, in fact they are in it and subject to it. Changes in government lead to changes in attitude within NGOs, in the attitude of donors and in government policy towards them. In the opening chapter I argued that NGOs can prosper in opposition, but when the government meets their demands their sphere of activity is curtailed. Not only the WPCC but many NGOs existed to fight the government and/or provide welfare for the poor. As the RDP gathers all the attention to fulfil this task so NGOs may be squeezed out, some will close down, and others will have to find new areas to be 'non-governmental'. Still others may become the pawns of political manoeuvres if they fall under the sway of government control, as many in Africa have done, by choice or by force.

The popularity of NGOs with those who wish to see the promotion of particular ideologies has some justification. Animation programmes like Delta do encourage changes in thinking through regular reference to the concepts important to those holding the course. The problem is that these courses lack self criticism. Delta does not debate feminism or left wing politics or the merits of local political organisation; rather it advances them through consistently making reference to the particular set of principles in which the organisers strongly believe. Friere would call it 'education', but for others it would constitute indoctrination. The subtlety of Delta is that it works with groups of people who are already working in these fields and effectively extends their views and shows them how to organise groups using these values, thus establishing and strengthening them. Should this ever take off on a large scale such values could become more influential. In more general terms, the capacity of NGOs to organise courses, as demonstrated by the WPCC, does expose groups of people to the dynamics of organisation, analysis, protest and so forth. In this way NGOs can play the role for which they have been credited in Europe as the vanguard of democratic values and civil organisation about local issues. This is fundamental to participatory democracy. NGOs are in a position to encourage such activity in a way that other institutions are not but, again, the way they go about it will be influenced by their funding arrangements, their politics and their ideology.

4.4.2. Relating to International Donor Agencies

The ecumenical movement in South Africa is funded by the many donor agencies in Europe sympathetic to the ecumenical movement. It is a product of history that virtually every European country has large donor agencies which are associated with the church. Some, like Christian Aid in the UK, are very well known and use networks run from the churches in Britain to place collection envelopes, suitably decorated with harrowing pictures of starving children, through every door in the country. These are then collected by volunteers. Such a campaign, supported by both advertising and tradition, raises millions of pounds, as I discussed in the second chapter. In Germany the agency Bread for the World is associated with an annual nation-wide collection in the churches at the popular Christmas Eve services. Other agencies are directly supported by their governments, such as the German agency EZE (The Protestant Central Agency for Development) and the Church of Sweden Mission. These agencies are the principal funders of the WCC and of the national councils of churches around the world, amongst which the SACC was for many years given considerable attention. Those who are state aided are to some extent influenced in their giving by Government policy. The Governments of Sweden, Germany and Holland have all begun to give aid directly to the new government in South Africa, and this may effect the willingness of their donor agencies to continue funding the NGO sector in South Africa.

The donor agencies each have a 'desk' concerned with one part of the world, such as 'the Central and Southern Africa desk'. One person will have responsibility for this region. The desk co-ordinator is responsible for receiving project proposals, screening them and presenting them at the annual intra-agency conference at which the agency allocates its total budget to its various desks. These usually take place in June. The donor agency is looking for projects with which it would like to be associated. In order to sustain its own income it needs to be seen to be doing important and valuable work. It therefore supports programmes which are relevant to current thinking. The agency needs, therefore, a context which is clearly needy to which to give their money; a project which appears to make a real difference; and a local partner who will oversee the project in a professional way. In short they need context, ability and impressive projects.

In the second chapter I referred to the concept of 'partnership' between northern donor agencies and a southern NGOs. The donors have the financial resources, and a world wide overview of what is going on in the field of development. On the other hand groups like the SACC have the 'context' and produce proposals for programmes. Without question, however, the power lies with the donor agency. Yet it is not politic to admit this. The rhetoric of partnership implies an equal relationship, with frankness and reciprocation: while the North supports the South financially it 'learns from 'the struggle' of the South. Although it would be wrong to pour scorn upon the sincerity of such notions of equality, the reality remains that money matters. The whole nature of the relationship is that the donors will fund such projects with which they wish to be associated, and those will be in the countries and of the nature which are deemed relevant in European donor circles, since demand for help exceeds the supply of donor aid.

To win over and work with donor agencies, southern NGOs must be wise, shrewd and diplomatic. An NGO must simultaneously plead ability and poverty: vision and ambition and yet a willingness to follow the donor's wishes. Above all the organisation must say what the donor wants to hear. A knowledge of donor priorities is therefore vital. In Europe the donor agencies meet amongst themselves in conferences. These conferences try to co-ordinate donor strategies. The result is that certain issues become 'buzz issues'. In the 1980s, regarding South Africa, it was 'the struggle', then in the 1990s it became 'development' now it appears to be moving to a focus on 'women' and 'children'. Along with these goes certain rhetoric, currently it is timely to talk of 'empowerment' and of decisions being taken at the 'grassroots'. A would be applicant would do well to present his project proposal on the current topic of interest, and in the current rhetorical approach. It is also wise to apply a few weeks prior to the internal budget discussions, for instance in April, and to present a proposal for a three year project, since this is the length donors most like to fund. Finally there is also the issue of being a known, liked and respected organisation. Proposals bearing the name of such

organisations will tend to be favoured; and if the likes of Desmond Tutu appear as patrons, all the better.

Since the donors have decided that women's programmes are important, it is for this reason that NGOs in the South will strategically switch to such programmes, and for a time they will become numerous. The dynamics of the relationship are such that it is in Europe that it is decided whether South Africa remains worthy of significant grants of money, and the kind of work which its NGOs will be doing.

The WPCC appeared to understand well the dynamics of winning funding. It used this knowledge to the best effect. All visitors were treated well and left with a large stack of WPCC publications and a mind brimming over with numerous activities of the council. In this way the WPCC assured the donors of its record as an able organisation. In particular its participation in the election process proved to be useful to the WPCC to promote its image. A member of the WPCC executive informed two United Nations officials, 'the WPCC has managed to get the most credibility in this election process'. He might have gone on to explain that from amongst the staff and executive of the WPCC its personnel: represented the religious community on the Regional Peace Committee; held the post of Recruitment Officer for the IEC; convened two of the three IFEE Commissions; set up NEON; and used its premises to help the IEC, NEON and IFEE to become established; carried out voter education in the churches and liaised with the religious community to facilitate election services. The WPCC also brought organisations together, helped to define the roles of different structures and tried to diffuse inter-structure conflict. This kind of election portfolio for the WPCC will not go unnoticed by potential donor partners, and it is the kind of portfolio which the WPCC will need if it is to survive in the 'new' South Africa.

The secondly point which the staff made clear to visitors is that the WPCC has a very large network of contacts, that it is relevant because it is 'in touch' with the 'grassroots'. This is important for the donor agency since it wishes to gain a partner in the area with a shrewd knowledge of which organisations are credible. This is very useful for screening purposes. Donor agencies use 'partners' to give them advice when they receive requests from that area, since otherwise to the person at the 'Southern Africa desk' of an agency in Europe one application looks like another. Thirdly the WPCC produced documentation which gave a detailed analysis of the South African situation and its on going needs, with a carefully argued motivation as to why, in this context, project are so important. All that remained outstanding was to develop clear project plans and conclude with a detailed budget. This is precisely the kind of information that the person on the desk in Europe needs in order to give an impressive presentation of the project within the agency during its budget allocation meetings. The staff

and executive thus set about making plans to enable them to survive and continue to work in the new era. As Shun had pointed out, 'if we can't come up with plans we'll lose our jobs'.

Unable to rely upon the SACC any longer, it became clear that the WPCC could no more afford the luxury of its 'crisis modus operandi' since it would no longer be able to merely respond to events as they arose, safe in the knowledge of the SACC's pay. The staff themselves would have to find programmes which generated funds through sponsorship to sustain the organisation, each member of staff pursuing a particular project. As Shun put it, speaking of the future, 'there is no post apart from a programme, there is no job apart from a project'.

The WPCC would have to shelve the residue of its previous and rather unique 1980s role as a multi-faceted reactive body, and take on the more proactive, programme oriented character associated with a standard development NGO. They would have to begin to generate specific projects which would attract funding, aware that they would be, 'working for bosses in London, Stockholm and Johannesburg' and, added Shun dryly, 'their kind of Christianity not ours'. It will be apparent that the WPCC's operations as an organisation existing to react to events and protest injustices would be significantly curtailed; and in its place the WPCC would become an organisation concentrating upon the running of projects and programmes approved and funded from overseas to 'develop' South Africa. This will be discussed further below. The alternative was for the WPCC to close. Bennie raised possibilities of the WPCC continuing 'in session rather than in structure', or some form decentralisation into an ecumenical co-ordinating office run by one or two persons to service the region. However, on the part of Bennie, the executive and staff there remained too much will to see the WPCC lose its substance.

4.4.3. Making Choices and Devising Projects

A meeting of the WPCC's staff was held at the St. Raphael's retreat centre at Faure on the 25th of May. Each member of staff, excepting Charles who was still with NEON, stated their position, whether they would accept the SACC's retrenchment package and leave, or whether they would like to stay, and if so what programmes they could propose for which they could gain funding. The build up to this meeting had been a traumatic time. Some members of staff began to show severe signs of stress over the decision which had to be made. To stay in the work they believed in, and so try to continue to work in an uncertain environment, or to leave and to go into the unknown. The latter required them to find a new job, the former an effective and financed project.

Moeketsi decided to leave. He reflected upon fourteen years at the council, and that he believed that there remained 'a great need for SACC programmes' during the period of democratisation and transition. Nevertheless he had found that the lack of funds in the last six months, and the continued frustration over an insufficient number of administrative staff, were too much for him. He could not live with the strain any longer, 'it kills a person' he said. So he left, and with him his networks in the townships developed over many years, and the WPCC lost its only black member of staff. It remained unclear who might continue the relief work of the WPCC once he had gone. Two secretaries, Pamela and Elizabeth also resigned, and with them the skills and contacts which they had developed to publish and facilitate the WPCC's many activities. They planned to remain in the NGO sector or to enter the civil service or local government.

In retrospect, amongst the senior staff Moeketsi was the most likely to leave. During the period of transition he had remained most closely associated with the 1980s style of operation. Certainly he engaged in 'transitional' activities, such as monitoring and the elections, but he did not produce new programmes in the way that the other staff did. He remained primarily reactive and a 'networker', even when the networks were breaking down. His relief work was reactive, and although it had changed from semi-political to purely humanitarian, nevertheless it was a carry-over from the 1980s. His attempts to generate protest around the Umtata raid was the clearest example of an attempt to continue a 'protest' mode of operation. The service and the following march were, however, hollow by equivalents in the 1980s. Moeketsi's commitment to the 'networking' of the IFEE structure was also reminiscent of the 1980s policy of organisation through co-operation; but he fell foul of the rivalries and competitiveness which had developed between organisations during the transition. Lastly, as pointed out above, Moeketsi's commitment to the ANC was primary and his commitment to ecumenism derived from it, rather than vice versa. With the acquisition of power by the ANC, particularly given the difficulties he was experiencing working at the WPCC, Moeketsi's commitment to the WPCC came to an end.

The rest of the staff decided to stay at the WPCC and presented their plans. Priscilla had two programmes planned. One, for refugees, began soon afterwards. The WPCC, almost daily, receives refugees, mainly from Angola, requesting help. Priscilla, with a small donation from the SACC, began a self help project at the WPCC. A Portuguese lady from Sea Point was employed to supervise the refugees in the making of clothes and the restoration of furniture, with the aim of selling these articles as a co-operative. Since there had been some interest in the plight of Refugees in Cape Town expressed by the UNHCR (United Nations High Commission for Refugees) and other local NGOs were also interested in launching a project, it was hoped that the WPCC would be able to gain available funding to expand this programme.

Her second project emanated from the long standing association of the WPCC with the SHAWCO nutrition centre for young mothers in Nyanga. Priscilla approached Bread for the World (BftW), a German donor agency, with a modest programme to give shelter, basic necessities and skills training for twenty women. However, BftW would only fund a much larger project, for a minimum of a hundred women. Thus plans were developed to build a centre in two stages. First a learning centre with crèche; vehicles; a psychologist; and various skills programmes. Then a second stage featuring a residential complex with self contained one bedroom units. An ambitious plan, but one which BftW was keen to be identified with and trusted the WPCC to administer well. BftW also wished to strengthen its contacts with the WPCC for help in screening projects which came to it from the region for finances. The WPCC hoped that this could be the beginning of a close partnership.

Nabs work also had much potential to bring funding to the WPCC. Shun commented that, 'women's work is a priority in international ecumenical funding'. It had been hoped that Nabs could tap into the disposition of donors to make funds available for women's programmes and to relocate her work to the WPCC. She successfully secured funding from DAN (Danish) Church Aid to establish programmes to 'empower rural women' which would potentially generate four or five posts using the WPCC's offices to host the programme. The details remained unclear at the time but it was presumed that the programme would be like that of Delta. Such a major programme, as Shun noted, would colour the whole character of the WPCC.

Shun and Bennie wished to pursue their projects with TEP and EFSA such as the Church and Development conference. 'Civil society' is one of the WCC's emerging issues of debate, and they hoped that this would generate interest and financial support for their own civil society conference plans. They also planned to strength their links with the Ghana Council of Churches and conduct joint projects, such as a publication on 'the values of Africa'. Such joint projects it was hoped might attract WCC funding. They also considered means to gain funding from donors for their conference work on the church and development.

The WPCC, therefore, prepared to face the future with a mixed portfolio of programmes. Relief work for refugees would be replaced by a self-help scheme to 'empower' them; and charity for deprived young mothers by a personal-development centre. Nabs would promote a major 'animation' programme for women, which constitutes another form of development. Bennie and Shun would continue to promote intellectual issues, some theological but all focused upon society, nation building and development. It became clear, therefore, that while there was to be variety, all of these projects fall within the rhetoric of development and thus

the progress toward a development paradigm seen during the transition became fully fledged as the WPCC entered the new era.

4.4.4. Relating to Government

The meeting at St. Raphael's, which confirmed that the WPCC would endeavour to survive into the future, took place two weeks after the inauguration of President Mandela. The coming to power of the new government raised questions and dilemmas for the WPCC concerning how it was to relate to the new authorities in power. On one level these were ideological; but they also concerned the WPCC financially. Not only might the new government be a source of funding, but it also became apparent over the following months that the accessibility of international donor finance might be influenced by the attitude to the state taken by NGOs in South Africa, including for the WPCC.

The relationship of non-governmental organisations to governments in Africa has often been contentious, particularly following 'liberation', and during the 1980s when the influence of northern donors increased the power of southern NGOs and made African governments feel threatened. The WPCC was well aware of some of the problems which can occur between the state and NGOs, even in a post-liberation situation. In the following discussion, therefore, we begin with a brief discussion of NGO-state relations in Africa, focusing particularly upon the National Christian Council of Kenya; with this background in mind we turn to the attitude of the WPCC towards the new government as it came to power, and the developing relationship between state and NGOs afterwards, particularly under the influence of donor agencies. It remains unclear where these processes will lead in the South African context, but the question of NGO-state relations will effect South African NGOs, including the WPCC, for the foreseeable future.

4.4.4.1. NGOs and Government in Africa

In Africa, NGOs have had an influential history, just as in Europe and America. Michael Bratton (1989) traces their history back to indigenous welfare co-operatives; health and education groups organised by the missions and churches; and to ethnic welfare groups which helped organise resistance to colonial rule; they were the 'struggle' organisations of their time. Bratton concludes (1989,571) that, 'such NGOs formed the building blocks of nationalist political parties and played an explicitly political role in contesting the authority of colonial governments'.

Following independence, however, there was a decline in the activity and number of these organisations. Some, which had existed for the struggle for independence, had no more reason to exist and closed. But the decline was due, largely, to the policy of the new

nationalist governments which tended to co-opt these organisations as a means to implement their national development policies. As such they became extensions of government and lost their independence. Some retained a semblance of autonomy but in fact operated in support of government policy for the sake of national development and unity. Agnes Chepkwony (1987) has documented this process in post-independence Kenya with reference to the National Christian Council of Kenya (NCCCK) and its identification with the state and government policies following independence.

The National Christian Council of Kenya pursued a policy of executing government policy following independence. It worked closely with the government in pursuit of the government's development plans, as Kenyatta had encouraged it to do as part of the 'Harambee' programme for unity and development. The NCCCK received grants from the government; it sat on government management boards; it was given responsibility for particular areas of development including sections of the media and certain ethics campaigns, farming and health programmes; it launched government programmes through the churches and addressed the government on behalf of the 'grassroots' and the churches (1987:120). As a result the council was very prominent, it received funding from a variety of overseas donors and had a staff of more than 130 in 1970.

The NCCCK was also increasingly staffed by 'experts' from its overseas donor agencies and used by foreign donors as a branch for their operations in Kenya. Chepkwony notes that 'the NCCCK adjusted its requests and programmes to suit the demands of the donors... donors almost dictated the policies that governed the types of projects which the NCCCK undertook' (1987:210). In effect the NCCCK became a secular development organisation working at the behest of the government and northern donors.

Over time it was used by the government to legitimate its policies, and to suppress opposition from within the church, particularly since it controlled the church media. This support continued even when poverty was increasing and the government's policy of 'development' came to include the suppression of opposition and the advent of one party rule. The turning of the NCCCK to pursue a policy of national development not only curtailed its activities as a 'prophetic' body willing to be critical of the state, but also led it away from theological reflection upon their work and upon Kenyan society. Only a tiny fraction of its budget was spent upon theological reflection and other church work. It did not raise doctrinal issues or pursue specifically Christian programmes because such concerns could lead to division or prove to distract from the emphasis upon 'development'. The churches themselves did not withdraw from the NCCCK, since it was an important source of funding, but nor did they play a large role in its running. The NCCCK was an institution in its own right, representative of the

church, but not accountable to it because of its international funding, and not directed by it because of its ideological commitment to the policy of the state.

NGO dependence upon the state can also be generated by creeping dependence upon government grants, or by the government simply absorbing the NGO into one of its departments. If the NGO continues to exist at all, under such circumstances, it is best referred to either as a government organised NGO or quasi-autonomous NGO. Nyang'oro has documented the way this process occurred in Africa, and illustrated the difficulties that can accompany an attempt to distinguish an African 'NGO' from a parastatal (see MWENGO, 1993:26).

African governments pursue this policy of incorporation for two main reasons. Firstly, NGOs have resources which can be used to promote government development programmes. This is particularly important to the government following independence, since national development is usually the most prominent government policy; as Ng'ethe comments of post-independence Kenya (1990:131), 'the realisation of the development agenda for the fragile government was to a large extent almost synonymous with political legitimacy'. The development programme has continued to dominate the political agenda in Africa and organisations with the capacity to implement programmes have tended to be brought under the control of government, whether through their own choice, financial dependence, co-option or absorption.

The second major reason for governments wishing to absorb NGOs, as Michael Bratton points out (1989:572), is precisely because NGOs act independently of the government. The government may be concerned that it will look weak if NGOs appear able to meet needs which it is not, and since development and the provision of services are critical political issues the government may feel that its legitimacy is threatened by NGO success. The government may also fear that NGOs will encourage people to criticise and oppose government policy, which may result in anti-government sentiments and organisations. Northern NGOs are often strong critics of ruling parties in Africa, and the values and activities of NGOs are often in direct opposition to those of government. Through 'animation' programmes, in particular, NGOs may introduce concepts from abroad which challenge the views propagated by the government.

Michael Bratton (1989:574) has highlighted some of the causes of friction between governments and NGOs. Governments seek to ensure control so that they can administer the country and maintain their power. NGOs, by contrast, are advocates of a strong civil society which operates separately from government, and they work to promote independent local organisations. NGOs perceive themselves to be advocates for the poor; they point out the suffering in society as well as abuses of human rights. They challenge the government's

'popular wisdom' and become a platform for the promotion of progressive ideas. They encourage pluralism, new independent institutions and critical thinking. Bratton states (1990:584) that, particularly in South America, where NGOs are more militant and stronger than in Africa, 'the basic relationship between NGOs and governments remains one of deep estrangement'.

The emergence of NGOs in the 1980s has put fragile African governments into a dilemma. Aid has in the past strengthened their power, but as aid is increasingly channelled through NGOs governments lose out financially, while NGOs in their countries (whether branches of northern NGOs or indigenous organisations with northern NGO links) become increasingly powerful. On the other hand, northern NGO funding brings considerable foreign aid into the country, and NGO work makes a contribution to the development effort. Given this analysis of State-NGO relations it is interesting to note the results of a meeting of Commonwealth states in Zambia, 1988, entitled 'Strategic issues in Development Management' which focused upon NGO activity. The meeting, and the report (1988) of the same title which followed, reviewed numerous NGO led projects, and concluded that they were in fact successful, particularly in the development of human resources, defined in terms of 'conscientisation', 'motivation', 'participation', the utilisation of 'community resources' and the creation of 'local structures'. It encouraged governments to support 'decentralised development approaches through NGOs' (1988:19). But while accepting that NGOs are effective and useful for national development, the report goes on to recommend that governments should,

- articulate a government policy on how NGOs should operate;
- develop a strategy by which NGOs should 'complement' rather than compete with the government;
- classify and register NGOs;
- permit only indigenous organisations, and these should not have any foreign affiliation;
- require NGOs to demonstrate a 'local legitimacy and mandate' and undertake to 'adopt constitutional and non-violent means in its work';
- require NGOs not to fund-raise abroad unless they 'have existed and have been operational for a minimum of three years' and in all events to limit fund raising from abroad;
- require that all projects be 'sanctioned by the government to operate in the particular sector and physical location';

- require that any large grant be subject to 'a trilateral agreement which includes the national government' (1988:24)

Drawn up at the end of the 1980s, these recommendations are a clear indication that while African governments have bowed to the popularity of the NGO sector, and will allow NGOs to be incorporated into national development, they are sufficiently concerned about their potential effects for their representatives to have drawn up the above guidelines. Under these recommendations the activities of NGOs would in practice be subject to government control and the autonomy of the NGO sector in Africa effectively curtailed. In particular their capacity to gain financial strength from partners abroad is heavily regulated, as is the freedom of foreign NGOs to operate in the country. It is noteworthy that a year after this report was published the Kenyan government ruled, as a part of its 1989-1993 development plan, that all NGOs must register with the government, and furnish a full description of their activities (Kenneth King, 1990:v). Such measures are implemented in the name of national development co-ordination, but they reflect a deep distrust of NGOs on the part of African governments. In effect these regulations threaten the freedom of NGOs to operate, particularly in the arena of opposition politics, conscientization and training 'agents of change'. Kenneth King (1990:iv) concludes that as a result of measures such as these, 'the NGO tradition of autonomy, independence and special relationship with the grassroots will be weakened'.

The WPCC were not unaware of the processes which have effected NGO relations in the rest of Africa, and indeed on occasions they discussed the fate of former 'struggle' NGOs in Namibia and elsewhere in Africa which had become tools of the government after independence. Strongly believing in the 'prophetic' voice of the ecumenical movement and in the importance of the independence of civil society to balance the power of government, they were afraid that such processes may effect the WPCC and the South African NGO sector in general after the elections.

4.4.4.2. The WPCC and the Government

A dilemma for the WPCC, therefore, was how best to relate to the new political context, particularly given its difficult financial position. This question is faced by the old 'struggle' NGOs in general. It will be recalled that during the 1980s the WPCC was clearly associated with an anti-government position and freely associated with the liberation movements, such as the ANC. At the Christmas party farewell (1993) the chairman spoke of the coming year, 'The next farewell will be a happier one, since after April we will no longer be under Nationalist rule'.

The dilemma for the WPCC on the national level, however, is that it cannot, ideologically, choose to legitimate out of hand 'our sisters and brothers in the new government', for the sake of the fidelity of its 'prophetic' independence. In the past they opposed the National party, for personal and theological reasons, but they are conscious of the danger of losing their freedom to be critical of the new government and do not wish to become 'to the new government what the Dutch Reformed Church was to the Nats'. Indeed they have been opposed to the possible alignment of the old 'opposition churches' (Anglican, Methodist, African Methodist Episcopal etc.) with the new government. Their commitment to 'prophecy' ('sound principles of social and political analysis' *Behold* 25.01.94) and civil society (organisation and action free from government interference) negate such a stand.

Theologically they feel compelled not to give their commitment to the government, but to 'the people', in particular the 'marginalised, oppressed and poor'. While for them, in the past, the ANC was 'like a prophetic Body of Christ, standing for the poor and liberation' they are very conscious of the temptations of power, of losing touch with the grassroots, and of the failings of government. They were also unhappy that the old apartheid institutions had become 'the midwives of the new'. Believing that no government will ever deliver 'the kingdom of God' there can be no suspension of their 'prophetic' role of analysis, working in the poorest communities, and speaking as loudly as possible against all injustices.

Nevertheless they desire to support the 'friends who have been through the struggle with us' now in the ANC led government in their plans for national reconstruction and development, which Shun regards as 'not far' from the agenda of liberation theology in the first five years of a post-liberation dispensation. Furthermore, they were particularly concerned by the continuation of power enjoyed by the National party in the Western Cape. Although the WPCC has attempted to distance itself from the liberation movements and unions since 1990, there remains a natural inclination to demonise the previous government and to support the new one. Following the election victory of Hennis Kriel for the National party in the Western Cape, Bennie led devotions, for once without reference to the devotional reading, like a homily in the harsh aftermath of a lost battle. He spoke of 'facing up to the great disappointment' and to try to understand the tendency for conservatism in any society, and to 'accept the democratic process'. They will wish to be amongst those, no doubt, of whom the *Mail and Guardian* wrote, 'There is, moreover, a strong tradition of political activism among ANC- supporting coloured intellectuals and students. Adept in boycott and mass- action tactics, they will be watching Kriel's every move.' (May 13-19, 1994:13).

The WPCC has attempted to reconcile the dilemmas concerning involvement/separation and support/opposition to the new democratic structures through advocating a position of 'critical solidarity' with the new government. The intention to retain a critical 'prophetic' edge will,

however, be tested, and possibly compromised, by financial considerations. If the WPCC retained the financial freedom which it enjoyed up until 1990, and to a large degree until 1994, then it could, have played a role as a 'loyal opposition', working as the 'watchdog' of state structures. Walters (1993:13) has argued that NGOs in Cape Town wanted to move towards such a role to ensure that the new government practised democratic principles, and so that they could retain their role as commentators upon the political, social and economic developments in the country. This kind of political role, however, requires the type of funding which the WPCC enjoyed in the 1980s, discretionary funding or funding for specific political programmes. Therefore, the nature of funding presents a significant factor in the relationship of the WPCC to the new government, as it does for other South African NGOs. The WPCC recognised that, despite its intentions, financial pressures may be such that it would be drawn into dependence upon the government.

Periodically at the WPCC, as the election approached, the staff mused upon what had happened to NGOs in other parts of Africa post-independence. The staff referred to Mozambique, Namibia and elsewhere on the continent. Their rather gloomy reflections perceived the following process which relates closely to the post-independence processes referred to above. As the 'liberation' movement comes into power, so it draws into its new administration staff from amongst its old allies in civil society. In the process the organisations which worked to help it come to power are denuded of their best staff. Simultaneously the international donor agencies become optimistic about the country and sympathetic to the new government, reduce their funding to local NGOs, and take the opportunity to refocus their aid upon more pressing (and no doubt more newsworthy) causes elsewhere around the globe, for which it is easier to raise funds.

Crippled by the loss of staff, and starved of funds from donors, the NGOs are faced with closure. To survive, the NGO must turn to the state itself for funding, offering to help execute its, no doubt, ambitious programmes. In this way the NGO becomes more vulnerable to pressure exerted upon it by the government. In due course the International Monetary Fund and World Bank launch Structural Adjustment Programmes in which they insist that the African government concerned cuts the size of its bureaucracy. To circumvent this the government transfers its staff back to the NGO sector but retains control of them, thus creating government organised NGOs. These are favoured by the government over the remaining NGOs and the later collapse or become quasi-autonomous NGOs. This process was referred to above in the case of Kenya.

The church, meanwhile, having been drawn into the battle for independence by the moral weight of circumstances, now takes its leave of the political debate and returns to safer waters - church affairs and preaching an other-wordly gospel. Civil society (NGOs, churches, unions

etc.) becomes disengaged from what Bennie and Shun would see as its primary role, to be the watchdog and balance of the government. Ironically, therefore, the processes surrounding independence are those by which the organisations which have struggled for it are crushed. While government itself takes over the rhetorical ground of welfare provision from NGOs, only civil society, they assert, can in fact effectively represent the grassroots and pursue the development projects which are needed. They argue that since 'government officials don't reach the poorest of the poor', rather officialdom 'swallows money' and offers only 'toilet development' (a reference to the kind of 'site and service' provision made by the National party government).

These fears raise several points which will effect the WPCC in the future, and indeed other organisations in the South African NGO sector. The first is the loss of staff around the time of 'liberation'; the second the change of attitude by donors upon the rise of a new government. Thirdly the policy which the state adopts towards the NGO sector; and finally the role which NGOs, and indeed 'civil society' as a whole play with regards to the government, its policies and national development.

4.4.5. Post Election Changes in the South African NGO Sector

A steady flight of donor finances from South African NGOs appears to have been happening in South Africa since 1991, not only from the ecumenical movement (as seen with regards to the SACC) but the NGO sector in general. In early 1994 the elections had provided a brief respite, and traditional 'struggle' organisations swung their programmes around to voter education and gained funding from abroad for this. The end of the elections, however, marked the beginning of a void for them.

The change in government which occurred in April 1994, brought to power a government with a stated commitment to overturning the effects of apartheid and improving the conditions of the poor through its Reconstruction and Development Programme. Many of those donors, of all types, which have remained committed to South Africa have switched their giving to the government's programme. Having exclusively funded NGOs in South Africa, since 1992 the British government aid, for instance, has adopted a 'broader strategy' which included bilateral aid state to state. In 1994 the British Prime Minister worked out Britain's revised aid to South Africa of £100 million (over the period 1994-1997) with President Mandela. Henceforth 'British aid funds will be used in support of the Reconstruction and Development Programme and channelled through non-government organisations as well as government' (British Overseas Development 38:3).

While South African NGOs will continue 'in theory' to receive support from donors such as the British government, the implication is that funds may only be allocated to organisations which pursue the government's reconstruction and development programme (RDP). This puts NGOs in a vulnerable position and raises the question; what attitude will the new government take to NGOs? Christopher Fyfe (1990:2) quotes Achmat Dangor as having declared that he 'fears that a future black South African government will take the NGOs under control and deprive the underclass of a voice'. In other words there is some possibility that South Africa will witness a repeat of the process which Agnes Chepkwony has shown occurred in Kenya, and has now been reinforced through that country's laws. Dangor (1990:160) continued by warning South African NGOs not to become the 'sweetheart NGOs' of the new government, but to take a stand as a 'benevolent opposition', firmly committed to values of being non-governmental, as opposed to 'semi-governmental'. The attitude of South African NGOs to the new South African government, and the government's policy towards South African NGOs, will be crucial factors for the survival and nature of South African NGOs in the future. The government may find it convenient to dispense RDP patronage using foreign funds. Furthermore, should the government choose to adopt such measures as those proposed by the Commonwealth meeting (1988) it could effectively control the South African NGO sector by using legal restraints.

Aware that the government was likely to acquire much influence over the NGO sector and its avenues of work, and also that the NGO sector itself may be threatened financially and in its autonomy, even before the elections were over an exodus began toward the new government. The first step for some in the NGO sector was to take up posts in the Transitional Executive Council, the Independent Electoral Commission and the Independent Forum for Electoral Education, those organisations with high profiles in the elections, and then within days of the new government taking power to apply for government posts. Post election conversations at the WPCC were full of news of old 'struggle' colleagues finding their ways into jobs in the new administration. Others the government have themselves recruited.

All of the NGOs I had contact with seemed to be encountering serious financial trouble. Some, particularly arts and publications groups, closed soon after the election. The magazine Work in Progress, for instance, closed down one week after the Inauguration of President Mandela. The magazine was not willing to close, since it wanted to continue in a critical role to help insure the proper delivery of the promises of the RDP (Reconstruction and Development Programme), but there was no internal South African funding available, and donors overseas were no longer willing to support a magazine of such a nature. Such financial problems for local organisations appeared widespread; in November 1994, for instance, the London based SA Times reported,

Funding cuts could force the Black Sash to retrench all workers in its advice offices throughout the country, Sash president Ms Mary Burton said last week. Her announcement follows decisions by some Sash funders, who include foreign government and church organisations, to redirect NGO aid directly to the RDP. (16. 11. 94)

Citing the generosity of the European Community and the Japanese government, the Kagiso Trust reported in its 1992/3 annual report: 'in 1992, we allocated funds to nearly 300 projects and committed R292 million. In particular, the generosity of the European Community, through the Special Programme for the victims of apartheid, and the Japanese Government is much appreciated' (p.6). During the transition the Kagiso Trust increased its funding dramatically through retaining donors sending funds for 'the victims of apartheid' but at the same time portraying itself as a 'development' NGO. It is doubtful, however that the Europeans will continue in the new era to give such large amounts to a 'Special Programme for the victims of apartheid', nor to channel its aid budget to an non-governmental trust when it could be given to the new government which it is keen to support for diplomatic reasons. Thus not only is inter-NGO funding likely to decrease in the new South Africa but government-NGO funding is also likely to be diverted from NGOs to government. It will be noted that Kagiso claimed to support 'nearly 300 projects'. Such projects were mainly run by NGOs. As the large NGOs and Trusts within the country, such as the SACC and Kagiso, lose out to government, so many NGOs will be starved of funds.

The new South African government, for its part, has made no secret of its desire for money from overseas to make some visible progress towards its much trumpeted but highly costly Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). High level inter-governmental delegations have met and agreed upon aid packages. Thus grants are made directly to the new government from the European Union (EU) and the United States. Money from the EU, which in the past, went to non-government organisations in South Africa, such as the Kagiso Trust, is diverted to the new administration. The RDP thus becomes the paragon to which those seeking funds must go, as Mark Suzman reported in the London Financial Times: 'It (the RDP) is now so powerful and pervasive a feature of South African life, that scarcely any large initiative, in the private or public sector, is launched without ritual reference to the plan.' (15.11.94:18). Sure enough, NGOs are being forced by this process to realign themselves with the government and are offering their services for the RDP, in effect they thus, at least potentially, are becoming parastatals.

One example of an NGO apparently courting government funding for RDP work is Mfesane. Mfesane, which means 'compassion' in Xhosa, is a large welfare NGO working in the informal

settlements near Cape Town. Mfesane issued bulletin in June 1994, entitled *'Mfesane and the Reconstruction and Development Programme'*. The chairman wrote, 'Mfesane is well placed to respond to any shift in circumstances, whether through the dictates of fate, positioning on the part of donors or changes in government policy. An initiative such as the Reconstruction and Development Plan (RDP) requires us simply to shift emphasis in what we are already doing'.

He goes on to note that the RDP could be worth a cumulative R37 billion by 1997, and that Mfesane had the potential to fulfil a vital role in specialised education for those with learning disabilities (in which it claims to be the 'undisputed leader') for whom, at this point, the RDP has not yet made allowances. Likewise the chairman promotes the vital need for programmes such as Mfesane's skills upgrading projects for the future of the South African workforce, using World Bank statistics to prove his point. It seemed to me that this detailed report was more for the eyes of those in charge of distributing the resources of the RDP than for its everyday well-wishers.

In South Africa it may be possible for organisations such as the WPCC to seek local corporate finance, but then they will still be likely to end up competing with the government which may seek RDP finance from all quarters. Another alternative source of income would be to pursue fund raising campaigns amongst the general public. These are, however, very complex to co-ordinate on a sufficiently large scale and may not prove cost-effective. The only other source of funding would be that pursued by many other African NGOs in the past: to co-operate with the new government and seek a share of its development budget - in this case the RDP. This shift might also increase the chances of gaining funds from donors in the North keen to support the RDP. It is expected that both the South African government and many overseas donors will fund development work which pursues the aims of the RDP. Large amounts of money are available and groups such as the WPCC can market themselves to the government on the basis of their experience, proven track record, and upon the positive relationship they had with the ANC before it took power.

The temptation to try to acquire government funding is raising dilemmas for NGOs, like the WPCC, who have previously committed themselves to remaining completely independent of government, in a position to be critical of it. Several South African NGOs are considering applying to receive RDP finances, working with the government who are, after all, old friends and colleagues. To do so, however, is to risk becoming a quasi-autonomous NGO or even a 'government organised' NGO, moving from alliance with the ANC as a liberation movement to supporting it as a government; and continuing to exist to serve the government's programme of development rather than its own. Without question turning to the RDP is financially the easiest way to go, and if the WPCC did so it could lead not only to the survival

but in fact to the growth of the organisation. It would, furthermore, remove the tedious and compromising process of courting foreign donors. In the process, however, the WPCC could be moulded as a government funded 'development' organisation and this is to enter a different field altogether.

As I came to the end of my research, the WPCC was edging towards the very affiliation with the government of which they had previously spoken with such wariness. At the devotions of 18th July the reading was of darkness descending again upon African countries after the false hope of a new dawn (at independence). The reading warned of the same potential for South Africa, but yet there remained candles of hope. Courtney began to talk of the RDP as a 'candle of hope', and Shun agreed. With only a little caution it was suggested that a speaker be invited to the WPCC to clarify the programme of the RDP, so that the WPCC could consider how it might best fit in with it. Whether the WPCC will follow this path I cannot know. In the light of its post-liberation finances it may have no choice if it wishes to survive as an active organisation. Perhaps the WPCC will be drawn into the programmes of government, and somewhere leave behind its principles of 'prophecy' and the independence of civil society: the independence required from government for its prophetic voice to be raised and to be the 'advocates of the grassroots'. Only time will tell, but they might have cause to ponder the words of John de Gruchy, 'the church in Africa has been so involved in nation building it has become almost controlled by the state' (in conversation). As Chepkwony (1987) has also identified with reference to the National Christian Council of Kenya, there is a danger of state-control in the post-independence period for NGOs if they allow themselves to become financially dependent upon government.

4.5. The Problems of Moving from Protest to Development

The WPCC, and it would appear many other 'struggle' organisations, have changed their rhetoric from 'protest' to development. Seekings, Shubane and Simon have noted a similar transition among civic organisations and their transition since 1990 'from primarily protest-oriented to more development-focused work' (1993:point 3.3). The shift concerns many NGOs in South Africa, and it should be seen as a paradigm shift which has considerable implications for their work. The use of development rhetoric carries with it implications and expectations which are in sharp contrast to those associated with 'protest'. Not only does this affect the style of the organisations work, but also its aims and its mode of operation, and its relationship to government and to the communities with which it works. The change of paradigm is likely to alter the nature of 'protest' organisations over time. Alternative paradigms to that of 'development' may express more accurately the purpose of an organisation.

4.5.1. Activism versus Development

The logic of the centrality of political activism in South Africa was very clear in the 1980s under the apartheid government. An unrepresentative government imposed laws and decisions which clearly disadvantaged poor communities. Hence the situation of the poor could be seen as political by nature, and this inspired organisations like the WPCC to focus upon a 'protest' paradigm. The 1990s has made such clarity much more obscure. The abandonment of discriminatory policies and the election of a representative government has clouded the link between political rights and welfare. The disadvantages which people face are now described in terms of 'underdevelopment' rather than 'oppression'. The apartheid government used 'development' language also, but it bears more legitimacy when it emanates from a representative government. Hence, rather than lacking political rights the poor are perceived to lack skills; facilities; organisation; training and opportunities. In response to which the government has introduced a 'reconstruction and development programme' through which these and other aspects of 'underdevelopment' are addressed. The emphasis upon development shifts the focus away from the political and economic injustices of the system, and locates the problems within the local community and in the poor themselves. Development is, as Fergurson (1990) described it, an 'anti-politics machine', because it takes the political dimension out of problems and instead presents their cause as 'underdevelopment'.

The former 'struggle' organisations such as the WPCC have been pushed by the dynamics associated with the transition to democracy, as argued in this thesis, toward this same 'development' paradigm. In so doing they will devote less attention to political events and much more to projects and programmes conducted in local communities to work directly with the upliftment of the poor, perhaps in co-operation with the government. The work of these organisations in the past involved such activities as the support of strikes and demonstrations and the publication of critical reports. These activities tend to stir up political criticism; question prevailing structures and raise issues of justice. By contrast development projects tend to bring the focus off government and onto the local provision of services, from 'rights' to 'self-help', which tends to pacify areas and gives a 'feel-good' factor which in fact promotes a positive attitude to government. Rather than consolidating opposition, 'development' projects tend to pacify the community because it is perceived that conditions are improving, while in fact structural injustices or governmental problems may not be addressed.

The first issue raised by a shift from 'protest' to 'development' therefore, is that they tend to effect the political situation in two opposite ways: 'protest' tends to promote a critical focus upon the state; whilst 'development' tends to support the state and focus upon local issues.

While the term 'struggle' was clearly a political one, the term 'development' is deceptively lacking in political connotations.

4.5.1.1. Problems with the Term 'Development'

There are also definitional problems concerning 'development' which can become problematic in the impression a 'development' organisation gives. It indicates all things good, it conjures up positive images, yet in fact remains entirely undefined. The word, as Ramashray Roy (1993) has pointed out, is so attractive that it acts as 'an engine for action', yet the term lacks 'fidelity with reality'. In other words the term is used because it seems unconditionally positive, but actually it defines nothing. Wolfgang Sachs (1992:110) has referred to the term in a similar way, 'development has become a shapeless, amoeba-like word... it appears benign. Pronouncing the word denotes nothing, but claims the best of intentions'.

The term indicates change for the better, but what that 'better' is remains in the mind of the one who uses it. It is undefined, and therefore means nothing. It is important to recognise that the term development is merely packaging. Many different intentions come under the cover of the term 'development'. A religious group may say they wish to enter a community to do 'development' when in fact their motivation is to convert the people to their doctrine; other groups launch 'development' courses which are in fact designed to change people's political thinking; governments pursue 'development' to bring about their vision of society and in order to maintain power; and there are international development agencies which wish to see the promotion of capitalism. They all use the same cover (the term 'development'), but what actually matters is their real agenda, and this can vary markedly.

Development is by its nature an intervention designed to change a situation. As Hyden himself states, 'development is intrinsically disruptive' (1983:180). In order to motivate an organisation or an individual to enter an area to disrupt it must require a strong motivation derived from a particular agenda. Since development itself is undefined this must be of a particular political, religious or economic nature. The term 'development' can be misleading and deceptive, it seems to me better to use more precise terminology which describes the motivation. If an organisation is genuinely motivated to simply provide a service to the disadvantaged then the term 'charity' (as used in Britain) or 'welfare' is more accurate than 'development'. Groups established to advance a political, social or religious creed should not hide behind the term 'development' but rather declare clearly what they believe in and wish to introduce. It is surely arrogant to cover and advance a particular philosophy in terms of the universal 'rightness' which the term 'development' implies. The attempt to cover up the real agenda either displays a lack of confidence in it, or the failure to be sufficiently self critical to accept that it may not be the only way to go forward.

The use of other terminology associated with development is similarly problematic. To refer to some people as 'dehumanised' or 'underdeveloped' shows that the developer has in mind some presumed standard or set of values of his own against which he is judging the conditions of others. By the very nature of this kind of thinking when that person comes to do his 'development' it must be with a view to changing those people according to the image of humanity he has conceived. It is impossible for development to be 'pure' or 'neutral'. The rhetoric of 'bottom-up development' and of 'empowerment' is misleading. It is a contradiction to intervene in people's lives in order to 'empower' them to be free from requiring intervention. Likewise, a person with sufficient motivation to enter an area to 'help' the people to develop from their position of being 'bottom' must first have regarded his own position as being 'up'. The term 'bottom-up' development in and of itself gives away a failure to really believe in equality. It is surely incongruous to describe people as 'dehumanised' and 'underdeveloped' and in the next breath to suggest the development will be strictly 'bottom-up'. The term 'animation' should also be robbed of its mystique, it veils what are in reality courses designed to promote a particular philosophy or some social or political revolution.

The Delta (Development Education and Leadership Training in Action) course is an example of the WPCC's involvement in 'animation'. As Nabs told me, 'our guiding star is to change women, their position socially, economically.. to create a movement'. This is, for her, 'human development', as she has written, 'development and education are first of all about liberating people from all that holds them back from a full human life' (*Ecumenical Ministries* booklet, WPCC, 1992:10). Fullness of life is defined as freedom from all oppression and limitations. A course such as Delta Nabs sees as the means to give women the 'confidence' and skills to play a more prominent role in society and for women to work together to transform the 'oppressive structures' which deny them opportunities.

The Delta course, it seemed to me, while referred to as a 'development' course is in fact essentially a subtle and very effective means to promote a particular form of social analysis and change. The format of the meetings and the confident, warm leadership of the three trainers gives a relaxed, unthreatening feel to each day's programme. But every aspect of the course works effectively to a greater design. The various weekly procedures (such as 'joys and sorrows') imbue the women with leadership skills to generate positive group dynamics. 'Codes' (plays, pictures, poems etc. on a theme), which are enjoyable for a group to do, teach the women to analyse issues. Very quickly the women begin to apply the same questions which they use to analyse plays and pictures to every aspect of life, so they become adept at social analysis. The frame of reference taught by the speakers concentrates upon gender issues (in a way which owes much to feminism); politics; violence; race issues; issues of economic justice and other aspects of class and power which are clearly Marxist in their approach. The women are encouraged to establish their own groups and use the same

methods - which the Monday women were doing enthusiastically after only half the course. In the final analysis the intentions of the organisers are to precipitate a premeditated form of social transformation, and in this case promote feminism and Marxist social analysis.

4.5.2. NGOs as Development Agencies

In the second chapter the work of Hyden was reviewed. He has advocated that NGOs should lead the 'development' process in Africa. Wisner, however, has described this view as 'romanticised' (1988:283), arguing that NGOs are not in a position to alter the forces which produce conditions of poverty in Africa. Other authors have responded to Hyden, pointing out the failures of NGOs as agents of development. The suitability of NGOs to fulfil a development role is therefore under debate. As organisations in South Africa, such as the WPCC, enter the development field what role they are best suited to play as agents of development becomes a pertinent question.

Government-led development has been criticised for its insensitivity to local conditions, and NGOs praised for the local participation they include in projects. Kalyalya (1988:15ff), however has pointed out that the budgets, aims and programmes of southern NGOs of any significant size are unlikely to be decided upon solely at 'the grassroots'. In fact he argues that the larger southern NGOs grow the more they are likely to pursue standardised projects and employ 'professional' staff. Growth tends to establish an institutional character. Thus the supposed strengths of southern NGOs, he argues, are only present while the southern NGO is so small as to be ineffective. While most comparative reports conclude that NGOs are more effective than government agencies (for instance Bratton, 1989:569) this is only a relative judgement. Most projects are still marred by problems even when run by NGOs. There is little room for over-optimism. The positive image projected around NGOs has, as Michael Bratton notes (1989:571) 'arisen by default - as a response to the shortcomings of state intervention'.

Kalyalya points out that NGOs have not been subject to the same kind of intense scrutiny to which state aid projects have been. Nor are NGOs easy to evaluate, for they deliberately avoid working to preconceived criteria since they wish to maximise local participation. NGOs also do not usually evaluate their own work, on the grounds of cost. Their aims are often vague, such as the 'humanisation of the oppressed' and the enhancement of 'awareness'. It is difficult therefore to consider quantifiable indices of success or failure. Kalyalya (1989:80ff) evaluated fourteen 'grassroots' projects in Southern Africa over a period of two years, considering the significance of each project. He concluded that their impact was 'peripheral'. Numerous projects failed to go as intended, local people did not take up new ideas or methods, and furthermore they tended to lose interest and not take the courses further. He concluded that most of the courses were one-off failures. The noble intentions of the projects

were marred by cases of corruption and the misuse of materials. Some projects served only to strengthen local elites and generated problems in the community. Local authorities used projects for their own political kudos, but in practice tended to be unsupportive and sometimes hostile. Tensions ran high in some instances and projects were closed down. Changes in prices made some projects unprofitable, requiring outside inputs to sustain them.

My research conducted on the WPCC (and its associate organisations) shows that NGOs can experience problems and difficulties just as government departments can. Programme flexibility is forced upon them as much by keeping up with the changing fads of donors as their willingness to adapt to changing circumstances. Altruism amongst the staff was true of those at the WPCC, but only because it emanated from their deeper ideological commitment. Altruism itself is certainly not the only factor which motivates NGOs. Some sprang up around the elections to pursue the funds available for voter education. For many it is merely a job, and some organisations will turn to take on any role simply in order to continue to exist. Job security plays as important a role in the lives of NGO staff as in any form of organisation.

NGOs are not always independent of politics or of the government. The National Christian Council of Kenya (see Chepkwony, 1987) is a good example of an NGO which in fact legitimated the government and was uncritical of its policies. NGOs are best understood as ideologically motivated organisations and therefore must be seen within the political context, inextricably linked to it rather than apart from it. If not politically dependent they will be dependent upon particular donors and networks. The notion of NGOs being independent or impartial is naive. NGOs also are diverse and it is dangerous to generalise about them. For instance, some are small, locally based and voluntary while many of the larger ones are not, predominantly, made up of the poor. In fact many are paying large salaries to 'experts' and are staffed by middle class professionals (Palmer and Rossiter 1990:45).

The case of the WPCC does demonstrate that many of the qualities attributed to NGOs do have some basis in reality, but the situation is more complex than it is usually presented. NGOs are not separate from the intrigues, corruption, influences and ulterior motives associated with politics. The reason they appear less so is because in Africa NGOs have generally been too small and too financially limited to warrant attention from any but highly committed, principle oriented people. Should NGOs grow very large and be given the finances to lead development in Africa, as Hyden suggests, it is most likely that they will become, perhaps, even less effective than their governments since not only will they be subject to the same traps and problems but, in addition, they are unelected and unaccountable and thus wide open to abuse. A further dimension of growth might be that their freedom from political control is subject to their insignificance, and their growth may be matched by moves by African governments to control them by legislation or co-option.

NGOs are well placed to cater for specific local needs, which government cannot easily meet: unexpected circumstances such as relief work after a fire; innovative schemes and educational courses; specialised training courses; the organisation of religious services, forums and campaigns; charitable works; community organisation; and facilitating associations, networks, structures and forums. Many South African NGOs have considerable experience in facilitating them and an effective working method. Government bureaucracies are not well suited to this kind of work: it is too unpredictable; it relies upon familiarity with local dynamics and some programmes can require independence from the state to be successful. We have seen, through the WPCC, that these kinds of services can be effectively established by NGOs in local areas. This places NGOs in a strong position to gain some of the RDP budget, and so gain a broad funding base from a variety of local and international donors and the state.

Through working on specialised services South African NGOs can avoid distracting from the government's responsibility to provide essential services. The major infrastructure needs which the government were elected to supply (and for which it receives taxation), and upon which 'development' ultimately rests, remain clearly the government's responsibility. While the poor may require some kind of support when in desperate circumstances, their long-term needs are for employment, representation and a fair share - and these are political issues. Once they are gained the poor then have the income and freedom to decide their own future. The problem is one of justice and equity.

National 'development' is essentially an issue of sound government policy. It is the responsibility of the government to deliver the promises for which it was elected. To suggest that NGOs take responsibility for 'development' (as Hyden does) is to place them in a position for which they have no mandate, and for which they are not sufficiently resourced or coordinated. It is too haphazard to rely upon NGOs to provide essential services. NGOs are not fitted to take on such responsibility and they are ultimately unaccountable. Government must always be put in the central position of responsibility for issues of national importance. NGOs can help to keep the focus upon the responsibility of government if they can prove to be effective pressure groups, an important feature of a democracy, and help to strengthen the representation of the poor not only at a local level but also at a regional and national level through conferences which tackle important issues. NGOs will need to demonstrate their relevance to the RDP to secure funding; ideally it would gain core funding (salaries and expenses) from a local source which gives the NGO freedom to use the funds on a discretionary basis; this would give the NGO the greatest potential for flexibility and independence. Funding from overseas can serve to fund specific projects, but it is best avoided for financing the core administration of an NGO, to avoid the problems of dependency.

The kind of role which this argument advocates for South African NGOs can also be applied internationally. NGOs do a disservice to the poor by continuing to use the language of 'development' and to advocate increased aid packages. In a 'global village' in which all countries are interconnected by the economic ties of trade, 'aid' appears to be simply a system of 'dole' payments (welfare grants) made by the rich countries which keep poor countries functioning within the global system. Poor countries will not attain a position of equality with the nations of the North through the receipt of aid and development programmes. This point has been effectively argued by Trainer (1989) who points out that the West is always able to outbid the South for resources. According to Robert McNamara (former President of the World Bank) 'even if the growth rate of the poor countries doubled, only seven would close the gap with the rich nations in one hundred years. Only another nine would reach our level in a thousand years' (cited in Trainer, 1989:6). In any event the environment would be unable to support indefinite global growth. Trainer concludes that there is gross injustice within the international economic system which deprives the South and enriches the North. While some, like Hyden, argue that it is naive to try to change the economic system it should be recognised that decisions taken by the G7 (the Group of Seven leading industrial nations) have more impact upon the third world than a multitude of development projects (see Bower 1990:26). As Palmer and Rossiter have noted (1990:49), 'the political and economic relationships between north and south often have a far greater impact on the poor in developing nations than do aid programmes'.

The NGO community play into the hands of those who benefit from the international economic system if they allow themselves to be regarded as the new messiahs of 'development' who will effect change in Africa; such a hope is a delusion. The crucial issues are essentially ones of international economic forces and sound government policies; as NGOs pursue the notion of 'development' so they distract attention from this fact and only serve to legitimise the fallacy that 'development' offers real hope to the poor. Development is peripheral tinkering while third world economies stagnate. The effect of 'development' programmes and rhetoric is to make those who have little believe they can have more; hence it makes them discontent but does not offer them the economic realities by which they can join the spiral of acquisition pursued in the 'developed' countries. To create dissatisfaction without opportunity is surely immoral.

4.6. Conclusion

With the elections of 1994 the transition period came to an end and a democratic era began. The advent of a government committed to a programme of reconstruction and development, non-sexism and non-racism, justice and democracy has had two important effects upon the WPCC. Firstly, the attitude of foreign donors towards South Africa changed; they were no longer willing to fund politically oriented NGO activity. The 'bubble' within which the SACC, the WPCC and other South African NGOs had worked came to an end. This led to serious reductions in the funding for the SACC, which in turn led to an end to the SACC's funding of the WPCC and to the issuing of voluntary redundancy packages to its staff. Reports in the press, and my own observations, indicate that other organisations have experienced similar financial problems. Some have been forced to close, and others have reluctantly chosen to do so. For the staff at the WPCC the choice between an uncertain future within the organisation, and the offer of redundancy on generous terms, brought into question many personal dilemmas which had to be faced concerning their commitment to the ideals of the WPCC in a post liberation era.

Most of the WPCC's staff retained their commitment to the WPCC and determined to try to continue its work as an ecumenical organisation. The NGO donor sector, and other funding agencies, have shown a marked shift towards development criteria in their funding policy for South Africa. This has enticed South African organisations away from 'protest' work towards 'development' work. The plans drawn up by the WPCC to win donor 'partners' and so save the organisation all related to various kinds of 'development' projects.

The second major consequence of the 1994 election was that the WPCC had to re-consider its relationship with the state. In the past the WPCC was one of many organisations which concentrated upon concerted political opposition. The preference expressed by the staff at the WPCC, and other former 'protest' NGOs, was to take a position of 'critical solidarity' with regards to the state, supporting the legitimacy of the new government, yet remaining active in political debate as 'watchdogs' and maintaining the independence to be critical of it. Early indications, however, are that many organisations, possibly including the WPCC, will be increasingly drawn into alliance with the state. This is once again because of their need to gain funds, since the government is itself a source of funding for 'development' projects, and secondly because foreign donors wish to see their 'partners' associated with the government's Reconstruction and Development Programme.

Similar processes have occurred in many African countries after independence resulting in the NGO sector shrinking from its pre-independence size and profile. Those NGOs which survive at all usually become 'development' agencies, and there is a strong pressure upon them to

legitimate and support the new government and become associated with its policies. In the process they embrace 'development', but lose the freedom to act in a 'protest' capacity. The 'development' paradigm tends towards an apolitical stance which distracts attention from political issues and the inadequacies of the government and the political system. As such it is an inversion of the 'protest' paradigm which the WPCC and other struggle organisations used before the fall of apartheid.

5. Conclusion

'if you have your hand in another man's pocket you must move when he moves'

African proverb

5.1. From Protest to Development

The WPCC arose as an ecumenical organisation in the context of apartheid, practising the principles of contextual theology. These focused upon establishing a just, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic society in South Africa. Its promotion of such values and its work in 'civil society' placed the WPCC in the tradition of non-governmental organisations. Although its activities and mode of operation have changed markedly in the last few years, and its paradigms and rhetoric have also changed, nevertheless the WPCC has remained conscious of the principles of contextual theology which has given it a consistency through change.

During the 1980s, when the apartheid government was acting with extreme guile and brutality, the conditions suffered by the poor were associated with the oppression which they suffered. This perception was shared not only by organisations like the WPCC, but also by international donor agencies. Large amounts of foreign aid come to Africa annually in the form of 'development' aid. Usually this is mostly channelled through government agencies. In the 1980s, however, because of the political situation, funds were sent to South Africa through non-governmental trusts and organisations. The SACC was one such beneficiary, and the WPCC through it. Most of this funding was given in block grants, distributed covertly, and used freely to react to political events through various forms of 'protest' work.

During the 1980s the WPCC benefited from this funding system. A large number of other organisations were similarly funded for politically-oriented work. This created an environment in which activists rapidly co-ordinated work between organisations to strengthen protests. A 'crisis modus operandi' characterised the operation of the WPCC at this time. The organisation had the financial freedom and the effective networks to launch campaigns, demonstrations, publications, 'relief' work in 'illegal' settlements and a variety of other projects in response to political events. All of the WPCC's work during this decade related in some way to the movement to end apartheid. Hence its work can be characterised as 'protest' work. During this period most overtly political organisations were banned. By virtue of its 'church' status the WPCC enjoyed a degree of protection, although it suffered harassment. In the political vacuum the SACC and the WPCC gained an unusually high media profile and attention as 'struggle' organisations.

Following the unbanning of the political parties in 1990, South Africa entered a transitional phase towards a negotiated settlement of its problems. Apartheid was clearly over and a new dispensation was under discussion. Democratic elections finally took place in 1994. During this period of transition change occurred as the context of the WPCC's work changed. The apartheid policy was gradually dismantled from February 1990, and from that time on the political climate altered dramatically. This directly led to a new environment for the SACC in which its clandestine mode of operation was no longer appropriate. The SACC also lost its role as a foremost advocate of the poor to the unbanned organisations. Hence it had to launch a new structure and new ministries to try to remain relevant to the changing context. As part of this restructuring it was agreed that all ecumenical councils, including the WPCC, were to be brought under the direct supervision of the SACC from Johannesburg. This soon affected the WPCC and its number of staff was halved and its departments and activities restructured. The role of the executive also became superfluous, although it continued to meet and to contribute to the WPCC's intellectual work. The political changes also ended the work of the Dependants Conference, a significant part of the WPCC.

The change in the political environment also weakened the WPCC's web of contacts. Those in the liberation movements and unions became free to operate and had no more need of the WPCC; and for its part the WPCC was in danger of compromising its independent status if it associated too closely with the ANC or its allies in the Congress of South African Trade Unions. Militancy in the church and local areas subsided as the focus moved to the progress of the negotiations. The way the WPCC had operated in the 1980s lost its momentum in the 1990s. The commitment of volunteers, committees, overseas donors and allies, upon which the WPCC had worked, dwindled as the political situation became more complex and less stark. Political change also affected other 'struggle' NGOs. Like the SACC their high profile was lost to the political parties. Hence they began to seek new forms of work. They became less concerned with political activity and their interests diversified. The sense of 'crusade' was over and co-operation between organisations became less frequent and less easily mobilised. This trend has continued.

Those activities of the WPCC which relied upon the 1980s methods of operation and focused upon 'protest' became less effective. It became more willing, however, to work through 'official' channels, including a campaign launched through the Mayor's office. The WPCC also responded to the problems and needs of the period of transition, becoming involved in peace work, monitoring and voter education. Such activities were in contrast to the WPCC's support for the United Democratic Front in the 1980s and its campaign to make South Africa ungovernable, during which the WPCC had promoted strikes and boycotts. The publications of the WPCC also changed focus from issues concerning apartheid and political events, to ones increasingly of the church and its work in society. An important trend which emerged

was the decreasing use of the rhetoric of 'protest' and instead an emerging paradigm of 'development'. This was most evident in the 'church and development' conferences facilitated by the WPCC. Furthermore the WPCC became involved in a women's animation programme, Delta.

Directly following the 1994 elections the WPCC prepared projects for the new era, all of which concerned 'development' in some respect. In addition to an extension of the WPCC's commitment to women's animation work, the WPCC also planned a centre to 'empower' destitute mothers with skills; similarly a training course was planned for refugees. Its publication and conferences also planned to consider issues of reconstruction, development and nation building, and particularly the church's role in these. The style of the WPCC's work would concentrate upon the running of projects; the preparation of conferences and publications and the conduct of studies. Hence its work would no longer be reactive, changing according to events and focused upon politics; in the future it would rather be concerned with a proactive approach, focusing upon the conduct of development programmes in communities, or the preparation of conferences, publications and studies.

During the 1980s the WPCC had a high degree of financial freedom, organisational autonomy and sovereignty over its work. During the transition these were all limited by the constitutional arrangement that was made with the SACC in 1991. In the future, however, its work will be concentrated upon the conduct of development oriented programmes approved by foreign donor agencies. Its finances will be restricted to the conduct of these programmes, and its future dependent upon its success as a development organisation. Hence its freedom of operation will be severely limited. Foreign agencies may insist upon work performed in conjunction with the government's reconstruction and development plan. Financial or ideological reasons may also draw the WPCC into working in co-operation with the state.

There is much irony in that the WPCC, which laboured in the 1980s to promote a democratic dispensation, for freedom and for the poor, should have found that during the transition it lost financial strength, influence, and independence. The contraction of its power continued such that, as the new era began its survival was in question. In order to survive it must sacrifice its former freedom to the control of overseas donors. Furthermore, having resisted the state with tenacity under apartheid, following the 1994 elections, which it helped to conduct, it is being drawn towards executing government policy, in spite of its own wariness of becoming involved.

At the WPCC, therefore, there have been significant changes in both its mode of operation and its rhetoric. It has changed character from a 'protest' organisation to that of a 'development' organisation. Its size and autonomy; its relationship with the state and with

other local organisations and donor organisations have all changed markedly. What have been the dynamics of this ?

5.2. The Dynamics of Change

The character of the WPCC has changed, from that of a 'protest' organisation to that of a 'development' organisation, and the first dynamic of this change has come from within the organisation itself. It has changed because it has been consistent to the tenants of its ideology, those of contextual theology. In remaining true to its ideology the WPCC had to remain relevant to its context. The adaptation made by the WPCC showed that they were not merely politicians in clerical garb, but that they are working towards a broader vision of a new society. The terminology of 'development' is a vehicle for the promotion of this order in the 1990s, just as 'protest' was the most effective means to promote it in the context of the 1980s 'struggle'.

The second dynamic of change were the changes going on in its context of operations; as other organisations adapted to a new era and found new means to operate, or closed down, so the WPCC lost much of its traditional network of operation. As NGOs concentrated upon various issues emerging during the transition the focus upon 'protest' disappeared, and a new rhetoric emerged using the language of 'development'. Furthermore, the WPCC's parent organisation, the SACC, promoted change throughout the ecumenical movement in South Africa to try and retain relevance. It did so under pressure from its European funding organisations. In some respects these changes were also intended to formalise previously covert forms of operation.

More forceful pressure, however, came directly from the international donor agencies. In the 1980s they had regarded South Africa as a 'special case' because of its political climate. This had led to large amounts of funding coming to South Africa and being channelled through non-governmental organisations, which were free to use the money to pursue 'protest' work as events arose. The WPCC was a beneficiary of such funding. After 1990 perceptions of South Africa changed and funding became increasingly conditional upon the adoption of 'development' work. There was an awareness that, particularly after democratic elections, international donors would treat South Africa according to their more regular 'development' criteria. In effect South African non-governmental organisations such as the WPCC had been in a funding 'bubble' during the 1980s, which protected them from many of the usual conditions and expectations applied to African NGOs. After 1990 that 'bubble' came under pressure, and in 1994 it burst.

The positive image of the new South African government, and the popularity of its Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), has influenced many donors to re-direct their funds towards it. Some South African trusts and other funding organisations have thereby lost their capacity to support the NGO sector, in addition to the financial difficulties experienced by many NGOs themselves who had been direct recipients of overseas funding. Much international funding is now linked not only to 'development' but specifically to the RDP. Without embracing a 'development' paradigm and practising 'development' projects, particularly associated with the RDP, it seems unlikely that many South African NGOs could retain the funding necessary to survive as active organisations in the new era.

The funding crisis of 1994 was directly responsible for the WPCC's loss of SACC funding. In response it sought to survive by devising projects which would win funding from overseas. Given the funding environment these were all 'development' related projects. This was not a cynical response but a forced adaptation worked out to keep the ministry of the WPCC alive. The conditions of work are such, however, that in the future the WPCC's freedom to operate as autonomously as it did in the 1980s will be severely curtailed. Its financial freedom will be restricted to the execution of particular projects approved from overseas, and this will limit the scope of its work. Furthermore, it will possibly be required to work for the RDP, or its financial situation may require it to seek government funding. In either event dependence upon the government will also restrict its ability to focus upon the criticism of government policy. In addition, given that these effects are widespread, the ability of 'civil society' to co-ordinate and mobilise extra-parliamentary opposition as it did in the 1980s will similarly be curtailed, and the former 'protest' networks finally broken down.

In closing, this thesis concludes that the factors causing change at the WPCC occurred on three levels. Firstly the political context of the WPCC's work changed dramatically between 1990 and 1994. The apartheid regime was replaced by a democratic state. Secondly, this in turn affected the attitudes of donor agencies towards the work of the WPCC as part of a change in their funding criteria for NGOs in South Africa. Thirdly, the WPCC, in the face of a funding crisis, had to negotiate choices and dilemmas concerning the future.

This thesis has also suggested that there have been similar dynamics of change working upon many South African NGOs which pursued 'struggle' in the 1980s. The funding 'bubble' which created an unusual environment for South African NGOs in the 1980s, and which has subsequently burst, may be a feature characteristic of any country where the political situation is regarded as the outstanding feature effecting the condition of the poor. International donors, which are generally associated with the promotion of democracy as well as welfare (particularly northern NGO donors), may under such circumstances tend to allow their 'development' funding policy to be redirected towards political 'protest' organisations. If this is

the case then there may be a genus of 'protest' NGOs in various parts of the world at various times. As democracy begins to emerge so it seems plausible that they would experience similar dynamics of change as has the WPCC. The occurrence of such experiences, however, requires further research.

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