

Apartheid Opponents = Communism Supporters¹

There is something in the letter of John Van Schepen (27/9/85) that calls for comment for it makes a very dangerous assumption that is rather commonly held. The assumption: that the *enemies* of apartheid in South Africa are the ones encouraging Communism.

To be sure, there are those who like to exploit the present situation in the country on behalf of the Communist movement. And as to the final outcome in that struggle, who can predict? Though I would hope not, one should not discount the possibility that finally Communism would end up the victor in that racial cauldron of violence.

However the main point I want to make is that *the best friends Communism has in Africa are those supporting apartheid, colonialism and neo-colonialism*. The Western world has disappointed Africa time and again and continues to do so. Whenever a liberation movement against foreign domination arises in the continent, it can almost be sure of Western opposition. This was true for Mozambique, Angola, and Zimbabwe. It is presently true for Namibia. It is also true for South Africa, though there it is a case of racial, not of foreign domination. In all these cases, the Western world has either openly opposed the liberation movements or they have simply paid lip service to the aspirations of the people, but in reality dragged their feet. Without exception, the West has continued to support the forces opposing liberation.

The main reason for such Western policies is to be sought in the huge investments we have in these countries: especially South Africa and Namibia. Our

¹ Letter to the Editor of *CC*, 21 Oct/1985. *Every Square Inch*, vol. 2, p. 291.

Western corporations have found South Africa such a lucrative place that they now fear to imperil their investments. These corporations are very powerful and our governments hear their counsel. It would take us too far afield to document these situations. Anyone seriously interested, can resort to the many books and publications devoted to these matters, including my own *Caught in the Middle*.

Now, those liberation and anti-apartheid movements face a powerful enemy in South Africa and Namibia: the South African government and her supporters. There is no way these movements can possibly win their struggle without outside help. They have turned to the West. They have begged, negotiated, threatened. All to no avail. So, what is their last resort? Well, of course, those waiting patiently on the sidelines: the Communists. The only reason Communist regimes have been set up in some African countries is that the West failed to understand their aspirations and literally drove them into the Communist fold. They had no other place to go.

I want to turn my general point above into a more specific long-standing thesis of mine: *The best friend Moscow has in Africa is Washington and her allies, including Canada*. By failing to support the legitimate aspirations for freedom, Washington and her friends have forced Africans to turn to the East.

Will the struggle in South Africa and Namibia end with a Communist regime? God forbid! If that should be the end result, it will be the fault of the West. Western greed for corporate profits will then have achieved the very opposite of what was intended. As Christians, such an ending should not surprise us, for the Bible predicts time and again that greed will result in one's destruction.

A final point to be made is that when we talk of corporations, we are not talking about someone out there, someone else. I do not know about other denominations to which readers of *CC* may belong, but I do know that the CRC heavily invests her pension funds in these corporations. So do those who have their pensions lodged with Christian Schools International. So do Calvin College pensions. It is not the greed of the world only that encourages a Communist solution in Africa, but also the investments of our churches, our institutions and

even of many individuals – perhaps you. I know, for I have for years been doing research in this area and discovered to my shame that I was one of the culprits!

Van Schepen's opinion is wrong and dangerous. It is time we faced reality: *We are the ones encouraging Communism in Africa*. I thank God for the support of the CRC for missions in Africa. However, it is time all members realize that our left hand undoes with our investments what we seek to accomplish with the right hand of mission and development. The sooner we realize this fact, the earlier we can adjust our total stance with respect to Africa to make it more consistently in favour of the Gospel, of the Kingdom of Christ and its righteousness. It may not yet be too late, but there is precious little time left. May God help us to become aware, honest and courageous.