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in Christ. The Christian partner must with humility and grace confess that there is no other name by which salvation comes.²⁶ We acknowledge that the gospel itself is not negotiable, though others may help us to see our own misunderstandings of the gospel. A Christ-centred approach to dialogue will involve a costly identification in the sufferings, hurts and fears of others and obedience to the way of the cross in self-denial. The finality of Christ precludes a false universalism in salvation. p. 65

c) Dialogue is the life style of the community. If the Church is to maintain an effective openness and witness in dialogue, it needs to be constantly transformed in all its life, theological understanding, spirituality, ethical behaviour, unity and structures, and commitment to mission in the world. *Ecclesia reformata semper reformanda*. The structures of the Church must be constantly renewed to maintain the primacy of the Church's function. In the economy of God the Church is God's agent for change. She lives on the frontiers of the Kingdom in a hostile world.

d) Effective dialogue demands that the Church live on the frontiers of mission, meeting genuine needs whenever and however they may arise. This may mean meetings with leaders of other faiths, to overcome misunderstandings, joining with other communities in times of national crisis or disaster to reduce human suffering, being peace makers in times of violence, working together for the betterment of the wider community life. It will also mean rebuking corruption and oppression in every area of living, attacking the evils institutionalised in social structures. But it will also mean faithfulness in witnessing to salvation in Jesus Christ, recognising that 'if our Gospel is veiled it is veiled to those who are perishing'. (2 Corinthians 4:3). True dialogue belongs to the mission of the Church in the same way that God enters into dialogue with the world he created and in Christ redeems. Everything the Church is and does has a missionary dimension but everything does not have a missionary intention.

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Kenya's Turbulent Bishop

A. N. S. Lane

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In this moving account of an African bishop's stand against injustice, the author raises the issue of the Church's witness in the market place of politics. Are the political and spiritual fields incompatible or complementary? Whether the bishop loved mercy and walked humbly with his God as well as acting justly (to quote the prophet Micah) is a question not answered in this article. Justice without reconciliation and peace is always in danger of becoming another form of injustice.

Editor

²⁶ See W. A. Visser't Hooft's *No Other Name* (London, SCM Press, 1963) for a valuable discussion on the dangers of syncretism and the nature of Christian Universalism.

Bishop Alexander Muge of Eldoret was one of Kenya's most controversial bishops, well known for his outspoken statements against government corruption. On August 14th, 1990 he made a journey to Busia in the west of his diocese. As had happened before, he received a threat from the government. This time it was from the Minister of Labour, Peter Okondo, to the effect that if he went he would 'see fire and may not leave alive'. Muge took this threat seriously and a banner headline in the Kenyan *Standard* newspaper that day read: 'My life in danger says Bishop Muge'. Undeterred, Muge proceeded to Busia where he received a tumultuous welcome. On the return journey that afternoon he was killed in a road crash (17:8:90, 41).¹

First reports of the crash referred to it as an accident. Archbishop Kuria, shortly after Muge's death, called it a tragic accident (17:8:90, 5). But as more evidence came to light the conviction grew that this was no accident. At Muge's memorial service in Nairobi the following Monday the talk was of murder. Muge's diocese made its own investigation and reached the following conclusions, having interviewed eyewitnesses. Muge was driving the first car of a four-car convoy. He caught up with a slow-moving lorry and trailer. Another lorry came round a corner at speed, grazed the rear of the trailer and smashed into Muge's car. The car was crushed and dragged for about 100 yards. Muge was found muttering 'It is done, it is done', before collapsing and dying (24:8:90, 5f.). Early reports had suggested that he was trying to overtake the trailer when the crash occurred. The evidence given at the trial of the lorry driver pointed in a different p. 67 direction, with Muge driving behind the trailer at a snail's pace (14:9:90, 4f., 12; 5:10:90, 35f.; 12:10:90, 19). The driver was convicted and sentenced to seven years' imprisonment for causing Muge's death by dangerous driving (16:11:90, 16f.).

Why should Muge have been killed? He himself offered an explanation. The day before his death he referred to the murder earlier that year of the Kenyan Foreign Minister, Dr Robert Ouko. Muge quoted from a British newspaper which attributed Ouko's murder to cabinet colleagues who did not like his attempts to probe high-level corruption. Muge claimed that he too was under threat because of recent charges that he had made against certain cabinet ministers (17:8:90, 4). While it has yet to be proved that Muge was murdered, the evidence so far points strongly in that direction and many Kenyans see his death as murder.

The purpose of this article is to review and assess Muge's stand for social justice, which may well have been the cause of his death. Two major sources have been used. First, the Kenyan press, especially the *Weekly Review*, published in Nairobi, to which references will be found in the text. Secondly, Muge was a former student of mine and I was able to visit him in December 1989. During that visit I interviewed him on the present topic. All references to that interview in this article were seen and confirmed by Muge himself. In addition to these major sources, I am also indebted to a number of folk with whom I have discussed Muge, both in Kenya and in the U.K. In order to preserve confidentiality, these have not been named.

Muge's political stand needs to be seen in context. In Kenya there are three main church groupings. The Roman Catholic Church speaks occasionally on political issues, but generally remains silent. One bishop commented that 'Water and soil don't mix. Politics and religion don't mix' (3:5:85, 10). But when the bishops do speak, they usually speak collectively and so are harder to ignore (12:1:90, 81). The mainstream Protestant churches belong to the National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCCK). Foremost among these churches is the (Anglican) Church of the Province of Kenya (CPK). In recent years

¹ References in the text are to the Kenyan *Weekly Review*, published in Nairobi, giving the date of the issue and the page number(s).

three of the CPK bishops have spoken regularly against injustice—Alexander Muge, David Gitari (12:6:87, 4–7; 5:10:90, 8–10) and Henry Okullu² (26:9:86, 4–6; 4:5:90, 15–17). Manasses Kuria, the archbishop, has tended to be cautious in speaking on social and political issues, and p. 68 has been criticised for this on occasions. But during 1990 he became much more outspoken (6:7:90, 4, 7f.). Other clerics from the Methodist and Presbyterian churches have also spoken, most notably the presbyterian minister Timothy Njoya (17:10:86, 3–5). The third grouping is the Evangelical Fellowship of Kenya (EFK), to which the overwhelmingly evangelical CPK does not belong. The EFK tends to oppose church involvement in politics but seems happy to make political statements in favour of the government. The EFK has, however, on occasions made private representations to those in power.

Alexander Kipsang Muge was born in 1948. After a spell as an untrained primary school teacher, he served for six years in the paramilitary General Service Unit (police), where he became a corporal and was awarded a medal for bravery. Feeling the call to the ministry, he studied at the (Anglican) Maseno Bible College, after which he was ordained deacon (1975) and priest (1976). From 1976 to 1978 he pastored a church on the outskirts of Nairobi. While there he began to be known for the outspokenness which was to be the hallmark of his ministry. At that stage the object of his wrath was tribalism within both the CPK and the NCCK (17:8:90, 91). From 1978 to 1982 he studied for his BA at the London Bible College. On his return to Kenya he was appointed assistant to the provost of All Saints' cathedral, Nairobi, where he 'started spitting fire from the pulpit' (24:4:87, 12). He opposed government corruption and also attacked tribalism within the CPK and, in particular the dominance of the Kikuyus (1:7:88, 7). The following June he was elected the first bishop of the new diocese of Eldoret. Muge himself discerned a tribal dimension to his election. The diocese is predominantly Kalenjin and Muge was, like the president, a Kalenjin³ (24:4:87, 12f.; 1:7:88, 7). As he was of the same tribe as many within the ruling clique, there were doubtless those who hoped that he would be at one with them. But this was not to be and he proved to be 'the thorn that still pricks' (22:7:88, 16).

REASONS FOR SPEAKING OUT

Why did Muge feel obliged to speak against the government? In the interview he gave four reasons. P. 69

First, he was a Kalenjin, a member of the same tribe as the president and other leaders. As such he felt a particular responsibility to speak. Other members of the tribe, who do not belong to the ruling clique, had asked him to speak and to make it clear that they are not benefiting from the existing corruption. They were afraid that they would suffer when the inevitable backlash comes. The *Weekly Review* also noted the significance of Muge's tribal origin. 'As a Kalenjin railing against a Kalenjin-led secular administration, the late prelate's criticisms against the political system could not be branded as tribally-motivated. In that sense, his criticism of the political system was more credible than that of the majority of other critics' (7:9:90, 4).

² Okulla has also written two books on the subject: *Church and Politics in East Africa* (Nairobi: Uzima Press, 1974 and many reprints); *Church and State in Nation Building and Human Development* (Nairobi: Uzima Press, 1984).

³ While Muge and Moi were both Kalenjin, they came from different clans. Muge was a Nandi while Moi is a Tugen. There is some tension between the two groups and the conflict between Muge and Moi should be seen against this background.

Secondly, things are fundamentally different now from earlier times. Corruption existed under Kenyatta, but church leaders could approach him and he would take action. This happened in private and so there was no need for public confrontation, no tension. This was even true on one occasion when they approached him about the misdeeds of his wife. That is not to say that there was no corruption under Kenyatta, but rather that there were lines of communication between church and state, without public conflict. The situation is different under president Moi. He speaks against corruption and urges people to expose those who are guilty, but in practice takes no action. Corruption has become institutionalized and protected. The church is forced to speak in public as a last resort because other methods have failed. The result is public conflict, with church leaders being reviled by politicians, which was not previously true.⁴

Thirdly, president Moi, unlike Kenyatta, claims to be a born-again Christian. In Kenya today around 75–80% of the population make some sort of Christian profession. Most of the government are churchgoers. This places a pastoral obligation on the church to speak, to call them to repent, forsake evil and come to the Lord. The church must oppose injustice in the same way as the OT prophets. The church's ministry includes a prophetic mission (29:3:85, 6; 19:9:86, 4; 22:9:89, 91).

Finally, one could once turn to senior leaders outside the government, such as civil servants. Today these figures are increasingly powerless. The concentration of power at the top will be considered p. 70 further below. The church has had to step in to fill the vacuum that is left.

POINTS AT ISSUE

There are a number of issues concerning which Muge spoke against the government. (These are drawn both from the interview and, where indicated, from the *Weekly Review*). First, at the most basic level, there are simple moral issues. As is well known, female school leavers are sometimes expected to offer sexual favours in exchange for a job (29:3:85, 61). There was an instance where a lady was entitled to air tickets for herself and her children to join her husband in the USA. The official concerned refused to hand over the tickets unless she would sleep with him. She refused and eventually the diocese had to come to her rescue and buy the tickets.

Secondly, there is straightforward corruption. Those in positions of leadership use them to enrich themselves at the expense of the people. President Moi is reputed to be the second wealthiest African leader, surpassed only by the infamous Mobutu of Zaire. The majority of Kenyans are landless while cabinet ministers own huge farms. In the Eldoret area the white settlers used to have farms of two to three thousand acres. The new 'black settlers' have amassed farms of ten thousand acres and more. Ordinary folk are worse off than under the colonial regime. In one instance some landless folk got together to buy a plot of land. They asked a local politician to help them with this. He told them to leave it in his hands. What he actually did was purchase the land for himself, using government money. The would-be purchasers found themselves being evicted by the police. The local district commissioner was powerless to act.

Thirdly, there was one particularly notorious instance of corruption. The district commissioner for West Pokot happened to be the president's nephew. He also ran a transport firm. In 1989 he gained the contract to transport 6000 bags of maize, each

⁴ Not all would agree with Muge's claim that corruption under Moi is worse than during the later years of Kenyatta's rule. There are also stories of Kenyatta's rejection of church criticism and expulsion of troublesome foreign clergy.

containing 91 kilos for famine relief in the Sudan. He had the bags taken to his home where inmates from the local prison were made to extract 35 kilos from each bag. Thus 336,000 kilos reached the hungry, 210,000 kilos went to the wealthy district commissioner (15:9:89, 81). This incident was investigated by the special branch, who forwarded a report on it, but no action was ever taken.

Fourthly, there was another incident concerning West Pokot. Muge claimed that there was famine in parts of the district, but the p. 71 government denied it. Muge stated which villages were affected and produced a video as evidence. This charge led to a particularly vigorous government response, doubtless because it conflicted with the official claim that Kenya is self-sufficient in food and that there is enough to feed the whole country. The president publicly condemned Muge for the first time over this issue (24:6:88, 9–10). The issue was complicated by the fact that this is a remote region where the people have yet to adapt to the modern world. The *Weekly Review* went on a fact-finding mission to the region. They concluded that there was a food shortage but found no evidence that people had died of hunger. But on the other hand they stated that many were dying of malnutrition (1:7:77, 4–612). Muge also claimed that the district commissioner had been distributing government food relief selectively, on political grounds (15:9:89, 91).

Fifthly, a major point of conflict between church and state was the issue of 'queuing'. This is a method introduced in 1986 for the selection of parliamentary candidates. As Kenya is a one-party state, only those nominated by the party, the Kenya African National Union (Kanu), may stand for parliament. 'Queuing' means that candidates are selected not by a secret ballot but by electors 'queuing' or lining up behind the candidate of their choice, or his representative. The president defended this system maintaining that because it is less open to fraud than a secret ballot and, curiously, that votes cannot be bought if the voting takes place in public. Only paid-up party members (less than a fifth of the population) can take part. Again, it would be hard for church leaders, for example, to vote by publicly giving support to one candidate. There are also problems for many voters in government employ whose jobs might be at risk if they voted publicly for the 'wrong' person. Furthermore, if a candidate receives 70% or more of the vote, he is automatically elected as the MP, without any further ballot (29:8:86, 3–6). Another, less publicized, feature of this system is that appeals against the results of elections go to the president, not to the courts (29:4:88, 13). This furthers the concentration of power at the top and encourages the situation where MPs are answerable to the president rather than the people. One MP told his constituents that they could not remove him if the president wanted him. As Muge put it, 'there is an outcry in Kenya today that the present parliament is full of people who are the friends of party officials and not the choice of the electorate' (22:7:88, 16).

The church spoke out against this new method of election. At the time when Kanu adopted the queuing method, the five-yearly NCKC pastors' conference was under way. This adopted a resolution p. 72 opposing queuing⁵ (29:4:88, 12). Muge described the resolution as 'wonderful' and archbishop Kuria, the head of the CPK, described the queuing system as 'un-Christian, undemocratic and embarrassing' (29:8:86, 3–5). The Roman Catholic bishops eventually came out with their own statement expressing their reservations concerning queuing (29:11:86, 81). The Evangelical Fellowship of Kenya, on the other hand, issued a statement supporting queuing (5:12:86, 9f.).

⁵ The church protested against queuing partly on the grounds that it would be improper for the clergy to vote publicly. The president announced that clergy and some others would be allowed to vote by proxy instead (19:9:86, 4). This did not happen (8:12:89, 9f.) and the secretary-general of Kanu stated that 'there is no special way of voting without queuing. You either stay away or join the queue' (29:4:88, 13).

In 1988 the queuing debate entered a new phase. It was proposed that this method also be used for general elections, in place of the secret ballot. This again led to a storm of protest by bishops Muge and Okullu, together with a Catholic bishop. All three claimed that there was vote-rigging under the queuing method (29:4:88, 11–14). This time the party backed down and no change was made. But there was another spin off from the queuing debate. An NCKK-sponsored magazine called *Beyond* had been critical of the queuing method. The March 1988 issue was devoted to a critique of the previous month's Kanu nominations, claiming widespread abuse. It alleged that some of those declared to have won had not in fact done so. The government responded by banning the magazine. This meant that it had to cease publication and also that the mere possession of back copies could result in imprisonment (18:3:88, 18f.). The editor of the magazine was briefly imprisoned.

Finally, the queuing controversy erupted again in 1989. The NCKK sponsored a large conference on the mission and calling of the church in Kenya today. One of the speakers was the former president of Zimbabwe, Canaan Banana. The conference adopted a resolution critical of the queuing method and urging the government 'to come up with an electoral system which is fair and just'. The government vehemently rejected this suggestion. Muge was not at the conference but expressed his support for the resolution and his opposition to the queuing system, calling it undemocratic and unpopular (8:12:89, 8–10; 15:12:89, 6f.).

Behind queuing lies a more fundamental issue—the concentration of power at the top. Kenya's independence constitution contained a number of checks and balances. These have been steadily eroded in recent years, with increasing power going to the president and the party. The auditor-general has the task of checking the government's p. 73 accounts. In the words of the *Weekly Review*, 'over the years, the reports of the auditor-general have unearthed a large number of questionable expenditures'. Clearly he has a key role in the exposure of corruption. In 1986 his security of tenure was removed, meaning that the president can sack him at will. This seriously undermines his ability to act independently, which was presumably the aim of the exercise (21:11:86, 7f.). At the same time the attorney-general also lost his security of tenure. Again, this security had been designed to 'enable the holder of the office to exercise his often sensitive duties with a relatively free hand, and without the fear of pressure from higher authority'. The aim in removing security of tenure was presumably to prevent such independence (21:11:86, 4–7). These changes provoked protests from many quarters: from the Law Society of Kenya, from the NCKK and even from the Roman Catholic bishops (28:11:86, 3–8). These were ignored. When the changes came before parliament, they were explained by the attorney-general who then announced that he expected no opposition to the bill from MPs (28:11:86, 4f.). In 1988 this process was taken further. High court and court of appeal judges also lost their security of tenure, as did some other officials (5:8:88, 3–6).

More is at stake here than the independence of a few officials. When the 1986 constitutional changes were introduced the president made the ominous pronouncement that the party is supreme over both parliament and the courts (21:11:86, 91). These were no empty words, as can be seen by the way in which the 1988 changes went through parliament. Here were serious constitutional changes, yet the bill was introduced to parliament at 3 pm and had received its third reading by 6 pm, without even token opposition (5:8:88, 3–6). The total lack of serious debate or scrutiny of such a major bill chillingly revealed the truth of the president's earlier words. So shocking was this that the *Weekly Review* devoted much of its next issue to considering the independence of parliament and could come up with no greater comfort than the fact that the situation was no different elsewhere in black Africa (12:8:88, 4–15).

Earlier that year, when the question of extending the queuing method to general elections had arisen, a government minister made some revealing statements. The secret ballot would be scrapped 'whether people like it or not'. There would be no need for a referendum because 'Kanu knows the wishes of the people'. Parliament would support the proposed change because any MPs failing to do so could have their party membership withdrawn (29:4:88, 7f.). These remarks led to protest from Muge, Okullu and a p. 74 Catholic bishop (29:4:88, 11–14). In fact the change was not introduced, but the attitude of the minister to the people and to parliament remains on the record. A more recent incident illustrates the same point. An MP was assailed by his local Kanu branch for 'asking irrelevant questions in parliament' (12:1:90, 81). If even MPs cannot speak freely in parliament, how can Kanu know the wishes of the people?

Underlying all of these issues is the question of the one-party state. Kenya began at independence (1963) as a multi-party state, but became a *de facto* one-party state the following year. Another opposition party emerged in 1966 but was banned in 1969. Finally, in 1982 Kenya became a *de jure* one-party state (12:1:90, 8f.). This is a sensitive issue for church leaders. Archbishop Kuria, who had spoken against queuing, expressed his support for the one-party system (17:10:86, 3f.). Others, such as bishop Okullu have opposed it⁶ (26:9:86, 4f.). Muge spoke repeatedly 'against the pressures of totalitarianism in the name of one-party systems and against the detention of political opponents without trial; (19:9:86, 4 *et al.*). Even the cautious Catholic bishops claimed that 'the party is assuming a totalitarian role. It claims to speak for the people and yet does not allow the people to give their views' (12:11:86, 8). The similarities between the Kenyan and former East European systems have not been lost on observers. Muge warned Kenya's leaders to heed the lessons of Eastern Europe, where the masses were rising against unpopular governments (8:12:89, 10).

The events in Eastern Europe served to keep attention focussed on the issue of the one-party state. 1990 began with a forthright New Year sermon on the subject from the controversial presbyterian minister Timothy Njoya. He claimed that the one-party system had been imported into Africa from Eastern Europe. He criticised attempts to justify the system by giving it local names, adding that 'all forms of social evils appear to stop being evil when baptised African' (12:1:90, 3–6). Later in the year a number of disaffected politicians began to agitate for the introduction of a multi-party system and the government responded by detaining two of them. The church did not keep quiet. Okullu sparked off a new controversy in April by speaking out in favour of a multi-party system (4:5:90, 6–9). The baton was surprisingly taken up by Archbishop Kuria, reversing his earlier p. 75 position (18:5:90, 9f.; 6:7:90, 7f.). Even more surprisingly, Muge spoke in favour of the one-party system. But he continued to call for further checks and balances within the one-party system, to make it more democratic (25:5:90, 6). Thus his defence of the system should not be seen as a reversal of his earlier opposition to matters such as queuing. But his advocacy of the one-party system does appear to have been a new stance. It has been suggested that he took this attitude because he came to see the advocacy of a multi-party system as a Kikuyu plot—which might have been reinforced by seeing the (Kikuyu) archbishop support it.

Muge's defence of the one-party system came at a time when he 'seemed to have lost much of his fire', as it has been put. He had been silent on national issues for some months and 'many observers felt that the usually fiery prelate had changed sides and become a supporter of the political system' (17:8:90, 11). There were rumours to the effect that he

⁶ Okullu has also opposed the one-party system in his books: *Church and Politics in East Africa* 73–75; *Church and State in Nation Building and Human Development* 72–88.

had been 'bought off' by the president. There is evidence that he received gifts from the president, which it would have been hard to refuse—but also that the president was annoyed at Muge's failure to step into line.

Any doubts about Muge's position were dispelled shortly before his death when, in the words of the *Weekly Review*, he reverted to type (10:8:90, 101). The context was a Review Committee set up by Kanu to tour the country and receive, from whomever wished to appear before it, recommendations for reform (27:7:90, 3–8; 3:8:90, 4–10; 10:8:90, 4–10). The original agenda included the queuing system, the 70% rule and expulsions from the party. Some sought to broaden the agenda to include the one-party system and the question of limiting the tenure of the presidency to two five-year terms. Muge appeared before the committee on August 3rd in a manner that indicated that he was 'once again on the warpath'. He claimed that the president was surrounded by a clique of cabinet ministers who were misleading him and indulging in activities which were driving a wedge between Moi and the people. He cited the examples of Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana and Milton Obote of Uganda, both of whom fell, he claimed, as a result of alienation from the people. He went on to cite specific instances of corruption (10:8:90, 5f., 10–12). It was these charges that led to the threats against his life a few days later.

MUGE'S SOURCES

What were Muge's sources for his serious allegations concerning corruption? In the interview he named three. First, the diocesan office P. 76 includes a department of justice and peace, with an officer in charge and another part-time worker. This department investigates such issues. It was hoped to employ a full-time solicitor before long. Secondly, ordinary people volunteer information when they find that normal channels are ineffective. The episode of the theft of the maize was reported by the prisoners concerned to church members working in the prison. It was also reported by an official who knew of it and whom I was able to meet personally. Information is given confidentially by people who could lose their jobs if they spoke openly. Finally, a number of Christians in West Pokot had the courage to sign a paper outlining the misdeeds of the district commissioner and urging the government to act. The only action that was taken was against the man who had drafted the document, who was a clinical officer. His clinic was closed down and his licence to practice was revoked, thus preventing him from pursuing his profession in Kenya.

One further source should be mentioned, which is perhaps so obvious that it is in danger of being ignored. The diocese is composed of a network of parishes and these are served by clergy, who are in regular contact with the people. This structure provides among other things an efficient process whereby the bishop can be kept informed of grassroots grievances.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF SPEAKING OUT

Until recently the main consequence for Muge and the other outspoken bishops was little more than insults and threats from politicians. Doubtless Muge was flattered to be called 'Kenya's enemy number one' (17:4:87, 13). Calls for him and other clergy to be detained and/or defrocked were commonplace (e.g. 22:7:88, 16). The NCKK and the CPK were branded as colonial relics subject to foreign masters (15:12:89, 6f). One of the more curious calls was for Muge and the others to come out into the open and form an opposition party. As the *Weekly Review* dryly observed, 'the question of forming another

party could only have been rhetorical, given the fact that Kanu is now the sole political party allowed in Kenya by law' (15:12:89, 7)!

Occasionally the harassment was more than verbal. In 1988 the police prevented worshippers from gathering for a church service and dragged Muge and two clergy from the church. This was later denied, but had been witnessed by visitors from West Germany (22:7:88, 17). The editorial of the *Weekly Review* made some unflattering comments about Muge ('imbued more with a bloated sense of his own importance than with the Holy Spirit') but was outspoken against this p.77 'height of stupidity' which 'amounts to gross interference in freedom of worship, and is a development with the most dire consequences for the sanctity of our constitution' (22:7:88, 1). Another time, while Muge and Gitari were monitoring the conduct of (queuing) elections their cars were stoned (13:10:89, 61). Gitari's house was also attacked one night by a gang of thugs. He himself escaped only by hiding in the roof (13:10:89, 51). More recently, Okullu was confronted and harassed by a group of about forty Kanu 'youthwingers' outside a church (27:7:90, 10).

Finally there was what at the time appeared to be a comical incident involving West Pokot once again. A local politician, Christopher Lomada, demanded that West Pokot should become a diocese independent of Eldoret. He also suggested that the people of the district were upset about Muge and that he should stay away for his own safety. There was a dramatic turn of events when the president's office also advised Muge against visiting West Pokot. He replied that nothing would stop him from performing his pastoral duties in the district. With the support of all his family, he declared that his personal security was secondary compared to the primary task of taking the gospel to the outermost parts of his diocese. If it was God's will for him to die, 'that is welcome, for death to a Christian is a gateway to heaven' (15:9:89, 7f.). (Interestingly, he made a very similar statement on the eve of his death (17:8:90, 6).) The government threats backfired in that they succeeded only in turning Muge into a martyr without (on that occasion) the inconvenience of martyrdom. Shortly afterwards he visited the district in what the press dubbed a 'triumphant entry', complete with police escort. There was no indication of local hostility. Muge visited Lomada's shop and bought some refreshments from his wife (22:9:89, 8f.).

ASSESSMENT

How should one assess the stand that Muge took?⁷ The *Weekly Review* summed him up well by calling him 'always fearless and sometimes reckless' (1:7:88, 71). An example of the latter was his charge that the human rights situation in Kenya was worse than in South Africa (17:4:87, 13, 24:4:87, 3). Not only was this charge untrue but it is particularly offensive in a black African country. In an P. 78 interview shortly after Muge admitted that 'the violation of human rights in Kenya cannot be compared to the situation in South Africa' but rightly protested against the hypocrisy of protesting against South Africa while ignoring the evils of one's own country (24:4:87, 4).

Another criticism that has been made is that Muge was guilty of conducting vendettas against individual politicians (such as the former local MP Stanley Arap Metro (17:4:87, 13 *et al.*)) and that he sometimes sank to mud slinging (24:4:87, 11). Related to this, some felt that he could be very emotional and therefore sometimes spoke rashly. He could turn

⁷ This assessment has been stimulated by conversation with a number of folk in Kenya, including the leaders of several denominations. I have not named them as these were private conversations.

molehills into mountains when he got involved. Again, even his supporters admitted that on occasions he could be erratic.

Some would question whether the points on which Muge made a stand are all particularly *christian*. In opposing the supremacy of the party and the removal of checks and balances was Muge standing for christian truth or was he merely expressing his personal preference for liberal western rather than traditional African values? This is a charge that must be taken seriously, especially by a western observer. In Muge's favour it should be noted that the point at issue is not the system as abstract political theory, but this system as actually used to protect corruption and injustice. Again, the issue of fair elections is not just theoretical. In Uganda hundreds of thousands of lives have been lost in the process of removing unpopular regimes by force. The ballot box is rather more economical in terms of both lives and financial damage.

It should also be noted that Muge was not himself totally committed to western liberal values. He repeatedly insisted that freedom of worship is a God-given right and not a favour bestowed by the government, a distinction that did not win him friends in the government (31:8:84, 9, et al.). But more recently he was the one church leader who urged the banning of a small and allegedly anti-christian religious sect. The group was in fact deregistered which means that it can no longer legally meet (2:2:90, 15f.). Again, his support for the one-party system, reaffirmed in his submission to the Kanu Review Committee, was not the stance of a western liberal. It has been said that his concept of leadership was similar to president Moi's in that he demanded total allegiance from his subordinates. Some of those who served under him felt that on occasions he could be arrogant.

Muge was also criticised for going to the press or to the BBC rather than making his points privately to those in power. This came out most clearly over the issue of the alleged famine in West Pokot. The p. 79 president rebuked Muge for going to the press rather than to the district commissioner. He claimed that Muge had written him a private letter, which had appeared in the press before he had received it. This was extremely rude, he said (24:6:88, 10). Others also charged Muge with acting disrespectfully towards his elders, be they the president or the archbishop. This is a more serious accusation in Africa than it would be in the west. Again, Muge was accused of pushing himself forward and seeking his own glory by the manner in which he sought publicity. The question of motivation must be taken seriously, but there may be another reason why Muge was criticized for his use of the media. One is tempted to suspect that some people's irritation was at least in part prompted by Muge's success in gaining publicity through the Kenyan press and the BBC—which is doubtless why he continued to turn to the media. Muge also claimed that private representations to those in power were ineffective. This may well have been true, but one can question his claim that the situation is so much worse than under Kenyatta. Stories are rife of corruption both under and *by* Kenyatta and also of the suppression of criticism. Perhaps what has changed the most is not so much the government as the church's willingness to stand up and be counted.

Should the church be taking such a political stand? The issue is well summarized by the *Weekly Review*. Kenyan politicians 'have always been critical of clergymen who comment too freely on national political issues, accusing them of misuing the pulpit and asking them to resign their church ministry and join politics instead'. They see politics as their domain and feel that the clergy should confine themselves to spiritual matters. While most politicians see the political and spiritual fields as incompatible, many clergy reject this compartmentalization and see their role as complementary to, rather than conflicting with, that of politicians. Church leaders stress that the church cannot be blind to social evils (29:13:85, 6; 26:9:86, 51).

In conversation with folk in Kenya I found a widespread appreciation of the fact that Muge and others made the stand that they did. This appreciation was shared by many who may not always have agreed with the point being made or the manner in which it was made, but were glad that someone was making a stand. One comment from a Kenyan clergyman was significant: the bishops are able to say things which would put other people in detention. The same point is made by the *Weekly Review* (12:1:90, 8). Apart from the church, the major opposition to the recent constitutional changes came from the Law Society of Kenya. This body was less able to sustain its criticism, lacking the moral authority and the broad base of support possessed p. 80 by the church. Furthermore, the government dare not try to suppress the church because it stands not just for political justice and freedom but also, unlike the Law Society, for divine truth which it is beyond the power (or will) of the government to suppress. The church in Kenya finds itself in a situation analogous in some ways to that of the Protestant church in East Germany at the start of the 1989 revolution. The church is the one permitted focus of opposition and as such has a moral responsibility to accept this role, however reluctant she might be. Muge noted that the role of the church in speaking out 'when God-given rights and liberties are violated' is especially important in African one-party states where the church must 'give a voice to the voiceless' (29:8:86, 5). The NCKK has been seen as being providentially called to become a forum for alternative political viewpoints in the absence of a second political party (5:12:86, 7). If it failed to rise to this challenge it would be bad for the nation and bad for the church.

POSTSCRIPT

This article has inevitably, like the churchmen's protests, focussed on the negative features of Kenyan society. But this is only one side of the picture, as was acknowledged by the NCKK (28:11:86, 71), by the Catholic bishops (28:11:86, 8) and by Muge. Kenya should be compared not with Western Europe but with black Africa. Here Kenya stands out for its stability and prosperity. Its stability can be seen from the number of pan-african ecclesiastical, governmental and business institutions that have their headquarters in Nairobi. Kenya's free market approach has produced a relatively strong economy and the poor are better off than those in most other black African states,⁸ Kenya's human rights record is not perfect, but is good compared with its neighbours. There is detention without trial, but at the end of 1989 there were no more detainees⁹ and there was an amnesty for political exiles (5:1:90, 18). This changed during 1990 with the detention of advocates of a multi-party system. Press freedom is not unlimited, as is seen by the banning of *Beyond* magazine and other incidents. But it is significant that almost every allegation mentioned in this article can be documented from the *Weekly Review*, which feels free to report the comments of others, however cautious it may be in its own comments. P. 81 But on the other hand, a presbyterian clergyman was sentenced to six years' imprisonment in March 1990 for sedition. His crime was to have written offensively about the president and the government in *his personal diary* (4:5:90, 32-34). It should also be noted that this article was initially accepted for publication by another journal, but one of the editors feared that his organisation would be forced to leave Kenya if it

⁸ For a more negative assessment of Kenya's economy, cf. E. Mukonoweshuro, 'Authoritarian reaction to economic crises in Kenya', *Race and Class* 31:4, April-June 1990, 39-59.

⁹ An article in the *Economist* (13:1:90, 49), which made many of the same points that Muge was making, claimed that there were still political prisoners in Kenya.

appeared. Whether or not that was a real danger, it is *perceived* to be a danger by folk in Kenya and their actions are limited accordingly.

The negative criticisms of Muge and others must be seen against the background of the positive features of Kenya, as he freely acknowledged. He did however warn that the situation was getting worse and that stability and prosperity could not be taken for granted. There was the danger that increasing corruption and injustice would give rise to an explosion which could destroy all that has been built. Hard though now it is to believe, it used to be Uganda that was called the pearl of Africa, a title now often awarded to Kenya. The example of Uganda shows the danger that could face Kenya. Muge's words, spoken in the interview at the end of 1989, have proved to be prophetic given the unrest of 1990 with its attendant dangers.

Muge died shortly after appearing before the Kanu Review Committee. This committee reported to a special delegates' conference of Kanu at the beginning of December 1990.¹⁰ The report recommended the abolition of queuing, of the 70% rule and of the use of expulsion as a method of party discipline, the three matters that the committee had been set up to consider. At the conference the delegates' speeches were predominantly against making any such changes, but president Moi surprised everyone by speaking at the end strongly in favour of them, in the interests of national unity. His wishes prevailed and the conference voted to accept the report in full. (7:12:90, 4–21)

Prior to the conference the president had also asked parliament to restore the security of tenure of the auditor-general, the attorney-general and the judges (7:12:90, 5, 7). Thus almost all of the constitutional changes opposed by Muge have been or are being reversed. At this stage it is hard to estimate the full significance of these events. Many politicians will see them as the end of a process, while others will hope that they are just the beginning of a more far-reaching process. Only time will tell. Either way, the constitutional changes are relatively easy to make, the elimination of corruption, Muge's other complaint, will be much harder.

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Educational Responses to Modern Pluralism

Brian V. Hill

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This important article demands careful reflection. It is adapted from the author's keynote address delivered at an annual conference of the Australian Teachers Christian Fellowship. The author argues the case for recognising modern pluralism in society as a day of

¹⁰ The full text of the report is found in *Weekly Review* 7:12:90, 37–60.