

APARTHEID

The Execution of ZoZo Stockton's Brother Became the Death of a Brother to Everyone in That Room

By Carmen J. Viglucci

The idea of the meeting, according to Rev. John S. Walker, executive secretary of the sponsoring body, the diocesan Office of Black Ministries, was to encourage the Roman Catholic Diocese of Rochester "to take a visible and active position against the apartheid administration of the South African government which boldly and in the face of world criticism practices the most heinous forms of racial injustice and dehumanization in civilization."

To this end, Rev. Walker called together some members of the Committee for Justice in Southern Afrika and others to speak to representatives of the diocese at a recent meeting at the Episcopal diocesan house on East Avenue. The speakers were articulate, informed, involved and impressive. They came from varied backgrounds -- the welcome was delivered by Episcopal Father James Prichard; Dr. Robert McKinney of the committee and Rev. Walker outlined their purpose.

Dr. James Evans of the Colgate-Rochester Divinity School and author of an article, "Apartheid as Idolatry" explained some of the background of apartheid and Isabel Caulkins of the Episcopal diocese briefly outlined positions taken by other denominations.

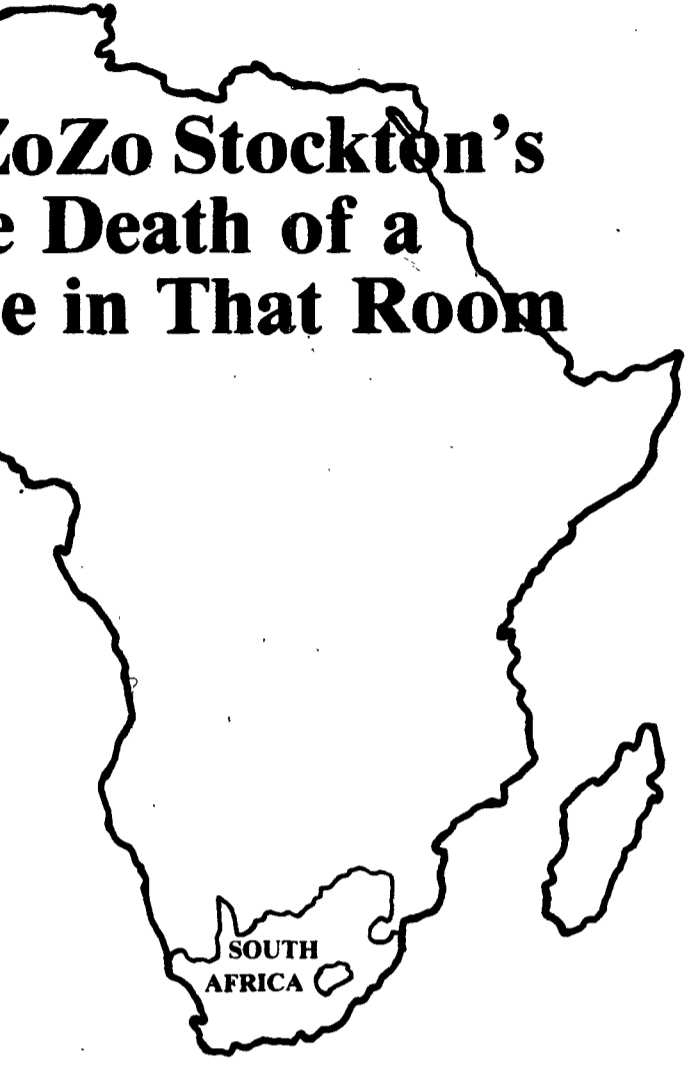
The question of corporate divestment was addressed by Dr. James Wright (earlier the same day, the OBM and the United Church Ministry joined to call for "an immediate end to American investment policy in South Afrika, and we appeal directly to the Eastman Kodak Co. and Xerox Corp. to divest all of their interests in that country...").

In addition, the OBM and UCM took other steps. They condemned the recent deaths by hanging of at least three and as many as 10 members of the African national Congress in Pretoria, admitting that they were "freedom fighters dedicated to the liberty of their rightful country." The two groups, however, pointed out that the executions were carried out against the protests of many throughout the world.

Under the headline "Guerrillas Hanged Despite Pleas of Church, U.S.," the Courier-Journal had reported the executions the issue before. "Three black guerrillas were hanged June 9," the NC News Service said, "after the white-minority government rejected numerous reprieve pleas, including a last-minute appeal from the South African Catholic bishops."

The bishops stated that "it is sad to see young men going to the gallows for actions that though in themselves reprehensible flow from circumstances induced by frustration, humiliation and desperation."

Given the official positions of the two church groups



announced that day, concerning divestments, and the freshness of the executions, the East Avenue meeting was serious but not dramatic -- that is until the final speakers were introduced by Rev. Walker -- two exiled citizens of South Africa, ZoZo Stockton and Phillip Ndaba, now residents of Rochester.

In his introductory remarks, Rev. Walker expressed particular gratitude for Ms. Stockton's appearance since she had just learned that one of the three men hanged the week before in Pretoria was her own brother. Stately dressed in black, "Sister ZoZo," as referred to by Rev. Walker, stood to read a statement especially prepared for the meeting. She began shakily and finally dissolved in tears, "I cannot go on..."

Ndaba took over and read the statement, excerpts of which accompany this article. The Courier-Journal publishes it because, like the personal appearance of Ms. Stockton, it brings home the harsh reality of brutal discrimination, something cold news accounts and headlines cannot do. As Ndaba read, it is doubtful that there was a dry eye in the room. Far from being just another in a seemingly endless list of atrocities being committed by a totalitarian government somewhere, the execution of Ms. Stockton's brother became the death of a brother to everyone in that room. Hopefully, readers will study the statement in that frame of mind.

A Statement

'I received a letter from my father Tuesday, my youngest brother has been killed while in police custody'

Ladies, gentlemen, brothers and sisters and friends:
It is with great sorrow that I stand before you on this occasion. On Tuesday I received a letter from my father, in which he stated that my youngest brother, who had been in police custody since last year, has been killed while in custody by the police. It seems he and several other detainees were killed consequent to the bombings in Pretoria, presumably as part of the retaliation by the South African government. As it always happens in South Africa, neither my family nor the families of other victims were notified of their deaths until the news was released in the local media. Moreover, the government even refused to return the bodies to their families for proper burial and funeral rites. Instead, my family has been subjected to constant police harassment, including the detention of my two other brothers, my sister and her husband.

I am relating this personal tragedy in order to show how the vicious apartheid government typically deals with its opponents, and how their families become easy targets for police harassment and brutality. It would be useless for me to dwell on the statistics illustrating the magnitude of murderous acts perpetrated by the South African government against the black population. It is a well-known fact that South Africa has more people in prison, and executes more people than other countries in the world -- per capita. This is a fact that the media has completely ignored.

I would like to take this occasion, therefore, and dedicate our statement in the memory of my brother, and to the memory of all those who have died in the struggle to liberate our people; and to all those who are serving prison sentences because of their belief in justice in a system that knows no justice; and to all fellow black South Africans within South Africa and those in exile, whose spirit, strength, and sense of national pride have sustained them through the trials and tribulations brought upon them by the vicious apartheid system.

First, consider your own history as Americans. You fought for your own nationhood and national self-determination against colonial domination from Britain; you had to struggle against racism in order that the dream of freedom and equality may be realized by all sections of the population, especially the African Americans, who have endured so much suffering and injustice in this very country.

We, therefore, as black South Africans, feel we have the right to freedom and self-determination just as do other citizens of the world community. We feel that we are internally colonized by a society that believes in racial domination, a false consciousness that has been reinforced by oppressive legislation and police gunfire. We also maintain that this group delusion has further been reinforced -- if not encouraged -- by the Reagan administration and American corporations through their military cooperation and economic investments. We insist on the withdrawal of all American investments from South Africa until justice is restored. We insist on the severance of all diplomatic ties and military cooperation with that country until a duly elected, democratic government is in place.

The ambivalent and ambiguous role played by the United States in the South African situation compounds this problem, confounds the issues and runs contrary to the wishes of the oppressed people of South Africa. They have again and again called for the withdrawal of all foreign investments from South Africa. The time is running out; soon it will be too late and the consequences are unpredictable. Bear in mind that the United States government is perceived by our people as being in collaboration with the apartheid government of South Africa -- not only because of the economic investments and military technological assistance but the United States has voted against virtually all United Nations resolutions concerning South Africa. This has not sat too well with our people and it remains to be seen that when South Africa finally confronts the day of judgment, whether the U.S. will be on the side of justice, as dictated by its own stated principles of democracy and freedom, or whether it will side with racism and oppression.

We wish to make it clear that our objective is no longer simply the abolition of apartheid. Our aim is the total liberation of South Africa; to restore the true principles of justice, equality and self-determination. To this end we are prepared to pick up arms and shed our blood if necessary. Our aspirations are like those of any other nation -- to live in dignity and peace in our own land; and this will be a free, democratic and nonracial South Africa.

We believe that our cause is consistent with the true teachings of the Christian faith, namely the righteousness of God and the brotherhood of man. We contend that the South African government policy of racial separation and racial supremacy is contrary to Christian ethical values. Indeed, the Christian Institute of South Africa, the South African Council of Churches and other church bodies and organizations have declared that the doctrine of apartheid espoused by the South African Dutch Reformed Church is a perversion of the Word of God. We feel it is therefore the duty of every Christian who professes the faith to oppose apartheid as an evil doctrine that lacks a moral basis, promotes interracial hatred and above all has kept a whole nation in servitude.

CRS Director Describes Africa Operations

By John Dash

Part of Dale Gilles' job is to oversee maternal and child health care for more than 65,000 people living in Sierra Leone, West Africa.

The 41-year-old Gilles is program director for Catholic Relief Service operations there.

In the diocese visiting his sister brother-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Michael Fredericks, of St. Paul's Parish in Webster, the former Peace Corps volunteer, is also stumping to raise some \$15,000 to set up blacksmith workshops for polio victims in Sierra Leone.

Gilles, a Kentucky native, said that young polio victims

will be trained in the smith's art by adult polio-crippled blacksmiths.

The primary CRS activity in Sierra Leone, however, is providing programmatic distribution of food aid, Gilles said, the maternal child health program one of three such operations.

He said that Nestle foods are not used. "We go along with the idea that the breast is best," he said. "As a complement to that, one food we distribute is non-fat powdered milk which is mixed with other food that's cooked," thus minimizing sanitation problems and establishing the weaning process.

Distributing foods does two things, Gilles said. It provides economic supplement and nutritional supplement. The food is used in payment for labor on public service projects, he said.

Gilles ticked off the commodity tonnages distributed in Sierra Leone last year: wheat, 2138 metric tons; milk, 1623 metric tons; soya oil, 861 metric tons.

The organization also brought in 329 metric tons of other commodities, he said, including medicines, clothing and equipment. The cash value of it all: \$3.3 million.

Catholic Relief Services is the largest volunteer agency in the world, he noted, operating in 70 countries.

Once headed by clergy, the organization, since July 5, has been in the hands of Lawrence Pezullo, Gilles said.

The CRS food for work program, "gives us the capability to provide food to villages and institutions which they use for an incentive for public service activities," he said.



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8,000 persons a month obtain food through the program, Gilles noted.

The third phase of the operation provides food for more than 2,000 people a month, the major part of it distributed to the indigent through parish St. Vincent de Paul societies, he said.

The Sierra Leone government itself sees the value of CRS presence in its country, and provides funding for both administration and developmental activities, Gilles said.

Catholic Relief Service maintains offices at 1011 First Ave., New York, N.Y. 10022.

Business in Diocese

Dr. Clare J. Smith of Honeoye Falls was installed as president of the Monroe County Dental Society on July 1. He succeeds Dr. Gerard T. Grassi.

Dr. Smith, a native of Fillmore, N.Y., received degrees from the University of Rochester and the University of Michigan prior to opening

his practice in Honeoye Falls in 1953.

He is a member of St. Paul of the Cross parish, a lay reader and past president of the parish council. For 13 years he was a member of the Honeoye Falls School Board, serving two years as president.

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