

GOD HAS BEEN DETAINED: AN EXAMINATION OF THE DETENTION  
EXPERIENCE OF A FEW CHRISTIAN ACTIVISTS TO SEE WHETHER  
THERE IS AN EMERGENT THEOLOGY OF DETENTION.

by

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## ABSTRACT

In this thesis we will describe the ways in which detainees have dealt with their experience of detention using various coping skills. Through using the psychological theory of the hardy personality and combining this with various theological categories, we will see how they could deal with the stress of detention. In this way then it is hoped that their experiences will serve as the beginning of a local emergent theology of detention experiences.

We will look at how they exercised commitment, and this will be examined by the role which faith plays as an agent of commitment. Faith will be interpreted as a symbol. We will, therefore, look at the role that dreams and visions, reading scripture, praying, and worshipping played in helping the detainees deal with the stress of detention.

The control component of the hardy personality will be dealt with by showing how by exercising forgiveness, creating justice, and using community, detainees were able to feel they had control in this stressful situation.

The hardy personality theory is based on an existential theory that says that life is constantly changing. We will see how Christian detainees are able to cope with change by challenging their situation through the use of a theology of hope.

In concluding this study of detention we look at the real evil of detention. We will, therefore, look at the negative effects of detention that these detainees were subjected to as part of their experience of detention. We will look at the psychological categories of dread, dependency, and debility. These categories are seen as companion parallel concepts to commitment, control, and challenge. Having done this, and bearing in mind that one of our aims in doing this study is to see if we are able to provide some ideas towards a pastoral model for dealing with the past hurt of detention, we then look at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the challenges it poses for the churches. In doing this we will attempt to show how resources drawn from the faith tradition of Christian activists may be used in helping detainees do 'suffering work' and deal with debility, dependency, and dread.

## PREFACE


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### DECLARATION

This whole thesis, unless specifically indicated to the contrary in the text is my own original work.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'D. J. Cochrane' or similar, with a stylized flourish.



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## CHAPTER ONE

### THE IMPORTANCE OF AN INCIPIENT THEOLOGY OF DETENTION.

#### 1. HOW THIS STUDY CAME INTO BEING

In 1989 I refused to be conscripted into the then South African Defence Force (SADF). I did this both as a pacifist, and as someone who was opposed to apartheid and the role that the SADF played in supporting apartheid. As a consequence of this action the state decided to prosecute me. At this point in the history of resistance to conscription, the penalty for such an action was a maximum prison sentence of six years. I, therefore, in preparation for the worst outcome, decided to register for a Masters in order that I might be able to study in prison. I also hoped to make my own experience into part of the Masters dissertation. The topic of this dissertation was going to be Prison Theology. It was intended that this thesis would look at experiences of other Christian activists from around the world and compare them with my own and that of other South African Christian activists who had been imprisoned for resisting apartheid. By doing this I was hoping that some data would emerge which could form the basis of a local theology.

Fortunately for me, however, other conscientious objectors won court cases in 1990 overturning the legal opinion that prison sentences were the mandatory punishment required for refusal to serve in the army. I was, therefore, eventually given community service of eight hundred hours. I had, however, begun reading the writings of Christian activists from other parts of the world who had been arrested, imprisoned, or detained because of their active work for justice. I found reading these accounts to be a source of personal encouragement and began to realise that South Africans placed in similar circumstances also needed to recount their stories. By recording and preserving their stories of suffering and hope they too would be able to offer lessons learnt from their faith experience. These accounts could be both a testimony to the power of faith as an instrument of support and also as an agent of change. It was, however, felt that looking at prison experiences generally was too broad a topic for a Masters dissertation and, therefore, the topic was changed to focus on the detention experiences of a few Christian detainees.

## 1.1 THE IMPORTANCE OF INCIPIENT THEOLOGIES

Cochrane argues that any attempt to do theology in context needs to

connect with the material and historical conditions of those who suffer poverty, oppression and marginalisation. Since it is in these conditions that ordinary Christians reflect upon their faith. He further notes (1994: that such

reflection may be, and usually is, that of the theologically untrained mind. It may be naïve and pre-critical; it may be unsystematic and scattered; it may draw incongruently on a range of symbols, rituals, narratives and ideas which express the sacred....But it remains nevertheless theology.

This kind of theology he calls (1994:35) 'incipient theology'. The task for the professional theologian is to uncover this local theology (the synchronic community) and bring it into contact with the traditions of past wisdom and insight (the diachronic community) of the wider church. In this way then the suffering community of the present is able to offer its experience as a beginning point, and such local theology is then brought into dialogue with the wider church tradition. This results in the edification of both the wider church and the local community. Without this happening the local theology is unable to move beyond its local context. Thus it is unable to have a broader universal intent. As a result the wisdom and insight gained by the local theology, which is both formed by and alters tradition, is lost. Cochrane writes (1994:36) that:

local theologies, mediated communally to the wider church, will challenge and alter the tradition. At a theological level, this implies that reflection upon faith at the local level, enriched and corrected by dialogue with the wider Christian community, should

be able to enter into our very understanding of who Jesus Christ is for us today....it should be able to affect the foundation of our faith claims.

For this very reason Cochrane calls such theology 'foundational theology'. He argues that proclaiming such theology may help people to understand the significance and extent of their faith. It is able to

affirm the reality of those to whom it is addressed, even as it offers ways of correcting error, clearing up misunderstanding, and challenging commitment.

## 1.2. THE NEED FOR AN INCIPIENT THEOLOGY ARISING OUT OF THE EXPERIENCE OF DETENTION

In a short publication entitled *Standing by God in His hour of grieving: Human suffering, theological reflection and Christian solidarity*, De Gruchy (1985:3) makes the point that events such as the Holocaust and Hiroshima have engaged contemporary debate on theodicy. Theodicy is the theological question about why, if God is powerful and good, does God allow evil and suffering? De Gruchy (1985:3) goes on to say that "within our own context theological reflection on suffering is called for by the reality of apartheid and should be grounded in it." This then calls for us to look at the suffering of detainees, imprisoned and often tortured in South African police cells, or prisons. We need to ask the question: how



did they experience God in such situations? Furthermore we need to see whether we can learn anything from their experience that will help us in documenting our struggle for freedom, to become a source of hope. It, therefore, becomes important for us to see how the local experiences of some Christians detained in South Africa's struggle for freedom are a part of the message of God's salvation. Cochrane writes (1994:35):

Where faith touches the practical realities of the daily lives of the suffering, celebrating people of God, there theology begins in order to find its intellectual source of life and the corrections it needs to the deadliness of forcing the formulations of the past on the needs of the present.

The experience of detention without trial has been the common experience of thousands of South Africans across the colour bar. It is an experience shared by both religious, and nonreligious people, and it has been a source of incredible suffering and hardship both for detainees, and those whose lives are connected with them. Foster, Davis, and Sandler (1987:Preface) estimate that some seventy thousand people were detained from 1953 to 1986. In addition numbers taken from the Human Rights Commission records (1990:411) show that some 1 984 persons were detained between 1987 and 1989. The effects of detention do not only last during detention, but may continue after the detention, and may even influence the society itself. An article by the Human Rights Commission (1990:423) has much to say in this regard. The article points

out that the detainee was often released from a very stressful situation into a very stressful society. It (1990:423) goes on to describe the after effects of detention as post-traumatic stress disorder, and describes changes both in the individual, and in the family:

The common after-effects of detention, in what is termed post-traumatic stress disorder [PTSD], are as follows: lack of concentration; flashback; a sense of acute alienation from family, friends, and society; bad dreams; insomnia; depression; moodswings; a sense of powerlessness; demotivation; low self-esteem; distrust; physical aches and pain; low libido or impotency; eating problems; and a sense of having left others behind in prison.

A released detainee might have all of these problems, or a combination of them to a lesser or greater degree.

Family members are often alienated from one another, says the Human Rights Commission (1990:423-424) because of changes that have occurred within the lives of the detainee, and the family, during detention:

Often detention has permanently changed the individual. In some cases youths detained in their late teens were only released in their twenties....New relationships, increased political and personal maturity, treatment meted out whilst in detention, and the realities of surviving without established familiar family support roles and routines have meant that individuals can no longer relate, or need to relate, to support structures within the family....Changes also occur within the family; roles within the family often alter subtly or dramatically, whilst a member is in detention. This is especially true if the detainee is a mother or father. Other members take over the roles usually played by the detainee, for example, that of 'head of the family', nurturer of small children, or breadwinner, and do not wish to relinquish these once the detainee is released. When the detainee returns, he or she is in effect a stranger, especially if there are small children in the family and the detention has been lengthy.

As far as the impact of detention on society is concerned, the article (1990:427) gives this rather bleak perspective of the future:

What cannot be seen at this stage, but which presents frightening probable scenarios for the future, are the consequences of such wanton waste and abuse of human potential. This is especially true with regard to the children and youth who have experienced the violence of detention, restriction, and township life.

The latent deprivation is a generation of adults who are psychologically scarred and crippled, estranged from society and family, and who are incapable of hope or trust. The bitterness, resentment, and anger resulting from detention and restrictions that cannot be expressed or dealt with today will be expressed as uncontrollable aggression in the future.

Given these effects both on the individual and the society there is an urgent need for the Christian faith to speak to this situation, if the situation of detention and its traumatic consequences is not to be one of utter hopelessness and despair. Dulles (1987:18) says:

At different times, the threats to meaning, commitment, and hope change their forms....Faith must present God under new aspects in order to show that he alone is the true principle of meaning, value, and hope.

The question that, therefore, needs answering is: how does the Christian experience of God enable the detainee to continue to see that God is the true principle of meaning, value, and hope? In other words how does the Christian faith of these detainees help us deal with the question of suffering?

In order to seek to answer this question it is necessary for us to look at various theological approaches to the question of suffering. We do this in an attempt to set the scene in which the local suffering theology is brought into contact with the broader traditions of the church.

### 1.3 VARIOUS THEOLOGICAL APPROACHES TO THE PROBLEM OF SUFFERING

For the person of faith, suffering and the mystery of God are linked. For this reason, therefore, Christian theology has attempted to find ways of defending God's powerfulness and goodness in the face of universal suffering and inexplicable pain. In order that we may have a broad understanding of how theology has sought to deal with this question we need to take note of Sands' summary and critique of the ways in which Western theology has dealt with the problem of suffering. We will use the work of Moltmann and Schillebeeckx to illustrate the two approaches which Sands identifies. We will then look at three possible approaches to the problem of pain and suffering which might be useful in this study. These approaches are those of Ricoeur, Townes, and Emerson, who seek to deal with the problem not just as a philosophical question, but rather seek to help the sufferer identify and deal with the cause of the

suffering.

Sands (1993) says that the way in which Western theology has usually attempted to solve the problem of pain and suffering is by creating an alliance between suffering and evil. Sands says that Western thought has been influenced by two philosophies when dealing with the question of evil. These patterns she identifies as rationalism and dualism.

Rationalism attempts to interpret evil in terms of a Platonic framework in which being is good and evil is nonbeing. Christian rationalism is built on the Neoplatonic framework in which it is said that there are superior and inferior forms of being. The superiority or inferiority of being depends on its degree of goodness. In this philosophy then, moral evil is not beyond comprehension or rehabilitation. Making sense of evil was to make good of it and so "to reestablish the hierarchical order proper to unequal things." (Sands 1993:3)

Dualism views reality as a fight between good and evil. Unlike the Platonic framework, here evil is regarded as existing in its own right, and cannot be understood in terms of the Good. Sands writes (1993:3):

By distinguishing the true from the good and the rational from the real, dualism provides ideological strategies of withdrawal,

resistance, and destruction...For the dualist, evil does have a distinct *raison d'être* and cannot be comprehended in terms of the Good. Instead one must 'just say no'.

Sands further points out the strengths of both responses. Dualism leads to the moral repudiation of evil, while rationalism leads to attempts to intellectually comprehend it. What Sands defines as their weakness is their inability to deal with what she calls "the wound of tragedy". She writes (1993:2) that :

Tragic speech is about irrecoverable loss and irresolvable contradictions. But it is not about nothing. The wound is not nothing. It cannot be fixed or stopped from meaning. It goes on meaning, as the metaphor goes on meaning, as the blood goes on flowing.

She believes that both rationalism and dualism negate the tragic because of their insistence on human good and the absolute goodness of God. The problem with rationalism is that it does not deal with loss since it denies the reality of evil. Dualism on the other hand denies that what is affirmed (good) and what is negated (evil) are actually entangled with one another. We see two very good examples of both the former and the latter type of this kind of theology in the treatment of evil and suffering by Moltmann and Schillebeeckx.

According to Moltmann, the question that the person of faith needs to deal with when faced with suffering is not how can we vindicate God, nor

how can we answer the question why does God let this happen. These questions Moltmann says belong to onlookers. The question is instead an existential one. It is a question that asks where is God in the suffering. Is God absent from the suffering, or does God suffer with those who suffer? Moltmann (1994:31) writes as follows:

The theodicy question is one thing. The existential question about God's involved companionship in suffering is another. The first question presupposes an apathetic God. The second is looking for a God who suffers with us.

For Moltmann the very centre of the Christian faith is the crucified Jesus. At the very centre of the Christian faith is also the experience of the God who suffers with the God-forsaken Christ. God according to Moltmann is not apathetic. God is not the God of Greek philosophy, incapable of suffering. Simultaneously God is not powerless, and therefore subject, as we are, to suffering. Instead God chooses to be a part of human suffering, because of God's great love for humankind. God in fact chooses to surrender Jesus for us (Rm 8:32). Furthermore Jesus accepts this suffering in that "he gave himself for me" (Gl 2:20). Central to this argument, and as a counter to idea that if God caused Jesus to suffer then God is a cruel God, is Moltmann's understanding of 2 Cor 5.19. He writes (1994:38) this of the text:

If God the Father was *in* Christ, the Son, this means that Christ's sufferings are God's sufferings too, and then God too experiences death on the cross.....God goes with us, God suffers with us. So

where Christ, God's Son, goes, the Father goes too. In this self-giving of the Son we discern the self-giving of God.

Furthermore, since for Moltmann the doctrine of the Trinity is central to all revelation of God, the suffering of God must involve the Spirit. He writes (1982:243) that "To understand what happened between Jesus and his God and Father on the cross, it is necessary to talk in trinitarian terms." It is only through the Spirit's power that the Son who suffers from being abandoned by the Father, and the Father who suffers the death of Jesus the beloved Son, are united. Sister Elizabeth Johnson sums up Moltmann's position when she (1988:74) says:

In their common will to save the world, regardless of the cost, what is revealed is the Holy Spirit, who is the Love of the Father and Son. At Jesus' death this Spirit, God's Love is let loose on the world; the Love between Father and Son is released into creation and brings us to redemption.

It is because God is a God who suffers with us that we can suffer in solidarity with God. Moltmann (1994:46) writes:

The God who has become human has made our lives part of his life, and our suffering his suffering. That is why when we feel pain we participate in his pain, and when we grieve we share his grief.

In the same way that God takes the negative, godforsakenness, alienation, rejection, and death, into God's self on the cross at Golgotha, so through the cross God opens the possibility of new life. In writing of this Moltmann says (1982:246):

The concrete 'history of God' in the death of Jesus on the cross on



Golgotha therefore contains within itself all the depths and abysses of human history and therefore can be understood as the history of history. All human history, however much it may be determined by guilt and death, is taken up into this 'history of God', i.e. into the Trinity, and is integrated into the future of the 'history of God'. There is no suffering which in this history of God is not God's suffering; no death which has not been God's death in the history on Golgotha. Therefore there is no life, no fortune and no joy which have not been integrated by his history into eternal life, the eternal joy of God.

As opposed to this viewpoint Schillebeeckx's argument is more in terms of Thomist theology that God is Pure Act. According to Aristotelian-Thomistic thought, all beings are composed of 'act' and 'potency'. 'Act' refers to the state of a being in its fullness or completeness, in its essential form. 'Potency', according to Baum (1992:24) refers to "the as yet unrealized possibilities of a being." All beings are a combination of act and potency. An acorn seed has in itself the potency to become an oak tree. When it grows into a mature oak tree then potency has become act. All finite being, however, can never exist in a total sense of act, in that they are always changing, and have the potential to change. Only God as the source of all being is Pure Act, since God is fully realized and activated, and thus free of all potency. God is in fact the Unmoved Mover. God is the one who empowers beings to move from potency to act, since God is pure existence, and is a Subsistent Being. Thus Schillebeeckx in seeing God as pure being is unable to accept that negativity is part of God. According to his point of view, God cannot be both the author of life

and the destroyer of life. Thus, he rejects the concept that God requires the death of Jesus "as compensation for what we make of our history" (Schillebeeckx 1990:728). He writes (1990:726) that "God is pure positivity; he wills the life of the sinner and not his death." Furthermore, he argues (1990:728) against the acceptance of Moltmann's thesis that God has so identified with the outcast, that God is in fact cast out as a sacrifice for human sin:

The difficulty in this conception is that it ascribes to God what has in fact been done to Jesus by the history of human injustice. Hence I think that in soteriology or the doctrine of redemption we are on a false trail, despite the deep and correct insight here that God is the great fellow-sufferer, who is concerned for our history.

The reason for this is that for Schillebeeckx negativity cannot have a cause or motive in God, and therefore there is no divine reason for the death of Jesus. His stress is rather on the victory that is attained for humankind through the resurrection of Jesus. He (1990:729) writes as follows:

For it emerges that God transcends these negative aspects in our history, not so much in allowing them as *by overcoming them*, making them as though they had never happened. By nature, and in addition to other aspects and meanings, the resurrection of Jesus is also a corrective, a victory over the negativity of suffering and even death....Only in the overcoming of it can we say that the negative aspects in our history have an indirect role in God's plan of salvation.

Ultimately however, Schillebeeckx is unable to deal with the problem of why evil exists.

Sands' critique of these and other modern mainstream male Christian theological thinking, including that of liberation theologians, in their responses to the problem of evil and suffering, is that they do not question or interrogate God. Sands' critique is that by abandoning speculative reflection about evil, theologians are able to protect God, and thus "secure theology's good ending" (1993:36), and as a result do not create for theology "a future in life's going on." (1993:36) For Sands, to speak about evil is to acknowledge its existence while at the same time that existence is "protested, resisted, refused, or terminated." (1993:8) As opposed to rationalism or dualism, when she uses the word evil it is as a negative judgment but it "is predicated on a positive ontological judgment." (1993:8). Evil, according to Sands (1993:8), is:

not that which destroys itself but the decision to destroy; not that which is unintelligible but that which we may understand and yet refuse; not that which lacks being but the wilful suppression of being.

Evil, cannot be ignored. Writing of living in the reality of postmodernity, with its belief in the plurality of truth, and its hypothesis that values, interests, and desires produce rather than reflect truth, she says (1993:6):

What is passing, in postmodernity, is the time when people could attribute to first principles, to ethics, or to God what we choose and what we do to each other in the rough and bloody theatre of history. Posted at the boundaries of this era is a warning that nowhere within it can we hope to encounter truth and goodness

unaccompanied by the most profound questions about violence, conflict, and loss.

Since she believes that tragedy "infects moral life with fault" (1993:9), and "troubles intellectual life with absurdity" (1993:9). Sands is, therefore, unhappy with any attempts to universalise solutions to the problem of evil. She believes that theology needs to be attentive to the tragic sensibilities within communities. A theology which seeks to deal with the tragic in a community's narrative, needs to be seen as "part of the story and implicated in it." (1993:13) If theology is seen in this way, then it can "transform religious narrative from justificatory theodicy to educational ritual." (1993:13) This is because the theologian is able to raise critical questions and also mediate the relationship between the local community and other worlds.

Sands' critique of Christian theology's refusal to abandon a belief in God's goodness needs to be dealt with before we look at the work of Townes. As a counter to this critique, Ricoeur's views on the challenge which evil poses are worth looking at. Ricoeur explains that the problem of evil has moved from the sphere of theory to that of action. Action, however, which concentrates on the practical struggle against evil, must not lose sight of suffering. He writes (1995:259) as follows:

The arbitrary and indiscriminate way in which suffering is

apportioned whether by violence or by the ultimate part of suffering that cannot be ascribed to human interaction - illness, old age, or death - keeps rekindling the old questions: not just Why? but Why me?

In other words what Riceour is saying is that feelings and emotions whilst they are not solutions to the problem of suffering, are still important responses which need to be taken into account together with actions to eliminate suffering. He says that a theology of protest against God allowing suffering should be encouraged as part of the emotional response to the question of suffering (Why me God?). Such a protest is directed against the idea in theodicy that grants divine permission for suffering. He believes that a catharsis is needed for the emotional response. This catharsis is needed in order that the work of mourning may be accomplished. Drawing on Freud's work he says (1995:259-260) that mourning is a step-by-step "letting go of all attachments, cathexis, and investments that make us feel the loss of a loved object as a loss of our very own self." Once this detachment is accomplished we are free to make new attachments and investments. Riceour proposes that this catharsis achieves the work of mourning by a qualitative change in the lament or complaint of the victim or sufferer. This is done by first addressing the question of the victim feeling guilty. We do this by affirming that the negative experience of suffering was not God's will, nor God's punishment for some or other misdeed. We then need to allow the

lament to develop into a complaint against God. Here one is protesting against the idea of divine permission, that God somehow allowed the suffering to happen. Ricoeur writes (1995:260):

Our accusation against God is here the impatience of hope. It has its origin in the cry of the psalmist, "How long O Lord?"

The third stage of the catharsis is to help the sufferer or victim to discover that the reasons for believing in God have nothing to do with the need to explain the origin of suffering. Ricoeur writes (1995:260):

Suffering is only a scandal for the person who understands God to be the source of everything that is good in creation, including our indignation against evil, our courage to bear it, and our feeling of sympathy towards victims. In other words, we believe in God in spite of evil. To believe in God in spite of ... is one of the ways in which we can integrate the speculative aporia into the work of mourning.

Seen from this perspective then, theologians do not need to interrogate God, or question the goodness of God, but they do have a responsibility to help the sufferer to do the work of suffering, and thus find new wholeness.

Sands, having critiqued male theological responses then explores and critiques how feminist and womanist theology deals with the question of evil and suffering. She is as critical of the assumption made by black Afro-American womanist theologians of the goodness of God as she is of male theologians. On the other hand, she does acknowledge that they

are attempting to deal with the problem in a new way. This is because they write from a particular context, and only seek to find meaning within that context. In doing this they seek to use the resources which arise out of their context to speak to their own particular situation. This way she believes is more meaningful than that of their male Western or liberation theology counterparts. Instead of attempting to reconceptualise God, they seek to discover the resources for combatting injustice in African American women's lives.

Townes (1993:78), in her essay *Living in the New Jerusalem: The rhetoric and movement of liberation in the house of evil*, says that womanist ethics begin with the role and place assigned by tradition to black women. She argues that the womanist ethic must challenge the assumption that there is a moral value or goodness in loss, denial, and sacrifice. She argues (1993:84) in the following manner:

A womanist ethic rejects suffering as God's will and believes that it is an outrage that there is suffering at all. Although the details of annalysis [sic] may differ, a womanist ethic must be dedicated to eliminating suffering on the grounds that its removal is God's redeeming purpose.

She makes use of Ida B. Wells-Barnett's social justice rhetoric and activities as a historical base from which to question the moral value of suffering. She also draws heavily on the work of Audre Lorde on the

difference between suffering and pain. Suffering she says is unscrutinised and unprocessed pain. It is the reliving of pain repeatedly. It is sinful in that it leads to continued oppression and does not lead to a struggle for liberation from sin to justice. Pain on the other hand is "an experience that is recognised, named, and then used for transformation" (1993:84). She further argues that the empty cross and the resurrection are God's symbols of victory. She writes (1993:83):

The resurrection moves humanity past suffering to pain and struggle. The resurrection is God's breaking into history to transform suffering into wholeness - to move the person from victim to change agent. The gospel message calls for transformation.

Townes says (1993:84) that pain allows the victim to examine his/her situation in the light of the past and through the recovery of the truth to make a plan for a healthy future. Speaking of the African-American context she writes (1993:84):

Pain promotes self-knowledge, which is a tool for liberation and wholeness. The pain of the *reality* of contemporary life can give us the power to question what was written about Black womanhood and African-American people in light of the *truth* found in our lives.

She further argues that Christian mission "must be done in the context of authority and obedience - not out of a sense of suffering and its goodness." To do this there needs to be a renewed emphasis on authority, liberation, and reconciliation. It is important to note that authority here means partnership, and involves a commitment to



community and the desire for justice. It is the shared power between God and ourselves as the children of God. It involves us being obedient in that we have a responsibility to discover God's will and then decide what is to be done. Liberation from oppression is achieved through the acceptance of God's presence and warmth in life. This is manifested in the transforming effect that the resurrection has for the believer or society. Townes' concept of reconciliation is bound up with her vision of the new society or new Jerusalem. This is essentially the same as what we have referred to elsewhere as the kingdom of God. It is a society built on justice and human rights. She writes (1993:90):

Living in the new Jerusalem means knowing God first hand....then the Black church is able to witness out of God's grace-filled forgiveness. Even in the midst of our iniquity, we can reach out to the poor, the dispossessed, the lonely, the rejected as brothers and sisters.

This approach is similar to that advocated by Emerson. Although his terminology is different to that of Townes in that he like Ricoeur speaks of the need to do 'suffering work.' Another important difference between Townes and Emerson is Emerson's understanding that suffering is neither good nor bad but simply necessary. Townes sees suffering as counter to the will of God, whereas, for Emerson it is a part of a process by which we take "good or bad experience, good or bad moment, and deal with it for the sake of health, wholeness, and salvation." (1986:38). Emerson

subscribes to the viewpoint that the tragic flaw which God as creator allows in creating freedom is that God also allows for the possibility of evil. This is a viewpoint that Riceour rejects. Despite these differences Townes, Emerson, and Riceour, agree on the need to deal with pain/suffering. Suffering work is the same as being in touch with pain in that, to do suffering work, one needs to "move through a situation of pain to a moment of healing." (Emerson 1986:16) This is so because suffering is both individual and corporate and it involves acknowledging the reality of evil and deciding what to do with it. Emerson says that , "the real issue of suffering is not 'Why do bad things happen to good people?' but 'How can we respond to pain and problems?' "(1986:24).

It is this response of Riceour, Townes, and Emerson to the problem of suffering, which takes seriously the reality of suffering, and the context and communities in which suffering occurs, which would seem to be most helpful when we tackle the problem of the suffering experienced by detainees. It is also an approach which partially addresses Sands' concern that religious narratives concerning evil need to be seen to be a part of educative ritual and not justificatory theodicy.

## 1.4 METHODOLOGY

To answer the question as to how the Christian experience of God enabled the detainees to continue to see God as the true source of meaning, value, and hope, I looked at the faith experience of a few South African Christian activists who had been detained. In doing this I made the following assumptions:

1. That arising out of their experience of detention the Christian activists would be able to offer us a theology which helps us deal with suffering.
2. That reflecting on the Bible, the use of prayer, worship, and visions, and being a part of a community enabled these Christians to deal with the stress caused by detention.
3. That in certain instances the Christian faith validates the hardy personality theory. This theory which seeks to account for the reason why some people cope better with stress than others, together with its components of commitment, control, and challenge will be discussed in greater detail in chapter two of this study.
4. That debility, dread, and dependency (terms which will be further defined in chapter five) are also part of the detainees experience, and that a pastoral model is needed to deal with these experiences.

In order to test these assumptions I made use of a qualitative research methodology. The qualitative research methodology used within the social sciences differs from quantitative research. Quantitative research is concerned with quantifying, classifying, or dissecting behavioural patterns, whilst the qualitative research methodology seeks primarily to understand behaviour patterns. The qualitative methodology of doing research is based on a phenomenological approach to social science. Van Manen (1990:39) accepts Merleau Ponty's definition that phenomenology is the study of essence, but cautions against mystifying the word "essence". According to Van Manen (1990:39)

a good description that constitutes the essence of something is constructed so that the structure of a lived experience is revealed to us in such a fashion that we are now able to grasp the nature and significance of this experience in a hitherto unseen way.

Qualitative research methodology is particularly important in that it enables us to "explore concepts whose essence is lost in other research methods." (Bogdan and Taylor 1975:5) These concepts include suffering, beauty, faith, hope, frustration, and love. Phenomenology places high value on the subjective interpretation and description of experiences of those interviewed. It seeks to reflect on these in order to better understand things and meanings from their point of view. Bogdan and Taylor (1975:2) point out that this approach "is concerned with

understanding human behaviour from the actors own frame of reference."

The phenomenologist, thus seeks understanding of his/her subjects through such methods as participant observation, open-ended questions, and personal documents.

Participant observation, is understood by Bogdan and Taylor (1975:5) as "a period of intense social interaction between the researcher and the subjects, in the milieu of the latter." Whilst I was not detained, nor able to study a homogeneous group, I was, however, able to conduct the interviews with the detainees in their own environments, whether workplace or home. I also made use of in-depth method of interviewing.

According to Bogdan and Taylor (1984:77) in-depth interviewing is modelled on a conversation between equals rather than a question and answer. The interviewer is the research tool, and not an interview schedule. The encounter between the researcher and informants is "directed toward understanding informants' perspectives on their lives, experiences, or situations as expressed in their own words." (Bogdan & Taylor 1984:77) The technique of in-depth interviewing involves not only asking questions, but also learning what questions to ask. In this way the researcher is enabled to in the words of Bogdan and Taylor, "illuminate

subjective human experience."

The technique is particularly useful when the research interests are clearly defined, as in this study where we are concerned solely with the individuals experience of detention. Furthermore, as Bogdan and Taylor note (1984:80) in-depth interviews are useful when "one wishes to study past events or cannot gain access to a particular type of setting", as was the case with detention. In-depth interviewing also enables the researcher to make the best use of limited time, as was the case in my interviewing. Because I was using a qualitative methodology the concerns and issues of the detainees were taken up, and thus whilst there were some initial guiding questions, the detainees were allowed to focus on topics of importance and interest to themselves. By doing the interviews in this manner detainees were able to tell their stories in such a way that it was not necessary to conduct many interviews with them. All that was needed after the initial interview was in a few cases a follow up telephone conversation simply to clear up points about which I was not clear. The strength of using a qualitative approach is that it allows for discussion and clarity, and the first hand sharing of experience in which in-depth response is possible.

In order to cross check information, I made use of the archives of The Dependants Conference, and the Detainees Parents Support Committee. In conducting my research, I also combined written accounts by detainees (Deeb, Farisani, Mashinini, Kistner, Mphahlele, Boesak, Mayson, Chikane) with interviews (Sacho, Souchon, Moreo, Brittion, Dandala, Sister Bernard, Kerchoff, Raphesu, Mayson, Mashinini).

The detainees selected for the interviews were chosen because their work for justice arises out of their Christian faith. They were also chosen because they speak English and are literate. The fact that those interviewed spoke English meant that they could be interviewed without any need to use an interpreter. Literacy is important when it comes to answering the question what role reading the Bible played for the detainee.

Those interviewed belong to different denominations, but are mostly Anglican and Catholic, with the exception of Dandala and Mayson (both Methodists), and Raphesu (Presbyterian). The reason for this is that my own status as an Anglican priest meant that my contacts for setting up interviews with Anglicans and Catholics were better than for other denominations. This is balanced by the fact that the detainees whose

written work is consulted belong to a wider range of denominations. Chikane belongs to the Pentecostal group of churches (Apostolic Faith Mission), whilst Kistner and Farisani are both Lutherans, and Boesak is a member of the N.G.Sendingkerk.

The interviews were granted on the basis of my being known as a conscientious objector (this gave me political credibility), or because I was referred to the detainee by others who were politically active and known to the detainee. This enabled trust to be built between myself and the detainee being interviewed. The timing of the interviews was also important in that they were conducted in the early years of the 1990s during the period of political transformation. This meant that detainees were willing to be interviewed, and were able to talk freely of their detention experiences. This would not have been possible for much of the 1980s, which was a time of great political turmoil and state repression.

At the outset I explained the purpose of my interview with the detainee, and having obtained some basic information as to age, and position within the denomination I then asked the detainee to tell me about their detention. The interviews were conducted by written record and no tape



recorders were used. The advantage of this was that it enabled the participants to talk freely without being in any way self conscious. After each interview the written record of the interview was transcribed. I had a list with of questions that I used as a guideline for obtaining data to understand the role which faith played for the detainee. These were all general open-ended questions. I made use of information which detainees gave me in early interviews, and information gained from the written sources in formulating these questions. I asked the detainee to tell me as much about his/her experience of detention as they could. In doing this I sought to obtain as much information as they wanted to give me. I needed to know certain information such as: when the detainee was detained?, for how long?, under what section of the law they were held? I also wanted to know whether they were expecting to be detained, or if they knew why they were detained. Often the detainee would give me much of this information without being asked for it. The detainees supplied the necessary information in the process of telling their own story. This usually included the detainee giving details of how they were detained and where they were detained, and how long they were detained for. I was also often told (without having to ask) whether the detainee was held in solitary confinement or with others. Another important question was how the detainee related to their guards or

interrogators? In the case of Raphesu, and Dandala this led to accounts of physical mishandling. I also asked whether reading the bible was important or not? If the answer was positive I asked whether there were any particular passages that were meaningful? In a similar way I asked the detainee whether prayer and worship was important or not? I also tried to find out whether the detainee received support from other people, and whether he/she felt supported by his/her church or not? In this way the data which forms the base of this study was collected, before being interpreted to be part of an incipient theology.

The activists in this study comprise people from different racial and denominational backgrounds, who were detained at different times in different places from one another. As has already been mentioned, some of the detainees had already written of their experiences, and others were being interviewed for the first time. Furthermore, they are not a homogeneous group in that they comprise both trained theologians and ordinary untrained Christians. It is still, however, my belief that their common experience of suffering caused by being detained provides a unifying factor between them, and thus creates them into a community by virtue of the fact that they are fellow sufferers. It is, therefore, possible for us to look at their experiences in order that we may learn from their

experiences how God may be experienced in situations of suffering and distress. In this way they may be said to have their own type of local theology of suffering. By uncovering this theology of suffering we are able to help a type of what Cochrane refers to as 'incipient theology' (1994:35) to emerge. This is important since, as De Gruchy (1985:3) notes:

All theological affirmations including those of a God who suffers with those who suffer because he indwells his creation - must be 'interrupted' by the narrative of those who are the victims.

In order to test the assumptions that the Christian faith is compatible with the components of the hardy personality theory, the narratives of the detainees of this study will be interpreted by making use of the psychological theory of the hardy personality. Traditional faith concepts will be combined with the components of the psychological theory, to help new understandings of faith to emerge. It should be noted from the outset however, that these concepts are those devised by myself as a means of interpreting the diverse experiences of the detainees used in this study. The concepts are thus the product of a white middle class clergyman, who is theologically trained. They are not necessarily categories which the detainees would use themselves.

This study is, therefore, very much a beginning, and is aimed at encouraging the already growing interest in the importance of local

stories as the base of theological reflection. More importantly, however, this study is done in the hope that those who have been scarred by their detention experiences will learn from these experiences of fellow detainees. It is hoped that through hearing how others dealt with the reality of detention, and through reflecting on the meaning of their faith in this situation, they may be encouraged to talk about their own experiences. In this way it is hoped that they may obtain the necessary counselling and support to reach their own sense of wholeness. If this does happen then they will have the opportunity of hoping and trusting again, and become agents of hope for other sufferers. This is particularly important in the light of the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Committee, and the attempt at bringing a process of reconciliation and healing of the nation into being. For this reason then I will attempt to make some suggestions as to how what we have learned from this incipient theology may be used as part of a pastoral model.

### 1.5 A HISTORY OF DETENTION FROM 1963 UNTIL 1989

As a result of opposition to the implementation of apartheid policy in the 1950s two forms of legislation were introduced to enable the state to practice detention. These were security legislation detention and state of

emergency legislation.

Security legislation providing for ninety days detention (the '90-day clause') was passed in 1963. This General Laws Amendment Act 37, section 17, allowed for a person to be detained, in isolation, without access to the courts for up to ninety days. The purpose of the detention was for interrogation. The period was renewable after the ninety days. In 1965, the '180-day' clause was enacted. This was achieved by the insertion of section 215 into the Criminal Procedures Act of 1955. Its purpose was supposedly to isolate any potential state witnesses for criminal proceedings in either a common law or political offence from intimidation or interference. Once again there was no access to the courts, to other people besides state officials, and the detainee was held in solitary confinement for up to 180 days.

In 1966 the General Laws Amendment Act 62 was passed. Section 22 of this Act provided for 'preventative' detention of up to fourteen days, which was renewable. This was the first 'anti-terrorist' legislation, and it was replaced by the Terrorism Act of 1967. This was initially promulgated in order to deal with SWAPO (South West African Peoples Organisation) guerilla action, but within a year was being used against South Africans.

Section 6 of the Act allowed for periods of indefinite detention without trial. The person detained could be detained until they had satisfactorily responded to questions, or no useful purpose could be served by their further detention. Once again the courts were not empowered to order the detainees release. The public were not notified about such detentions, and even family were not informed of the detention. As with previous legislation no one had the right to see the detainee, and a visit by a magistrate 'if circumstances permit' was allowed every fortnight. The definition of terrorism was so broad that it encompassed just about every act of defying the state in any way.

In 1976 in the wake of the Soweto uprisings the Internal Security Act 79 was introduced. Its purpose was to withdraw political activists from the political arena. Section 10(1)(a) *bis* allowed for long term 'preventative' detention of up to twelve months, renewable. Section 12B made provision for up to six months detention of potential witnesses in solitary confinement. A review committee of three persons (a judge or magistrate and two others) was established to investigate the Minister of Justice's action in detaining a person. The committee was to do this no later than two months after the start of the detention, and thereafter at intervals of no more than six months. While the committee could hear evidence or

representations from any person, it could only make recommendations to the Minister who was not obliged to follow them.

The Internal Security Act of 1976 was replaced by the Internal Security Act of 1982, which in turn was amended by Act 66 of 1986. Section 28 of the Act provided for up to twelve months 'preventative' detention (renewable), as did Sections 50 (fourteen days) and 50A (up to 180 days, renewable). The Minister was required in the case of Section 28 to furnish reasons why the detainee was detained, but did not have to do so in the case of Section 50A detainees. Section 29 was indefinite detention for the purpose of interrogation. It was similar to Section 6 of the Terrorism Act. Section 31 provided for six months detention in solitary confinement as a potential witness. It was similar to the '180-day clause'.

The security legislation was reinforced by the Public Safety Act 3 of 1953. This empowered the State President to do two things:

1. Declare a state of emergency with a time limit of twelve months, if in his opinion, circumstances are such that the ordinary laws of the land are inadequate to maintain public order.
2. Proclaim Emergency Regulations, including the arrest and detention of persons without trial, for the period of the state of emergency.

This legislation was used to proclaim a nation wide state of emergency after the Sharpsville massacre in 1960. This was effective from 30 March 1960 until 31 August 1961. From 21 July 1985 until 7 March 1986 a state of emergency was proclaimed in forty-four magisterial districts. On 12 June 1986, a national state of emergency was again declared which lasted until 11 June 1987, after which it was renewed. The state of emergency was again renewed in 1988 and 1989.

#### 1.6 A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE CHURCHES' RESPONSE TO DETENTION DURING THE PERIOD

Cochrane (1990) notes that any attempts to analyse Christian resistance to apartheid need to take cognisance of the fact that churches are social institutions . He makes the point (1990:95) that:

the churches as human institutions tend to reflect rather than challenge their social milieu, and, that they do so in accordance with the prevailing symbols of social and political legitimacy.

The English speaking churches had a long history of working closely with the state before 1948. Even after 1948, whilst these churches did not support the governments policy of apartheid, they did not question the legitimacy of the state. Cochrane (1990:93)in his periodised typology of Christian resistance to apartheid suggests that from 1968 until 1986



there were three characteristic forms of 'resistance'. These were:

1. Black consciousness/ Conscientisation that marked the years 1968-1977. This was the period in which the Christian Institute was closely connected with a young generation of black leadership who launched the black consciousness movement. This in turn led to the emergence of black theology, and programmes of 'conscientisation' carried out by politically involved Christians aimed at raising human rights issues.
2. Challenge to legality that marked the years 1977-1983. These were years in which the trade unions were finding new support and strength from workers. They were also the years following the 1976 uprising. They were a period of bannings, and restrictions, and increased support for the liberation movements. This was the period during which a change "in the concept of resistance from identification with suffering to solidarity with the struggle" (Cochrane 1990:91) took place.
- 3 Delegitimisation/Civil Disobedience were the hallmarks of the years 1983-1986. The Alliance of Black Reformed Christians in Southern Africa, named apartheid as a heresy, this was confirmed by the World Alliance of Reformed Churches in 1982. The publication of the *Kairos Document* in 1985, and the 'Call to Prayer for an End to Unjust Rule' in that same year, were further attempts to critique church support for

the state's legitimacy. The *Kairos Document* (1987:24-25) said that the most loving response to oppression, one which takes seriously both the oppressed and the oppressor "is to remove the tyrants from power and establish a just government for the common good of *all the people*." There was also in this period a strengthening of contact between the SACC and exiled organisations, and the building of trust between them through the Harare (1985) and Lusaka (1987) conferences. These were also the years following the formation of the UDF (United Democratic Front), and the resistance to the 1983 Constitution, and the formation of the 'tricameral parliament'.

It is against this background that the churches response to detention must be seen. Prior to the 1980s the way in which the English speaking mainline churches dealt with the issue of detention was through protest at the state's action at its synods and assemblies, attempts to meet with the state to discuss the detention legislation, and through vigils of prayer support for detainees. These responses were all limited by the churches continued recognition of the state's legitimacy.

The Christian Institute had raised concern over the issue of bannings and detention. Already in *Pro Veritate* on 15 December 1972 it raised its

concern about torture, and the Terrorism Act, and made the seven suggestions. These were again highlighted in the 1977 publication *Torture in South Africa*? They are as follows:

1. that the South African government return to the rule of law;
2. that there be an independent judicial investigation into allegations of torture and irregular methods of interrogation;
3. that a judge must have the power to visit detainees;
4. that there be a change in the system of taking confessions;
5. that the next of kin need to be informed when someone is detained;
6. that the conditions of detention are spelled out;
7. that the Appellate division take the first opportunity to rule against admissibility of confessions or admissions made by detainees.

It was concerned not only to protest these actions but also to raise public awareness of these issues. In October 1975 it published a report on detention without trial, which was banned on 8 January 1976. Undaunted the Institute published a similar booklet entitled *Detention and Détente in Southern Africa*. It is particularly critical of Vorster's attempts at détente on one hand whilst suppressing genuine attempts at opposition through detention on the other hand. Unlike the reconciliatory attempts of English

speaking churches this document does not shy away from challenging the legitimacy of the state. Published on 30 April 1976 it is very prophetic indeed when it (1976:2) says:

Perhaps all that is hoped for in the publication of a document such as this is that when change does come in South Africa people will not be able to excuse their own or their government's collusion with this regime on the grounds that they did not realise the cost in terms of human suffering and degradation that was paid to preserve the White élitist group with which they were dealing.

The document is also critical of the press and public's lack of response to black people being charged under the Terrorism and Suppression of Communism Act. It points out the same press protested vociferously the detention in August 1975 of several leading white students and Breyten Breytenbach, whilst it said virtually nothing of the 12 trials in which 29 black people were charged. It is also critical of the churches lack of real opposition to detention without trial legislation. It says:

However, besides issuing statements little else appears to be done to oppose this legislation or to help support the families of the detained and awaiting trial prisoners to say nothing of the lack of support for the families of the many political prisoners on Robben Island.

In addition to this Theo Kotze was one of the editors of a small publication called *Band Wagon* that functioned between 1974 and 1976 that was published for members of the Christian Institute and related organisations with the aim of providing a readership of some five hundred persons with information on who had been detained, banned, or brought

to trial. The *South African Outlook* a missionary publication, also published articles on the Terrorism Act, as well as two accounts of detention experiences, and information from press reports in its column *For the Record*.

Perhaps the single most important contribution of the churches, however, was their attempt to help support detainees and their families financially and legally. Work in this area began in Cape Town in 1963 where Defence and Aid was helping those faced by detentions (directly or indirectly). A meeting of church organisations took place and Dependants Conference was formed. Their aim was to support the dependants of detainees, convicted political prisoners, and those who had left South Africa. In 1966 Defence and Aid and its work was banned. With the forming of the SACC in 1968, the work of Dependants Conference (DC) was attached to it. It was only with the appointment of John Rees in 1970 that DC began to work through out the country. Between 1967 and 1976 DC did not do much Defence and Aid work, especially not legal work. In 1976 the Asingeni Fund was set up to do this. Whilst local member churches made use of DC and sent it motions of support, the Christian Institute was correct in its critique of their real commitment to supporting detainees or political prisoners. The major financial support for the work

of DC came from outside the country. The Asingeni Fund as well as the National Emergency Fund which helped detainees, came directly from overseas churches. Anne Hughes reflects this in her 1979 report for the work done by DC years during the years 1978-1979. She writes:

What assistance have the Churches in South Africa been giving in all this? In financial terms - not much. Some congregations and individuals have given to appeals made by their regional Dependants' Conference Committees and a few thousand Rands have been raised in this way. The central D.C. fund has also received some assistance from individuals, congregations and national Church bodies, but the bulk of our help continues to come from overseas. In other ways? We cannot know the whole answer to this. We do know of individual clergy and lay Christians who have given much of their time and energies - in service of D.C. committees, in supportive visiting, in organising and for Section 10 Detainees....We constantly need to look for further ways of getting our Churches to participate actively in this Christian service.

From 1978 on regular once yearly prayer services were organised for detainees, and later 12 March became National Detainees Day. In 1981 two further initiatives to support detainees namely, the Detainees Parents Support Committee (DPSC) and DESCOM were initiated. DPSC comprised the family members of detainees whose major function was to give moral and other support to detainees and their families. It was particularly successful in its campaign for the release of children who had been detained. The membership of DESCOM was open to any person concerned with the state of repression. The aim of DESCOM was to organise and educate people against and about repression. Neither of

these initiatives was a church based initiative. There is also no evidence of broad congregation support from the churches for these initiatives. What support there was came again from individuals, although there was greater financial support from the churches especially the South African Catholic Bishops Conference. The fact that many more church workers and clergy were detained in the 1980s may have had something to do with this.

What emerges from this brief analysis of the churches' response to detention tends thus, to correlate with what Cochrane says (1990:95) in his analysis of Christian resistance to apartheid , namely that,

the churches can only be expected to lag after popular resistance, and the role of those who keep up with such resistance or even enter into the *avant-garde* will likely never be anything but peripheral to the institutional churches - the activity of a relatively small group.

## 1.7 SUMMARY

In this chapter the initial reason for embarking on this study were looked at. We have also seen the importance of helping incipient theologies to emerge. The need for a theology of detention in order to provide a message of hope to people traumatised by their detention experiences has also been dealt with.

We have looked at the methodology which underlines this study. In doing this we noted the differences between this study and other types of community based incipient theologies. In order to put the local theology in touch with some broader church traditions various approaches to the question of suffering were looked at. The approach favoured by the womanist theologian Townes, together with that of Emerson, were selected as the most appropriate response for this study to make use of.

Finally in order to place this study in context the various detention laws were reviewed, and a brief overview of the churches' response to detention was given.



## CHAPTER TWO

### THE COMMITMENT COMPONENT OF THE HARDY PERSONALITY THEORY AND THE FAITH OF CHRISTIAN DETAINEES

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to examine the detention experience of a few Christian activists in terms of the commitment component of the hardy personality theory. To do this we will look at the theory underlying the hardy personality hypothesis in greater detail later in this chapter. We will do this in order to enable us to understand how the commitment component fits into the general hypothesis.

According to Kobasa (1982:6), individuals are better able to cope with stress if they believe in themselves, and the value, truth, and importance of what they are doing. They also need to have a strong sense of personal identity. Individuals who cope better with stress are people who involve themselves fully in their work, interpersonal relationships, and the social institutions they are part of. The confidence that they have in themselves, and in of the purpose of their lives serves as a buffer in

dealing with stressful life events. Kobasa calls this personality characteristic the commitment component of her hardy personality theory. We will make use of this theory, and argue the case that the Christian experience of God (the experience of faith) forms part of the commitment component.

## 2.2 THE HARDY PERSONALITY THEORY

This theory was first proposed by Kobasa (1982:3-29), a social psychologist. Her hypothesis was based on studies conducted with white male business executives, 157 male general legal practitioners, and 75 (mostly white) male army captains and majors in the military establishment. As a check, similar studies were done with mostly white, working, middle-class women who were gynaecology outpatients. Besides these studies, independent studies conducted on college students by Smith, Johnson, and Sarason (1978) confirmed Kobasa's emphasis on control and challenge. All these studies were conducted in the United States of America.

The focus of Kobasa's research was the relationship between stress and illness in personalities. Her research was concerned with three areas.

The first was determining the personality characteristics of those who remained healthy despite recent stressful life events. The second stage of her research established that these traits guarded future health from the effects of stress. Her third area of concern was a consideration of how personality interacts with stress resistance resources (such as social support networks) to keep people healthy. Kobasa (1982:6) writes the following about the importance of personality for her studies:

The basic notion throughout the research has been that the person's general orientation towards life or characteristic interests and motivations would influence how any given stressful life event was interpreted and dealt with and, thereby, the event's ultimate impact on the physiological and biological organism. The personality emphasis has sought to determine the conscious psychological processes by which persons efficiently recognize and act on their situations.

Kobasa (1982:6) says that her research shows that there are three components that make up a personality style which is better able to handle stress. These three components are: commitment, control, and challenge. For this study it will be necessary to look at each of these components separately, and to assess their importance for the Christian detainee. In this chapter we will look at the commitment component.

It should be noted that before 1988 research into this hypothesis had not extended to detention and torture. In 1988 A. K. Perkel submitted a Masters thesis to the University of Natal on research done with detainees

entitled: Perceived locus of control as correlate of traumatization during detention - with implications for therapeutic intervention. This thesis supports the Kobasa hypothesis directly as it acknowledges that control is an important factor in dealing with stress in detention.

Although Perkel's thesis does not specifically refer to commitment and challenge, these components may be said to be factors that enable detainees to cope with the stress of detention. It is important to note that the very influential study of detainees by Foster et al (1987:164), (which was published before the submission of Perkel's thesis) says this of the Kobasa hypothesis:

Research into this hypothesised 'hardy personality' has not extended to extreme situations like detention and torture, so its use here is conjectural. It does seem, however, to offer some possible set of constructs with which to explain individual variances in response to torture.

The use of the constructs of commitment and challenge becomes even more plausible when we consider Perkel's analysis of the strategy employed by the security apparatus when making use of detention. Perkel (1982:72) classifies this strategy under three headings: Assault, Invasion, and Deprivation. Assault refers to:

direct and indirect attack on the beliefs, morals, personality, spirituality, defences and physical body of a person detained....for the sake of obtaining information, securing a confession, or undermining their political resolve and functional capacity.

Invasion, he (1988:72) says refers to the "invasion of body space, personal belonging, and private boundaries " of individuals. Deprivation, he (1988:72) describes as:

The process of confining the detainee under conditions of solitary confinement....This is, therefore, the systematic deprivation of emotional, spiritual, physical and sensory input and support necessary for basic healthy functioning.

The only way for a detainee to cope with the strategy of assault is through a strong commitment. The construct of commitment is defined and dealt with in greater detail later in this chapter. Both invasion and deprivation are attempts to undermine the detainees' sense of control in the situation of detention. Furthermore, the only way for a detainee to deal with all these strategies is through challenging the situation, and having a personal sense of being able to adapt and be in command of the situation. We will look at the constructs of control and challenge in chapters three and four respectively.

## 2.3 COMMITMENT AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO FAITH

Commitment, according to Kobasa (1982:6) is "the ability to believe in the truth, importance, and interest value of who one is and what one is doing." Kobasa (1982:6) goes on to say: "The committed person knows not only what he or she is involved in but also why the involvement was

chosen." Furthermore, this commitment to self enables the individual to have a strong sense of purpose so that s/he can mitigate the perceived threat that s/he faces. Commitment, however, is more than simply self interest, or even self understanding. This is because it is based in a sense of accountability to others, and the knowledge that the individual can both draw strength from, and turn to others in times of great stress. Kobasa (1982:7) notes that this sense of community, or accountability to others is one of the most important interpersonal resources for coping with stress.

Faith is not as easily defined as commitment, but for the purpose of this chapter we will accept the phenomenological concept proposed by Dulles. Dulles (1987:17) says faith must be:

viewed as a wholehearted acceptance of something which comes upon one with the strength of revelation - something that proves capable of giving meaning and purpose to man's existence.

Such faith, he (1987:17-18) says involves three principal elements. These are conviction, dedication, and trust. Each of these three elements corresponds with components of the definition given of commitment.

Conviction means the acceptance of God as the source of ultimate meaning. According to Cochrane, De Gruchy, and Peterson, the authors

*In Word And Deed* (1991:15), the Christian theologian, or community engaged in theological reflection, derives a sense of purpose in life from the acknowledgement that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ. This means that the Christian believer views history from the perspective that Jesus is God's agent of judgement, redemption, and liberation in history.

Dedication is the willingness to make sacrifices for the one whom one believes in. It is because of their understanding of the Christian faith that the detainees interviewed, and those whose written work is used in this study, opposed apartheid. Because of their belief that apartheid was opposed to the will of God, they were willing to challenge the injustice inherent in its structures, and to work for justice and peace.

Trust means relying on God's power as the source of one's confidence, and optimism, for the present and the future. The gospel message is that Jesus through his cross and resurrection is not only the Redeemer of humankind, but also the Lord of all history. Cochrane et al (1990:15-16) say the following:

By confessing Christ we imply a faith praxis which engages reality within a particular context [and thus must work with the historical ideas and goals, or ideologies, of a particular society ], but which also places any ideological claim under the authority and critique of the gospel.

Thus we can see that there exists a relationship between the Christian concept of faith and the concept of the commitment component of the hardy personality theory. We will find further evidence of this relationship as we examine the experience of the Christian activists involved in this study in greater depth later in this chapter and elsewhere.

#### 2.4 THE ROLE OF CHRISTIAN SYMBOLS IN BRINGING ABOUT AN UNDERSTANDING OF FAITH

To investigate further the relationship between faith and commitment it is necessary to devise some framework through which a better understanding may be reached of the importance of faith for the detainee. This is important for us since faith involves not only the intellectual assent of the believer to the Christian confession that Jesus is Lord but is also an experience of Jesus as the Christ. Schillebeeckx (1990:32) expresses it this way: "Religious faith is human life in the world, but experienced as an encounter and in this respect a disclosure of God." We, therefore, need an appropriate understanding of revelation to provide us with further categories through which we may examine in greater detail the meaning and importance of faith for the detainees of this study. In this regard it is useful for us to again dialogue with Dulles.



Dulles (1992:3), in his book *Models of Revelation*, notes that Christianity, Islam, and Judaism are based on the conviction that the world in which we live, and our very existence in that world, has meaning. This meaning is derived from our encounter with a personal God. The model that Dulles finds most satisfactory in presenting this theology of revelation is that of "symbolic mediation". In this model it is assumed that in order for revelation to take place, the encounter with God is always mediated. It is mediated through symbol. In saying this Dulles is expressing the viewpoint of Tillich (1958:45) who said "The language of faith is the language of symbols." This is so because as people our ultimate concerns can only be expressed symbolically, and our ultimate concern is what we call God. For Tillich (1958:44) that which is true ultimately transcends the realm of the finite indefinitely. Therefore, no finite reality can express it properly and directly. Therefore, in order for us to experience God we need to make use of symbols as the agents of revelation. Dulles (1992:131) defines symbol as:

An externally perceived sign that works mysteriously on the human consciousness so as to suggest more than it can clearly describe or define. Revelatory symbols are those which express and mediate God's self communication.

According to Dulles (1992:136-139), the relationship between symbolic communication and revelation is further strengthened in that both share

four qualities. First, symbolism and revelation do not give speculative knowledge but participatory knowledge. Secondly, symbol and revelation have a transforming effect on the knower as a person. Thirdly, symbolism and revelation have a powerful influence on commitments and behaviour. Fourthly, symbol and revelation introduce us into realms of awareness not normally available to discursive thought.

We will now examine each of these four characteristics more thoroughly, making use of Tillich's six characteristics of a symbol as we do so.

First, symbols give meaning, and to enter that world of meaning we cannot be detached observers but need to engage with that world of meaning. Tillich (1958:41-43) says that two of the characteristics of a symbol are that it points beyond itself to something else, and that it participates in that to which it points. Besides this, because symbols arise out of a collective or individual unconsciousness they cannot be produced intentionally. It is for this very reason that symbols grow when a situation is ripe for them and die when they are no longer meaningful for the group for which they previously had meaning. In the same way that symbols are dependent on community acceptance, the acceptance of the Christian revelation involves one in becoming a part of a

community of faith. This in turn enables the believer to share the Jesus way of life. It involves the believer accepting Christian symbols. These symbols, Dulles (1992:266) defines as "the persons, events, and other realities whereby God brings into existence the community of faith we call the Christian Church."

Secondly, a symbol "does something to us." Dulles (1992:136-137) quotes the psychotherapist Victor White, who writes the following about the symbol:

It moves us, shifts our centre of awareness, changes our values. Whether it is just looked at or heard, acted out, painted out, written out, or danced out, it arouses not only thought, but delight, fear, awe, horror, and the rest.

Tillich (1958:42) refers to this characteristic of the symbol as unlocking dimensions of our internal reality, or inner being, which correspond to the dimensions and elements of reality. Revelation transforms the believer in that it opens a new spiritual world, and shifts his or her perspectives. It involves the believer in a personal relationship with God.

Thirdly, symbolism according to Dulles (1992:137):

stirs the imagination, releases the hidden energies in the soul, gives strength and stability to the personality, and arouses the will to consistent and committed action.

For the Christian, strength and stability are imparted to the believer

through revelation. This is so, since it is through revelation that the believer becomes involved in a relationship with God. This in turn demands obedience of the believer. Furthermore, since the believer becomes a part of a community of believers, this has an impact on the commitments and behaviour of the believer. The believer is bound to the community, and to God, through ties of loyalty and trust.

Fourthly, Tillich (1958:42) said that another of the characteristics of a symbol is that it opens up levels of reality that otherwise would be closed to us. It is through revelation that we can encounter the God who is both transcendent and imminent, *fascinans et tremendum*. According to Dulles (1992:267), revelatory symbols have a twofold truth.

They have 'symbolic truth' insofar as they express, communicate, or produce a transformed consciousness. But the truth of the symbol is not merely its symbolic truth. In reflection, symbols give rise to true affirmations about what is antecedently real.

Having established the relationship between faith and symbol, we are now in a better position to understand the interrelationship between faith and commitment. Kabosa (1982:6), as we have already read, says:

Commitment is the ability to believe in the truth, importance, and interest value of what one is doing (cf. Maddi, 1967,1970) and thereby the tendency to involve oneself fully in the many situations of life, including work, family, interpersonal relationships, and social institutions.

We have read how the symbol opens up reality, and gives deeper

meaning to the faith of the believer, through strengthening the believers relationship with God, and others of the Christian community. We now need to see how revelatory symbols make themselves "concrete" in our everyday experience.

#### 2.4.1 The way in which symbols are made present to reality

As we have already noted, Tillich said that the symbol opened up to us levels of reality that would otherwise be inaccessible to us. He argued (1958:48-49) that the way in which this happens is through myth. He described myths as "symbols of faith combined in stories about divine-human encounters." These include manifestations of the divine in words and documents, events and things, in persons and communities.

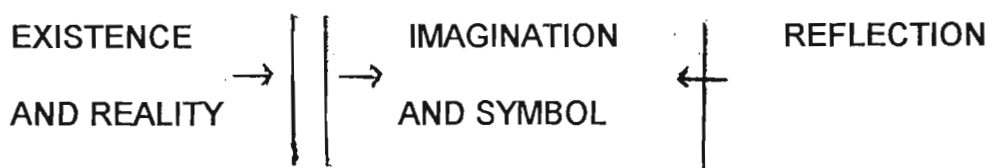
Jennings (1977) builds on Tillich's understanding of myth using Ernst Cassirer's work. Jennings, however, sees myth as only one component of the religious experience, which he terms "mythos". He is influenced in his understanding of the role of the religious imagination, which we will be examining in more detail further on, by Feuerbach and Eliade. Feuerbach's thesis, as summarised by Jennings (1977:38), is that the imagination produces myths and symbols that characterise it. He credits

Eliade for his understanding that the given of the religious imagination is the sacred, together with the human world. Jennings (1977:2) maintains that Christian theology is a reflection on Christian mythos, which is:

that set of symbols, rituals, narratives and assertions which taken together announce and mediate the presence of the sacred so to represent, orient, communicate and transform existence in the world for a community of persons.

Jennings (1977:17) goes on to say that mythos is a product of the imagination. Imagination is the way in which existence and reality is made present to human awareness and thus "serve as the legitimate ground for reflection." The religious imagination, in particular, he (1977:42) describes as the "imaginative representation" of the sacred "in the midst of human existence in the world."

Schematically what Jennings is saying is that there is a "three-storied edifice of human existence", namely:



It is only possible to reflect on existence and reality when they are brought to awareness through images and symbols produced by the imagination. What this means is that the imagination functions to represent the pattern of participation in the world. It not only participates

in the world but also transcends it so that it makes possible the experience of, and conscious participation in, reality. Jennings (1977:18)

says of this process:

It is as if through the imagination reality does indeed press itself outward and upward from darkness and silence into awareness. It is the force of this insistent pressure through the image that allows us to posit the real as the given which imagination moulds to produce the image....Reflection serves the task of distinguishing, ordering, and interpreting this world of images, thereby seeking to make more lucid the reality in which we live.

The mythos not only represent existence in relation to the sacred, but it also functions to orient existence. Jennings (1977:65) goes on to say that the mythos:

situates one within a pattern of meaning interpretive of life and death, nature and history, work and play, individual and community.... Insofar as the mythos does function to orient existence it functions to open up the multiple dimension of life to full and meaningful participation.

Thus we can say, that the mythos function to communicate existence and open us up to life that creates community. According to Jennings (1977:66 ), "The mutual participation in a shared pattern of meaning makes possible the identification with and appropriate participation in the life of the other." Jennings (1977:66) also says of the mythos that it functions to transform existence. The Christian mythos do not separate faith and praxis, theology and ethics, nor hearing and doing. Instead any understanding of the Christian mythos involves the believer in

consideration of its meaning for action in the world.

The way in which the Christian mythos seek to "represent, orient, communicate, and transform existence" is through the modes of expression of the religious imagination. According to Jennings (1977:49-53), there are least five modes through which religious imagination comes to expression. These modes are: vision; symbol; myth; ritual; and apocalyptic. We will look at the meaning that he assigns to the vision, the myth, and the ritual, in further detail in the sections that follow. We will make use of these modes of expression when we describe the meaning of faith as the following, namely, the experience of dreams and visions (vision), the reading of scripture (myth), the role of prayer and the importance of worship (ritual). Since this section is concerned with broad understanding of how the symbol is made present to reality, we will not be dealing with this narrower understanding. We will be looking at the role of apocalyptic modes of religious imagination in chapter four.

#### 2.4.2 The experience of dreams and visions

In his book on dreams and revelation, Kelsey derives his understanding of these forms from Plato's understanding of ultimate forms of reality.



Kelsey (1974: 224-225) writes that Plato understood the 'form' to be real even when it has not been given material expression. In other words 'form' is in existence before a person makes use of his/her natural senses to comprehend 'form' in its physical reality and take it directly into rational consciousness. Since this, is so:

At this deeper level of his being the Christian has traditionally held that God, through his [sic] ability to speak directly to man, has the power to offer or impose new relationships, or even offer new forms. These can then be pictured in dreams or spoken of prophetically.

This seems to accord with the theory already advanced by Jennings of the " three-storied edifice. " Jennings speaks of three general acts of the imagination, namely, seeing, dreaming, and speaking. Through these acts images are created which are then interpreted and ordered by reflection, and in this way then the reality in which we live is made more lucid. In his treatment of dreams and visions Jennings (1977:49) says that vision is:

the emergence either in dreams, trance, or ecstasy, of a pattern of images, words, or dream like dramas which are experienced then, and upon later reflection as having revelatory significance.

The images and myths created by the imagination, therefore, have twofold significance. They sustain social life, and may express, distort, or even seek to transform the reality that they purport to represent (Jennings 1977:32). We will encounter this in the experience of Brittion, Kerchoff,

and Farisani, who are some of the detainees whose experience forms part of our study. Brittion relates that one weekend she felt:

totally desperate and God forsaken, and the thought came to me to think of those who loved me, and who would be thinking about me and praying for me, and after a while the whole cell was full with people I knew. The truth that God shows love through other people came to me and strengthened me when I was ready to give up.

Kerchoff spoke of an experience that he had. He says "at one point I looked at the grilled door, with the light coming in, there in a silhouette was a cross on the door, which became a symbol for me."

It is, however, Dean Farisani who speaks most of the visions that he experienced during his many detentions. He tells of a particular instance in which he was told of forthcoming torture, assured that he would be delivered from detention, and given the assurance that his family and friends were safe. Farisani (1988:50-51) writes:

That night I had a vision. I was caught in a great storm. Dust and stones overwhelmed me. A mighty force carried me into the air. I could see the storm far beneath me, and also police who tried in vain to hit me with stones. Their stones either fell short of the target or were deflected by the force of the strong wind. When the vision came to an end, I was very excited, though not convinced. I pleaded, 'God, if this vision is from you let me have a second one, for nothing is impossible with you.' In the second vision I saw myself walking on a gravel road. Two white snakes came from nowhere. They stood on their tails, one to my right and the other to my left, reaching over my head. Both tried to bite me at the centre of the head, but an unseen power made both feeble, the two collapsing to either side.

Dean Farisani's vision ended with a voice quoting Luke 10:19 to him: "See, I have given you authority to tread on snakes and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing will hurt you."

From what Brittion, Kerchoff, and Farisani say of their experience of dreams and visions, there is a danger of writing such experiences off as highly individualistic, and, as such, irrelevant to the broader church. Balcomb (1991:83-84), however, reminds us that in Acts 2, Peter explains the experience of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit as a fulfilment of a prophecy in Joel 2: 28-32. In the Joel passage reference is made not only to prophecy, but also to dreams and visions. These gifts are not the preserve of the powerful or elite, but will be exercised by everyone, despite age, sex, or race. According to Balcomb (1991:84) the availability of the gifts of prophecy, dreams, and visions, resonates "with a certain 'democracy of the Spirit' that unites and envisions an oppressed people and inspires them to rise up and possess the land."

Furthermore, Jennings (1977:30) points out even with dreaming we are engaged in a social process that has its roots deep in the collective unconscious of all human beings. He says this drawing on the work of Freud and Jung investigating the world of dreams. Jung (1977:28)

teaches us that there are archetypal images produced by the unconscious when we dream. These images are the basis for both myth and dream alike. Therefore, since these symbols represent the experience and wisdom of the human race, we can speak of the unconscious as a collective unconscious. Dreams (and we might by extension, therefore, also say, visions), therefore, help the growth, healing, and transformation of the human being.

Thus we can see the importance that Jennings attaches to dreams and visions as symbols. He (1977:49) writes as follows "The symbol, Ricoeur says, gives rise to thought." The dream or vision, therefore, has a mediating and symbolic character for Jennings in that it relates human life to the sacred. By doing this Jennings (1977:48) believes that it permeates "existence and the world with a structure of significance." This as we have seen in the experience of the detainees, is particularly important in situations of isolation, threat, uncertainty, and stress. In these circumstances the dream or vision becomes an agent of commitment in that it can be said to "serve as a buffer " (Kobasa1977:6), in that it continues to provide meaning for the detainee. In so doing, it mitigates the perceived threat within the situation of detention, and thus reduces stress.

#### 2.4.3 The reading of Scripture

Jennings (1977:50) describes myth as primarily a verbal means of conveying the meaning of human existence "in relation to its destiny or origin, or the destiny or origin of the social group, nature, or cosmos of which it is a part, as grounded and penetrated by the sacred." He (1977:51-52) goes on to say that:

by the concreteness of its imagery, the universality of its intention, its narrative or story form, the myth evokes the identification and participation for those for whom it functions as revelatory....Furthermore, it is subjective in the sense of making a claim upon its hearers to understand their existence and world from the perspective of the myth....It in itself serves as the hermeneutical key to unlock the meaning of existence and world.

For the Christian, scripture functions as the primary source of myth. The reading of scripture is one of the chief ways God is revealed to the individual, and to the community. Cochrane et al (1991:20) point out that scripture is normative for all theological reflection. This is so, since the original witness of the scripture gives the Christian access to "the founding events of revelation in the history of Israel and in Jesus the Messiah, as they were understood and preserved within the community of faith." According to Dulles (1992:208), the scriptures become a medium of encounter between God and the individual. They do so in that they arise out of a revelatory experience, and so their language can

induce revelatory experiences for those who read it in faith. Dulles (1992:269) says that:

the words of Scripture and Christian proclamation are dynamic. They are, under favourable circumstances, imbued with the power of God who speaks and acts through them.

One of the most accessible forms of revelation for the Christian detainees of this study was through the reading of the Bible. This may well be due to the fact that one of the few rights accorded to the detainee by law was the right to have a copy of the scriptures of his/her faith. It is therefore, not unexpected that the detainees in this study all speak about the importance of the Bible as an agent of revelation. It should, however, be noted that the reading of the scriptures functioned in different ways for different detainees. We will see this as we read their various accounts.

For Sister Bernard, for Raphesu, and for Boesak, the reading of the scriptures engaged them in questioning their situation and God's ability to save them in such circumstances. Sister Bernard speaks of the important role that reading the book of Malachi had for her. She says:

In prison the content spoke to the context. You felt yourself struggling with God. Malachi asks the question, 'Why do you show me this and not assist in helping us?' I was asking the questions, 'Is this the work of His hand or not? If it is, where is His power?' These questions were a reality, not just reflections.

Raphesu speaks of the way in which the experience of torture affects

faith. He says:

When you are not grounded in the Bible you feel guilty, and sometimes say that this world has no God. This Bible speaks of liberation but it's just a gimmick. It is as though the prison is real but the Bible is not. You can abandon faith. My story is what is happening to me, there is no dawning of the Daniel day. You see the Jesus route more than any other. You question the existence of the God of the Old Testament, who helped so many in the Old Testament, but doesn't come and deliver you. You feel that this God belongs to the oppressor.

Raphesu does not stop here, he goes on to say:

When I became a Christian minister, I was able to understand my later detention better. I based my reading on the New Testament. I became a gnostic and divided the Bible into two. The Old and the New Testament. St. John's gospel, St. Paul, and the Jesus way, and above all the cross, were important. 'Eloi, eloi, lama sabachthani' [My God, my God, why have you forsaken me]. You say perhaps it's through that light that you've stood for the truth, and for that truth you will suffer and it is later generations who come after you who will see the endurance you had, and the hope that endures.

Boesak in his first sermon preached after his detention speaks of the importance that the text of Mark 9 had for him while in prison. The words, "If you believe all things are possible to those who believe" came to him in the third week of his detention. This was at a time when he was struggling with the seeming powerlessness of God in the face of his continued imprisonment. On reading the text, however, his belief in the struggle for justice and freedom based on a belief in the kingdom of God, was reaffirmed. The text, he (1988:162) says became:

a word of consolation, a word of inspiration, a word of truth that

would take away from my uncertainty, my fear, my anxiety, a word that I could hold on.

The reason this was so was that the text helped him to come to terms with evil, with what he terms the "so-called realities of life", and to realise the importance of God's promises. Boesak (1988:167) says this of the text:

I heard and I believed. I learned to depend not on Allan Boesak who can talk his way out of anything, but on the promise of God alone. I was humbled before God for almost four weeks. Twenty-five days of solitary confinement.... have taught me to depend on the Spirit of God alone, and that the Word of God is true. And as this word from the gospels came to me, then I said to God: 'You will lead me out of here, you will change my situation, you will change this land.'

The scriptures not only helped detainees to question their faith in God's saving power, and to receive new insights into faith, they also enabled detainees to deal with their captors, interrogators and torturers. For Dean Farisani, and for Deeb, the words of scripture became a means of resistance. Dean Farisani (1988:52) writes this of the one of the many scripture verses that had meaning for him:

Where my friends could not reach me, God could. I had been taken to the mountain of temptation: 'Why suffer all these things Dean? If only you would cooperate you would have been a great man in Venda.' But I had been saved by a tender voice. 'No man can serve two Lord's [ sic ]; you cannot serve God and mammon.' And again, 'For whosoever will save his life will lose it; but whosoever will lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it...' (Mark 8:35-38) Better that I should be a nobody in the arms of God than a great man in the diabolical arms of apartheid. It was comforting to know I was innocent, that I was



right. It was comforting to be aware of God's active presence.

Deeb found reading the Epistle to the Hebrews useful in dealing with what he terms "the absurdity of the point and timing" of his detention. He (1987:37) writes:

I was tempted to make an issue of this absurdity. However, while reading the letter to the Hebrews I had a sense of being our school's scapegoat for the activity there during the year [a sacrificial lamb], and so to argue in terms of absurdity would be appealing to them on their terms and to compromise the struggle we had waged all year.

Brittton and Mayson found reading the scriptures gave them a sense of hope and encouragement in their imprisonment. Brittton speaks of using passages from Isaiah and other prophets, and in the place of Israel's name substituting her own name. In this way she derived comfort and strength from the scriptures. Of particular importance to her were the Passion stories. They told her that "Jesus was here before me and knows what it is all about, detained, imprisoned, and not given a just trial."

Mayson also found the Bible to be a source of hope and empowerment during his period of solitary confinement in Pretoria Central Prison. He (1987:37) writes:

But if my outlook on the world was limited in one way it was enhanced in another because I had a Bible....For the Bible has a great deal to say about every human experience including the collective concerns of political and economic history... History has repeatedly proved the Bible correct. The world will only work

God's way. If you try it another way it does not work.

Brittton and Deeb both tell us the reading of scriptures helped to maintain a sense of community and solidarity with the church and society outside prison. Reading the scriptures created a sense of being in community with those of the Christian faith community outside prison. This is borne out in what Brittton says of the importance of using a lectionary used by others in the Anglican church. She says:

To know that I was reading with the rest of the church, and that they were reading with me was important. It meant that I could ask questions: So what does this say to me? What does it say to others?

Not only was the sense of community created with those outside the prison, but the reading of scripture communally made acts of solidarity possible by those within prison with the outside community. Deeb speaks of the importance of communal meditation on the scriptures during the period when he and other detainees were engaging in a hunger strike. The hunger strike was part of a national action by detainees to demand the release of detainees, and the ending of the State of Emergency. The hunger strike also was an act expressing solidarity with the call for 'a concerned Christmas.' Deeb(1986:118)writes:

Every meal time, when we should have been eating, we read a text from the Bible together (often shouting to be heard by others at the opposite end of the section), remembering that 'Man does not live by bread alone.' When we were a few left, in the cells close together, we would then share our reflections on the text, or

reflect on it together during exercise time....Our reflections all focused on fasting and suffering, and many texts, like the temptations of Jesus, and the Agony in the Garden, became very real to us.

While we note that different detainees ascribe different meanings to the reading of scripture, we also note that what all these different readings have in common is that they led the detainees to have new understandings of God and of themselves. In this regard it is useful for us to note what McKelway has to say about thinking about God, which is what takes place when the scriptures function as a source of revelation.

He (1990:38) writes:

Thinking about God is possible only on the basis of God's own action, and it involves human thought in a metacritical movement. This movement calls into question not only thought about God, but also the thinker, who thereby is led into a new relationship in which thought and language about God becomes authentic.

Writing of how important the Bible is for the ordinary person in South Africa, West (1994:16-17) makes the point that two studies (one related to labourer's views of the Bible, and the other a study of a community in Amaoti's understanding of the kingdom of God) both pointed to the very important role that the Bible plays in the theological reflection of ordinary people. West (1994:17) quotes Philpott who says of the community in Amaoti, that their experience of reflecting on the God who is revealed through the Bible,

has equipped them better to dialogue with and engage the

oppressive reality of their community, so that they can work against the forces of death and be involved in engendering life.

Through the accounts of the detainees we have again seen how faith caused through the reading of scripture provides the detainee both with a commitment to self and a sense of community. All the detainees' accounts seem to reinforce the view expressed by Russell, quoted by McKelway (1990:53):

The word of God is living and liberating to those who hear with faith and live it out in faith...The liberating Word is the power of the gospel to renew our lives continually, opening them to freedom and future...The Bible is a witness to the promise that God continues to be with us as Creator, Liberator, and Advocate.

#### 2.4.4 The role of prayer

When Jesus' disciples came to him and asked him to teach them how to pray, he taught them what we have come to know as the "Lord's Prayer". This prayer has formed the basis of the Christian understanding of all prayer. Evidence of how important this prayer was in the life of the early Christian church is found in the treatment that Clement of Alexandria, and Cyprian, gives to it in the later half of the second century and early third century of the Christian era. Prayer, therefore, forms an essential part of Christian ritual.

Jennings (1982:111) makes the point that not only narrative forms of the

religious imagination are central to theological reflection, but also ritual forms. He (1982:112) makes the statement that "Ritual is not a senseless activity but it is rather one of many ways in which human beings construe and construct their world." This is so because ritual serves as a way of gaining and transmitting knowledge. Furthermore, Jennings (1982:113) points out the object of ritual knowledge is that by its performance those observing the ritual may see, approve, understand, or recognize the ritual action. The Lord's prayer is a very good example of how ritual transmits knowledge in that it not only teaches us to see differently but to act differently. It "does not provide a point of view as much as a pattern of doing" (Jennings 1982:117). The use of the Lord's prayer in worship teaches the congregation not only how to say this prayer, but it also gives them a model for other acts of prayer that are not necessarily used in the context of worship. In support of this statement, Jennings (1982:118) quotes Johannes Wollebius who said: "The form or true and religious pattern of prayer is the Lord's prayer." Thus, we can say that the Lord's prayer governs all other praying activity, including that which occurs outside the liturgical or ritual context. Ritual, therefore, serves as a paradigm for all important action whether the action is religious or not (Jennings 1982:118-119). Viewed in this way the validity and authenticity of a ritual is determined by whether that ritual can serve as a paradigm

for significant action outside the ritual itself. Jennings(1982:118-119)

makes this comment:

The performance of ritual, then, teaches one not only how to conduct the ritual itself, but how to conduct oneself outside the ritual space in the world epitomised by or founded or renewed in and through the ritual itself....The ritual serves to focus paradigmatic gestures which pattern world-engaging activity generally.

McAfee Brown also believes that spirituality and liberation belong together. McAfee Brown (1988:120) quotes a statement of third world

Christians meeting in Brazil where the delegates said:

Prayer and commitment are not alternative practices; they require and mutually reinforce one another. In the spirituality that we want to create, the option in solidarity with the poor and oppressed becomes an experience of the God of Jesus Christ.

De Gruchy (1986:99) writes that the prayer of true piety, although it arises from a personal encounter with God, will always lead us to engage with the world. This is so since through prayer we learn to relate to God so that we begin to discern God's will, and to act according to God's will. This means that prayer will by its very nature engage us in reality and the struggle for justice. De Gruchy (1986:99) further writes that "In prayer the Christian does not turn away from the world but rather turns *with God to* the world."

Boff (1985:6) supports both De Gruchy and McAfee Brown when he

writes:

Any genuine liberation, from the Christian standpoint, starts with a deep encounter with God that moves us to committed action. It is here that we hear his voice as he tells us continually: Go! And at the same time, any radical commitment to justice and love of others moves us back to God as the true Justice and supreme Love. Here also we hear his voice as he tells us: Come!

For Boff the Lord's prayer is a prayer in which the correct balance is maintained in keeping the relationship between God and humankind, and the religious and political, in harmony. The first part of the prayer is concerned with God's name, kingdom, and will. The second is concerned with our needs, such as bread, forgiveness, temptation, and evil. These two parts are interlinked. God is concerned with our needs, and we are also open to God's concerns.

Sacho, another of this detainees in this study, seems to bear witness to this interlinking when she speaks of her discovery of God's personal relationship with her during her detention. She says:

Before God was located outside myself in the suffering of the poor and in my commitment to them. Detention put me in touch with God's personal love for me.

In his attempt to link spirituality and liberation, McAfee Brown suggests that in order for us to do away with the artificial division created between these two terms we need to find new ways of acting and speaking. Sister Bernard seems to affirm the validity of this need to do away with

the division. When asked about the role which prayer had played during her detention and solitary confinement says:

Is it prayer or spirituality that helps one? That is a difficult question. We've learnt to compartmentalize. Anything good in man is part and parcel of the goodness of God. I found it strange that in times of crisis there is no spiritual question: Is God present or absent? You find yourself being strengthened by the knowledge that you simply say, this is a battle of life, and strength comes from within the strength within you. This is expressed in the words '*ubuntu bami bongke*' [my entire being or the whole of my humanity]. Rather, than speaking of God there are no lines of division within myself. It is me acting towards a challenge before me, and within this there is power before me. You find yourself telling yourself, 'I am alive, I am living, and I shall go on.' This proved another opening in my understanding of prayer. Prayer is not a verbal thing, it's an experience. People say we live in God, I do not think that living in God can better be understood than when a woman is pregnant. When another being lives within you, life within life, that is prayer, that is existence.

In his treatment of a new way of speaking about the relationship between spirituality and liberation McAfee Brown turns to Metz's treatment of mysticism. Metz sees mysticism in the same way that he sees asceticism, which is as a movement that involves not flight from the world but rather a movement towards the world. McAfee Brown (1988:143) quotes Metz as saying:

Christian mysticism finds, therefore, that direct experience of God which it seeks, precisely in daring to imitate the unconditional involvement of the divine love for persons, in letting itself be drawn into the ....descent of God's love to the least of God's brothers and sisters. Only in this movement do, we find the supreme nearness, the supreme intimacy of God. And that is why mysticism, which seeks this nearness, has its place not outside, beside, or above responsibility for the world of our brothers and



sisters, but in the centre of it.

The experiences of Mayson and Souchon are themselves good examples of such a spirituality which as McAfee Brown (1988:118) says "when radically understood includes what is meant by liberation." Mayson speaks of an important moment in his experience of detention in 1976, when after three days of continuous interrogation he was placed in a cell and allowed to sleep. On awakening he walked around the cell alone, and he recalls this experience:

I had this overwhelming conviction, a deep peace, because I knew that we were going to win, that the gospel would reveal itself to be true. This is what Jesus meant when he said 'It is finished.' He was saying, it is completed, that the ruling power of God did reign.

Immediately after this experience the interrogation was resumed.

Dominique Souchon speaks of a prayer experience he had with the chaplain who visited him in prison. The chaplain is described by Souchon as a mystic. He involved Dominique in his ministry to others, and enabled him to see the power of God at work through his mysticism. Dominique says that the chaplain "broadened things beyond the political sphere." Dominique says there was one occasion when he had a mystical experience with the chaplain:

He asked me to pray for a kid in Bop who had been detained naked by the Bop police. I cried and asked how his mother was, and he told me this was really strange, because although I knew

nothing about his background, the boy had never known his father, only his mother.

Another way in which prayer encompasses all that is meant by liberation, is the role that it plays in discerning what does, and does not, belong to the kingdom or rule of God. Libanio points out that faith encompasses the whole of our lives. Faith "embraces our way of thinking, of forming opinions and desires, of viewing things" (Libanio 1990:185) . Since this is the nature of faith, it is threatened by external distortions, such as the media, insinuations, false suggestions, and value judgements. Faith, therefore, needs to be discerning. This is what Nolan calls the ability to read the signs of the times. According to Nolan (1986:47), this "means that we become more critical of the world in which we live, that we learn to identify that which is unreal, inhuman, unloving and totally false." The way this happens is that faith is purified through prayer. Prayer, according to Libanio (1990:185):

Brings our way of seeing the world, human beings, and history more into line with the gospel, purifying it of astigmatic foreign elements. It redimensions commitment. It extends our faith to our lesser acts, so that no recess of our heart and our life is left in the dark.

Libanio (1990:185) says that prayer "puts us in a position to have a more Christian view of reality". It is a "necessary condition for the making of a coherent choice on the basis of our faith." (Libanio 1990:185)

This role of prayer as the agent of discernment is seen in Mphahlele's struggle with forgiveness, and Deeb's struggle with fear. Mphahlele was visited by the prison chaplain, who read Matthew 5:43-45 to her. He emphasised the words "love your enemies and pray for them." Mphahlele (1989:377) writes this of the encounter, "After the chaplain went, I went back to the cell and that was the first day that I started this journey to Damascus. I realised that I could not pray." The reason for this difficulty with prayer was her struggle to forgive those who had unjustly imprisoned her. Mphahlele (1989:377) writes:

It took me almost three months to try to forgive these enemies and to pray for them. The day finally came when I had overcome my bitterness. I felt that my load became light. I couldn't even remember the faces of the policemen - not even of those who came to interrogate me...I thought to myself, I suppose they failed to identify the people who have wronged them. I felt some joy in me and I realised that I could forgive and forget. These two things go together.

Deeb (1986:36) says that the one way in which he could deal with being alone in detention was to regard it as a monastic experience. While doing this, he was greatly helped by insight he received from a book by Thomas Merton. One of Merton's reflections was particularly helpful. Writing of this passage, Deeb (1987:36) tells his readers:

Another of Merton's reflections - 'to be in God is always to be in the Present' - also became very real for me; the need to overcome fears of the past and the future in order to live fully in the present, and hence to be open to and in God. From my solitary reflection, I found myself more and more able to savour the present (though

only when I was able to transcend my expectation of release), finding enormous pleasure in very small things.

Later in the article Deeb (1987:39) continues his discussion on dealing with his fears when he writes:

I became so conscious of how my fears of loneliness, harm, detention, and the future had stood in the way of my developing a full, unconditional commitment to God, the Kingdom, and the struggle. And these fears were all reflections of some inadequacies, which it seemed difficult to overcome.

This lead me to think a lot of the love of God. If I could develop a real sense of God's love for me - an unconditional love - it could enable me to free myself of those fears - more easily accept myself, with all those inadequacies. This would then free me to love more unconditionally.

But how to experience this love of God? It became clear to me that this requires reflection in, and appreciation of the gifts (the graces) we experience daily - our privileges, joys, satisfaction of needs, friends, love, life - all those things which help us feel more secure, and to overcome our fears.

Through looking at what detainees have said about prayer, we can see how the world of faith as interpreted through symbol, in this case ritual, serves to provide meaning for individuals. The reason for this is that all prayer offered in Jesus' name may be said to be communal prayer. Even when we are praying silently, or alone, we are united with all who call upon God as Father. Jennings (1982:38) says that when we pray we do so in "the solidarity of our common godlessness and godforsakenness, and thus in solidarity with all humanity." Furthermore, as Christians we are united with all those who share with us God's promise of hope given

to us in Christ. This indeed is what it means to be united with the whole communion of saints, across both time and distance. Jennings (1982:38) continues:

No matter how hidden, how silent, how private our prayer, it is prayer with the whole of the people of God - common prayer. The prayer of the community is not the mere aggregation of individual prayers; it is common prayer offered out of our common plight, to our common Lord, for our common hope.

Thus, the example of prayer further strengthens the link we have made between the role of faith for the Christian and the psychological theory of the role of commitment in dealing with stress.

#### 2.4.5 The importance of worship

According to Jennings (1982:137), "the proper function of worship is to form our life in the world as an existence 'before God'." In other words , worship is the act of offering one's life and action, one's feeling and emotions, all that one experiences, all that one is, both as an individual, and as a part of a community or society, to God.

Moltmann expands this idea and says that worship is part of the

Messianic feast<sup>1</sup>. In saying this Moltmann, moves the emphasis of worship away from the individual in his/her own time-frame, and situates the importance of worship in the much broader time-frame of salvation history. We will examine Moltmann's understanding in more depth when we consider Moltmann's use of Durkheim.

Moltmann, like Jennings, treats worship as ritual, and both make use of Durkheim's groundbreaking work. Durkheim said that ritual had four fundamental purposes: (a) Ritual creates continuity; (b) Ritual has an indicative character; (c) Ritual stands in a framework of social coherence and establishes its own social coherence; (d) Ritual has an ordering function. We will examine each of these purposes in turn.

Firstly, Moltmann sees the Christian service of worship as a messianic feast that is entirely decided by the history of God and by what takes place in it. What this means is that when the Christian partakes in this service, he/she can perceive anew the history of Christ, and the meaning

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<sup>1</sup>The concept of a Messianic feast has its roots in Jewish and Christian speculations about the end of time. Isa 25:6-8 and Isa 55:1-5 are the roots for this concept. During the Intertestamental period (Enoch 62:14) and in the New Testament (Matt 8:11-12; 26:29; Lk 22:15-30; Rev19:9) the Messianic feast is understood as the feast the faithful would share in the presence of the Messiah in the age to come. This was a powerful image since sharing a meal was a common way of being a part of a community, and of being in covenant with others in the community. It was also a way of being in covenant with God.

of his salvific death and his glorious resurrection. Moltmann (1985:261)

writes:

In this history of Christ the assembled community perceives the Trinitarian history of God, his love's openness to the world and the perfection of all things in his joy.

The church is thus able to see its own history as continuing in the history of Christ, the history of God with the world. In so doing, according to Moltmann (1985:261) "it acquires and demonstrates freedom." Since the church shares in God's history of salvation, Moltmann (1985:261) accredits it as the source of "freedom from the alienation of existence, freedom for the alternative of new life, and freedom for the acceptance of existence in the present." This sense of historic continuity is reflected in the church's calendar, and the order of its services. It is for this reason that Moltmann (1985:263) says the participant does not find the repetition of the rite boring but rather "it is solemn and of decisive importance for his life and he associates it with personal commitment."

The importance of ritual and commitment finds further support in the writing of Bishop Yannoulatos. Yannoulatos as quoted by the authors of *In Word and Deed* (Cochrane et al 1991:81) does not see the liturgy as an escape from life, but rather as,

a continuous transformation of life according to the prototype Jesus Christ, through the power of the Spirit....Since the liturgy is the participation in the great events of liberation from the demonic

powers, then the continuation of the Liturgy in life means a continuous liberation from the powers of evil that are at work inside us, a continual reorientation and openness to insights and efforts aimed at liberating human persons from all demonic structures of injustice, exploitation, agony, loneliness, and at creating real communion of persons in love.

This is the understanding that is found in Deeb's account of the Christmas he spent in jail. Deeb (1986:131) writes:

On Christmas Day itself, being alone, I made it a 'retreat' experience, trying to feel the experience of detainees elsewhere, of the other prisoners around me as well as of my family and friends. The frustration of the prisoners became heightened at this time, knowing of all the joy and celebration happening elsewhere, so that a sombre cloud hung over all. I had a real sense of being privileged to celebrate this 'new birth' of Christ amongst the literal outcasts of society - the people with whom Christ especially identified. In fact, I had never before celebrated Christmas in the company of so many people!

It is also because liturgy is meant to be a liberating experience that Sister Bernard's experience of receiving communion was such a negative one. For her the attitude with which the wardress led her to worship, and the very heavy presence of guards became a denial of the meaning of worship. This wardress had once kicked the door and shouted at her "you are not allowed to receive nagmaal [communion] or read the Bible." Now this wardress led her to the service, slamming the doors as she did so. Sister Bernard said:

This caused me to question their Christianity. How can one attend a service when you are watched? The priests battled for the right to give me communion, but this incident prevented me from being in a service. The service was more like being policed than being



anything of a service. I wouldn't even call it a service.

Secondly, the indicative character of ritual means that the ritual as symbol points beyond itself. For the Christian ritual this means that through ritual representation Jesus who is represented becomes present to the believers. Moltmann (1985:243) writes this:

Baptism and the Lord's supper are the signs of the church's life, because they are the signs of the one who is their life. They are in this way the public signs of the church's confession of faith because they show the one who leads the world into the liberty of the divine life.

It is for this very reason that Moltmann can speak of worship as the Messianic feast. He regards Christians as a messianic people since everything they are and do must be legitimated by the Messiah, the Christ, who has brought into being the kingdom of God, which is both present and still to come. This is true particularly of the celebration of the Eucharist. Moltmann (1985:243) sees the Eucharist as "the sign of the actualizing remembrance of the liberating suffering of Christ." It is also the prefiguring of his future glory and thus a sign of hope. Finally in the way in which it combines both remembrance and hope, it is a present sign of God's grace, and as such of God's gift of freedom and community.

Mashinini, Farisani, and Kerchoff speak of how important the Lord's supper was in allowing them to know the presence of God. When

interviewed Mashinini spoke of the need to be given hope. She says that receiving communion gave her strength, strength to have hope. Very important to her were the seven words spoken from the cross, which are preached about on Good Friday. The words, " I thirst ", were foremost in her mind. She says:

I thirsted, felt hungry and thirsty, nothing could give me strength but communion, it made me strong. There was a feeling of yearning for God on Good Friday. I was hollow and empty. I needed it.

When Mashinini's request for holy communion was granted on Good Friday, she had to receive communion in the presence of her guards. She says that the response of her guards to the service made her realise that they also were in need of God. She says:

They were also hungry and thirsty, and their spiritual need could be seen in the way in which they joined in everything in the service, except for receiving communion. They were very humble afterwards, and asked if my handcuffs were too tight, and they were very careful driving back to the police station.

Farisani (1988:49) writes:

I habitually fasted from Thursday or Friday until Sunday, my regimen culminating with Holy Communion on Sunday. I did the liturgy from memory, and used maize and water for bread and wine respectively. Never before in my life did the death of the Lord mean so much to me.

Kerchoff says:

I could only get the prison chaplain Enoch Ngomede to come in and give me communion. The Security Branch at first thought the chaplain must be white! Initially he gave me communion with wine

and wafer, then the Security Branch insisted on tincturing. Communion put me in touch with the wider church, and gave me physical contact with another person. Partaking in the meal puts me in touch with the Presence of Jesus.

Thirdly, "through ritual a group assures itself of its own character, integrates itself and portrays itself " (Moltmann 1985:264). This function of ritual is very important, given the deliberately destructive psychological tactics used by security branch interrogators, and other perpetrators of the system of detention without trial. Moltmann (1985:273) writes the following:

The Christian service was and still is the feast of Christ's resurrection...The resurrection feast is a feast of the risen Christ. It reveals and demonstrates in him the eschatological alternative to this world of work, guilt and death. The inescapability of history is broken through, the compulsion of wickedness is abolished and death is disarmed...As an action of hope in the resurrection, worship is, in a crucial sense, a liberating, public matter.

The truth of these words is borne out in the experience of Dandala, Deeb, and Farisani. Dandala speaks of his first night with about thirty other detainees in St. Alban's prison. He says:

I was hesitant about the request for prayers before we went to bed. I felt unsure of forcing my religion down them. Mfala said 'Prayer time folks, now let us pray.' I learned that prayer was not ones private thing but our faith together. As a prison chaplain I felt awkward with this ministry. This experience gave me new insights.

Deeb (1986:122) writes the following of the services held by detainees in solidarity with other detainees:

In the month leading up to Christmas, we knew that candle vigils

were being held all over Cape Town every Wednesday evening from 8 pm to 9 pm, to express solidarity with detainees. So, at that time, we detainees would get together (in spirit and verbally) to be in solidarity with those thousands of people who were singing and lighting their candles - in churches, gardens and streets (a number of whom ended up joining us!) We would sing a few songs together, and then switch off our lights for 15 minutes while we prayed for the downfall of the Government, and for those people who might have been arrested that night.

Farisani (1988:49), speaking of his role as a pastor in Pietermaritzburg, writes:

Detention or no detention, I was still a man of God, a pastor. It gave me great joy to know that even in my suffering I could still bring joy to my fellow sufferers. A sign of hope in a situation of total despair and helplessness....I would prepare sermons for my neighbouring cellmates, for the congregation at home, and for myself. I shouted sermons at the top of my voice, especially on Sundays, and rejoiced greatly whenever the other detainees would resound with an 'Allelujah, amen.'

Fourthly, as Moltmann (1985:265) points out,

rituals regulate the group in the face of the chaos of diverging interests and anti-social behaviour. They establish stable patterns of thinking and behaviour for constitutionally unstable man. They are necessary for the building up of individual and collective identity. Free, spontaneous and creative life, whose effect is not destructive, only becomes possible out of the security ritual confers.

The building up of individual and collective identity, and the provision of a sense of well-being, and a sense of order, was very important for both Mphahlele and Raphesu. In the face of the systematic attempt of the security branch officers, and other prison guards, to destroy the prisoners' humanity and break them psychologically (as has already been

referred to by Perkel), worship functioned to give detainees a sense of worth and meaning.

Mphahlele (1989:378) writes:

But God loved me and was always with me. While in prison we used to sing 'All over the world the Spirit is moving. Right here in this place the Spirit is moving.' We used to sing this very joyfully. We had our Bible lesson in the morning. The young girls used to challenge us. There were a few over 60's and a few over 50's. We had a family of detainees.

Raphesu says that worship in Modderbee prison was very important:

My faith emerged strongly in Modderbee. There were many priests there, Moselani, Farisani, Mayatola. There were services, and Bible studies, and they kept one going. I started enjoying the Bible, reading it, and by 1980 I was candidating [for the ministry]. I was an inspirer of these services.

We have, therefore, seen through our examination of the four functions of ritual, how Christian worship, like prayer, serves to strengthen the faith of the detainee. In so doing it serves as an agent in strengthening the 'commitment' of the detainee, and it enables the detainee to cope with the stress of detention.

## 2.5 SUMMARY

The aim of this chapter was to examine the detention experience of a few Christian detainees in terms of the commitment component of the hardy

personality theory. We did this by first defining what the hardy personality theory is. We then looked at how Kobasa views commitment as a way of dealing with stress. Commitment is seen to be the belief and value system that gives to the individual a sense of meaning and purpose. It is this very sense of purpose that enables the individual to mitigate any perceived threat that the individual may face in stressful situations. It was subsequently argued that for the Christian detainee, faith is essential to their commitment. This was seen to be so, in that for Christian detainees, their faith, or commitment to Jesus Christ, and the proclamation of God's kingdom, enables them to continue to find meaning and hope even in the stressful situation of detention. We then examined how faith functions as a symbol, since as Tillich (1958:45) pointed out "The language of faith is the language of symbols." This involved us examining how symbols are made present to the world of reality as visions, myth, and ritual. The present chapter looked at the meaning that dreams and visions, and the roles of reading scripture and the experience of prayer and worship, had for the detainees. By looking at each of these aspects of symbol in depth, we could see that, at least, in those instances examined, the psychological component of commitment is closely linked with faith.

Dreams and visions served to relate the human experience to the sacred.

By doing this they assured the detainee that he, or she, had importance. The dream or vision, served to remind the detainee that his, or her, works for the Kingdom of God were very important, and that God was present even in the dark experience of detention. In this way then the dream or vision becomes an agent of commitment. In situations of threat, uncertainty, isolation, and stress, the dream or vision, continues to help the detainee find meaning for his or her life.

The Christian's chief source of myth, the Bible, functions to transform existence. It does so when it relates the individual to the divine, the present to the past. The reading of the Bible also orients life, when it opens up the multiple dimensions of life to full and meaningful participation by both the individual and the community. When the Bible serves as an agent of critical reflection and of transformation in any situation, then as the central symbol of the Christian faith, it is also an agent of commitment.

The importance of worship and prayer for faith, and therefore, also commitment, is best summed up in these words by Cochrane et al (1991:78):

None of these is meant to be a means of escape from the world; they are all a way of engagement, a unique way, a way of engagement which is shaped not by human self righteousness, nor by human greed, nor by human pretension and the will to power, but by God's concern for the well-being of society.... Prayer and worship keep us open and sensitive to the Spirit, to the surprising possibilities of God in history and grace. But they also affirm our faith and keep it alive in grace and expectation.

In this chapter then, we have seen how faith, expressed in various symbolic forms, helped the detainees to make sense of their experience. By doing this faith enabled them to have hope and meaning in their lives, and thus to show themselves to be people whose commitment enables them to be better able to cope with the stress of detention.



## CHAPTER THREE

### THE CONTROL COMPONENT OF THE HARDY PERSONALITY THEORY AND THE EXPERIENCE OF A FEW CHRISTIAN DETAINEES

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to examine the control component of the hardy personality theory, as it pertains to Christian detainees. We will do this by first looking at the psychological theory, and then we will argue that Christian detainees involved in this study relate to the situation of detention with an internal orientation. In order to argue this we will attempt to use appropriate theological concepts to interpret the psychological theory of Locus of Control. This will enable us to see how certain Christian detainees living under the stressful conditions of detention could exercise control and thus cope with and reinterpret the stressful conditions at play within this experience.

#### 3.2 THE CONTROL COMPONENT OF THE 'HARDY PERSONALITY' THEORY

According to Kobasa (1982:7):

Control refers to the tendency to believe and act as if one can influence the course of events. Persons with control seek explanations for why something is happening not simply in terms of other's action or fate but also with an emphasis on their own responsibility .... they can interpret and incorporate various sorts of events into an ongoing life plan and transform these events into something consistent and not so jarring to the organism.

Tyson (1983:7), notes that there are reductions in the detainee's reaction to stress if "the individual believes that he or she has control over the stressor....even if that control is not exercised." Tyson explains that this is so is because the belief that the individual has control gives the detainee a feeling of coping with the situation. In psychological terminology this construct concerns the Locus of Control theory.

The Locus of Control theory distinguishes between persons who have an internal orientation, and those who have an external orientation. Perkel (1988:7) says that internal or external orientation:

represents the way in which each individual interacts with the external environment and defines his or her mode of perceiving and relating to it.

People are not either internally or externally controlled. Orientation develops out of a consistent reaction to external stimuli. The way in which an individual perceives, and responds to, a specific situation will show

whether he/she is relating to an environment with an internal or external orientation.

Internal orientation refers to the cognitive and emotional process at work within an individual. This process enables the individual to mediate and reinterpret the social and environmental forces at play within stressful situations such as detention. An individual may be in hospital, or in prison, or detained, and as such, be unable objectively to be in control of the situation. The individual may choose to reinterpret the traumatic experience as a valuable experience. This lessens the stress of the situation. External orientation refers to a passive response. It is a response characterised by potential helplessness in the face of external, social and environmental forces imposed on the individual within stressful situations.

In this chapter we will focus on the experience of the detainees mentioned to find out whether an external or internal orientation operated within their experience. We will see whether the hypothesis that Christian detainees seem for the most part to relate to their detention with an internal orientation can be confirmed. We will examine their attitude towards their gaolers and interrogators, their insistence that their gaolers

comply with the human rights principles of the just treatment of all people, and their experiences of community support within and from outside prison. Through this we may discover evidence of their internal orientation.

Christian theology might describe these experiences using the concepts of forgiveness, justice, and community. We will look at each of these concepts in turn. First we shall see whether forgiveness changes the relationship that these Christian detainees have with their gaolers or not. Next, we shall examine what the meaning of justice is for them, and how it enables them to exercise control of their situations. Finally, we will see what the importance of community and the African understanding of *Ubuntu* are for the Christian detainees on whom we based this study.

### 3.2.1 The attitude of forgiveness

To deal with the concept of forgiveness it is necessary for us first to examine the concept of sin as the ideas of sin and forgiveness are closely related. We will do this by briefly surveying the use of these two ideas in the Old and New Testament.

According to McKenzie (1991:1305), the Old Testament expresses the concept of sin by using several different Hebrew words. This, he says, shows different approaches to the concept. In surveying four of these terms (*hatta't*, *peša'*, *ma'al*, *awon*) McKenzie (1991:1305) shows that some of their meanings are the following: *Hatta' t*, refers to the failure of an individual to conform to the expectation of others; *Pesa*, is rebellion against God, or the violation of the rights of others; *Ma'al*, is a breach of the covenant with God; *'Awon*, is the permanent harm done to a person by his/her sinful action. What each of these terms has in common is the understanding that sin causes damage to the individual, and to the individual's relationship with others. Sin also damages the individual's and the community's relationship with God. This understanding of sin is to be found in Genesis chapters 3-11, which are the most extensive treatment of the subject in the Old Testament. Here, as in other passages of the Old Testament ( Jr 16:12; 18:12; Is 63: 10; Hs 5:13; 6:1; 7:1; Ec 7:29), there is an understanding of the universality of sin. Once it has entered the world, sin affects all nations, and all generations (1Ki 8:46; Job 4:17; Ps 51:5; 79:8; Ex 20:5). The New Testament writers develop this idea even further (Rm 2:1-3:1; 1 Cor 15:21-22; Heb 4:15; 7:26; 1Pt 2:21-25). The idea evolved with the

prophets' reflection on Israel's history, and particularly on the collapse of the monarchies, and the experience of exile.

The Old Testament makes it quite clear that God is not responsible for sin. The prophets point out that sin, and the corresponding alienation that results from it, arises out of the refusal to accept God, to acknowledge God's holiness, and to accept God's moral will (Jr 18: 12; Is 6:10). Sin is the refusal to acknowledge the goodness of God and to trust, to reverence, or to depend upon God. It is therefore, a rejection of the reign of God, and as such, involves a much broader understanding than a moral transgression of known laws.

The New Testament understanding of sin builds on the Old Testament understanding. However, according to De Vries (1981:370), there is one very important difference between the Old and New Testament, and that is the solution to the problem of sin. In the Old Testament, we only find mention of the cultic sacrifices required for infringements or failures to meet ritual prescriptions in the books of Leviticus and Numbers. Apart from these sacrifices the only means of obtaining expiation for sins was to bear the punishment that was due because of the sin. Individuals or nations were to turn again to God, and trust in God's mercy and

forgiveness (Ps 103:3-4). The writers of the various books of the Old Testament do not say how God would exercise this forgiveness and conquer sin. De Vries (1981:371) says this of the concept of forgiveness in the New Testament:

The doctrine of sin in the NT is dominated by the assurance that Christ has come to conquer it. Thus, whatever is said to emphasise the deadliness and seriousness serves to magnify the greatness of the salvation from sin which Christ has obtained.

Jennings (1988:30-46 ) says that when we speak of the forgiveness of sins we are actually speaking of the relationship between forgiveness and healing, sin and bondage. We derive this pattern from Jesus. Jesus shows the power and love of God by destroying all that separates us from God, and this includes the power of death itself. When we speak of the forgiveness of sins, we are therefore speaking of acts and deeds which make the reign or kingdom of God present to others. We do this by showing that God's compassion, love and mercy are at work in the world. Jesus showed this by liberating people from their past misdeeds. Thus he set people free to live in the present and move into the future without their past deeds hindering them (Lk 7:36-50; Jn 8:3-11). This was particularly important for the 'sinners' to whom the gospel makes reference. According to Nolan (1986:23), they were the economically poor and the marginalised within the society of that time:

The 'sinners' were social outcasts. Anyone who for any reason deviated from the law and the traditional customs of the middle class [the educated and the virtuous, the scribes and the Pharisees] was treated as inferior, as low class. The sinners were a well-defined social class, the same social class as the poor in the broader sense of the world.

The suffering of these 'sinners' was their loss of human dignity, and the accompanying experience of frustration, guilt, and anxiety. Furthermore, since many were illiterate and ignorant of the scriptures and the law, they did not have the assurance of God's mercy and forgiveness. During the Inter-testamental period, the idea of forgiveness was associated with the ethical observance and legalistic following of the Torah. Jesus himself observed the law and took seriously the problem of sin. He was, however, not prepared to resort to legalism in dealing with the reality of sin (Mt 23:13-26; Mk 7:1-23). Instead, he reintroduced the Old Testament understanding that forgiveness is possible through the mercy of God (Mt 9:12-13; Lk 18: 9-13). He himself drew alongside sinners to show that although they needed repentance, they were acceptable to God (Lk 15). According to the authors of *The Things That Make For Peace* (1985:32), this identification of Jesus with the poor means that the rich and powerful are no longer in sole control of society:

Neither giving nor receiving mercy is compatible with retaining full control over oneself, over others and one's relationship with them ...there is a surrender to the power of God that can draw us into a future that goes beyond our calculations.



There is a close relationship between forgiveness and healing in the ministry of Jesus. This is most clearly shown in the story of the healing of the paralytic (Mt 9:2-8; Lk 5:18-26; Mk 2:3-12). At the time of this miracle, people thought sickness resulted from sin, or sins committed by the sick person. By exercising divine healing, Jesus proves that the power of God was at work through his actions, assuring the paralytic that he was not in debt to God. Furthermore, by casting out evil spirits (thought to cause illness), Jesus showed that sinners were not subject to the bondage of the power of evil. Liberation was possible for sinners through the power of God's love (Lk 13:10-17; Mk 5:1-20).

Jesus' teaching on forgiveness closely relates to his understanding of the kingdom of God. For Jesus, his miracles were a sign that the kingdom, or rule of God, was at work in him (Mk 3:27; Lk 11:20-22; Mt 12:28). He even understood his death as a new act of God, a covenant through which God destroyed the power of sin (Mt 26:28). It was because they were living in the age of the rule of God that Jesus' disciples were both given authority to forgive (Jn 20:21-23; Mt 18:18) and expected to forgive (Mt 6:14-15).

This, then, leads us to Paul's understanding of reconciliation. According to Dörmes (1987:78-79) and McKenzie (1972:722), Paul understood reconciliation as primarily the restoration of humankind's relationship with God. Sin causes damage to this relationship, but God takes the initiative through Jesus and restores the relationship (Rm 5:8-1). God entrusts Christians of every age with the message of reconciliation (2 Cor 5:14-21). Paul's subordinate understanding of reconciliation was of people reconciling themselves with each other (1 Cor 7:11; see also Mt 5:24).

Jennings provides a useful summary of this biblical concept of the forgiveness of sins, and of its implications for us. He says (1988:46) that when we speak of the forgiveness of sins we are asserting that we rely on Jesus who forgives, heals, and liberates us. Because of Jesus' initiative we are given a commission to participate in God's own mission and ministry to the world. This he (1988:46) says means:

We rely on God to act in and through our action to make of our words and deeds what they can never be by themselves - the sign and seal of God's own liberating and saving action.

### 3.2.1.2 The meaning of forgiveness in the South African context of oppression

Within the South African context there has been a great deal of debate as to the exact nature of forgiveness. This debate arose with the issuing of the *Kairos Document* in 1985. The authors of the *Kairos Document* argue that true forgiveness and reconciliation are only possible when there is true repentance by the oppressor. This repentance requires a commitment to justice from the oppressor. They write (1987:10):

What this means in practice is that no reconciliation, no forgiveness and no negotiations are possible without repentance. The Biblical teaching on reconciliation and forgiveness makes it quite clear that nobody can be forgiven and reconciled with God unless he or she repents of their sins. Nor are we expected to forgive the unrepentant sinner.

Black theology would align itself with this position that links reconciliation and liberation. This is evident in the writing of Deotis Roberts (1994:59-67), and Mosala (1987:22-23), to name two exponents of this theology. There are, however, other theologians (Domeris, A. Torrance, and J.B. Torrance) who have different views on the Biblical teaching about forgiveness. While they agree with the challenge of the *Kairos Document*, they are unhappy with forgiveness being made conditional on repentance. Forgiveness, they note, is unconditional. They also note that repentance is the necessary response to forgiveness as opposed to its

prior "condition". Domeris points out (1986:50) that with Jesus forgiveness precedes repentance since "God says through the cross 'I forgive you' and we respond 'Father, forgive us'." These understandings are incorporated into the 1987 second edition of the *Kairos Document* in an explanatory note. This note makes the important point (1987: 34) that God is always willing to forgive, but that in order for this forgiveness to be effective sinners must appropriate it. These sinners need to confess their sins, renounce them, and demonstrate the fruits of repentance. The document (1987:34) goes on to say:

Human beings must also be *willing to forgive* one another at all times even seventy times seven times. But forgiveness will not become a reality with all its healing effects until the offender repents .... Our willingness to forgive must not be taken to mean a willingness to allow sin to continue, a willingness to allow our oppressors to continue oppressing us.

This way of expressing the meaning of forgiveness agrees with both liberation and black theologies. Here the understanding of sin is not only that it is a personal problem, but that it is also a community problem. As Maimela notes (1987:95):

Sin is an objective social, historical fact, a *state of absence of brotherhood and love in interpersonal relations*. Only because sin is real in this concrete social and historical sense, is it possible for sin to become secondarily an interior, personal or subjective fracture in one's life.

Maimela goes on to say that liberation theology sees the atoning work of Jesus as the transformation of the entire human situation of sin. This

atoning work also seeks the transformation of sin's consequences (such as injustice, oppression, poverty and misery). This means that it is possible for an oppressed Christian who follows the example of Jesus to forgive. In forgiving the oppressor, the Christian shares in Jesus' ministry of transformation. Simultaneously the Christian offers to the individual oppressor, and the community of oppressors, the opportunity of forgiveness and transformation. It is this dynamic that we will see expressed by most of the detainees in this study.

### 3.2.1.3 Forgiveness and Christian detainees

The tension between forgiving, and continuing to resist evil and oppression, which we have seen in our previous discussion on the meaning of forgiveness, is evident in the detention experience of Souchon. Souchon says the following:

There was a major issue I was trying to solve about my detaining officer. How does one deal with this *oke* [slang term meaning a person] that is a menace to all and everyone concerned, and yet is God's creation?

One way of understanding this, is that a comrade said that Christ said love your enemies, he doesn't say make your enemies your friends. It means that the bottom line is this, that the meaning of the gospel that you are propagating and working on means that you will arouse the enmity of some, and these are those you must love. For me the revelation was that I'm loving this person as an

enemy which necessitates different loving to a comrade or friend, and is more difficult.

I put this into practise with the warder and his second in command. The second in command was gay and bohemian with a dark side that was authoritarian and pro the regime. The cops had threatened to expose him so he had to be a stool. He took a shine to me and obviously had mixed emotions about me. It was a tactical exchange on one level, and on another level he exposed a lot of weakness. So I had to think fast, and for me there was a clear understanding, this *oke* is the enemy but that doesn't mean I need to annihilate him. But when he played hardball, he really played hard.

Dean Farisani is another example of an oppressed Christian forgiving his oppressors, and thus following Christ's example and serving as an agent of transformation for the oppressor. We see this in his ability to recognise how oppressive structures burden the victims and oppressors alike.

Farisani (1992:6) says of his torturers:

Nobody is inherently evil ....There are people who have been dehumanised by their socialisation into structures that are evil. But structures can be changed and a person's socialisation can be overcome and people can be humanised with God's grace. Such things do happen and they will continue to happen. There is hope.

We find evidence of Farisani's adherence to this truth in the way in which he related to his gaolers. Once a black policeman was guarding him after he had been tortured. The guard, knowing Dean Farisani to be a man of God, asked two questions. He asked why God did not help the Dean. The guard also wanted to know whether God was only the God of the whites. Nolan (1992:6), in recording this story writes:

The Dean was gripped with pain, but he knew how to respond because he had grappled with these questions for a long time. Quoting Romans he began: "We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him" (8:28). The prophets suffered. The Son of God suffered. For me to participate in the suffering of Jesus Christ is an honour and a privilege. I don't know how and I don't know when, but I believe that God will use my suffering for his purposes.'

Several years later when Farisani met the same policeman on the street, the man had only one question: How can I join your church?

A very good example of forgiveness being practised, and the kingdom of God made present despite the oppressors' response, is found in Mphahlele's response to her interrogator during her period of detention. She continued to respect his humanity even when he refused to respect her as a person. She (1987:379) writes:

Those who interrogated you, insulted you about the Bible. A young, very arrogant, and very aggressive man said, '*Hoekom lees jy so? Waar bly jy? Gee vir ons jou adres*' [ Why do you read like that? Where do you stay? Give me your address ]. I said, 'I have given you my address '. He said, '*Jy lieg, niemand ken jou by daardie adres, ons kom van daar. Hulle ken jou nie.*' [ You are lying, nobody knows you at that address, we have come from there].

I thought, has my husband gone off his head? I told the man to pick up the telephone and phone my husband we would find out what the man says. He kept quiet.

They harassed you until you had lost your senses! As he was harassing me, I bowed my head in prayer. When I had finished, he had normalised. The situation had changed from interrogation to interview ...When he had finished asking his questions I asked him, 'You know what? You didn't impress me to be a Christian when you started the interview. I am pleased to realise you are

one. May I know your name? ' He wouldn't tell me. This man said to me, 'All you Black people are hiding behind the Bible. You do evil things behind the Bible. '

Chikane (1991:74), another detainee, writes the following in his account of his torture experience:

It was during this ordeal when I tried to make sense of the gospel and the sermons I preached about 'loving your enemies'. I began to ask questions about God's power and concern. But one thing that kept me strong and made me survive was the experience of the Lord Jesus Christ: that for the salvation of the world it did not seem like Jesus could have let the cup pass.

The experience of the apostles also kept me strong. For it does not seem as if the Gospel we have today could have been passed on to us without them going through the persecution they suffered even unto death. But as I went through the pain I began to understand that, in fact, Christians have an enormous responsibility in the world, far more than they are aware of. I felt it was a matter of life and death for me to suffer for the sake of others; the weak in our society, the brutalized, for the sake of Christ's body, that is the church. I felt more empowered to say to my torturers during my fifty-hour ordeal, men who told me that I was going to die 'slowly but sure' that Christ will be honoured in my body whether by life or death.

The experiences of Souchon, Farisani, Mphehlele, and Chicane are all good examples of how forgiveness empowers the detainee. In spite of the harrowing circumstances, the detainees did not simply yield control to their interrogators and torturers. By choosing to respond to their oppressors with forgiveness they exercised control over their oppressors. The oppressor held the physical power, but the detainee, by choosing the manner in which he/she responded to the oppressor, remained in



control of this adverse situation. Finally, it is in Mayson's experience that we see the clear link between forgiveness and wholeness. Mayson's account shows the negative effects of not forgiving.

Cedric Mayson said that forgiveness became important for him at the time of his first detention experience. While processing his release, Cronwright, who had been his interrogator, decided to lecture him. Cronwright chose as his topics the evils of Modernism, Russia, and terrorism. Mayson argued back and as a result Cronwright flew into a rage and delayed his release by three days. Writing of this experience, Mayson (1984:26-27) says:

Throughout those days [and endless nights] I sat and fumed and consumed myself with malevolence and loathing for this obnoxious excrescence of a captain, whilst the painstakingly stupid copyist took his time over every word, and my frustration built up into an explosive loveless detestation. By the time they let me go I was so consumed by this antagonism that it took me weeks to recover. It also made me determine never to fall into that abyss again - and in fact in the later and longer detention from 1981 to 1983 it did not drag me down.

In this regard it is useful to read what Jennings (1988:129-130) writes:

Forgiveness is not something that takes place only *within* us, it must also take place *between* us...To forgive the other does not mean to suffer in silence. It is a means to act in a way that delivers the other from guilt, debt, and bondage. We will not be able to do this without learning to see through the behaviour of the other and the offence it gives us, to the underlying bondage and brokenness of the other, which has given rise to the hurtful

behaviour. So long as we are preoccupied with our own hurt and resentment we will be unable to do this. This is yet another example of a Christian, who through his act of forgiveness, could realise for himself the rule of God.

We learn from the insight of these detainees that forgiveness produces liberation. To forgive is to liberate oneself. It is also to liberate one's enemy, be that enemy warden or torturer. Forgiveness, therefore, engenders a situation by which the detainee can feel empowered. It is an experience of exercising a degree of control. Jennings (1988:130-131) sums up the situation well when he says:

Forgiveness is not passive it is an aggressive assault on dominion of sin in ourselves and in our neighbour...It must spring from a fundamental commitment to the freedom of the other. We are granted dominion over sin. We are granted no dominion over our neighbour.

### 3.2.2 Acting justly

We will now examine the biblical understanding of justice. This understanding is that justice is not one of God's attributes but is God's character (Is 28:6; 30:18). The Bible, however, does not have a single word that is the same as the English word justice. Davies (1976:80) says that there are at least six Hebrew words that have bearing on its meaning. One of the most important words is *mispat*. Implicit in the use of this word is the covenant relationship between Yahweh and Israel. Yahweh has a relationship with Israel, and, therefore, defends the rights of the people, and acts with kindness towards them (Jr 9:23-24). We see

this in the way in which Yahweh protects the nation and king from attack (Ps 9; 5ff; 2 Sm 18:31), and defends the poor, the orphan, and the widow (Dt 10:18; Ps 82:3; Job 36:6). In this relationship Yahweh acts as judge when a violation of the covenant occurs (Ezk.5: 7-17). Justice viewed in this way is justice that arises out of relationship rather than simple contractual or distributive justice.

The New Testament continues with the idea that justice arises out of the righteousness of God, and the way in which God deals with people. We see this idea of justice in Matthew's portrait of Jesus. We see that according to Jesus, God judges people according to their own standards (Mt 7:2). Furthermore, God rewards those who in this life are subject to loss, suffering, poverty, and oppression, and also those who embody qualities of justice and peace (Mt 5:3-11). God's justice does not consist of simply obeying legal precepts, but in inward observance of the spirit of the law (Mt 5:17-6:6). God cares for both the just and unjust alike, for the basis of God's justice is love (Mt 5:43-45). This idea of justice based on love is also found in Paul's writing of God's relationship with sinners. We see this particularly in his treatment of Jesus as God's instrument of salvation (Rm 5: 6-11; 8:1-3). For Paul ultimately the judgement of God is unsearchable (Rm 11:33).

Summing up the biblical teaching about justice, Marshall (1986:53) says that justice implies that there can be a just ordering of all things. This is in accordance with God's will, since God is just. This he says is the central truth that underlies the more than seven hundred references made to justice in the Bible. Justice is the responsibility placed on all people to abstain from negative actions that may be harmful to others. It also involves the responsibility to pursue positive actions. Marshall (1986:54-55) writes as follows:

Justice is a drive to make things right, it is a movement toward good and life giving relationships. Justice must always include kindness (Mt 25:31f) and generosity (2 Cor 9:9f).

Frederick Herzog builds on Marshall's understanding of the biblical teaching. He (1982:124) writes that justice is "human rights attained on the basis of God's rights. It includes rights to goods as well as to human dignity." This viewpoint is further articulated in a report entitled *The Things That Make For Peace* (1985:101). Here the meaning of justice based on the biblical understanding is expressed as follows:

Justice as it is embodied in correct human judgements, fair and sensible arrangements and sound policies is thus both a human achievement and one of the ways in which God exercises his providential care for the human community.

In this report (1985:97) to the Catholic bishops justice is said to be found in a person's strength of character. Strength of character is the ability to correctly assess what a situation requires and to act accordingly even

when faced with opposition and danger. This kind of justice is what Tillich calls this "creative justice." Tillich (1974:71) said of justice that "Justice in its ultimate meaning is creative justice, and creative justice is the form of reuniting love." Tillich believed that all being was once united in "being-itself" (God). Beings had become estranged from one another, but there still exists within all beings the desire to achieve their full potential by growing, by drawing closer to other beings and "being-itself". Every being affirms its own being and resists any attempts to reduce it to non-being. Tillich refers to this characteristic of beings as the "power of being". Simultaneously every being that is, is driven towards everything else that is, and love is this driving force. As it seeks to transcend itself and grow by being united with other beings or "being-itself ", a being may either fulfil or destroy itself. This process Tillich (1974:54 ) called "the risk of creativity." Justice is the form in which the power of being actualizes itself. It gives form to the encounters of being with being. Justice cannot guarantee what will happen to a being in the encounter. Tillich (1974:56) said that there were no principles that could be applied mechanically to guarantee that justice is done. The chief principle of justice is love, which drives being towards reunion with that from which it is separated. In order for love to be effective there are other further principles that he (1974:57 ) said "mediate between it and the concrete situations in which

the risk of justice is demanded." These principles are: that justice must ensure that the content or form of the law is relevant for its context; that all laws must apply equally to all people; that the laws must deal with every person as an individual; that liberty is essential to justice. This is because the freedom of political, economic, and cultural self-determination is an important element of personal existence.

The justice that incorporates these principles is not justice measured in quantitative terms but is rather "transforming or creative justice" (1974:64). This justice is God's justice, which God calls us to imitate. It is a justice that is dynamic in nature, since it realises "One never knows *a priori* what the outcome of an encounter of power with power will be" (1974:64).

The Christian detainees' resistance, and opposition to, the injustice encountered during detention is an example of creative justice. It is justice that seeks the fulfilment of each being. It became a means by which detainees could exercise control over their situation. It also allowed them to be instruments of God's care and concern for others.

We will explore their way of exercising justice as we seek to see how they asserted the right to human dignity and freedom. We also seek evidence of the meaning of justice for them, as we examine their strength of character.

### 3.2.2.1 Creative justice and the detainee

In Sister Bernard's account of her relationship with her wardresses we hear the demand that justice should be available for all people. We also hear that justice ought to affect the treatment of individuals. Sister Bernard said that one white wardress at Krugersdorp prison asked her why she had been arrested and why she was not happy. The wardress asked her this because all the wardresses were told that Sister Bernard was in protective custody because of threats to her life from her community. Sister Bernard says:

I sat down and told them, 'I am here because of suspicion and fear but not from the community where I am fighting for water, housing, and cleanliness. Munsieville is on the bucket system in this time, and your town has adequate sewerage.' One warder said, 'You know Bernie if I were you I would fight every single day.' I said, 'You are also part of this every day when you don't give me basic rights, when you throw my plate at me and lock me up.'

Sacho's understanding of justice was empowering. Because of her belief in justice, she kept asserting the right to be free. She kept on challenging

her guards and interrogators to provide her with a reason for her imprisonment. Every day when the guards came around saying, '*Klaer of versoekte*' (complaints or requests), she would say that she had a complaint. When asked what it was, she said that she did not know the reason for her arrest and imprisonment. This is a clear example of a person with an internal orientation exercising control over her situation because of her expectation that liberty is essential to justice.

Mayson, in his book *A Certain Sound*, writes of his experience of being detained in John Vorster Square police station. He (1984:87-88) writes the following concerning the importance of exercising the right to freedom of association:

One day I was being taken by my guard from an interrogation session back to a cell...Suddenly we rounded a corner, and there was my friend Audrey Mokoena being marched along with his guard in the opposite direction. For a microsecond pause each of us calculated if there was any reason why we should not recognize one another and decided there was not, and then shouted in delight, threw our arms around one another, and burst into torrents of quick conversation ... In a flash the gloom had been ripped out of John Vorster and a clean gust of lively revolution tore through the place...Then they hauled us away from one another and marched us to our separate cells. But the air was cleaner and I slept like a child.

In his article on his detention Deeb speaks of the importance of combatting a sense of meaninglessness, depression and helplessness. He says detainees did this by identifying issues of injustice in the limited



context of being imprisoned. This meant identifying areas in which detainees might win more rights for themselves. Therefore, he, together with other detainees in Pollsmoor prison, joined in a hunger strike. He (1986:118) writes:

Our hunger strike (demanding the release of detainees, the ending of the State of Emergency, and expressing solidarity with the call for a 'Concerned Christmas') upset the relatively placid status quo of the prison routine. The authorities reacted violently. The Prison [sic] Second-in-Command screamed at us to 'Shut up!' while we were singing at the start of the strike, and promptly separated us all into cells as far apart from each other as possible. Any sympathy that might have existed for us before from the top brass rapidly vanished, and they threatened to charge us (in the prison court) for 'endangering our lives!' However, the confrontation strengthened us, made us more resolute, increased the solidarity we experienced amongst ourselves, and gave new meaning to our detention. It made us feel in communion of action with all those struggling outside.

#### 3.2.2.2 Justice as strength of character

Justice as strength of character as we have already been told, is the ability to assess what is needed in a situation and then to act accordingly even in the face of opposition and danger. There were various occasions where Chikane, Mphahlele, and Sacho had their work for justice challenged by interrogators. On these occasions they stood firm in their commitment to their work in the face of considerable opposition and threat of punishment. This gives clear evidence of the importance they attached to working with the community, and with individuals. It is further

evidence of their very strong internal orientation and the hardness of their personalities. Their belief in the power of justice is seen in their continuing desire to overcome all that separates people from realising their true "being".

Mphahlele (1989:379), writing of another encounter with the Special Branch officers (officers of the national state security apparatus), says:

A man came to see me and said, 'Do I speak Afrikaans or English to you?' I said, 'English please!' He said he was just remanding people one by one. He said, 'Rosina, I know that the women of Atteridgeville have a very high regard of you, but you should not have gone to the police station!' To me that was the most stupid statement to be made by an official. I had gone to the police station for a good cause. I had a good meeting with the powers that be. Was that the reason for my detention? If it was that I can only repeat what one man said, 'The law can be blind!' I didn't worry about the law.

Once during an interrogation a policeman asked Chikane why he was helping criminals. The policeman asked this question because of Chikane's work for the families of detainees. Chikane replied that if the man was a criminal he did not see why he should not take care of the man's children. This he said was his job as a pastor. On another occasion when he had been tortured for fifty hours he was told that if he wished to live, he must become a state collaborator. Chikane (1991:75) writes this of the experience:

My torturers asked me in the course of the ordeal to make a choice between dying slowly in a painful way and cooperating by collaborating with them against those I am called to minister to. I told them that collaboration and cooperation with the evil racist system in South Africa was out for me. It was a call to abandon the very fundamentals of my faith and calling. I told them that instead they had to decide whether to let me die or live, being conscious of the consequences of both options.

Sacho's experience was that by treating her interrogators as persons she could challenge them. One day when Captain Truter was interrogating her she asked him if he had ever had a black friend. When he replied that he had, she asked him if he did not want his friend to enjoy decent housing and education. Again he said yes. She pointed out to him that this was exactly what she wanted. She went on to say that since this was the case, it could not be a communist plot that he was suggesting she was a part of.

The decision of Mphahlele, Sacho, and Britton to treat their interrogators as human beings reveals to us another aspect of their strength of character. In situations of injustice they took control of the situations by seeking to overcome the barriers of injustice that stood between them and their interrogators. They did this by trying to talk to their interrogators. As we have already seen in Mphahlele's case this was not always successful. If, however, the exchange was not always successful

it was at least helpful in strengthening the detainees' commitment to justice for oppressed and the oppressor alike.

Dean Farisani displays a further strength of character in his resistance to his last detention. This last detention began on 22 November 1986. The group of torturers who had almost killed him in 1982, interrogated him again. The Dean in assessing the situation refused to be a part of this injustice any longer. He refused to answer their questions and demanded his release. One of his former interrogators threatened him with death. In response to these death threats Dean Farisani embarked on a hunger strike. This action, together with international pressure on the South African government resulted in the Dean's release on 30 January 1987.

Wolfram Kistner's account of his detention provides us with the last example of a detainee's strength of character in a situation where he was subject to unjust treatment and threats of rape. Here we find the problem is not the interrogators or wardens but the prisoners sharing the cell. Kistner (1989:369) writes as follows:

The inmates of the cell inquired why I had been arrested. I said that I was arrested under emergency regulations. They expressed the opinion that I was an ANC man who instigated the people to stone throwing. I was told that the inmates of this cell and the

neighbouring cell were all AWB supporters [*Afrikaanse Weerstandsbeweging*].

One of the inmates asked whether I wanted to have some food. Gradually the inmates became very aggressive and poured water on the mattress on which I was lying and spread soap foam on the blankets and on my clothes. They tried to pull the blankets from the mattress. One of the inmates of the cell said he wanted to sleep with me. I told him I would not allow this. They could rather kill me. I then stood up in the cell for a time. After approximately two hours the inmates calmed down and I was able to lie down.

We have now seen how even in the face of opposition and danger these detainees remained committed to justice. In situations of very limited actual control they continue to mediate and reinterpret their social circumstances. This has been evident in their strength of character. By continuing to struggle for justice, for their integrity, and the recognition of their humanity and that of their interrogators, these detainees show evidence of having an internal orientation.

### 3.2.3 The importance of community

Bonhoeffer in his book *Act and Being* and in his 1933 lectures on Christology was concerned with two questions. The first question was, 'Who is Jesus?' The second question was, 'How is he experienced?' In response to these questions, Bonhoeffer said that we could only experience Jesus as a person. Jesus is the Christ as he encounters the

individual, and as God he encounters us in the experience of community.

He said that Christ was *pro me* (for me) and *pro nobis* (for us). He (1971:47) wrote:

Christ is Christ not as Christ himself, but in his relationship to me. His being Christ is his being *pro me*.... That is Christ can never be thought of in his being in himself, but only in his relationship to me. That in turn means that Christ can only be conceived of existentially, viz., in the community.

When Bonhoeffer originally said this, he was still thinking of community as the church. He said that in spite of this fact that the church could not confine Christ because he was the centre of all human history. There is an indication that Bonhoeffer already had a broader understanding of Christ's involvement in the world when he (1971:62) wrote the following:

The fact that Christ is the centre of our existence does not mean that he is the centre of our personality, our thought and our feeling. Christ is our centre even when he stands on the periphery of our consciousness: he is our centre even when Christian piety is forced to the periphery of our being. The character of the statement about his centrality is not psychological, but ontological-theological. It does not relate to our personality, but to our being a person before God.

Bonhoeffer, as quoted in De Gruchy (1988:18), went on to define his understanding of history as follows:

The meaning of history is tied up with an event which takes place in the depth and hiddenness of a man who ended up on the cross. The meaning of history is found in the humiliated Christ. Christ was in solidarity with the world both as the 'humiliated one' and 'the exalted one'. It is as the humiliated God-Man that Jesus is the Christ *'pro-nobis'*. It is because Christ is present in the world

in human form, in all its weakness and even sinfulness, that he can both be in solidarity with us and act vicariously for us. Christ is therefore only present within the church when it follows the way of the humiliated one.

Bonhoeffer later spoke of the need of the church to be able to "exist for others". If the church is to be a Christian community then it must be in solidarity with humanity. In particular, it must stand with those who while not part of it "suffer for the sake of a just cause". De Gruchy (1988:18) quotes the following from Bonhoeffer's writings on ethics:

In times which are out of joint, in times when lawlessness and wickedness triumph in complete unrestraint, it is rather in relation to the few remaining just, truthful and human men that the gospel will make itself known.

The Christian community is therefore, the church in which individuals experience Christ as acting vicariously *pro-me*, and simultaneously acting vicariously towards the world *pro-nobis*. It is the place where in the words of Bonhoeffer, as quoted in De Gruchy (1988:40-41), "our being Christian today will be limited to two things: prayer and righteous action among men." This type of ecclessiology is what Dulles (1988) refers to as the model of the church as servant. Dulles quotes McBrien (1988:97), who says:

the Church must offer itself as one of the principal agents whereby the human community is made to stand under the judgment of the enduring values of the Gospel of Jesus Christ: freedom, justice, peace, charity, compassion, reconciliation.

Tyson (1983:858) quotes Janis as saying that:

one of the most basic psychological needs activated by stressful events [is] the longing for contact and psychological warmth from supportive parents or parent substitutes.

He then goes on to suggest that supportive others increase the ability to cope with stress. In summarising work done on various models of social support as a potentially useful coping resource Brehm and Kassir (1993:669) point out that there are different models of what constitutes social support, and how it operates. Social support they note, may be constituted by: the number of social contacts a person has; the number of helpers assisting a person in need; the presence of a close, confiding relationship; and the perceived availability of social support as a coping resource. They write (1993:668):

Rather than regard social support as one-size-fits-all, it is more useful to think in terms of a match among the individual, the type of support needed, and the type of provider who gives it.

What is evident from these various models is that social support is important for dealing with stress. One theory on how social support affects health and well being is that it operates as a buffer effect. A buffer effect is "the effect whereby a protective factor such as social support, shields a person from the adverse effects of high stress." (1993:669) When stress levels are low it does not matter whether there is a high social support or not. When, however, stress levels are high and there is



low social support this leads to poor health. If on the other hand, there is high social support, this enhances well-being.

The detainees in this study had an experience of community, and thus of social support, when the church drew alongside them. They also experienced community when supported by those "good people" who suffered with them because of their commitment to a just cause. In both, cases according to Bonhoeffer's theology, they experienced Christ acting *pro-nobis* and thus exercised control over their circumstances.

#### 3.2.3.1 The detainees' experience of community from the church

Gutierrez (1987:42) writes these words about the Christian experience of community:

The following of Jesus is not, purely or primarily, an individual matter but a collective adventure. The journey of the people of God is set in motion by a direct encounter with the Lord but an encounter in community: 'We have found the Messiah'.

The servant model of the church stresses the need for Christian service in the world. The beneficiaries of the church's action according to this model, as proposed by Dulles (1988:97), are people throughout the world who

hear from the Church a word of comfort or encouragement, or who obtain from the Church a respectful hearing, or who receive from it some material help in their hour of need.

Sacho, Sister Bernard, Mashinini, Moreo, and Kerchoff all highlight the need for the church to give support to individuals, and to share in the individual's journeys.

Sacho says that she derived support from the visit of Father McGreal, whom she had known from the age of six. She discussed Paul's theology with him. Paul's views on the role of women were frustrating to her at the time. Sacho's mother organised this visit through the help of Bishop Orsmond. Sacho also felt supported by the church community in general, and affirmed by Archbishop Hurley. He gave her a sense of pride in being a Catholic.

Sacho's mother was a faithful Catholic who took a great deal of time and effort to support her. Although only allowed two visits to her daughter (as a concession to her being in the terminal stages of cancer) she showed her care and support. She did this by organising for her daughter to have a photograph of her deceased father with her in prison. According to Paul Verryn, she also arranged for her to obtain a copy of Brother Lawrence's book, *Practising the Presence of God*, and wrote notes within

Sacho's copy of the Jerusalem Bible. This included a list of Sacho's friends' names in the margins of the Psalms.

Sister Bernard, while feeling unsupported by the institutional church leadership, speaks of the support that her mother and father, who were church people, gave to her. She also speaks of being supported by Father Mkhathswa and other clergy who organised for her to receive Holy Communion.

Mashinini and Kerchoff both speak of the importance of experiencing other human beings through the celebration of the Eucharist. Other action displaying the church's support was also very meaningful.

In Kerchoff's case the expression of church support occurred during the Provincial Synod of the Anglican Church in 1986. The synod took place in the cathedral of Pietermaritzburg. To draw attention to the fact of Kerchoff's absence due to his detention an empty chair was placed in a central position. This also served to remind all the delegates present at the synod of all the other detainees imprisoned without trial.

Mashinini says that she really needed to receive communion during her time of detention. That was the one action that helped to strengthen her during detention. The other two actions that strengthened her were the support of the Khotso House staff, and a wardress who was an active member of the Anglican Mothers Union.

At the time of her arrest, the security guards at Khotso House alerted everyone about what was happening. Word even got to those who were at morning prayer. As Mashinini and others who were with her were taken out of the building everyone in the building came out and blocked the police cars. They did this until they had finished singing the Lord's Prayer.

The other instance of support occurred during the last stages of her detention. Mashinini experienced a severe depression at this time. A wardress became a source of great encouragement to her. She said to Mashinini, " You are looking terrible, you look as though you are going to die. You had better think of your children, and be strong and pray.' She then prayed with Mashinini. On several other occasions the wardress came into the cell and took her wardress clothes off. Underneath was her Mothers Union outfit. She then invited Mashinini to pray with her, which

Mashinini did. This woman also organised with other wardens to smuggle newspapers in to Mashinini.

A final example of support is shown in the way Moreo's congregation supported him, and in the actions of a parishioner of his who was a warden. This man smuggled newspapers, a book, and even food to him. He also smuggled a letter from Moreo's congregation in to him. This was an important letter of solidarity since it assured him of the congregation's prayers and support. He also heard of a service that the congregation held for him. Even more remarkable was the visit that the Mothers Union of his congregation paid him. They came and sang and prayed, and were undeterred by the wardens' threats to expel them if they did not stop their singing.

According to Brehm and Kassin (1993:671), another model of social support holds that

social support may, then, act indirectly on adjustment [to the high levels of stress] through its effects on feelings about the self. When others care enough to help us, we feel better about ourselves. It can also go the other way.

By acting as an agent of social support for detainees the church helped the them to feel better about themselves, and thus to feel more in control of their situation.

### 3.2.3.2 The detainees' experience of community from those detained with them

Gutierrez points out that the Christian who is committed to the liberation of the society from injustice will experience times of isolation, loneliness, solitude and even suffering. It is precisely in such moments that a new encounter with Christ and the community is possible. Trust in God and in what he calls the 'ecclesial community' go hand in hand in dealing with 'the dark night of injustice'. Gutierrez (1987:131-132) writes:

The passage through the experience of solitude leads to a profound community life. As I have already pointed out, the solitude of which I am speaking is different from individualism. In individualism there is a large measure of withdrawal....The experience of solitude, on the other hand gives rise to a hunger for community.

Gutierrez (1987:133) goes on to quote words from a meeting of basic ecclesial communities held in Brazil in 1975:

The faith and courage of the members of our communities in the face of threats, misunderstandings, and persecution for justice sake are sustained and strengthened by the support each individual gives the others, by the support each community gives the others, by our very struggle and activity, by meditation on the word of God, and by the recollection of the witness given by those who have struggled for justice.

These are words that we will find echoed in the African experience of personhood, or *Ubuntu*, which may be understood as the mysterious quality that makes a person a person. Setiloane (1989:37 ) points out that

"A primary characteristic of African 'being' is its inclusiveness." In African society there is no one who does not belong. Belonging lies at the heart of being. True personhood is only attainable in community. Therefore, the concept of *Ubuntu* is often expressed by Tutu in terms of a Xhosa saying that "a person is a person through other people." Greeley in his model of the way in which the religious imagination works makes the point (1981:18) that in the same way that anyone's life is a story of relationships, so too each person's religious story is a story of relationships. He writes (1981:18) as follows:

the principal sacraments in our lives are other human beings or, more precisely, our relationships with other human beings....We are the principal sacrament, the principal sign, the principal symbols through which other persons encounter grace and hope validated, just as they are the principal sacrament, the meaning base, and validating hope for us.

Farisani, Dandala, Britton and Moreo all bear witness to the importance of this concept.

Writing about his first period of detention, Dean Farisani speaks of experiencing community during his exercise breaks. It was during these times that the other prisoners in the Pietermaritzburg prison called out to him. He (1988:49) writes:

As I ran in circles some detainees whispered loudly whenever I passed under their windows: *Umfundisi! Umfundisi!* [Pastor! Pastor!] They knew that I am a pastor, a man of God. Detention or

no detention, I was still a man of God, a pastor. It gave me great joy to know that even in my suffering I could still bring joy to my fellow sufferers. A sign of hope in a situation of total despair and helplessness.

Deeb (1986:115-116), writing of his experience of community among detainees, says:

Having other detainees with whom I could communicate was possibly one of the major factors enabling me to keep my spirits up. I really felt the difference after the first six days on my own....when we came out for our first exercise session together. It was like an ecstatic holiday. It made me so conscious of how much we need that communication - that sympathetic human contact....We provided a lot of support for each other, through the many ups and downs we all went through. This created a new constructive goal for our time inside....Then we would do things together which gave lots of meaning to our restricted condition-jogging, singing, prayer sessions (which even some of the agnostics found meaningful), and communal meditations or symbolic acts of solidarity with people and events outside. One of the most enjoyable communal activities was to sit on our window ledges with feet dangling out through the bars watching the sunset on many an evening-appreciating the beauty together. There was a stillness and serenity about this ritual which drew us very close together. All this contact was crucial for all of us detainees, some of whom were even taking sleeping tablets to shorten their time awake.

Dandala says this of his time in St. Alban's prison:

Life in the cell was an education, particularly the care the prisoners had for one another. They told us how to lay the mats on the floor to get used to the cold, how to fold the blankets, and how to look after toothbrushes. They organised evening discussion groups. These were clearly planned. Christianity and politics was my topic, as well as an exposition of the Vietnam war. There was a thirst for knowledge. This was an effective way of dealing with loneliness.



The other thing which struck me was the way the guys dealt with the pain of physical abuse both psychologically and physically. There was a great deal of caring. I remember both Dennis Neer and Aaron Rensburg were badly beaten up. The guys gave up their pillows and blankets for them. It was unbelievable how unselfish they were. They also talked about how they were beaten up, and also how they were interrogated. The group was therapeutic. We had become a community.

Moreo was held in solitary confinement, although he did have access to visitors and exercise. He says that during the course of his detention other ministers were also detained. He could hear them praying and singing and this served as a source of encouragement to him. He also says that he was detained with a white Roman Catholic priest who tried to get Moreo moved into his cell. When the prison authorities did not grant his request, he promised Moreo that he would pray for him each day. Moreo agreed to do the same. Since they were in adjacent cells they felt near to each other. Furthermore the joint prayers served as a support system for them during their time of detention.

Brittton was also held in solitary confinement. She says derived support in knowing that Anita Kromberg was in the next door cell. In her interview she says that she discovered Kromberg's presence in the following way:

I was outside in the courtyard on the first day. I decided to sing a hymn and as I did I heard a faint voice singing. Then I knew that Anita was next door, and after that at meal times I used the spoon to bash on the wall, and she would respond. We weren't sending messages, only making contact, so we knew we were not alone.

These accounts of their experience of community by detainees give support to a statement made by Gutierrez. He (1987:133) says:

Community life cultivates receptivity for God's reign and also proclaims it; in this reception and proclamation a community can build itself up as a community.

Gutierrez (1987:133) goes on to quote the community of the Parish of Christ the Redeemer:

Only in community can we hear, accept, and proclaim the gift and grace of the Lord, the special call to overcome everything that destroys comradely communion [oppression, injustice, marginalisation, discrimination, etc.] - because at the same time it destroys communion with God - and to struggle for the values of the kingdom that Jesus proclaimed.

We have, therefore, seen that through experiencing community with other detainees high social support is maintained, the detainee no longer feels isolated even though he/she may be held in solitary confinement, and the detainee is enabled to have a perception of being in control of the situation of detention.

### 3.3 SUMMARY

In this chapter we have looked at the hypothesis that the Christian detainees of this study could exercise a degree of control because of their internal orientation. An internal orientation means that a person can mediate and reinterpret the social and environmental forces at play

in stressful situations. The validity of this hypothesis was ascertained through our examination of the detainees' ability to forgive. We also looked at the way in which they continued to struggle for justice. Thirdly we looked at how their experience of community strengthened them during their detentions.

We have seen that the detainees' ability to forgive empowered them in their dealing with gaolers and interrogators. This ability to forgive is based on the biblical understanding of the concept of the forgiveness of sins, and on the example of Jesus. Forgiveness is empowering because it liberates the detainee. It enables the detainee to forgive an enemy or enemies, and thus to liberate the enemy or enemies. In this way then the detainee can exercise control, because he/she is still able to make choices that affect the way in which life is lived under very restricted and controlled conditions.

We have also seen that a concern for justice enabled the detainees to continue to challenge all that prevents them from obtaining unity of 'being' with 'being'. In other words, by seeking justice for themselves and for others they were seeking to realise their own potential and that of others. By doing this they were uniting themselves with the care, love,

and concern which God has for each person. This is evident in their concern for both individuals and communities. By asserting the right of all people to be allowed to retain their human dignity they were able to challenge their interrogators, wardens and, in one case, even their fellow prisoners. The content of this challenge was the treatment of detainees, and the need for the rights of all people to just treatment to be upheld. By struggling for justice in this way, and by their very strength of character, detainees were able to exercise control over their own lives, and that of other detainees.

Finally, we have seen the importance of community support. This came from the church. It was given by Christians outside prison, and those within prison. By experiencing community in this way the detainee encounters Jesus who is both *pro me* and *pro nobis*. The importance to the detainees of the concept of *Ubuntu* has been clearly shown in the concern exercised by detainees for one another. This concern enables the detainee to realise that he/she is still a person because he/she is important to and valued by other significant people. Because the detainee is enabled to feel important, he/she is able to have a sense of self-worth, and thus exercise a degree of control in the difficult situation of detention.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE CHALLENGE COMPONENT OF THE HARDY PERSONALITY THEORY AND THE THEOLOGY OF HOPE

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to examine the challenge component of the hardy personality theory as it pertains to the Christian detainees in this study. We will do this by making use of a Christian theology of hope. For the purpose of this study we will define hope as the believer's trust in God's love and concern that underpins human existence. It is the expectation of a good future based upon God's past redeeming actions, God's actions in the present, and God's promise for the future. In this way we will see how, even when faced with the reality of suffering, these Christian detainees could find purpose and hope for their lives.

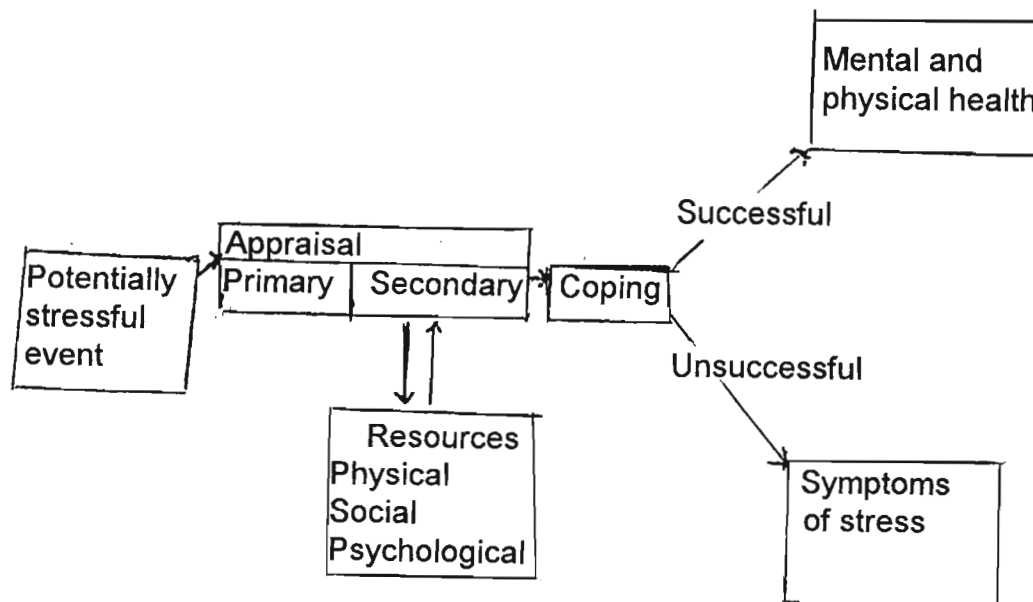
#### 4.2 THE CHALLENGE COMPONENT

The hardy personality theory depends on an existentialist theory of personality. According to Kobasa (1982:6), existentialism portrays life as

always changing, and, therefore, stressful. The challenge component of the hardy personality theory has as its base the premise that change rather than stability is the norm for all our lives. Kobasa (1982:7-8) says that this means that:

From the perspective of challenge, much of the disruption associated with the occurrence of a stressful life event can be anticipated as an incentive for personal growth, rather than a simple threat to security. Challenge leads persons to be catalysts in their environment....they are characterized by an openness or cognitive flexibility and tolerance of ambiguity. This allows them to integrate and appraise effectively the threat of even the most unexpected stressful life events.

Rotter (1990:510-512) in an article on stress draws attention to the work of Lazarus who has developed a cognitive phenomenological theory of stress. This theory is best summarised by the following diagram:



What Lazarus is saying is that the level of stress is determined by how

we appraise or think about the event. If we think we can cope with it by seeing it as a challenge then we are more likely to be successful in retaining our mental and physical health. This depends on the individual being able first to assess the situation, and then to evaluate whether or not his/her resources are adequate to deal with the event. If the individual is unsuccessful in managing his/her resources this leads to symptoms of stress. The same event may be regarded as a threat, a loss, or a challenge. Challenges and threats are both stressful. Unlike threats, however, challenge appraisals do not see events as damaging or harmful. Instead, a challenge appraisal leads the individual to pay more attention to opportunities for mastery, gain, and growth (Rotter 1990:513).

Although no studies involving detention have specifically looked at the challenge component, Foster, Davis, and Sandler (1987:164) suggest that Kobasa's construct might be a useful one in dealing with detention and torture.

Thus, for the purpose of this thesis the validity of the challenge component is assumed. In the next section we will investigate the exact nature of the relationship between the challenge component and the Christian doctrine of hope, which itself is normally discussed in relation

to eschatology.

#### 4.3 THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE BIBLICAL UNDERSTANDING OF ESCHATOLOGY

A contemporary Christian theology of hope has been recovered through new biblical insights into apocalyptic literature and the nature of eschatological hope. These insights have led in turn to a revision of the doctrine of eschatology. It is necessary for us to briefly examine the Old Testament understanding which led to the development of an apocalyptic understanding of eschatological hope. This will then lead us into a brief look at the Jesus' and Paul's understanding of eschatology and hope.

The Old Testament understanding of hope as a religious concept depends on the covenant relationship that exists between Yahweh and Israel. Zimmerli (1981:418) points out that in the Psalms, the book of Job, and even in the Pentateuch the relevance of hope is not established by human means or achievements but only by Yahweh. There is no word that conveys the modern understanding of hope as the desire for and expectation of a better future. There are, however, a few passages that refer to desire and to future hope (Pr 13:12; 23:18; 24:14; Jr 29:11). The



predominant understanding however, is of trusting in God and God's promises. As a result of God's previous acts of deliverance, God's power to fulfill promises could be trusted (Ex 6:5-8; Is 51:9-11). It is for this reason that even in times of difficulty Israel, or the individual believer, was to wait patiently for God's salvation (Ps 31:24; 33:18-22; 130:6-8). This hope is remarkable in that it lasts only for the believer's lifetime. The idea of an afterlife is a late concept in Old Testament thinking, as we shall see.

The fall of Israel to Assyria in 721BC, and the events leading to the fall of Judah to Babylon in 587BC and the exile of the people in Babylon led to a crisis in faith, and a crisis in hope in God. The prophets responded to the crisis by reminding the people of their failure to observe the covenant. According to the prophets, the kings and the wealthy had no concern for justice for the poor (Am 2:6-7; 4:1; 5:11; Ez 22:29). Furthermore, there was a great deal of religious apostasy (Jr 2:20 -26) and a general lack of moral behaviour. This they warned would lead to God's judgment and punishment (Ezk 5:5 -17; Jr 11-31). When judgment did overcome the nation the prophets still held out hope. The hope was that because of God's love and mercy there would be a new future (Jr 29:11; Ezk 36:1-38). Nürnberger (1994:140) points out that this new

future entailed a reversal of all previous ills. There would be a new and righteous king, there would be peace and general well-being for all people, and the nation would no longer be subject to the threat of enemy attack. In addition there would be a new sense of morality, and a new relationship would exist between God, individuals, and the nation as a whole (Jr 31:31). The prophetic understanding of eschatology<sup>2</sup> is thus for the most part concerned with the nations of Judah and Israel, and their vision is largely of a just society following the traditional model of the kingdom as it was before the exile. Having said this we need to take note of the observation made by Collins (1991:299) that the prophets did make use of cosmic imagery. In addressing their own historical reality there is also a sense of concern for the future of the world (Jr 4:23; Is 11:1-9).

When however, these expectations were only partially realised, or in some cases did not materialise at all, a new understanding of hope was introduced. This concept is known as apocalyptic eschatology. This was necessary in order to make sense of continued suffering and oppression. It was influenced by the Persian mythology of how history would end in the struggle between a good god (Ahuramazda) and a bad god

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<sup>2</sup>Eschatology is a term introduced into systematic theology in the 19th century to refer to the doctrine of the 'last things' - that is, to matters concerning the judgment after death and the end of the world, 'the end of time'.

(Angramainyu). The victory of good would bring about salvation. This idea of a fight between good and evil which would take place at a crisis point in history was adopted by the Jews. Whilst the Jews retained their belief that there is only one God, they came to believe that they were living at the end of one age and the beginning of a new age. It was their belief that God alone was capable of bringing about a new age.

Hanson (1981:30) believes that this new understanding was a direct result of the Jewish community being deprived of power within religious and social institutions during the Intertestamental period. This led to God's final saving acts no longer being seen as being fulfilled in political structures or historical events, but rather as deliverance from the present order into a new and transformed order. Nothing would be able to prevent this final redemption from taking place. No rulers, political systems, events in the natural world, desires of evil persons, nor even death itself could defeat God's justice from taking place. This new age would be the age of God's universal salvation and righteousness, and Israel would occupy a special privileged position in God's new reign. This new reign would be accompanied by God's judgment on and destruction of all evil. The dead would all be raised to life, and judged as individuals, and either

be judged righteous or condemned and destroyed. God alone would bring this new future into being, but it could be anticipated in faith. Nürnberger (1994:139) points out that at the root of eschatology is the awareness that "what reality is does not correspond with what reality ought to be."

The New Testament understanding of hope, like that of the Old Testament, is based on relationship with God. The word hope is found very seldom in the gospels, but as Minear (1981:641) points out, the absence of the word does not indicate the absence of the reality. Jesus and John the Baptist are both heirs to the Jewish understanding of eschatology. This is seen in their concern with proclaiming the message of the kingdom of God. According to A. Collins (1991:1361), an analysis of apocalyptic and eschatological texts of the first centuries BC and AD shows that the kingdom of God was perceived of as a present reality, which was fully revealed in heaven and which had some influence on earth. The hope for the future was that this heavenly reality would determine fully all earthly circumstances. It is for this reason that Jesus announces the coming of this kingdom as "good news". As we have already read Jesus not only proclaims this kingdom but enacts it in his actions on behalf of the outcasts, the sick, and the oppressed. In this way he understood that God's kingdom was present and made manifest

through his teaching and deeds. At the same time Jesus' teaching is not confined to present or realised eschatology. According to A.Collins (1991:1362), the phrase "Your kingdom come" which Jesus taught his disciples "probably referred to some objective manifestation of God's rule on earth that was even more complete than any experienced so far, even in his own activity."

Paul saw the death and resurrection of Jesus as the beginning of the Messianic age (2 Cor 3:17-18; Gl 3:23-29;4:1-7; Rm 3:21-26). It is through his death and resurrection that Christians are given new hope. This indeed is the central thrust of Paul's understanding of hope (Col 1:27; Rm 8:24). The age of Christ or the age of the Spirit precedes the final age. It is a time in which Christians prepare for the day on which Jesus would return in glory to raise the dead to life. This day would be accompanied by judgment. After judgment the faithful would be united in love with God and Christ, and participate in the glory of God.

Nürnberg (1994:140) sums up the biblical understanding of eschatology when he says:

At the root of biblical faith, including its eschatological hope, lies the experience of the redemptive acts of God in history. Redemptive experiences happen under the condition of time and space. Therefore they are by necessity limited and provisional,

never comprehensive and final. A redemptive act of God in history is always the promise of something greater. And the promise and the expectation always go beyond their fulfilment.

#### 4.3.1 The relationship between a Christian theology of hope and its understanding of eschatology, and the challenge component of the hardy personality

With the increased understanding brought about by modern Biblical studies, eschatology has found new importance and meaning in modern theology. Instead of being a theology of what is to happen at 'the end of time' or being solely concerned with life after death it has again become a theology of hope.

Jennings (1977:76) maintains that the importance of apocalyptic literature for Christian faith is that it is a form of religious imagination whose importance lies in representing the future as the "fundamental locus of the presence of the sacred." The Christian mythos, of which the apocalyptic forms a part, see the divine as active in the past, the present, and the future. According to him (1977:77), the apocalyptic is important in that it "engenders not only a faith which remembers and relies upon what it remembers, but a hope which expects and anticipates that which

it expects." The text of Rev 21.1-5 reflects this understanding. Here we find the confident expression found elsewhere in the Old and New Testament as we have already seen that God would act to bring about redemption because God is concerned with the well being of God's creation.

Schillebeeckx (1990:807-808), in his treatment of the meaning of eschatology for our world today, speaks of the uncertainty of life. He says that because of this uncertainty we need to realise that man has a "*temporalized* " existence. Therefore, we must not over-emphasise the past, the present, or the future. While we need to be aware of these dimensions, we also need to allow God to have a place in what we say about this temporalized existence. This is because:

We do not know precisely what God is for us. We do not have him in our hands, and of ourselves we do not understand our own humanity and its potentialities. Any one who believes in God knows that, in some way or other, he holds us in his hand...Thus the believer sets himself utterly at risk by trusting in the steadfastness of the one whom he does not see, the living God.

Moltmann (1983:17f) argues that it is because of this trust in God that we understand Christian eschatology as speaking about 'Christ and his future'. In other words, Christian eschatology arises from the believers' trust that God has acted in history through the cross and resurrection of

Jesus. The resurrection of Jesus is, therefore, a beginning rather than the ending of God's purpose for the world. Moltmann (1983:229) says that the future of Christ does not cause a repetition of the past, nor even a repetition of Jesus' former ministry. This means that Christians live in the present historic reality, but because they believe in the future of the risen Christ, and the promises associated with the future acts of Jesus, they live in anticipation of that future, and they are in fact open to the possibilities of that future. Moltmann (1983:326) writes as follows:

Christianity is to be understood as the community of those who on the ground of the resurrection of Christ wait for the kingdom of God and whose life is determined by this expectation.

Christians are, therefore, people who live in a state of flux. Moltmann expresses this when he says (1983:18):

Present and future, experience and hope, stand in contradiction to each other in Christian eschatology, with the result that man is not brought into harmony and agreement with the given situation, but is drawn into conflict between hope and experience.

It is precisely this state of flux, of uncertainty and ambiguity, or of what is, and what ought to be, that the existentialist theory of personality calls change. The very idea of change serves as the base for the hardy personality theory. This understanding of change says that life is never static or certain. The challenge component has as its root this philosophical background. It also believes that persons are beings in the world "who do not carry around a set of static internal traits, but rather



continuously and dynamically construct personality through their actions." (Kobasa 1982:6) Thus there exists a relationship between the theology of hope, and the psychological theory underpinning the hardy personality theory, and more specifically the construct of challenge.

#### 4.3.2 Existential hope and the idea of hope in political theology

The existentialist criterion for decision making, on which the challenge component is dependent, is whether the decision is authentic to the individual or not. According to Nürnberger, an authentic decision is one in which the individual takes responsibility for his or her decision, irrespective of the attitudes and actions of others. Furthermore for the existentialist theologian there is also a material criterion for authenticity, which is the willingness "to receive life as a gift from the Source of reality and not gain it by our own achievements." (Nürnberger 1994:145).

What is important for the existentialist theologian is God's redeeming love in the present. The emphasis is on the Christ who opens authentic life for the believer in the present, and not in some future distant date. This viewpoint leads to conflict with Moltmann's theology of hope. Moltmann does not deny the presence of God in the present, but he is quite clear that the present cannot fully disclose the God of promise. Morse

(1988:146-147) in his article on Moltmann's theology draws our attention to his opposition to natural theology that sees creation as revealing the creator, or anthropological theology with its view that the universal presence of God is presented by human existence. Christian theology, according to Moltmann, is based on promise, which it inherits from the eschatological and apocalyptic tradition of its Jewish background. This is seen in its emphasis on the coming of the future. This can be traced in New Testament writings that refer to the coming of the Son of man, the coming of the kingdom, or even in the reference to the new and holy Jerusalem. The Christian faith is an Easter faith, and since this is so, as we have already noted, this means that it is a faith based on promise.

Morse (1988:145) quotes Moltmann (1970:11) when he says this:

The God of the Exodus and the Resurrection is the God of the coming kingdom, and therefore a God with future as the mode of his being.

Since as Christians we await the coming of Christ in glory this means that we await the time in which the gospel promises of the kingdom of God are fulfilled. Morse (1988:148) sums up this point of view in these words:

An Easter faith looks not to some God beyond us or within us but to the God coming from that which lies ahead of us and in front of us

This concern with the future led European theologians such as Moltmann, and theologians of the Black theology school in America to

reevaluate the scriptural texts dealing with God's particular concern with the poor and oppressed. This led to a new interest in the teachings of Jesus on the kingdom of God. We have already encountered this emphasis on the kingdom of God in earlier chapters. Theology that emphasises the role of the kingdom of God is known as political theology, or the theology of hope. It is the belief that God is concerned with the whole of life as experienced by humankind. This theology sees the rule of God as concerned with politics, economics, ecology, social factors, and culture. Furthermore, God is concerned that all barriers that prevent people from being loving, and human are destroyed. The Kingdom of God is both a present and yet to be realised vision of a world. It is a vision of a world in which people are at peace and harmony with God, one another, and the natural world. It is this kingdom that Jesus proclaimed as the good news. Jennings (1977:78) seems to best summarize the importance of political theology in relating the past and the future to the present when he says:

Here it becomes clear how memory [exodus, crucifixion] and hope [messianic banquet, city of God] come together to focus upon the present as the place in which love is enacted in such a way as to transform the present into a prolepsis or anticipation of that which is to be.

It is this very state of the presence of the God of promise in the present and yet not totally present because God can only be totally present when

there is a universal fulfilment of the gospel promise, that "unsettles reality and gives it a hope beyond its own potentialities." (Morse 1988:148)

Nürnberg (1994:146) points out that political theology shares existentialism's concern for reality in the present. Furthermore, it realises the importance of personal commitment and involvement in that present. Political theology, however, places emphasis on the authenticity of the social order rather than personal authenticity. Authenticity is to be found not in the "continuing process of individual human existence " but in "the historical future of society." Nürnberg (1994;146-147) believes that this emphasis on society does not negate existentialism but complements it, since it brings a critical corrective to the existentialist emphasis on immediate personal decision making. This emphasis on the personal tends to overlook the importance of the historicity of wider social contexts in which decisions are made.

Political theology believes in an eschatological hope that gives us the freedom not to be bound by a seemingly static universe, but rather to join a dynamic movement into a future that is open. This is because Christian hope believes in the power of God to make all things new. Although it does not disregard the reality of broken societies and interpersonal

relationships, it believes that Christians are given power by God to make a difference. Christianity believes we are engaged in a history, the goal of which is the kingdom of God. As we engage with this history, we have endless possibilities for becoming more human, of living a better and more humane existence in the world. Galilea (1989:61) writes as follows:

Through our hope - and in this case through our whole Christian spiritual experience - we begin to participate, already in our mortal life, in the life of God. Hope anticipates the promise of the eternal "now" of God. As a mystical experience hope relativizes the earthly past and future and emphasizes the present. For only in the present do we experience eternal life as the "now" of God that is God's own present. From this fact arises a tremendous paradox: the promise, which looks to the future, is assured only in our present; hope, which deals with future realities, can be lived only in the present.

We find evidence of the experience of Christ in the present in the accounts of Moreo and Mphahlele. Moreo says this of living in the present while in detention:

You do absolutely nothing. God does everything. My faith got stronger. I had the feeling that God was with me, and that God was above the prison warders. I believed that God wouldn't just take me here and then leave me. I believed that I would be out in fourteen days, this belief was stronger than the feeling that I would be detained for a longer period. After the tenth day I lost hope, and all I could do was wait for the fourteenth day. At this time I thought, if God wants me out he will get me out, and if they keep me then God will be with me here. God can unlock the doors. There were six doors that needed to be unlocked before you came to the place where you could be given clearance for release. God can unlock the doors because God is above the six guards.

Mphahlele writes of the importance of living in the present when she speaks of leaving the situation up to God. She writes this of what she calls her 'journey to Damascus':

It strengthened my faith. I became a different person. What I learnt through this was that when you are confronted with the situation, find out what God wants you to do. Leave the situation in the Lord's hands. This situation is the arena where the Lord has put you - like the arena where Moses once found himself, where there was a burning bush coming from nowhere saying to Moses, "Take off your shoes, for the land on which you stand is holy ." Then you want to find out, why did God choose me to have this particular experience, and what purpose does it serve, and at what cost?

While there is an emphasis on the present, there is in all the accounts of the detainees whose experience is considered in this study, an emphasis on the future. This is because the detainees of this study cannot simply be limited to an existentialist understanding of eschatology as individual authenticity. Their understanding is more in accord with that of political theology and the need to work for change in society. It is in the writing of Deeb that we find the best articulation of what it means to live in the present and have a hope for the future based on an understanding of the kingdom of God. Deeb (1987:38) writes:

Once the schools were closed and I knew that my fellow-teachers had been released, (my twenty-fifth day), my continued detention struck me as completely futile - devoid of meaning - an act of pure vindictiveness, and I felt resentful, utterly powerless, and thoroughly depressed... I realised then, that I needed to develop a new attitude to my detention. I was no longer capable of having a political impact. That (if any) had now been made. All that remained was for me to develop a spirituality of suffering - without necessarily expecting or

hoping for it to bring a juster society closer. It was helpful to think of Jesus' futile suffering - misunderstood, falsely accused, yet silent in defence; or of all of Paul's imprisonments; or of the martyrdom of so many saints through the ages. To make new sense of my detention, a transcendent view of it became essential - that somehow it contributed to the struggle for the Kingdom, and that I was a minor pawn in the whole show - yet not insignificant. Yet my significance was to be experienced, not in the glory given by the people outside, but in my conviction of my own integrity.

We have thus seen how Christian hope, while it is concerned with helping the individual make a decision based on personal authenticity in the present, is also a social hope. This is so because it is concerned with helping the individual make a decision for the future, a future based on and faithful to God's promises. In this way then the Christian theology of hope both agrees with the existential understanding that underpins the challenge construct of the hardy personality theory. It also extends this understanding by taking socioeconomic and political factors into account. Thus the Christian detainee is challenged not only to deal with the present, but also the meaning of the past and the future for the present. Davies (1976:81-82) writes this of the importance of a theology of hope for the individual and the community:

After all, eschatology in the New Testament is not just a doctrine of last things - the present is eschatologically understood because of the inbreaking of the Kingdom through Jesus here and now. So Barth emphasized that the Christian has a hope for the temporal and the provisional and that this hope must assume the form of an action corresponding to its object. 'The Christian hopes as he serves, and he expects provisional and temporal encouragement, equipment and direction for his service.'

We will deal with this in more detail in the sections that follow.

#### 4.4 HOPE AS A SOURCE OF EMPOWERMENT

The *Kairos Document* speaks of the need for hope so that liberation may be attained. Its authors (1987:26) write as follows:

But hope needs to be confirmed. Hope needs to be maintained and strengthened. Hope needs to be spread. The people need to hear it again and again that God is with them and that "the hope of the poor is never brought to nothing" (Ps 9:18).

Writing in the same vein, the authors (Cochrane et al 1991:82) of *In Word And Deed* have this to say:

The gift of empowerment is the enabling of disciples to engage in the task of living out the gospel in the life of the world, and especially in our time in the struggle for justice.

The extent to which Christians have been empowered to struggle for justice has also evoked hope and kept it alive in those who have despaired of social transformation. Hope is, in fact, attempting to live and witness here and now in anticipation of the fulfilment of God's promise of a "new earth and new heaven".

How it is that the detainees of this study are empowered to keep hope alive? To answer this question we need to engage in dialogue with Deotis Roberts. Deotis Roberts makes use of work done by Thurman concerning the views that black American slaves had of death. Thurman points out that for the black slave death was an ever-present threat. In a situation where a person is stripped of all basic rights, the struggle for



human dignity becomes desperate. What one thinks about death in these circumstances is influenced by one's experience of life. According to Deotis Roberts (1994:87), Thurman makes the point that the black person's view of life, death, and the beyond is in fact shaped by their experience of life. Deotis Roberts (1994:88) builds on this understanding, and goes on to say this:

What one thinks of life relates to what one thinks of death; or the future life beyond death has an impact upon the meaning of life. It follows that even though we are greatly concerned about conditions here and now, we will greatly impoverish our understanding of the Christian faith if we are indifferent to the "not yet" of eschatology.

In answering the question about how detainees kept hope alive it becomes important for us to look at how they viewed their experience of detention. In doing so we remember that the way in which the present is viewed influences the way in which the future is viewed, and the views that the detainee has of the future life beyond death influence the meaning of life in the present. If we return to the theory that Lazarus advanced then we could say that the situation of detention, which is one of stress, requires that the detainee then thinks about his or her resources. If the detainee can use these resources then there is a better chance that he or she will cope with the stressful situation in a successful way.

In chapter two we have seen how faith and commitment are important in dealing with stress. We will now look at another resource. This is the viewpoint that a successful way of dealing with stress, and thus having hope, seems to lie in the way in which detainees can see some positive benefit arising out of the detention experience.

Most of the detainees who make up this study speak of some positive benefits of detention, while none of them denies the stress of detention. For many of these detainees, detention strengthened their commitment to working for justice (Kerchoff, Brittion, Chikane, Boesak). For others it became an opportunity to minister better to other detainees (Mashinini, Dandala, Sacho). For some it was an opportunity to continue with their education (Dandala, Raphesu, Farisani, Souchon). Further detainees speak of the experience in a more personal way. Sister Bernard experienced detention as a time of finding her inner strength as a person. Deeb says that being detained removed the fear of detention. For Mphahlele it was simply a confirmation of the rightness of her action. Whatever the positive benefits were, it seems that they are best explained by the construct of the challenge component of the hardy personality.

To show how these various positive benefits apply to the detainees of this study, we need to engage in dialogue with Dulles and Moltmann, to see how hope and challenge interact. We will be making use of Dulles' apologetics of hope, in which he suggests that Christian hope has four attributes. These four attributes are, "a hope that is invincible, comprehensive, realistic, and fruitful" (1987:68-69). We will look at these criteria in detail. We will also use Moltmann's stress on hope as "the will to live", and the importance of what he calls the "passion for living".

#### 4.4.1 Christian hope and the reality of human sin

The reason that Dulles sees hope as invincible is because it is based on God's love as Creator, and God's forgiveness as Redeemer. In his discussion on the Christian doctrine of God and humanity Dulles says that the Bible describes God as both loving and powerful. He goes on to say that if God were loving but not powerful then God would be incapable of doing the good that God intends. This would mean our hope would be insecure. If God were powerful but not loving then we should be unable to live up to God's standards and so live in fear of God's judgement. Our hope would thus have no solid basis. But because God is powerful and loving we can trust in God's mercy, and this then is the

psychological basis for "hope against hope" (Dulles 1987:68). This means that "Christian hope is invincible because it is founded not on creatures but on God " (Dulles 1987:69).

Moltmann's understanding of hope is also built on the premise that it is not through human endeavour that change will take place but only as we co-operate with God, who alone transcends the reality of the negativity of the human condition. According to Meeks (1974), Moltmann builds on Marx's understanding that persons must realize the tension, pain, and transcendence of religion as being the ground of transforming the given actuality in which they live. God reveals God's self in history through judgement, contradiction, and difference. Since God identifies with what is negative, it is through being a part of the negative that God's lordship is known. Meeks (1974:144) writes :

Thus the external ground of the universality of the Gospel is not the abstract, universal nature of man but the concrete community of sin, inhumanity, poverty, and lack of future with God....Christian faith turns to the negatives in order there to proclaim and to practice the negation of the negatives.

Moltmann views the will to live as the refusal to simply accept oppression, and the deterioration of the quality of life that accompanies it. He speaks of the importance of Christianity overcoming "the fatal loss of courage with its *passion for living* " (1985:167). Moltmann believes that it is only

as Christians show that their faith is rooted in their socioeconomic and political realities, in their "passionate love of life" that we can resist death, catastrophe and people who pursue destructive and deadly policies. He (1985:16) writes as follows:

We can break the spell of creeping acclimatization to the deterioration in the quality of life brought about by oppression and manmade catastrophes. The paralysing feeling of helplessness must be overcome if mankind is to go on promising itself a future.

In his treatment of the atonement Maimela writes of the meaning of Christ as the hope for African humanity. He makes the important point that we cannot meaningfully speak of Christ as its hope if we do not deal with the reality of the sociopolitical, economic, and cultural problems facing the continent. Maimela proposes that we look at the concrete problems that face Southern Africa as a starting point in order to address this question. As we do this he suggests (1987:112) that we should ask the question, in what sense does Christ become our hope by virtue of being the hope of the world? Maimela (1987:113), writing in the context of apartheid South Africa, says that:

In the face of this political system which declares that people are irreconcilable, cannot and will never be able to live together in peace and justice, thereby denying that the death of Christ indeed reconciles different races, theology will have to show how Christ can become the hope in the situation in which this hope is denied, and how the wounds and hurt that are provoked by oppression and racial conflict can be healed.

Theology has, therefore, to deal with the reality of what causes such a

situation, and how it is that humankind allows such situations to continue. We have already dealt with the historical origins of detention in chapter one of this thesis. To ask why this situation of oppression is allowed to continue is, in Maimela's terms, to confront the problem of sin. Sin is the refusal to be in a relationship of fellowship with one's neighbours. It is only as we understand sin in this way that we can understand why the system of detention was allowed to continue. For through this system, the white ruling class and its subordinates, actively sought to destroy individuals and negate that which makes for healthy community living. As we have already seen in the previous chapter, Maimela views the whole of human existence as characterised by sin. He sees the need for healing and transformation to take place if there is to be any hope for Africa. In dialogue with Maimela we might say that the same is true for detainees. Maimela says that it is the atoning work of Jesus on the cross that brings this hope into being. It is because Christ wins the victory over evil through the cross that he is able to stand by, surround, and defend the victims of sin and oppression. Maimela (1987:116) writes:

In Christ there is the possibility for renewal and re-creation of humanity, and therefore there is hope for humankind, the hope that is grounded on his victory on the cross.

The cross is the first sign of the future victory of human history. This means that Christians can and must struggle and be in conflict with evil

structures, and all forms of corruption, all that stands in the way of God's perfect rule. In this struggle against all that denies the individuals worth, we see how Christ's victory over the evil forces serves as the source of hope for humankind. The struggle against evil and the knowledge of ultimate victory is what Dulles refers to when he speaks of a Christian hope that is "realistic". He writes (1987:70):

The Christian has no need to shrink in fear from the prospect of poverty, disgrace, captivity, physical pain, apparent failure, even death. None of these eventualities dejects him because he has been taught that to share in Christ's suffering is the normal way to prepare oneself to share in his glory. He does not feel compelled to look upon man's future, in some pollyannish way, as an endless progress. He soberly recognizes that no utopia will ever be constructed through human planning.

This struggle against evil structures and forces includes the fight against the system of detention without trial. The attitude of the detainees regarding hope as the will to live is best expressed in the words of Gutierrez. He (1983:218) writes as follows on the importance of the theology of hope:

Amongst other things, it helps us overcome the association between faith and fear of the future...To hope does not mean to know the future, but rather to be open, in an attitude of spiritual childhood, to accepting it as a gift. But this gift is accepted in the negation of injustice, in the protest against trampled human rights, and in the struggle for peace and brotherhood. Thus hope fulfills a mobilizing and liberating function in history.

The possibility of detention was a very real one for Christian activists in the 1970s and 1980s. Faced with this possibility, Christians had to be

prepared to make this sacrifice for the sake of their work for justice and peace. Sometimes this meant that Christian activists had to consider the very real possibility of facing further detentions. The way in which Christian detainees of this study respond to the challenge of evil serves as example to us of the hope that is ours in Christ. They are witnesses of how the challenge of evil is overcome in and through the power of hope.

One way in which evil was overcome was through anger being harnessed to become an instrument of resistance to the situation of detention. Gonville French-Beytagh, a detainee not included in this study, speaks of the need to struggle against evil. He (1973:162) writes, "I think that Christians are far too apt to try and escape from the need truly to hate evil, so that their love is also wishy washy and weak." The importance of anger as a source of resistance to evil is further highlighted by Nolan. He (1986:25) writes:

God's compassion is always accompanied by his anger and indignation. They are two sides of the same coin because one cannot really love or have real compassion if one is not able to get angry and indignant. When one person harms another, when they exploit them and oppress them, then real compassion for those who are being harmed and oppressed necessarily entails anger and indignation towards those who make them suffer....Sharing God's anger can be a liberating experience and a source of drive, energy and determination in our spiritual lives.



Kerchoff and Dandala both speak of their anger at the manner of their treatment. In Kerchoff's case it was anger at being separated from other detainees and held in solitary confinement. His anger was increased by what his detention was doing to his family. He says, "They (the security police) were manipulating people. I saw this as evil and was angry about it." Raphesu speaks of how his anger was aroused by the treatment meted out by his interrogators. He says interrogation was the most severe part of detention:

They are not honest. They ask you about underground organisations and your activities with them. They try to link your activities with them. When you are relaxed someone comes from behind you and you are slapped with a 'warm klap' [a hard slap, across the ears and side of the face]. When people want to incriminate you with lies it eats on you. When you've been assaulted they hold you for a longer time under section six, so you are unable to prove assault.

It is Deeb, however, who best articulates his feelings of anger on being detained. He (1987:38) writes this of a particular period during his detention:

At this stage I developed a very understanding [sic] attitude of resignation to my detention - as an inevitability of the time, and therefore not to be got all emotional and angry about....My 'understanding' approach was in danger of demobilising me, making me stop fighting. Yet I dared not stop fighting - nor suppress my emotion and anger. To do that would be to bend to the system - to become 'understanding' (and probably accepting) of evil. I did not want my passion for changing the system to be blunted. So I immediately started identifying new demands to fight for.

The "passion for living" which refuses to admit defeat to hopelessness, but rather offers resistance through use of anger is thus an agent of hope. Moltmann (1985:194) says of such hope:

The anticipation of what is to come will break this political resistance too and will change the closed, immunized society into an 'open' one, open for the experience of the future in the hope of what will come. It opens society's institutions and society itself for others, but also makes it vulnerable and alterable. Without this perilous openness to the world and time, there is no future, no freedom and no life for people or for human society.

Further ways of overcoming evil through the power of hope are found in the devotions of the South African Council of Churches Conference in 1986. These were led by Wolfram Kistner. The theme of the conference was "Hope in crisis". Kistner chose to preach from the text of Ephesians to help delegates to deal with the crisis caused by the "state of emergency" regulations at this time. He preached on the power that Christians have. In a similar understanding to that of Dulles and Maimela, he (1988:174) reminds us that through the death and resurrection of Jesus God's power is committed to us. Thus though the situation may appear to us to be one of apparent powerlessness it is not the case. Kistner (1988:177) went on to point out how God's power ensures that even when we are imprisoned unjustly we are free. Kistner, reflecting on the situation at the time, went on to point out how detainees and other people imprisoned by the apartheid government were in fact sources of

hope. He (1988:187) writes:

We are also aware of many examples of the victims of such measures who have converted what was meant to be evil, to serve a good purpose. Thus we can refer to examples of detentions and bannings which have been used to serve exactly the opposite purpose of what they were intended to achieve. The witness of the victims, their personal convictions, and their outreach, and their influence, has been strengthened and intensified by the isolation to which they had been exposed. This outcome has not been achieved merely by their endurance but also by their active conversion of what was meant to serve an evil purpose into something that served God's glory.

It is for this reason that Kistner urged delegates to continue to struggle against evil and oppression, even though the cost might be imprisonment.

In his last address to the conference, given on the morning of the day of his own detention, Kistner (1988:192 ) says the following:

In our own situation we are becoming more and more aware of what it means to be an ambassador of Christ in chains. A considerable number of fellow Christians are already in prison. Possibly more of us will go to prison sooner or later. Our Bible passage of today (Eph.1: 3-13) ensures us that in such a situation and particularly in such isolation we are not cut off from God the Father of Jesus Christ and that we have access to His power. We are also not isolated from one another.

A very good example of the way in which faith served as an agent of hope and power is found in Mashinini's account. Here we see how the challenge of dealing with evil is dealt with by relying on the resource of the hope contained in Christ's victory over evil.

When asked if she had hope during her detention Mashinini says the

following:

I always had hope. You need to be strong to fulfill hope. I had no Bible, but I had strong faith, I am a strong believer. That is why I knew I needed communion. Communion gave you strength. I knew I had to refuel my energy from hope. On one occasion I was being interrogated and I knew that I was about to break. I remembered the line from the hymn 'Rock of ages cleft for me', I remembered the words 'let me hide myself in thee.' As I did so the telephone rang and the interrogation stopped because the interrogator had to leave the room to deal with the call. My faith experience kept me sane while I was in detention.

Equally powerful is Deeb's understanding of the importance of the resurrection in order to maintain hope. Speaking of his experiences and feelings while in detention, he (1987:39) writes:

Finally, all these experiences and reflections led me to a new appreciation of Jesus' resurrection. While I had always battled to embrace faith in the resurrection intellectually, I came to see that, ultimately, the intellectual response was not of the essence. Faith in the resurrection was reflected in one's present approach to life. If I could maintain hope of a better future in the midst of our dismal reality of death, oppression and suffering, I really was believing that Jesus had risen. What other reason to have hope, when our circumstances were riddled with forces that could only breed cynicism?

Souchon's understanding of the resurrection allowed him to withstand interrogation aimed at intimidating him, and inducing a sense of guilt and fear arising from his sister's death. He recounts his experience as follows:

17 June the security cops were back and wanted my Passport, which I said I didn't have, and I complained about [not having] my Bible. Then on the 18th and 19th, a heavy experience. Four of them came in wearing balaclava, woke me up, insulted me, said

they were taking me to Pretoria, pushed me about, made me take a cold shower, and then left, leaving a young cadet behind. I was completely shit scared, balaclava, etc., this was not good. They quoted Romans 13, and demanded to know how I could say that I am a Christian. I answered them. My major fear was that they thought that I had information that they needed, and that they would beat it out of me, and I had no useful information. I knew from other people's experience that at four a.m. they would pitch again so I got into bed fully clothed and decided to sleep. At four a.m. they pitched again, and I couldn't place them. They were all intelligent and smart arsed. They started to talk about my sister's death earlier that year, and as I was completely resolved about this, I was prepared to talk to them about this. I only discovered what they were trying to do, when I saw a psychologist about six months later. It was because of my faith that I was able to work through my sister's death. I really felt protected by God in this situation.

We further see the interrelatedness of hope that is both invincible yet at the same time realistic about sin and its effects in the fact that Chikane, Farisani, Raphesu, Mayson, and Sister Bernard all continued their work for justice, and were all detained again. In the case of Chikane, Farisani, Raphesu, and Mayson, this was despite their torture experiences, and their fears of being detained again. In Sister Bernard's case it was despite being continually harassed, and even locked up over weekends. Farisani tells of how a close friend of his, Isaac Muofhe, was killed by the security police. At this time he was warned not to visit the family, or even conduct the funeral, or he too would be killed. Farisani had only been released from detention for a second time when presented with this dilemma. He was frightened of being redetained. His fear kept him away

from the widow's house for a few days. Throughout this time he was struggling with God. He (1988:66) writes as follows:

Many times the voice of God had said to me, 'You shall go'. I always answered, 'I will not. It is very dangerous. They will detain me. I will be killed. God, do not be reckless. I do not want a third detention'. God never gave up. 'If you are my pastor, not just a status-dean, you shall surely go'.

Farisani did go to see the widow, and saw the lawyers to discuss Isaac's death. He also helped another young woman whose husband was tortured. After this, he was redetained.

In the case of Brittion, Kerchoff, and Deeb, the experience of detention strengthened their resistance to injustice. Brittion says "In the long run I felt stronger, and I felt bolder, and the next time they [the security police] raided the office I was stronger, and able to challenge their actions".

Kerchoff also speaks of the empowering role which detention had for him.

He says:

The detention experience reinforced my commitment to the struggle for justice. PACSA had many meetings about my detention, and the support was extensive. I even saw a birthday card from them.

Deeb says this of his fear of detention:

I even had a deep sense of my detention being a gift - an event helping me to shed my fear of detention [ and hence to improve my service to the struggle ]....I also felt very thankful for the many experiences and opportunities over the years that had enabled me to overcome so many fears, grow in confidence, and open myself

up more to others. This led me to confront all the fears and uncertainties I felt in relation to my future, which gradually began to appear more as a challenges rather than obstacles.

I thus felt that my detention had had a very positive effect on my commitment. I felt it to be in no way reduced - only a lot more realistic, in that I was now much more aware of what we were up against, what resources were necessary to sustain the struggle, and what I was capable of - insights which often made the whole experience seem Providential.

Lastly, it is in the testimony of Frank Chikane that we again see the meaning which hope gives to the believer to be victorious over sin. In an interview recorded by Ronald Sider, Chikane (1989: 358) says this of the meaning of his Pentecostal faith:

You depend more on the Lord for what happens to you in terms of the future. Pentecostal Christians have used belief in the hereafter to avoid the reality of the present. But it also keeps you strong to believe, 'This is not the end of the world: if they kill me now, it's not the end.'

#### 4.4.2 Hope and solidarity

Dulles believes that Christian hope is "comprehensive", because it is not simply a matter of individual hope but is extended to all people, and ultimately the whole created order. He says (1987:69) that the "corporate dimension of our hope is expressed in various biblical images, such as that of the 'Kingdom of God'." This image conveys something of the meaning of human solidarity. It is this very need to work with God and other people in order to realize on earth some anticipation of the

Kingdom of God, which Dulles (1987:70) calls the "fruitfulness" of hope. Since we hope not just for ourselves we are, therefore, brought together into a community of hope.

Albert Nolan, in his attempt to contextualize the meaning of hope in the South African situation, speaks of the way in which the Kingdom of God is brought into being through Christians being a part of the national struggle for liberation from apartheid. He (1988:159) quotes Dorothee Soelle as saying:

Struggle is the source of hope. There is no hope without struggle. There is no hope that drops from heaven through the intervention of God. Hope lies within the struggle.

Nolan sees hope and challenge as being dialectically related to one another. He writes (1988:195):

Without hope for the future of South Africa it is impossible to feel challenged to do anything about the situation. On the other hand, it is only when we begin to take up the challenge that we begin to feel hopeful. We find hope in the struggle. The more we become involved in the process of salvation, the more hopeful we become. And the more hopeful we become, the more deeply do we feel challenged to further and further transcendence.

We see the interrelatedness of hope and challenge in the important role which solidarity played for detainees. The situation of detention was designed to break the political will of detainees. One of the ways in which detainees responded to this challenge was through their solidarity



with one another. The expression of this solidarity served as a means of hope. We see this in the way in which the detainees sought to help one another during their detention and after it. Those who suffered became a source of hope to one another and even used their suffering to bring hope to other sufferers after their detention. An example of such solidarity in the midst of suffering is found in Farisani's account of his meeting with Muthuping. Farisani was being led back to his cell after being tortured when they met. In recalling the encounter he (1988:4) writes:

I was led out by both security policemen, to some holding cells nearby. 'Come out, madala!' one called contemptuously. Out came an old man pale as a ghost, lips cracked, and apparently very weak physically. 'Do you know this man, madala [madala means old man]?'. Instead of responding to the question, the man raised a clenched fist and saluted me: 'Power to the people. Power, brother! You are fine! I am fine. Power!' I knew him. I recognised him - once we were both speakers at a student conference in Wilgespruit - old man Muthuping.

Another form of solidarity from within the country came from the solidarity expressed through the work of the Detainees Parents Support Committee, and the activities of former detainees. In the detainees' experiences we find accounts of how they used their experience of detention to draw alongside the families of other detainees, or even to help detainees. Sacho used her counselling skills for the Detainees Parents Support Committee. Chikane helped families of detained people to obtain legal aid. Mashinini spoke about her detention experience, and

the psychological trauma it caused her, so that other detainees with similar trauma might receive counselling. She also continued to help in the drawing up of a register of detainees and political prisoners, and became part of the Free the Children Alliance. Dandala could speak to others of what detention means. He says this of his release:

There was strong congregational support. It was very powerful at the end of our detention. There was a service to receive us. At this service a woman asked me, "*Mfundisi* [minister] how is my son? How is Xhola?" I knew exactly what was going on and was able to say that Xhola was fine. It is as though you are coming out of hell and are able to give a report of hell.

Not only was support from and between detainees, and organisations within the country important, but international support of detainees also played an important role and was thus a source of hope and solidarity. Moltmann speaks of the need for solidarity between people in Western society and those who suffer elsewhere. He says there needs to be a rediscovery of seeking a common future. He (1985:167) writes that if humanity wants a common future, and if we are to overcome suffering and death, then those who can do something about the situation must rediscover the meaning of suffering. It is only through solidarity in suffering that Moltmann believes we rediscover the meaning of fellowship and the possibility of new ways of living, being, and acting.

The international community certainly played an important role in

expressing solidarity when it placed pressure on the government to be more humane in their treatment of detainees, and also when it pressurised the government to release certain detainees. For Farisani, Mashinini, and Kistner, the campaigning by members of the international community helped to secure their release. There is also evidence in the archive files of the SACC ( South African Council of Churches) of letter writing campaigns conducted by church groups and individuals overseas. These letters written for the most part to the Minister of Justice, and the Minister of Police, came in response to requests from Amnesty International to secure the release of Raphesu, Moreo, Sister Bernard, and Kerchoff.

We have already read of how the international community, with assistance from Amnesty International, prevented Farisani from being tortured to death. In Kistner's case, the overseas solidarity arose through the intervention of Dr. Becken and Professor Huber who were with him at the time of his arrest. On returning to Germany they immediately held a press conference. Extensive press coverage and pressure from the West German government resulted in Kistner's release.

In Mashinini's case, it was support from the international trade unions,

such as the International Union of Food and Allied Workers Association which helped to protect her. Although this intervention did not secure her early release, it at least provided her with a degree of protection. This was particularly important as Mashinini's detention took place at the same time that Neil Aggett was killed in detention.

Not only did detainees support other detainees, but sometimes ordinary prisoners were a source of support to detainees. Deeb (1987:120) writes:

I developed a real affection for so many of these people, who provided me with rare sympathetic human contact, especially during the times when I was on my own. During the hunger strike, they were all very supportive (continual thumbs up!) - a number of them, themselves, having staged such strikes in the past....I found it difficult to imagine so many of these warm people out there in a world of crime. When possible, I tried to find out what had motivated their crime. One said, 'With a wife, four children, and no job - a man must rob!' Very logical! But for the most part, they had a different mentality, which I was not able to penetrate. What was clear, though, was that people virtually never told the real story about what they had done. Nevertheless, getting to know this 'new world' gave a lot of new purpose to my time inside.

During her detention Mashinini spent some time in Pretoria Central Prison. The section she was held in was for condemned prisoners. She (1989:69) recounts her experience as follows:

In early January there came two black women to the corridor where my cell was. They were going to be executed. I could hear them talking, but they were not sounding angry about going to be hanged. The only time I could hear their anger was when they

were angry about my food, which was standing outside the door and was cold, and about the type of food I was eating. But when it came to themselves they were talking sweetly - 'Make me beautiful, so that when I meet my Creator I am beautiful.'

This experience of the solidarity and courage of ordinary condemned prisoners greatly challenged Mashinini. Her experience led her to have solidarity with them, and to enter into their suffering. As a result Mashinini became opposed to the imposition of the death sentence, and she was active in the campaign to Save the Sharpville Six, and later campaigns to abolish the death sentence.

Nolan (1988:196 ) sums up the importance of hope as a means of solidarity in these words:

The dialectic of hope and challenge takes place not only in the individual but also in the community. We generate hope in one another. We create together an atmosphere of hopefulness. I am challenged by the hopefulness of other people and by the way they have taken up the challenge. I become hopeful when I see what God is doing in and through other people, and they are no doubt affected by my hope and my commitment.

#### 4.5 SUMMARY

We have in this chapter sought to establish the relationship between the challenge component of the hardy personality theory and a Christian

theology of hope. We have established the fact that both are dependent on a viewpoint that change rather than stability is the norm of life. To cope with the stress induced by change it was essential for the Christian detainees of this study to have a hope in the future. Simultaneously we note the importance of not escaping the hardship of the present. We have looked at examples of how detainees were able to respond to their detention in a positive way by mobilising their resources in such a way as to respond to the situation as one of challenge. This way of coping with stress was not without its price. An example of someone who both faced a crisis and paid the price for it is Mphahlele. She (1989; 387) views her detention in the following way:

True, I had paid a price because it brought ill-health to my husband. Nevertheless, I thank God that ever since that day we spoke to those policemen, not one child has been shot until today. Ever since then the shebeens have not been abused by the police. The police behaviour has been normalised to a point. I praise God that I have paid the price for a good cause.

Christian hope depends on detainees having hope in the victory over evil. They also need to understand the power of hope as an agent of solidarity. Besides this they need a hope that is both realistic and has a passion for living.

The belief in the hope is derived from the kingdom of God. It is this hope that enables the detainees to deal with oppression and torture, while still

placing their trust in God. In their support of other detainees and their families, and in their compassion for other ordinary prisoners, they maintained their capacity for suffering for others. They maintained their belief in the power of hope, by believing in the rightness of their cause. This belief in the power of hope enabled them to face their own fears, and to continue in their struggle for justice. Finally through making use of their anger they maintained the will to live. For all these reasons these detainees fulfill the second requirement of the challenge component namely that: "Challenge leads persons to be catalysts in their environments and to practice responding to the unexpected" (Kobasa 1982:7).

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSION: THE REALITY OF SUFFERING SOME PASTORAL CONSIDERATIONS OF WHAT WE HAVE LEARNT

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

Thus far in this thesis we have described with the way in which detainees have dealt with their experience of detention using various coping skills. Through using the psychological theory of the hardy personality and combining this with various theological categories [faith, forgiveness, justice, community, and hope] we have seen how they could deal with the stress of detention. In looking at how they exercised commitment, control, and challenged their situation, the difficulties of detention have been alluded to.

In concluding this study of detention we now need to look at the real evil of detention, the negative effects of detention, that these detainees were subjected to. We will look at the psychological categories of dread, dependency, and debility. Since in this study these categories are seen as companion parallel concepts to commitment, control, and challenge, it is not necessary for us to deal with them in the same detailed way that



we dealt with the components of the hardy personality theory. We will, however, define each of these terms, and look at how these aspects of detention affected the Christian detainees in this study. Having done this, and bearing in mind that one of our aims in doing this study is to see if we are able to provide some ideas towards a pastoral model for dealing with the past hurt of detention, we then look at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the challenges it poses for the churches.

Finally what we have learned from the previous chapters will be incorporated with Emerson's understanding of 'suffering work'. In doing this we will attempt to show how resources drawn from the faith tradition of Christian activists may be used in helping detainees deal with debility, dependency, and dread.

## 5.2 DREAD

Dread is 'the state of chronic fear induced by captors through a range of threatening devices.' (1987:79) These 'threatening devices' include psychological abuse. According to the study conducted by Foster *et al.* there are four types of psychological abuse:

- a. Those involving communication techniques, which are the most common. Different techniques have different aims. False accusations, misleading information, and offers of rewards are aimed at distorting or confusing the situation. Verbal abuse is aimed at humiliating or degrading the detainee. Threats are aimed at instilling fear and thus weaken the detainee's conscious decision to resist interrogation. Misleading information about family and friends is directed at increasing the emotional vulnerability of the detainee.
- b. Mental weakening devices such as solitary confinement, blindfolding, sham executions, and prolonged interrogation. They are used to 'induce cognitive, affective and motivational vulnerabilities and disorientations.' (1987:106)
- c. Psychological terror tactics. These include threats of violence or execution made to the detainee, and threats made to the detainee about his/her family. Being made to watch the torture of another detainee also falls under this category.
- d. Humiliation, which includes being kept naked, excrement abuse, and other situations, which may cause the detainee extreme

embarrassment in the presence of others.

There is evidence of these types of psychological abuse being used against nearly all the detainees whose accounts are used in this study. Farisani, Raphesu, Dandala, Chikane, Mashinini, Mphahlele, and Mayson were all subjected to psychological abuse involving one or more 'communication techniques'.

Farisani, Raphesu, and Kerchoff all speak of the fact that their interrogators would not believe them when they told the truth and accused them of lying. Farisani and Raphesu both speak about how their interrogators sought to link them with banned and underground organisations. Furthermore, they tried to link the detainees' activities with these organisations to incriminate them. Writing of her experience of interrogators, Mashinini says (1989:75):

They were questioning me about our meetings and our trade union centre and where this idea had come from, and that somebody must have put this or that idea into my head. They wanted to know if I had ever read certain books - I can't remember the names, because in fact I hadn't read them, but they were Marxist books, because Marxists were the sort of people who have that type of thought, of bringing people together. I was interested in a trade union centre for worker education. Not necessarily with any ulterior motives behind it. But I was interrogated for hours to come up with the truth about the idea and where it came from.

Always they wanted the truth, when I had no more truth to tell. I don't think they ever really understood that in fact there was nothing to give away. But they always tried to find it this nothing.

Chikane was detained in 1977 and tortured by security police who believed that he was connected with John Phala. This was despite the fact that he had no connection with the events that lead to Phala's and others being charged (Chikane 1989:181). Dandala relates how during his interrogation he was accused of preaching from the pulpit that people should burn down the houses of security police in the townships. Later another interrogator attempted to link his presence at the funeral of Goniwe with the activities of the UDF (United Democratic Front). He also speaks of being taunted by a black policeman during another session. We have also previously read how Mphahlele's interrogator called her a liar and insulted her. Mayson relates how the Security Police in John Vorster Square stripped him naked, handcuffed him and then brought in all the staff of the ninth and tenth floor to surround him. He writes (1984:108-109):

Those that could not pack inside the room, went into adjacent offices and stood on desks to glare through the clear glass in the top of the partitions. I was deluged with insults, questions and tirades all of which embroidered the theme: How can you as a Christian support the ANC, be a terrorist, be a commie, and put your family in peril? 'We are Christians but you are not.'

Mashinini was also subjected to verbal abuse and threats of losing her position in the union, and her husband. This is what she writes (1989:76) of these experiences:

I was never physically abused by them. Just pushed around, but not battered or assaulted. It was an emotional battery, I suppose. There was a woman who would say, 'If you tell the truth and nothing else you will be able to go back to your children in good time'. And then there was a policeman who was very angry and bullying, called Whitehead, who would tell me I was fat, but that I was not to worry because by the time I left this place I would be the size of a marble, I would have lost so much weight. And that I would lose my position with the union, which had made me so hot-headed. And that when I came out my husband would no longer be there.

Mashinini also speaks of how her interrogators deliberately misfed her information about Neil Aggett. This she attributes to the fact that they could not deal with the reality of white people working for justice for black people. We read this in her account of the way she was lied to about Neil Aggett (1989:81):

When they interrogated me they didn't know that I had found out that Neil Aggett was dead. They would time and time again tell me, 'We're going to question him about this.' I remember Whitehead would use very vulgar words when he spoke about Neil. I could see he was furious and mad about him, that there was no more price Neil could pay, because he had died on them.

Farisani recounts the following of the interrogation technique used by his interrogators. They sent a black informer into the room to talk to him after they had tortured him and he had lost consciousness. When

he regained consciousness, this man told him how other activists would crack under the pressure of interrogation. He went on to encourage Farisani to tell all he knew with the minimum of suffering or be prepared to tell it all anyway after going through hell. Farisani relates the rest of the conversation as follows (1988:45):

'Perhaps you should know,' he went on, 'that your friends were also detained immediately after you. For the past two weeks we have been working on them. We now know all about you. We also know that you were influenced and misled. We do not want to punish you, but those who misguided you to misguide other people who in turn misguided other people particularly the young. I do not want to see the white police deal with you again. You are mine, but only if you cooperate, if you play ball. It is now one in the morning. They will come back at eight.'

Farisani, Chikane, Sacho, Kerchoff, Souchon, Mashinini, Britton, Sister Bernard, Mayson, and Boesak were all held in solitary confinement for different periods of time. It is not possible to recount how each of these detainees experienced these periods of confinement, but the following accounts give a general idea of the effects of such confinement on detainees. Farisani writes as follows of the effects of his second last detention in Venda Central Prison. After speaking about what was good in his prison experience he says (1988:8):

I hated this prison. I hated the small toilet and washbasin, the iron grilles at the door, always too stubborn to let one's head out. I hated visits by security police at night, which often led to the removal of one of us for nocturnal interrogation. I hated

listening to stories of the "graduates", those from the torture chamber. I hated the insults by some of the uniformed policemen... I hated all the good things, because nothing is good in detaining innocent people. I hate detention and torture and murder...lonely moments, no sun, no trees, no newspapers, no wife, no children, no friends, no Bible, no books, no truth, no control, no decency, no limits, no life, no freedom. A kingdom of brutal beasts, of spineless ghosts that unleash their lunacy on helpless victims hooded and handcuffed at the back. A kingdom whose statue of liberty is the violation of human rights. Here Pretoria's will is done.

Brittton says the following:

I used to think what am I here for when they've got all the files and minutes of the meetings of ECC [The End Conscription Campaign] I used to mark the days. One of the frightening or demoralising things is that you know that there is no way of knowing how long you would be held for.

Mashinini expresses herself as follows (1989:87):

So in prison you are anxious and concerned about everything. You are killing yourself about being there and what's going to happen tomorrow, and all that, and you look forward to your outings - to the doctor, to visitors, and to the interrogations.

And then, one day, the interrogations just stopped. That was it - bang. No word. Nothing about why. And I missed them. I thought once again I was going to be sitting in that room all by myself. I didn't think that I knew myself any longer. There was no mirror. It's odd what happens when you don't see yourself in the mirror for such a long time. You don't recognise yourself. You think, who am I?

Sister Bernard says that her detention experience helped her in her commitment to working for justice, but that solitary confinement is not without its cost:

I asked the prison inspector what solitary confinement meant.

He said, 'You have lost all your human rights.' I asked what kind of an object one was. He said, 'You will find out.' He was right, you are like a robot, with no will and no choice. It was a mastermind of a human being who set out to plan a prison life for other people. Somehow, somewhere it gets its results, you either swim or you drown... One is strengthened by affirming for oneself that the cause for which one was imprisoned was just, and worthwhile... Still solitary confinement in South Africa is solitary confinement.

Chikane, Farisani, Raphesu, Mashinini, and Mayson were all subjected to prolonged interrogation, and all of them except Mashinini were subjected to psychological terror tactics. We have already read of Mayson's interrogation in an earlier chapter. Raphesu refers to "heavy interrogation" during his 1977 fourteen-day detention. Farisani was forced to listen to the screams of other prisoners being interrogated (1988:36;43-44). Chikane says this of his 1977 detention (1989:54):

The last ordeal of my six weeks of torture had involved being kept standing in one spot for 50 hours without sleep. I was chained against the bars of the heating system, under-fed, interrogated and assaulted continuously by teams of interrogators who changed shifts every eight hours, 24 hours around the clock.

Mphahlele, Souchon, and Dandala were all subjected to psychological terror tactics. We have already read Souchon's account of the attempts to unnerve him by the hooded policemen. Mphahlele speaks of her fear for her daughter during her interrogation



(1989:379):

He wanted to know how many children I had, where they were, what they were doing. I told them. When I mentioned the youngest one, he wanted to know at what university she was. He picked up a pen and started to write. I thought, oh no, now they are going to pick up my daughter!

Dandala says:

We were taken to a room and seated on the floor, then they called Soga and myself out. They took us to a small passage and there they beat us up with fists saying we had been preaching from the pulpit that their homes would be burnt down. I said 'that is a lie, I have never condoned violence.' Then they were trying to force us to toyi-toyi saying that we were toyi-toyi ministers. They wore balaclavas, there were black policemen and a white policeman was behind them. He hit one of us, only once.

The effectiveness of detention in achieving a sense of dread is seen in the continuing fear that detainees have after being released from detention. Mashinini, Moreo, Dandala, Farisani, and Sacho all speak of their fears of being detained again after their release. Mashinini suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder and needed to be treated for this in Denmark. Moreo was disturbed by passing traffic and was afraid that this was the police coming to arrest him again. He says:

The experience killed my spirit. I was worried that my wife would be left alone with no real friends. It broke my resistance. This so particularly since on the night of my release others were taken in again. I was filled with fear and prayed through the nights. When any car passed the house I thought that they [the police] would be coming to fetch me, and in the day this would also happen. They kept coming to check on me.

Dandala says:

What was most painful after my release was a dread of return. I was panicky for some weeks afterwards until someone helped me understand this. This person said 'You Mvume you are feeling naked, as though someone has touched the real you, and there is nothing wrong in trying to protect the real you.'

Farisani, as we have already read, was frightened of visiting Muofhe's family since he was afraid of being redetained. Sacho was also afraid.

She says that "afterwards I fell apart." She was so afraid that after her detention she felt she had to sign a confession that she had made in detention that the police told her to sign after her release. This fear of being redetained lasted for a long time afterwards.

### 5.3 DEPENDENCY

Dependency according to Foster et al (1987:79) is 'the product of the totalitarian regime imposed by captors and is demonstrated to captives by the deprivation of those factors needed to maintain sanity and life.' They further point out that long periods of solitary confinement strengthen this dependency of the detainee on his/her captors. The complexity of the detainee-captor relationship is confirmed by the detainees themselves. We see this in the interviews conducted with Moreo, Mashinini, Sacho, and Sister Bernard.

Farisani and Deeb also write of the relationship that comes to exist between the detainee and his captors.

In Moreo's case as we have already read, the help he received from his parishioner who was a warder helped him cope with his detention. Mashinini, on the other hand, experienced both positive and negative relationships with her captors. We have already read how the wardress at Jeppe helped her, as did a young policeman whom she could trust, but there were others who were not as helpful. She describes (1989:76-77) how on being taken to John Vorster Square for interrogation she saw on a poster the heading, *DETAINEE DIES IN CELL*. This disturbed her and on returning to Jeppe police station she asked a policeman to be told who it was, the policeman referred her to a section 6 inspector. This man would give her no further information, but amused himself by making her play a guessing game as to whom it was.

Sacho says:

In order to survive I needed social relationships. I tapped into the goodness of others [interrogators and warders]. I tapped into their humanity. I needed to tap into God in them. I developed a relationship with the wardresses and would counsel them. They found it difficult to understand why I was imprisoned. One wardress was very distressed when she was found out playing a board game with me and told she was not allowed to speak to the prisoners. I would be left to sit in the sun for longer periods than

other prisoners. I had such a good relationship with the guards that when Anne came to fetch me at John Vorster she was shocked at my friendly approach to guards and policemen. Afterwards I had to come to terms with the evil of detention.

In a similar way to Sacho, Sister Bernard found herself making friends with the wardresses at Krugersdorp prison. She says:

When I was to be released I definitely saw them crying and I couldn't understand why. I found out that there is a golden rule that once you've been detained you cannot visit the house of a wardress. Despite everything else hardships cement a relationship in a very different way .... the very security police become part of your life, and to my surprise some of them became very dear and friends.

Farisani speaks of how despite the many warders and guards there were those who were challenged by his stand for justice, and who were even genuinely helpful. One policeman put ointment in his eyes, ears, and nose, and tended to his wounds after he had been severely tortured, taken to hospital and then returned to his cell. Other policemen in hospital helped to bath him while he was recovering. At Masisi he was allowed free access to the shower by the guards.

In describing his relationship with his interrogators ('the primary enemy') and the prison warders ('the secondary enemy') Deeb makes a distinction between the two. Of his interrogators he (1987:34) writes:

We remained enemies, with opposing wills and intentions pitted against each other. Nevertheless, I at times felt a deep sadness and pity and even warmth for a number of these people.

Writing of the warders he (1987:34) says:

The warders in the prison were a completely different kettle of fish....Many of them continually distanced themselves from our captors....A number of them tried to make things a little easier for us at times, e.g. allowing longer exercise times, allowing freer communication amongst ourselves, passing brief messages from friends who had come to prison to bring clothes etc....Despite a good deal of sympathy from them, (and although recognising that they weren't the primary enemy) we grew to realise that they were seldom (if ever) to be trusted....Nevertheless, at least they provided some human contact - albeit distant, strained, and often hostile.

#### 5.4 DEBILITY

Debility is defined as the 'loss of energy and the incapacity to resist even minor abuses' (Foster et al.1987:79). It is produced 'by starvation, fatigue, disease, constant humiliation and chronic physical pain through beatings and other physical abuses' (Foster et al 1987:79).

There are no accounts of debility occurring among the detainees in this study. The closest we get to the experience is the experience of loss of memory, the need for a psychologist to be consulted, and a temporary loss of the will to eat or take medication.

Mashinini was physically worn out by her experience of solitary confinement. She was tormented by not being able to remember the name of her youngest daughter for a time. Even in this condition

Mashinini continued to offer resistance in that she did not at first eat the food at Jeppe police station since she believed that good food was being given to her to weaken her.

Kerchoff recounts how he needed and was granted access to a psychiatrist because of his difficulties in coping with solitary confinement. Farisani in his time at Sibasa prison was severely tortured and for a time refused to eat since he could not see the point of continuing to live. He also refused to use his medicines, and had to be hospitalised. When we read his account we realise that this was not because he was unable to resist abuse but because he was already physically weakened and did not wish to betray his own principles.

## 5.5 THE TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION AND DETAINEES

We have already noted in the introduction that it is one of the aims of this study to help detainees deal with the past hurt of detention. The negative effects of detention have now been clearly illustrated for us in the preceding sections on dread, dependency, and debility. We now need to seek ways in which healing of the past hurt might be accomplished. In order for us to do this we need to take cognizance of the current context

in which such healing needs to take place. We, therefore, need to look at the importance of the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission for the churches in their work with detainees.

One of the ways in which the past hurts of the people of South Africa are being dealt with is through the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) has been set up as required by Act of Parliament (the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act, signed by the President on 19 May 1996). The objectives of the commission, as stated in a booklet entitled *Truth and Reconciliation Commission* (1995:5), are:

to promote national unity and reconciliation in a spirit of understanding which transcends the conflicts and diversions of the past by:

- establishing as complete a picture as possible of the causes, nature and extent of the gross violations of human rights committed during the period from 1 March 1960 to the cutoff date including the antecedents, circumstances, factors and context of such violations, and the perspectives of the victims and the motives and perspectives of the persons responsible for committing such violations, by conducting investigations and holding hearings;
- facilitating the granting of amnesty to persons who make a full disclosure of all the relevant facts relating to acts associated with a political objective and which comply with the requirements of the Act.

In doing this the Commission (1995:28) aims:

- to return to victims their civil and human rights;
- to restore the moral order [of our society];
- to seek the truth, record it and make it known to the public;
- to create a culture of human rights and respect the rule of law;
- to prevent the shameful past from happening again.

The reference terms of the Commission are flawed in that they are derived from the political compromises arrived at through negotiations at Kempton Park that paved the way for the general elections of 1994 to take place. This is seen particularly in the fact that all that is needed for the granting of amnesty is that the offence must have been carried out with a political objective, and that an application to the Commission must set out the full facts of the violation of human rights by the perpetrator. If granted amnesty the perpetrator cannot be prosecuted in a civil court for the offence, and is not obliged to make any recompense to the victim/s of his/her action, or even to the victim's surviving family. There is in fact nothing preventing such a person from ever holding public office, nor requiring him/her to relinquish any material benefits (such as state pensions) which were granted from holding public office during the time such abuses were committed. Hamber (1995:6-7) points out that many survivors of perpetrators of brutal crimes will feel that justice has not been done if the perpetrator is granted amnesty. He says (1995:6-7) that these feelings:

may result in anger, resentment and even revenge in extreme cases  
....To deal with these feelings, and more broadly individuals' feelings



towards the perpetrator particularly if amnesty is granted, it is important that it is not demanded, either covertly or overtly, that survivors are expected to forgive the perpetrators. Anger or other emotional responses by survivors to the granting of amnesty to perpetrators has to be legitimised and space provided for survivors to openly express their feelings.

Furthermore, the cost of addressing past acts of violations of human rights is borne by the tax payer if the victim or the victim's family's claims to the Committee for reparation are successful. This is not only morally problematic, but theologically unacceptable since, as we have argued elsewhere, for true forgiveness to take place there needs not only to be an acknowledgement of the offence, but also a genuine attempt to make recompense to the victim. It is however, to be noted that institutions can only establish justice, they cannot grant forgiveness. This can only be done by individuals. This is perhaps best explained by what Lizzie Sefolo, the widow of a victim of a gross human rights abuse, said to the Truth Commission amnesty hearing. She said (*Mail and Guardian* 1996:13) that she doubted that the commission was a means of reconciliation because:

We are still feeling the pain. These people never came to us to ask for forgiveness. The government is doing this on our behalf ... It is people who should forgive each other, not the government.

It also needs to be noted that not all victims will be given an opportunity to tell their story in public hearings. Once their statements have been taken, it is up to the Commission to decide which cases it will hear publicly since it has a limited period in which to operate. It is therefore imperative that the church and other

religious bodies find ways of supporting or creating initiatives through which individuals and groups can share their stories. There is a real sense in which all South Africans are victims of apartheid's evil and therefore we all need to listen to and hear each others stories if healing is to take place in our society. We need to acknowledge our 'shadow side' both as a nation and as individuals. Storey (1996:2) says that while the process of reconciliation acknowledges the opponents' part in past evils, it also needs to see the perpetrators of apartheid as co-victims. It is only when the perpetrator is seen as a person "gripped by the primal forces of domination, prejudice, fear and hate that we can begin to relate to them". ( Storey 1996:2 ) In this regard there is a real need for churches and other religious bodies to follow the example of the DRC (Dutch Reformed Church) and confess areas in which it was negligent, failed to resist, or was complacent and compliant with regard to the policy and practice of apartheid. Some examples in this regard might be:

- 1) the inequality of salaries paid to black employees;
- 2) the churches' relative silence and inaction with regard to the policy of "Bantu education", the Group Areas Act, the Mixed Marriages Act, and forced removals, to name just a few apartheid laws;
- 3) the very limited support for and involvement with non violent campaigns engaging in civil disobedience;
- 4) the failure to challenge those who supported the apartheid system and

benefitted directly from it;

- 5) the failure to support those who opposed the apartheid system and suffered for their actions.

By making the kind of public acknowledgment that has been suggested it is hoped that members of churches and other religious bodies would become encouraged to be involved in the process of reconciliation that the TRC sets out to achieve.

One final area of concern is in the area of reparation. There is the danger that victims and survivors may have unrealistic expectations in relation to receiving compensation. Although compensation of some form is important as a symbolic acknowledgment and recognition of the survivors' (victims') suffering expectations and wishes will differ considerably. Hamber (1995:6) gives some examples, such as: financial compensation; a proper funeral for the deceased; finding out the truth about what happened; having the perpetrators brought to justice. It is likely that the state will "focus on rehabilitative strategies or measures like free schooling and medical aids to make amends." (Hamber 1995:5). The difficulty will lie in deciding exactly how to quantify the social experience of the survivors so that they may qualify for compensation.

Having raised these problem areas it is still imperative that the church and other

religious bodies facilitate the work of the Commission. The Commission is still the only free legal structure through which victims can have access to some form of justice. It empowers them to tell their stories and seek redress for past injustices committed against them. Hamber makes some interesting observations in this regard. According to Hamber (1995:3), past traumas related to political conflict do not simply disappear or pass with the passage of time, instead they impinge on the present. He says:

Past traumas can always be expected to have emotional consequences for an individual. Repressed pain and trauma generally block emotional life, have psychologically adverse consequences and can even lead to physical symptoms (Miller 1991). Psychological restoration and healing can only occur through providing the space for survivors to feel heard and for every detail of the event to be re-experienced in a safe environment.

Hamber suggests that TRC might help to provide this space. Since the TRC seeks to create an accurate picture of the past it can help to deal with the distorted cognitive picture that many victims have. Instead of a skewed view built around the inhuman legacy of South African society, the TRC could by creating a realistic perspective of past abuses and help survivors to accept what happened to them and their resultant emotional responses. It does this by breaking the culture of silence, misinformation, and lies which often made distinguishing between what was true and untrue in apartheid South Africa so difficult. Hamber points out (1995:4) that such silence leaves most survivors feeling misunderstood and thinking that no one is willing to hear their stories.

The TRC, by allowing survivors (victims) to give testimony, allows them to relive the past trauma but also to reshape the event by building a context of meaning. It is noted (Hamber 1995:4) that acknowledging and uncovering the roots of past trauma in public allows for

the individual's feelings to be dealt with and for the essentially abnormal event to be integrated into the cognitive and emotional matrix of the survivor's life.

In so doing the victims could be absolved from feelings of guilt and personal causal responsibility that survivors often experience after a traumatic event has occurred.

This gives the church and other religious bodies particular responsibility for helping the Truth Commission to do its work properly. After a year of its existence there are still rural communities who do not understand how it functions. The youth have not yet come forward to make statements to the TRC and one of the reasons given for this on the East Rand (according to Tlhoki Mofokeng, a field worker for the Centre of the Study of Violence and Reconciliation) is that some youth feel there is a need for legal workshops to be held which explore the implications of making a statement to the TRC. In these areas the church could play an important role. Furthermore, despite promises of interim reparation, none has been forthcoming. Storey makes the point (1995:1 ) that the religious component of civil society bears a great responsibility

for South Africa's past and, therefore, needs to play a significant role in the task of reconciliation for its future. This means it needs to address those areas of weakness inherent in the TRC, and where the TRC cannot or does not meet the needs and expectations of survivors and victims the church and other religious bodies need to create other avenues of support. An article by Smit (1995) highlights the importance of the ongoing role of the church in bringing about healing, forgiveness, and reconciliation between individuals and communities. He writes (1995:15):

The Christian church will realize ....that there will always be a constant tension between personal processing of the guilt of the past and the pain of the past; that many victims will never be able to forget; that they will always remember again, tell their stories, want to be heard, exhume memories. And then there must be people who hear. And, on the other hand, the need to confess, show contrition and be forgiven will also never be over.

The TRC has a limited time period within which to operate, whereas the church needs to continue to offer people the space in which they can "always set things right with their own stories, which means coming to terms with themselves and thus with one another" (Smit 1995:15). To do this the church could initiate or sustain existing initiatives. In doing this it will be accomplishing the transformation that Townes envisages is the result of working with pain, and Emerson sees as the goal of 'suffering work'. Kraybill says (1992:19) that:

reconciliation is not only a process, it is a cycle which will be repeated many times. The goal is not to avoid pain, but rather to persist in the never-ending work of self-definition and negotiation required to transform the differences that exist in any relationship from liabilities into assets.

Kraybill suggests that reconciliation at both personal and social levels requires these seven identifiable stages:

1. Relationship. This precedes reconciliation in that reconciliation involves the restoration of a damaged relationship. All relationships involve trust which in turn is founded on risk. Risk involves sharing personal information, sharing resources and making and accepting promises. At first trust may be low so risks taken are also low, but as trust grows bigger risks are taken which leads to increased trust;
2. Injury. In relationships at some point one party exploits, insults, or betrays another. In such a case the risk inherent in all relationships has been rewarded not with a good outcome and increased trust but with injury;
3. Withdrawal. This follows injury. It may take the form of a physical action, such as turning one's back on the offending party, or leaving the place where they are. It may also involve emotional withdrawal. This is a healthy response. For true healing to take place, however, there must be an understanding that reconciliation is possible but that it is a process which cannot be short-circuited. Hasty apologies, and feeling constrained to forgive may not advance the process. This is because there is still distance between the injured party

and the offender. "No one is willing to risk anything, so people remain frozen, 'forgiven' but not reconciled." (Kraybill 1992:19);

4. Reclaiming identity. This is a twofold process of self-awareness and self-affirmation. At a personal level this involves acknowledging and accepting one's feelings of hurt and anger. It also involves reclaiming one's self worth and the validity of one's needs. Where there is group hurt, there needs to be conscientisation. This is partly a matter of acknowledging that the group has been hurt. This frees the oppressed group from internalising their hurt and blaming themselves for their problems, when in fact these problems arise out of their hurt. It is also a matter of allowing the group to reclaim its threatened identity, and for members to identify for themselves what they value and feels good about in the group;
5. Internal commitment to reconciliation. This is the conscious commitment to move beyond withdrawal and reclaiming identity to seeking reconciliation and to undertake the risks this entails;
6. Restoration of risk. Until there is restoration of risk there can be no restoration of trust. The nature of the risk will vary widely, but the fact that the risk is taken and recognised is an



essential step towards reconciliation. As has already been mentioned, small risks lead to enough trust to undertake greater risks and to build larger trust;

7. Negotiation to meet present needs. This is not to impose punishment on or exact retribution from the offender. Negotiation is needed to address current needs arising out of the old injuries. Some needs cannot be met such as replacing human life. Furthermore the "material and social costs may be so staggering that neither side has the resources to meet the needs that still exist." (Kraybill 1992:19). Other needs, however, may be symbolic or emotional such as hearing an apology or admission of guilt. Still others may be political or material, and need to be redressed at this level. Negotiations are, however, needed to free both sides return to normal relationship. "The injurer needs negotiation to move beyond the paralysing clutches of guilt; the injured needs negotiation to let go of blame." (Kraybill 1992:19).

There are currently two approaches being used to bring about reconciliation within suffering communities, both involve the telling of stories. The first is that of the Khulumani Support Groups and the second

is that of work being done by the Trauma Centre for Victims of Violence and Torture. Both are approaches that the church could support by making use of these existing structures, or else creating similar ones.

The Khulumani Support Group is a group of survivors and family members of victims of past human rights abuses committed in South Africa. It has three aims namely;

1. Providing support for these victims of violence;
2. Exposing human rights abuses committed under the apartheid regime and identifying the perpetrators;
3. Encouraging its members, and other victims of abuse, to speak out about the hardships they have faced and are facing. In this regard it seeks to use the TRC as a way of speaking out about the past and exposing the truth to ensure that such violations will never occur again.

While initially based in Gauteng, it is now national in its scope. The strength of each group is dependant on its members. The groups provide an informal psychological service by providing a space where members can tell their story and seek ways of addressing common problems and needs. Groups are set up by interested individuals taking the initiative

and gathering together other victims or survivors. The Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation helps by providing the services of a Community Service Coordinator who helps newly formed groups identify their needs, and explains how they could interact with the TRC by liaising with relevant NGOs (non-governmental organisations). These NGOs may also provide important social support to the groups. There is a real need for a social services support structure to Khulumani that is currently being set up. It is also hoped that the groups may be strengthened by work being done by the Programme for Survivors of Violence based in KwaZulu/Natal. This programme is putting together materials on training victims to be group facilitators.

The Trauma Centre for Victims of Violence and Torture has been conducting healing of memories workshops nationally. These groups comprise seven to eight individuals, all of whom are given an opportunity to tell their story. Each group has facilitators who help to keep the group together and provide the boundaries needed for sharing to take place. Each person, including facilitators, explores their faith journey with both its positive and negative aspects. They examine for themselves what was sustaining and what was destructive. Their story is connected with the nation's journey, and Christ's story. Use is made of a theology of sacrifice

that enables victims and survivors to see their struggles as part of the larger pattern of sacrifices that were necessary for freedom to come. Participants are thus able to see themselves as the subjects of history and not merely objects in it. By making use of drawings, telling stories, and working with clay, each individual is given an opportunity of dealing with their feelings. They are then in a position to see what role (positive or negative) these feelings play in their lives, and what they want to do with these feelings. Finally the workshop ends with a liturgy. This is created by the participants. It becomes a way in which by making use of reflection and actions they are symbolically able give expression to feelings and emotions that they could otherwise not express.

#### 5.6 'SUFFERING WORK', PAIN AS A SOURCE OF TRANSFORMATION

We have seen the need for churches and other religious bodies to create spaces for victims and survivors to tell their stories. Only in this way can an incipient theology be helped to emerge, and individuals and communities experience a sense of healing and wholeness again. When it comes to the issue of suffering Fichter (1981) points out that patients in American hospitals could be described as having one of three

approaches, namely: ignoring God, turning from God, or seeking divine assistance. In speaking of ignoring God he is referring to persons who grow up in a secular society for whom belief in God has no importance. Those who turn from God are those who having had some faith system find it wanting in the situation of detention and, therefore, abandon their faith. Both circumstances are experiences that need further investigation that falls outside the scope of this study. It is the third approach, namely that of seeking God, which is of concern to us. We agreed with De Gruchy (1985:3) in chapter one that "within our own context theological reflection on suffering is called for by the reality of apartheid and should be grounded in it." We opted to use the approach of Townes and Emerson, and in our local context see how the faith of detainees might enable the sufferer do the work of suffering and find new wholeness. In attempting to help an incipient theology of the experience of detention to emerge we used a social psychology model which seeks to account for why some people cope better with stress than others. We used the hypothesis of the hardy personality to help us look at the role which faith plays in providing meaning in the situation of detention, which is one of stress and suffering. The hypothesis of the hardy personality holds that there are three components that make up a personality style that is better able to handle stress namely: commitment, control, and challenge.

We will summarise findings from the previous chapters that sought to show how detainees were better able to deal with the stress of detention through the expression of their faith as a source of commitment, a means of control, and an agent of challenge. In summing up our findings and seeking to develop some pastoral considerations which may be useful for helping detainees in their suffering, particularly now that we have seen the way in which dread, dependency, and debility work in the situation of detention and beyond, we will integrate them with Emerson's concept of 'suffering work'. In so doing it is also hoped that we may provide an extra resource for work already being done by Khulamani, and the Trauma Centre, and further encourage other similar initiatives to be formed by church communities elsewhere.

Emerson (1986) suggests that suffering work is never done alone. While it may involve an individual, it involves that individual being in relation with the other - nature, God, memories, institutions, hopes, or other people. What is attempted is to "transform a painful, hurtful, and destructive situation into a process of health, well being, and wholeness" (1986:17). To do this it is necessary to identify the psychological needs of the suffering individual or community, to affirm the sufferer/s in relation to God, to others, and to self. Another way of describing this would be to

speak of putting the sufferer/s in touch with the 'cosmic dimension'. The cosmic dimension, according to Emerson (1986:29), is our awareness that we are part of something greater than we are. This could be the desire for justice in society, or belonging to a community, or being a part of God. This is important since as Emerson points out (1986:29):

Any cosmic dimension carries with it a sense of values, fundamentals of life, the basis on which all decisions are made, whether one is consciously aware of them or not.

In terms of this thesis the 'cosmic dimension' might be described as the commitment component of the hardy personality theory. In chapter two it was argued that faith corresponds with the commitment component of the hardy personality theory. The hardy personality It was argued that faith helped the Christian detainees deal with the reality of detention by giving them a sense of meaning and purpose. We could also say that their experience of faith (or trust in God) gave them the resource with which to deal with their experiences of dread, debility, and dependency. Through their belief and through value systems derived from their faith and commitment to Jesus, they could mitigate the threat of detention. We will see how symbol and faith function as agents of commitment a little later in this section. What is important for us to note here is that it was because of their faith that the detainees had a commitment to justice and made attempts to achieve a better society. Arising out of their experience

of faith came the strength to oppose injustice and apartheid. While it was not always made clear to detainees why they were detained, it is clear that none of them regretted their activities.

In identifying psychological needs, Emerson makes use of insights gained from Maslow's hierarchy of needs, developmental psychology, and field theory. Maslow speaks of a pyramid of needs. One moves from the most fundamental level, up through various levels of need until one reaches the most sophisticated needs at the top. He starts with biological and physical needs, as the most fundamental needs. The next level are safety needs. These are the needs for security, stability, dependency, protection. They include the need of freedom from fear, anxiety, and chaos. Next one encounters the need to be loved and to belong. The importance of community and community identity emerges here. After this, comes esteem needs. These include self-esteem, esteem from others, a sense of achievement and recognition from others, self-confidence and mastery of the environment. Finally, at the top is the need for self-actualization. This is the need for a sense of directing one's life, of having a sense of meaning and purpose.

Emerson suggests (1986:63) that instead of viewing Maslow's hierarchy



of needs as a pyramid we see it as a spiral. Viewed in this way the various levels of need (safety; love and belonging; esteem; self-actualization) of the individual or community act and interact with one another. Sometimes one comes before another, and at other times all are on the same level. This means that those who facilitate suffering work need to be flexible in helping the sufferer move with the spiral. Identifying the needs of the detainee and helping with these was dealt with in chapter three of this thesis.

It was argued in chapter two that the only way to deal with a situation that deprives detainees of these needs by invading the detainees' body space, sense of personal belonging, and private space, was through the individual having some sense of control over the situation. In chapter three we expanded on the need for the detainee to have a sense of control in this situation which is designed to undermine his/her control. We did this by examining the 'control component' of the 'hardy personality' theory. We argued that the detainees could exercise a degree of control because of their internal orientation. An internal orientation means that a person can mediate and reinterpret the social and environmental forces within a stressful situation. Using the faith tradition of Christian detainees it was shown how the concepts of

forgiveness, justice, and community enabled detainees to exercise control and not to simply be the objects, but rather to be the subjects of their own life history.

Exercising forgiveness means that the detainee realises that he/she still has control. When the detainee realises that he/she can make decisions about how to respond to the oppressor, although he/she is subjected to a situation and strategies designed to break his/her will, the detainee is given some control over the situation. Although physically and by circumstance of situation under the control of the police, the interrogator, or the warder, the detainee is no longer simply the victim of the oppressor's treatment. The victim, therefore, realises he/she still has control over his/her life and the decisions that affect that life albeit, in a very limited way. By seeking justice for themselves and for others, detainees through their own strength of character and belief in human dignity could challenge wardens, interrogators, and even other prisoners, and thus exercise control in a situation in which they had little real control.

Emerson argues that in helping the process of suffering work a balance has to be found between the need for support from relationship and the

space within which to work through suffering privately. Being a part of a community while being detained, and knowing one is part of a larger supportive community outside prison enables the detainee to realise that he/she is still an important person. The detainee realises that he/she is important too God and valued by other people. This sense of being valued empowers the detainee to continue to struggle with and against the effects of a system designed to cause dread, dependency, and debility.

In order for suffering work to be effective symbols need to be found "that will help put the suffering into context and also advance the suffering work." (Emerson 1986:41) In chapter two we explored how faith could be related to commitment by making use of the concept of symbol to see how this faith continued to be expressed and thus was a source of meaning and gave a sense of purpose to the detainee. It was shown that the experience of dreams and visions, prayer, worship, and reading the scripture were sources of strength to the detainees. These experiences were important in that in a situation of uncertainty, threat, isolation, and stress they assured the detainee that God was present in this darkness. Not only were the detainees assured of God's presence, but they were also empowered to reflect on their situation and to construe and

construct their world in a meaningful way. This enabled detainees to have a sense of hope and encouragement, or to offer resistance to their captors. In some cases the faith experience provided a sense of community and solidarity between detained Christians and even helped them to feel linked with the outside community. Faced with an inhumane system designed to dehumanise and break the detainee psychologically by attacking their beliefs, morality, personality, spirituality, physical defence, and political will (as we have seen in the section on dread, dependency, and debility), faith functions to give detainees a continued sense of worth and meaning.

In dealing with the importance of symbols for suffering work, Emerson says that if they are to be effective they must help the sufferer/s to:

- a. surrender the past to the past;
- b. surrender to the victory of the present;
- c. surrender to the expected hope of the future, based on the victory of the present.

In the fourth chapter we again returned to the faith tradition and argued that the 'challenge component' of the 'hardy personality' was compatible with the Christian understanding that life is not static. It was shown that the resurrection is an important symbol for suffering work. One Christian

understanding of the meaning of the resurrection is that life is a constantly changing reality. In this changing reality the values of the kingdom of God are to be worked out and lived out. Because of a trust in God's past redeeming acts, and God's promise for the future, the present becomes a situation of hope for the future. From the psychological data available we saw that stress is mediated if the change in circumstances is seen as a challenge. Detainees who could mobilise their resources could respond to the situation as one of challenge and hope and not one of utter hopelessness. Through making use of anger to challenge the evil of their situation detainees maintained the will to live. By believing in the power of faith and having hope in the victory over evil, they were able to continued to struggle for justice after their detentions. By maintaining support for other detainees they could be a support for each other and through their solidarity engender a spirit of hope. In these ways then detainees were able resist the strategy already outlined when discussing dread, dependency, and debility. In so doing they were ultimately able to defeat a system that sought to deprive them of the emotional, spiritual, physical, and sensory input and support that they needed for healthy functioning.

## 5.7 CONCLUDING WORDS

Elie Wiesel (1982:Introduction) tells the following tale:

When the great Rabbi Israel Baal Shem-Tov saw misfortune threatening the Jews it was his custom to go into a certain part of the forest to meditate. There he would light a fire, say a special prayer, and the miracle would be accomplished and the misfortune averted.

Later, when his disciple, the celebrated Magid of Mezritch, had occasion, for the same reason, to intercede with heaven, he would go to the same place in the forest and say: "Master of the Universe, listen! I do not know how to light the fire, but I am still able to say the prayer." And again the miracle would be accomplished.

Still later, Rabbi Moshe-Leib of Sasov, in order to save his people once more, would go into the forest and say: "I do not know how to light the fire, I do not know the prayer, but I know the place and this must be sufficient." It was sufficient and the miracle was accomplished.

Then it fell to Rabbi Israel of Rizhyn to overcome misfortune. Sitting in his armchair, his head in his hands, he spoke to God: "I am unable to light the fire and I do not know the prayer; I cannot even find the place in the forest. All I can do is to tell the story, and it must be sufficient." And it was sufficient.

Just as each successive Rabbi did not have the same experience as their predecessor, we too can never have the same experience of God as did the detainees whose experience is recounted in this thesis. It is further more unlikely that any of us would want to undergo the same experience of suffering that they underwent during their detentions. What, however, we can do is listen to their stories of suffering, and in so doing learn from

the way in which they continued to believe and trust in God as their true source of meaning, value, and hope. Through listening to how their theology enabled them to cope with stress, by strengthening their commitment to God and others, by enabling them to have a sense of control, and by giving them the ability to accept that change rather than stability is the norm of life, they offer to us a "transformative ritual". They offer to us a way of coping with our own stresses, and dealing with our own experiences of debility, dependency, and dread, which while they may not be as devastating are nevertheless as real. They also challenge us to take seriously the need to help 'suffering work' be done within churches and congregations in our land. It is as we have read and listened to these stories, that our faith and that of the 'sufferers' is given practical expression, and becomes part of Christ's continuing redeeming of the world. In this way then, like the actions of each successive Rabbi, this is sufficient, and the miracle of faith which overcomes misfortune is accomplished, and our hope in God and one another restored.

## APPENDIX A

### INTERVIEW WITH SUSAN BRITTION

Date: 18 February 1993.

Place: Kempton Park, Johannesburg.

Denomination: Anglican.

Position within denomination: ordinary member, working for an ecumenical organisation - Diakonia.

Age at time of detention: 46.

Experience of detention

Were you expecting to be detained?

I was not expecting detention at this point. In the mid 70s I gave up my British passport and took on a South African passport, since at this point I thought I faced deportation. At the time I was detained I never used to think that what I was doing was so important so I was not expecting to be detained.

Tell me about the detention.

It was September 1985, and they came at 6 a.m. in the morning. It was



during my quiet time, and I was angry and rather Bolshy. I insisted on having my tea and a shower and so they had to wait. My daughter was in the house at the time, and she came into the bathroom to distract the policewoman so I could have a shower in private. My friends in the other half of the house told Carmel Rickard and other friends from Canada and the U.S.A. about my arrest.

After the house was searched I was taken to the office which they searched. Paddy Kearney had been detained one week before. The people at the office sang and prayed for me. I was then taken to Brighton Beach but there was no place for a white woman, so I was taken to C. R. Schwartz square. Whilst waiting for the district surgeon I saw couple of people from the movement. I was held under Section 29 of the Internal Security ct in a tiny cell with an exercise yard for the two weeks I was there.

When I was detained I packed as though to go away to a course or meeting and this made them very angry, particularly the chief interrogator. I took what I wanted, great bundles of clothes, bright coloured clothes, pink stockings and a bright bath towel. I even took a manicure set which I was allowed to take in with me after a few days. I

took my Bible, Book of Common Prayer which had pictures and hymns, and my lectionary. I had some information about the saints . I found all this very valuable. They didn't want me to have the material but I insisted, maybe because of a fear of sensory deprivation. This material was a great comfort to me although reading was difficult as the light was turned off during the day and on at night, and I was half-way under ground.

The wire grill was fine and narrow so I could tuck clothing in it. On the first day they told me I could buy some food, and so they went out and got me a Juicy Lucy tuna roll and granadilla juice. On the second day they said I must go for interrogation. I said 'I'm not going , there is no hot water, in fact there is no water and I'm used to a shower. I also complained about not having a plug and the security policeman told me how to make one with a toilet roll. This was the security police bending over backwards!

I found not having a mirror very disconcerting. I got into the habit of drinking water so that I would have to go to the loo [toilet] . On the thirteenth floor where the loo was there was a mirror. I had to see myself in the mirror, it was connecting with myself, giving myself courage, as I was not allowed to see anyone else.

The thirteenth floor is like the tax office, everything is the same, with long corridors and a walk in safe. All the ECC [End Conscription Campaign] stickers were plastered on it. I was taken in because of my work with ECC, and not Diakonia, as I had originally thought. I was surprised at the line of interrogation. I was a founder member of ECC through my C.O [conscientious objector] work. I was surprised at the line of questioning. They painted a picture of this dangerous woman founding a dangerous organisation, which was a threat to the state. They would frustrate me with their questions. I used to think 'What am I here for, when they've got all the minutes and the files.' I had made a decision to stick to my values and love my enemies and despite the frustration I kept to this decision.

I used to mark the days. One of the most frightening, or demoralising things, is that you know there is no way of knowing how long you would be held for. I would take a square of toilet roll squash it up and fit it in the grill, this equalled one day. On Saturday this routine didn't happen, this was a very conscious action. I also decided to fantasize that this was home, and I made an imaginary fireplace up and pretended that I was reading a novel. I turned the storey of one of the judges who cut off her enemies into a murder storey, and this was my novel. I made an intentional decision to stick to eat the food they gave me and stay

healthy. I could see the blue sky, and putting cold egg between two slices of bread I would imagine that I was on the beach eating a nice toasted bacon and egg sandwich. Because I was held in solitary confinement I made a conscious decision to make contact with the warders and find out about them. I was outside in the courtyard on the first day. I decided to sing a hymn, and as I did I heard a faint voice singing. Then I knew that Anita was next door, and after that at meal times I used the spoon to bash on the wall, and she would respond. We weren't sending messages, only making contact, so we knew we were not alone. Towards the end of the second week a dietician arrived. I didn't know at the time that this was linked to the court case going on about me at this time.

There was no pattern to the time I was allowed in the exercise yard. I could walk around the exercise yard sometimes for five hours at a time to vent my frustration, when they left the gate open.

Did prayer play a role during your detention?

Yes, one weekend I felt totally and god forsaken, and the thought came to me to think of all those who loved me, and who would be thinking about me and praying for me, and after a while the whole cell was full

with people I knew. The truth that God shows love through other people came to me and strengthened me when I was ready to give up.

You mention that you took your Bible with, and that the Bible, as well as your prayer book and lectionary were valuable to you. How were they valuable?

The lectionary was important because to know that I was reading with the church, and that they were reading with me was important. It meant that I could ask questions: So what does this say to me? What does it say to others?

Difficult stories like that of Deborah gripped me. Passages from Isaiah and other of the prophets were a source of comfort to me. I had been taught on a retreat to insert my name in the place of the reference to Israel. The Passion stories told me that Jesus was here before me and knows what it is all about, detained, imprisoned, and not given a just trial. The Psalms were incredibly good too.

What was the effect of detention on you after you were released?

Well I didn't know that there was a court case going on about me, so

when they told me to come to the thirteenth floor with my suitcase packed I was concerned. The they released me, and I returned to the centre where we gave thanks for our release. In the long run I felt stronger. The reason for this was my daughters and friends took me to a cottage in the Drakensburg. They came and paid attention to me, and gave me space to cry and scream and get it out of my system, and this was a very healing experience. In the long run I felt stronger and bolder, and the next time when they [the security police] raided the office I was stronger, and able to challenge their actions.

End of interview.

## APPENDIX B

### INTERVIEW WITH MVUME DANDALA

Date: 18 August 1992.

Place: Central Methodist Mission, Johannesburg.

Denomination: Methodist.

Position within denomination: Ordained minister.

Age at time of detention: 34.

Experience of detention

Were you expecting to be detained?

It was between July and August of 1985, the first State of Emergency, the day after the Cradock funeral [Matthew Goniwe]. We said 'Ag they are going to pick us up.' At the time I was heavily involved with IDAMASO, I was the Port Elizabeth North Superintendent of the Methodist Church and we were reconciling UDF [United Democratic Front] and AZAPO [Azanian People's Organisation] who had different ideologies, and a key player a Reverend M. was suspected of being a police plant. It was in the early hours of the morning that they came to arrest me. About twenty minutes before there had been a phone call from Mrs. Soga to warn me, so when they came I had been warned.

Tell me about your detention.

I was held for ten days with others. The first thing that happened was the arrest. There was a white fellow who was leading, he was 'just doing his job', and was indifferent. The three black officers were cynical. They were taunting me, 'We're giving you a break from eating the eggs this congregation is feeding you with.' Mr Tongata was in the forefront of the investigation, but was quiet. There were two helpful things at the time. Firstly the children remained asleep, and secondly my wife was strong. My wife Mphuse was very pregnant at this time, but she was very strong, and wasn't going to be intimidated. As I was being led into the SAP van she shouted, 'Well cheerio honey. If they kill you God will be with us. My wife was very conscious of the need to be strong, it was as if she was saying 'I'm expecting the worst so nothing will shock me.' Anger overcame her pain.

I was taken to Njoli Square in Kwazakeli township where the hawkers sell their wares. There I was transferred to a big truck with many people who I was known to, UDF leaders, etc. In a sense I was welcomed into the community almost like a minister being welcomed into a congregation. I remember someone saying 'Give a seat to Mfundisi.' The learning began



immediately. I was shocked. I didn't know what to expect, and here was warmth, and I said to myself 'I am not alone.' I was not a member of the UDF but was being welcomed into this community. This was important to me since I had quietly declined to be a patron of the Eastern Cape UDF, so this welcome was 'good for my soul'.

We were taken to a police station and at one point were made to stand outside, and the black police taunted us. Ivy Mxina was taunted about her family and her children. Henry Fasi was taunted about his age and at one point he was klapped [smacked] very badly. There was a struggle in him as I interpreted it, to treat this as something he was used to. With the struggle there was also a sense of shame, and a small tear in his eye, and this stung me. We were taken to a room and seated on the floor, then they called Soga and myself out. They took us to a small passage and there they beat us up with fists saying we had been preaching from the pulpit that their homes would be burnt down. I said 'that is a lie. I have never condoned violence.' Then they were trying to force us to toyi-toyi saying that we were toyi-toyi ministers. They wore balaclavas, there were black policemen and a white policeman was behind them. He hit one of us, only once. I felt concerned and hurt about Soga who was 53 at the time. Then we were taken back to the same room and they took all our

details, and then we were taken out to St. Albans Prison..

At St. Albans we were allocated to cells. Before they did this they did a medical check up. We were all made to strip naked and I felt shame for Soga walking naked in front of boys of fourteen and fifteen. I remember thinking, 'God have these people lost all sense of decency! We are not criminals!' We were thirty people in the cell, they were not people I knew, but I discovered people I should have known in the community, for example the pharmacist in the New Brighton area, Mr Ximiya. I slowly made friends.

Life in the cells was an education, particularly the care the prisoners had for one another. They told us how to lay the mats on the floor to get used to the cold, how to fold blankets, and how to look after toothbrushes. They organised evening discussion groups. These were clearly planned. Christianity and politics was my topic, as well as an exposition of the Vietnam war. There was a thirst for knowledge. This was an effective way of dealing with loneliness.

The other thing which impressed me was the way the guys dealt with the pain of physical abuse both psychologically and physically. There was a

great deal of caring. I remember both Dennis Neer and Aaron Rensberg were badly beaten up. The guys gave up their pillows and blankets for them. It was unbelievable how unselfish they were. They also talked about how they were beaten up, and also how they were interrogated. The group was therapeutic. We had become a community. The worst time was the breakfast time which was for one hour. The torture was that was when they were going to call the roll for who was going for interrogation. When we had to relax and chat guys would come back and laugh at the way they were beaten up, and it became like a drama. This heightened for me what isolation or solitary confinement must be like. The Anglican priest Mncubisi was taken to solitary.

When they took us for interrogation that was terrifying. The guy interrogating me started at a point of extreme arrogance, and moved to hearing my views. At one point I remember his anger came out but was not directed at me. 'Tell us what happened at the Goniwe funeral. Who was there, and what did they say ?' he demanded. My protection was that I had nothing to hide. They tried hard to link me to the UDF. I was able to be public and tell of the support of the church executive for the UDF. I also said to him ' I don't care what you are going to say but I am going to pray for you.

The next time they called me in I was just sitting there and black SAP [South African Police] members kept taunting me. I simply kept quiet and bore it quietly. The next time they kept taunting me, and then released me.

What role did the Bible have for you during your detention?

Well I specifically concentrated on reading Isaiah for no particular reason except that Isaiah is a fantastic prophet and exponent of God as a God of justice and righteousness.

Did prayer play a role during your detention?

I was hesitant about the request for prayers before we went to bed. I felt unsure of forcing my religion down them. Mfala said 'Prayer time folks, now let us pray.' I learned that prayer was not one's private thing but our faith together. Reverend Soga used to take a lot of time in silence to pray which was honoured by the others in the cell. As a prison chaplain I felt awkward with this ministry. This experience gave me new insights.

Right through my detention there was a sense of others giving more than

I. The key thing for me was the assurance from Christ 'I will be with you always.' There is a sense of peace and serenity when I think of my time in jail. There was no absence of God. He was there in a quite enjoyable way. There was a sense of his power in his sustaining me.

When I got home the greatest surprise was the way in which the congregation received me. The police had said that they would be breaking them down. I thought this was my own private business, only to find that daily prayers had been set up for me. In 1985 I had preached as part of the Covenant Service on the text where God says to Moses 'You will the people I am sent you.' I preached on how God was saying to the people I will be with you. When I was released one of my parishioners asked me, 'Mfundisi did you see I am there. I have come to thank God that you were jailed its good for the faith.' What I had thought would be understood as weaknesses were not seen as such. People felt that it was not for the UDF that I was detained, but they felt that it was for the sake of the gospel that I was jailed.

What was the effect of detention on you after you were released?

There was strong congregational support. It was very powerful at the end

of our detention. There was a service to receive us. At this service a woman asked me, 'Mfundisi [minister] how is my son? How is Xhola?' I knew exactly what was going on and was able to say that Xhola was fine. It is as though you are coming out of hell and are able to give a report of hell.

What was most painful after my release was a dread of return. I was panicky for some weeks afterwards until someone helped me understand this. This person said 'You Mvume, you are feeling naked, as though someone has touched the real you, and there is nothing wrong in trying to protect the real you.' I was able to share this with other detainees.

End of interview.

## APPENDIX C

### INTERVIEW WITH PETER KERCHOFF

Date: 1994.

Place: PACSA offices, Pietermaritzburg.

Denomination: Anglican.

Position within denomination: Ordinary member working for an ecumenical organisation-PACSA [ Pietermaritzburg Agency for Christian Social Action]

Age at time of detention: 52.

Experience of detention

Were you expecting to be detained?

They came to my house at twelve thirty am to tell me I was being detained. I asked Major McLolling why I was being held. He said 'Oh one of many reasons, maybe to keep you out of June 16th.' The detention was unexpected. I thought there was no reason to be picked up. There was a meeting at the cathedral on 9th and I had taken photos of the security police in the audience. The interrogation later revealed that the police thought that key white people were mobilising blacks and telling them that they were oppressed, and that I was one of these key people.

Tell me about the detention.

I was held from 12 June until 16 September 1986, first under the Criminal Procedures Act and then under the State of Emergency regulations. The first thirteen days I was held with others and then thirty two days on my own, and then again with others. The total length of days spent in detention was ninety seven.

Before they arrested me they searched the house, three security police and four plain clothes police. The house was searched for two and a half hours. They even invaded Joan's diary. I remember looking at their wedding bands and thinking at the time 'I wonder what your wives think you are doing.'

I took my Bible with me. I was first taken to Loop Street but told to stay in the car. I was then taken to Fort Napier and was dumped there and handed over to the warders. I was taken in to be processed and asked to write a letter. Theo Knifle, John Jeffrey, and Larry Kaufman were there. Myere Ndbele was in from Robben Island and he was helpful, for example he told us to drink plenty of water and what to do with the tea we were served. We were seventeen in total held in one cell for the first five



days until 16 June. After that we were put back into cells of four. We had morning and evening sessions together as they had also brought their materials with them. We discussed various things, and were able to talk about 16 June. We decided to go on with the fast as we would do if we outside prison. At night we were taken back to the cell. Our food was different and could be shared, and when the first round of interrogations came we were able to share experiences.

I was very angry about being led down to the cells [after 16 June] this was the bad news. The good news was the interfaith experience. On 16 June the chaplain was Kruger, a Methodist who allowed us some freedom in our worship. We said prayers and sang Nkosi sikelel'. This was a time of reasonableness given the circumstances. In the cells I was alone. I was able to talk to the warder but no one else. P2 were single cells. There was an alleged murderer across the cells. He was the only other person there. I couldn't talk to him as we would have had to shout. They had a warder outside my section round the clock to watch me. For me this was solitary confinement. In addition to this my cell was right next to the boilers, and their noise was very disturbing, and woke me very morning at two am.

How did you cope with solitary?

I thought 'What have I done to deserve this?' I was surprised because I was an only child and thought that I was used to loneliness. I was worried because where I had worked before was at an aluminium factory, and I had told people that if you want to stymie the government all you have to do is cut off the supply of aluminium. This played on my mind.

I was given questions to fill in and respond to. I couldn't remember and they would say that this wasn't true. Smuts insisted on sitting in on my visits with Joan. These happened for a half an hour every two weeks and were non-contact visits. The first visit was cut short after my first interrogation about the Holy Obedience workshop. I was asked about people in photos. My initial resistance to telling them who they were led them to say that this was no problem as they had months to get the information. After this they cut my visit with Joan short. Smuts told me that if I told Joan anything about my conditions the visits would be discontinued, so I had to raise issues indirectly. In this way Joan gathered that I was being held in solitary, and eventually Les Wynberg the lawyer came to see me. He was able to send a psychologist to see me through pressure he applied to them. This was important as even the

noises reverberating and the gates being slammed open and closed got to me. One didn't know whether they were coming to get you or not.

Sue was out on holiday and created havoc with the security police and managed to get a visit. On the one occasion we met at Loop Street and I was allowed to keep the flowers she brought. I was brought out again to Loop Street on another occasion. On 20 August my birthday, I was allowed a contact visit with Joan. It was their way of showing they were nice. There was a card with everyone wishing me a happy birthday, and I was allowed to receive a T-shirt with the words love, joy, and peace on it.

What role did the Bible have for you during your detention?

I read the Bible from cover to cover. I started with Job and with other Old Testament prophets, then the Psalms, and New Testament, and then back. I had Faith for Daily Living material whilst I was on my own. I was reading with Joan as we agreed to read the same section together. I felt that it was difficult to chronologise the prophets. The Bible was a resource which was very helpful in dealing with the time.

One morning Smuts came around and saw an open Bible. He said 'Are you having trouble reading the Bible ?' I was angry with him and said 'I'm a better Christian than you are.'

What role did prayer play during your detention?

I prayed more, as I do when I am in trouble. At one stage during my detention I looked at the grilled door with the light coming in, there was a cross silhouetted on the door. It became a symbol for me.

Joan struggled and through bishops Philip and Desmond intervening I was able to get contact with the old prayer book. This came in August, and allowed me to structure and focus in my prayers. Also important was the receiving communion. I could only get the prison chaplain Enoch Ngomede to come in and give me communion. The Security Branch at first thought the chaplain must be white. Initially he gave me communion initially with wine and wafer, then the Security Branch insisted on tincturing. Communion put me in touch with the wider church, and gave me physical contact with another person. Partaking in the meal puts me in touch with the Presence of Jesus. I only came back to church in the 70s. Sharing the peace was also important. We invited the warders to

share but they never did. Communion made an important change as the thirty two days in solitary were very bad.

How were you able to relate to the guards?

The guy doing the interrogation I have a sense of acknowledging that there needs to be forgiveness but there is a memory that will never leave. Bezuidenhout was a more humane person, but he got an outburst from me on my release. What I held against them was what they were doing to the family. They [the security police] were manipulating people. I saw this as evil and got angry about it.

What happened after you were in solitary?

After forty nine days I was returned to a cell with others, two Zulu's and a sangoma [a practitioner of traditional medicine]. It was very frustrating moving from silence into people talking at night. At this time a court case to obtain our release was being fought. It was lost, then taken to the supreme court and the verdict overthrown and we were released.

What was the effect of detention on you after you were released?

The experience reinforced my commitment to struggle for justice. PACSA had many meetings and the support was extensive. I even saw a birthday card from them. What also helped me was working with DESCOM from 1973 so I knew that Joan and the family would get support. I was also supposed to be a part of the synod in the Provincial Synod in 1986, and they put an empty chair there to remind people of all detainees. My mother also received support from the minister in Fishoek. What my detention did was to make people think 'this is happening to people we know', and therefore to question what the government was trying to do.

## APPENDIX D

### INTERVIEW WITH EMMA MASHININI

Date: 1993.

Place: Khotso House, Marshalltown, Johannesburg.

Denomination: Anglican.

Position within the denomination: Ordinary member working as provincial director of Justice and Reconciliation.

Age at time of detention: 52.

Emma having read your book I would like to know did prayer play a role for you during your detention ?

I had always been a Christian and I had a strong faith. When I was held in solitary confinement I was still in communication, it was an unusual experience but I was communicating with me. Because I am strong believer I knew that I needed to refuel energy from hope. Communion gave me strength. It made you hopeful. You need to be strong to fulfill hope. This is why after fourteen days I said I was going to assert my rights, and I said I wanted to see Bishop Desmond and receive communion from him. I clung to Desmond because he had been such a support to our union. Our union was allowed to be in Khotso House, and

the church was utilised by the unions. The seven words from the cross were important, especially 'I thirst.' I thirsted, felt hungry and thirsty, nothing could make me strength but communion, it made me strong. There was a feeling of yearning for God on Good Friday. I was hollow and empty. I needed it.

There was a time when I felt where is God, when I was locked up in Pretoria Central Prison. I questioned why the other women prisoners had such freedom. The chaplain told me that this was because they were going to die. When these women were executed I questioned God. 'Why were these women executed? Why are we here?'

When I heard of Neil Aggett's death I would have broken if I didn't have faith. In detention you mustn't have company, so you mustn't be comforted. Neil's greeting had helped me to know I was not alone. Another time when I was about to break when I was being interrogated, then I remembered the words of the hymn 'Rock of ages cleft for me', 'let me hide myself in Thee.' Then the telephone rang and my torturers left me alone, and the interrogation stopped.

How were you able to relate to the guards?



When I received communion I realised that they were also hungry and thirsty, and their spiritual need could be seen in the way they joined in everything in the service, except for receiving communion. They were very humble afterwards, and asked if my handcuffs were too tight, and they were careful driving back to the police station.

There was also a policewoman who was looking after me. She said 'You are looking terrible, you look as though you are going to die. You had better think of your children, and be strong and pray. Another time she took her police clothes off and underneath was her Mothers Union outfit, and she said 'You had better pray' , and we knelt and prayed. She did this several times. She also made contact with other police, and then newspapers got smuggled in.

Did you receive support from anyone else?

I was aware of support because of the security guard at Khotso House. He told other people I was being detained, so word went out to those in morning prayer. As we came down the whole of Khotso House was there. They sang the Lord's Prayer and blocked the cars. So there was church support from the beginning to the end.

Tom also went to DPSC services, he addressed the churches and talked about detention. When I came out of prison just about every parish came to visit me. There were also letters of support from the church here and abroad.

There were also greetings from the unions. The teachers unions of New York sent cards. There were demands of my release from other unions.

What role did the Bible have for you during detention?

A Bible sent by Desmond had very special meaning for me. The book of Daniel was very meaningful. It was useful to see that things similar to us had happened centuries before, and that their faith had got them through. I read it, enjoyed it, and reread it.

What was the effect of detention on you after you were released?

After I came out of prison I went to St. Augustine's as a way of saying thank you, but I needed help to deal with detention. People said nothing about detention, so when I had help I started sharing and telling the

community. This experience made it possible to inform the community about detentions and it was helpful for one's self.

I found it very difficult to trust Helen when friends brought her to see me, because it was another white. This was a problem my Christianity had to deal with, the need to trust. God had to help me with this.

End of interview.

## APPENDIX E

### INTERVIEW WITH CEDRIC MAYSON

Date: 1993.

Place: 19 St. George's Street, Yeoville, Johannesburg.

Denomination: Methodist.

Position within denomination: Ordained self-supporting minister.

Age at the time of detention:

Cedric you mention being detained in your book but only briefly. Could you tell me more about your detention?

Well I was detained in November 1976 for sixteen days under Section 6 and then in October or September 1981 until March 1983, but this was only part detention.

When I was detained for the first time I was on my honeymoon travelling from Cape Town to Durban. It was my second marriage, Penelope had two daughters, and she couldn't drive. The Mosselbay Security Police didn't know why I was being detained, and they were very helpful. They agreed that the police would drive in my car, and a police car would accompany us. I was allowed to give my wife a hug, and in the process passed on a message. Certain papers were in the briefcase, she tore

them up and stuffed them into the thermos flask. Twenty four hours later we got to our flat in Twist Street, where they searched everything. After all this they took me in to John Vorster Square.

Conwright and Struiwig headed the interrogation. It lasted three days and nights. I was stripped and dehumanised. I was given sugar water to sustain me and occasionally taken to the toilet. They said ' This is the loo window that people have jumped out off.'

There was a twofold tenor to the investigation following years of following me - seven years in fact. A lot of info was revealed by people in my various congregations. What I was interested in was the things they didn't ask me about. At the time the Christian Institute was talking behind the scenes to the ANC, and I had met Thabo Mbeki and others for long detailed discussions. As a result of this the Christian Institute passed a resolution supporting the liberation struggle in so far as it was in accord with the gospel. They never asked about this.

The second point was that they considered that I was one of the brains behind Soweto 1976. So they threw all sorts of names at me. My attitude was basically to say that we have nothing to hide, we are operating out

of our convictions. I didn't play hard to get. With Conwright you could divert him easily with theological arguments. He claimed to be a born again Christian, and if he got warm you could divert him and get him to defend his position.

I have an abiding memory of two things. The first is that a number of us were detained at the same time. There was a Hindu woman from Cape Town, a Jewish person, and a white guy who didn't have a faith. You could talk through the cells into the corridor. The white guy was disturbed by his interrogation. He spoke about the others having faith. They didn't seem to have the fear he had. His problems with the church I could agree with. The second thing is that after four days when I came round in a big cell alone, I had this overwhelming conviction, a deep peace, because I knew that we were going to win, that the gospel would reveal itself to be true. This is what Jesus meant when he said 'It is finished.' He was saying, it is completed, that the ruling power of God did reign. Then in came Struiwig and the interrogation began again.

Later there was another three days tough guy/soft guy interrogation trying to make me admit to things I knew nothing of. These included the total onslaught business, this conspiracy against South Africa never existed

except in their ideology.

In the second detention what they were trying to do was to prove a big white conspiracy. Allen Fine, Barbara Hogan, and Cedric. The end result was to try and get Beyers. Tozi, Ceasar, and Sam Kekane were taken in with us. The idea was that by going for me they could prove the Christian Institute was an instrument for the ANC and then go for Byers. This lasted for fifteen months. There was tough interrogation at Brixton, Benoni, John Vorster Square, and Pretoria Central.

Spyker van Wyk was pulled in to interrogate me. He was an absolute sadist. One day he took me naked for interrogation into one of the rooms with glass from top to bottom. I was surrounded by face who hurled insults at me. Then I was alone with Spyker. He says to me 'I am not a Christian', and then he pulled me and ripped my hair out, and said 'What's all this hair about.' This was the period when I agitated for a Bible. I was in solitary at Pretoria Central for three months.

Neil Aggett was killed in September or October and so there was a demand to see detainees. Suddenly without warning in came my wife wearing a black armband and she told me about Neil. After this I was

allowed periodic visits. Kim my eldest daughter was very upset and seeing a psychiatrist who then spoke to the police, and she was allowed to see me.

To occupy my mind I wrote a long letter to my kids about things to do with faith, and when I got a Bible I wrote the list of these topics inside the Bible. I tried to smuggle the letter out, but it never got to my wife. My own experience of the church was entirely Methodist before the late 60s and 70s when because of the Christian Institute I got involved with other churches. I had to resign to take up a post at the Christian Institute. Working for the Christian Institute I understood what the church meant and what the gospel meant in South Africa. When things exploded for the Christian Institute I realised that the church authorities were blocking the teaching of the kingdom of God. In the entire eleven months as an awaiting trial prisoner only one Methodist minister Simon Ncubule came to see me. The whole experience of prison meant I realised something of what families of prisoners go through. One of the things that needs to be discussed is the hurt for those left behind.

As an awaiting trial prisoner in the fort I was asked by the Major to do prayers in the morning queue for graze up. To him I wasn't a terrorist. He



also asked me to do Sunday services, and people came to talk to me about their problems.

One thing that makes a difference in prison is having faith. My faith constantly grew, not faith in the church, but in the living presence of God, and in what I was doing and thinking about Jesus Christ. I was gripped by something and needed to express this. Having a Bible made a lot of difference, since I knew a lot about it.

What was the effect of detention on you after you were released?

The first time there was a lot of anger at the delay in being released, and it took me a long time to cope with this. I did in the end, as this kind of anger is totally futile.

The second time was more difficult as it was related to the trial. Both times it was difficult in a sense to come back to reality as it were. I didn't want to talk about it much. It was not that I had any objection to talking about it, but there didn't seem much point. I organised one evening to talk it through with the children as they wanted to know what had happened to me. It was also difficult in that while you are in prison you are thinking

in general terms, it gave you time to think about the struggle and where it was going to. Now coming out you had to catch up and be updated as to where it really was. It took a bit of time relating to people again as there was a lot of catching up to do. Also behind the scenes of the second detention which ended in a trial was the pressure I was under by colleagues to leave the country. I didn't want to do this as it would mean upheaval for the family, and I could see no benefit in it, although eventually I did leave the country, so this was very stressful.

End of interview

## APPENDIX F

### INTERVIEW WITH STEPHEN MOREO

Date: 1992.

Place: St. Hilda's Senaoane, Soweto.

Denomination: Anglican.

Position within the denomination: Ordained minister.

Age at the time of detention: 28

Experience of detention

Were you expecting to be detained?

No I wasn't. I was heavily involved with the local parents crisis committee at Ikhangeng. We were dealing with issues we thought the government was happy with. The ministers fraternal was playing a mediatory role between parents and students and the local education authorities in the education crisis.

Tell me about the detention.

I was detained for fourteen days. They came with guns, at twelve forty five am in June 1987. We had forgotten to close the windows. There was a loud knocking on the windows. They said 'We are looking for Steve

Moreo.' At first I denied that I was Steve Moreo, because they kept mispronouncing my name. I got angry with the questions they were asking me. 'Is this your wife', I said 'Yes'. Then they asked 'Are these your children'. I said 'Yes.' Then they asked if Liziwe was my girlfriend. I then told the officer that I had told them that Liziwe was my wife, and that I was a priest. They moved with me with their guns. The one was flipping through my diary. When I went to the bedroom to dress I wanted to put a clerical collar in my clerical shirt but they didn't want me to. I felt this would mean something to them and other people, so I put it in anyway.

There was a joint interrogation with four others. It felt like a Shadrach, Meshach, and Abendigo situation. We didn't answer their questions. The one policeman told us of his experience in the PAC [Pan Africanist Congress] and how he had changed. They showed us blurred photographs of people who had been shot.. This questioning went on from two until four thirty am. Then we were taken to the cells. One of the four was an informer. He was separated from us and went to Potch-University where he was an agent whose task it was to get young black students to start an uprising.

In the cell next door was a white Roman Catholic priest, who insisted I should be with him. This wasn't granted. He promised to pray for me, and I did the same for him. Going through those doors and guards broke me, to be treated like the worst murderer in the world. The experience of being locked in three times made me feel like a lion that was not allowed to go out because I'd kill others. You are put into solitary confinement without being told why. This was breaking, you don't know why you are held. The first day was so long, thinking about family and uncertain how long I would be there. They did allow me a Bible, and that Bible got me through. My first model was David and his suffering in the Psalms, again and again. As a Christian the question of forgiveness kept coming again and again. Should I as a Christian forgive them [the police]. The question of forgiveness became easier when I realised that they were in a Nebuchadnezzar situation through their abuse of power. At one stage I was more worried about the Kommandant's welfare than my own. I wondered how long he would stand on his pedestal before he came tumbling down [reference to Dan 2].

On Sunday the lawyer came to take an affidavit and this gave me hope that I could be out sooner. I learned that I was being held under the State of Emergency [Section 29]. When the prisoners were called to go to court.

I hoped it would be me.

In prison I also had a parishioner who was a prison warder. He smuggled in newspapers and food for the whole day, which his wife cooked, and also a book. He spoke to the other guys so that they knew I was a priest. Both black and white prison warders respected me when they knew I was a priest. Showering was the only frightening and disturbing time because it was the only time they guarded you. My parishioner also smuggled me a letter from Liz assuring me of prayers, and that the people were praying and on Sunday said special prayers for me.

I was allowed to see others on Sunday's, Tuesday's, and Thursday's. One Thursday the whole MU [Mothers Union] came pray and sing. This made the Kommandant very angry, and he threatened to throw them all out. During the course of my detention other ministers were detained and I could hear them singing and praying. I also heard that the students were saying 'Before Moreo is released we wont go back to school.'

Did prayer play a role during your detention?

I prayed continuously, using the Psalms three times in the day but not

during the night. One particular psalm worried me. It said that if people are digging a ditch for you they will fall into it themselves. It worried me that God might take revenge against those who had imprisoned me. I prayed 'Please God don't do it to them.'

During your detention you do absolutely nothing. God does everything. My faith got stronger. I had the feeling that God was with me, and that God was above the prison warders. I believed that God wouldn't just take me here and then leave me. I believed that I would be out in fourteen days, this belief grew stronger than the feeling that I would be detained for a longer period. After the tenth day I lost hope, and all I could do was wait for the fourteenth day. At this time I thought if God wants me out he will get me out, and if they keep me then God will be here with me. God can unlock the doors . There were six doors that needed to be unlocked before you came to the place where you could be given clearance for release. God can unlock the doors because God is above the six guards.

What was the effect of detention on you after you were released?

The experience made me question what was the point of prison. Was there no other way of discipline? Is this what you should do to another

human being ?

On the fourteenth day I was called at five a.m., but only left the prison at one p.m., but I was not immediately freed by the C.I.D. The C.I.D. interrogated me for another hour and told me that the next time there would be no prison for me, but death. When I was released I said to the Kommandant 'God bless you. Thank you that you are at least releasing me.' The experience killed my spirit. I worried that my wife would be left alone with no real friends, and this broke my resistance. Others were taken in on the night that I was released. I was filled with fear, and prayed through the nights. When a car passed I thought that they had come to fetch me. They also kept coming to check on me. Once when a march was organised, and I had already moved to Fleurhof, they came to see me . This only stopped when I moved to the Cathedral in town. I was fortunate in that the MP for Sunnieshof who was a KP [Konservatiewe Party] member had paid for my education from standard six to matric. He was worried about me, and phoned the Regional Commander of the SAP and told them not to arrest me without charging me.

End of interview.



## APPENDIX G

### INTERVIEW WITH SISTER BERNARD NCUBE

Date: 12 January 1992

Place: Institute of Contextual Theology.

Denomination: Catholic.

Position within denomination: Member of a religious order.

Age at time of detention: 41

Experience of detention.

Tell me about your detention.

I was first arrested in 1984. They searched the house where I was staying , and they found a letter from Oliver Tambo, AGM minutes and a few books that they said were banned. This was at the community of the Companions of St. Angela. They then detained me. I was involved in the civic, working with students at school, and with women, and full time with the SACBC [South African Catholic Bishops Conference] in the field of J and R [Justice and Reconciliation]. I was working as a field worker on awareness programmes for sisters in S.A. I was charged for possession of banned materials. The case lasted one year. I was found guilty and sentenced to six months imprisonment. There was an appeal which was successful.

Thereafter there were a series of detentions on varying weekends. During this time the convent was bombed and there was harassment at night with the throwing of petrol bombs. These were the actions of the SAP. There was an intensification of the struggle especially in 1986. I worked with KROW [Krugersdorp Residents Organisation] with Frank Chikane. We launched an interdict against the SAP and SADF in 1986. Goldstone launched a local investigation. At the eve of winning our case and getting a good result, a State of Emergency was imposed, and all fifteen of us were arrested. I was detained separately under Section 29 of the Internal Security Act in solitary confinement. I was first held in Krugersdorp, then transferred to Johannesburg. After one year I was charged with sedition, subversion, and assault. Most of my colleagues were given bail, but I was refused. When I was given bail, I was banned out of the townships, and then the case lasted six months. The case had insufficient evidence and they dropped charges, and I went back to the township.

How did you cope with solitary?

The intention is to break your spirits and dehumanise you and take away your dignity. I asked the prison inspector what solitary confinement meant. He said, 'You have lost all your human rights.' I asked what kind

of an object one was. He said, 'You will find out.' He was right, you are like a robot, with no will and no choice. It was a mastermind of a human being who set out to plan a prison life for other people. Somehow, somewhere it gets its results, you either swim or you drown.

As a nun there was a natural trained will that definitely I had experience of retreats, of being alone with myself and my reflections for ten or thirty days, this was a great help. As a young nun I had read monastic books about how monasteries were build etcetera and I found that this was the same as prison. The difference was that this was imposed.

What role did the Bible have for you during your detention ?

Prison reflections were a different approach in that while we read we grow. In prison the content spoke to the context. You felt yourself struggling with God. Malachi asks the question, 'Why do you show me this and not assist in helping us?' I was asking the questions, 'Is this the work of His hand or not? If it is, where is His power. These questions were a reality, not just reflections. One was strengthened by affirming for oneself that the cause for which one was detained was just and worthwhile.

Did prayer play a role during your detention?

Is it prayer or spirituality that helps one? That is a difficult question. We've learnt to compartmentalize. Anything good in man is part and parcel of the goodness of God. I found it strange that in times of crisis there is no spiritual question: Is God present or absent? You find yourself being strengthened by the knowledge that you simply say, this is a battle of life, and strength comes from within the strength within you. This is expressed in the words '*ubuntu bami bongke*' [my entire being or the whole of my humanity]. Rather, than speaking of God there are no lines of division within myself. It is me acting towards a challenge before me, and within this there is power before me. You find yourself telling yourself, 'I am alive, I am living, and I shall go on.' This proved another opening in my understanding of prayer. Prayer is not a verbal thing, it's an experience. People say we live in God, and I do not think that living in God can better be understood than when a woman is pregnant. When another being lives within you, life within life, that is prayer, that is existence.

How were you able to relate to the guards?

It wasn't bitterness from me towards them. I was filled with pity. Krugersdorp Prison was very strict in 1986. They relaxed a little later. The experience with white warders was not easy. There was one time when I was asked to read a Bible passage. Hearing my voice this one white warder kicked the door. She shouted at me ' You are not allowed to receive nagmaal or read the Bible.' She lead me to another service banging the doors as she did so. This caused me to question this Christianity. How can you attend a service when you are watched? The priests battled for the right to give me communion, but this incident prevented me from being in a service. The service was more like being policed than being anything of a service. I wouldn't even call it a service.

But this same woman asked me one time why am I arrested and why am I not happy. Because they had been told that I was being protected because my community was about to kill me. I sat down and told them, 'I am here because of suspicion and fear but not from the community where I am fighting for water, housing, and cleanliness. Munsieville is on the bucket system in this time and your town has adequate sewerage.' One warder said, 'You know Bernie if I were you I would fight every single day.' I said, 'You are also part of this every day when you don't give me basic rights, when you throw my plate at me and lock me up.

When I was released I definitely saw them crying and I couldn't understand why. I found out that there is a golden rule that once you've been detained you cannot visit the house of a wardress. Despite everything else hardships cement a relationship in a very different way.

Were you supported by the church?

The Catholic Church would want to say it fought for me, but my experience was different. But there were individuals within church circles who need to be congratulated. The price paid in the struggle is realistic and I would never forget their real being part of my suffering. Father Smangaliso Mkatchwa mobilised for me outside. My parents supported me, as did brothers and sisters. Their suffering was emotional to me. There were also friends who made their way of thinking about me.

What was the effect of detention on you after you were released?

I found a deeper relationship than blood relationships with Priscilla Jannah and Advocate Miller. I don't think in my lifetime I will form such strong ties. Despite everything else the very security police became part of your life, and to my surprise some of them have become very dear and

friends. I didn't have a bad feeling about it. Still solitary in South Africa is still solitary.

End of Interview.

## APPENDIX H

### INTERVIEW WITH MAMABOLA RAPHESU

Date: 1993.

Place: Sable House, Braamfontein, Johannesburg.

Denomination: Presbyterian.

Position within denomination: Ordained minister.

Age at time of detention:

Experience of detention

Tell me about your detention.

I was first detained in 1969 when I was part of the church youth. I was resident in Alex and was taken to Orlando police to meet Mabukwe. I was detained for three days, beaten and taken back to Alex.

I was detained in 1976 and taken to Nelspruit police station. Reverend Ngobena was working at Masana hospital. It was an Evangelical Presbyterian hospital protesting transference to a Bantustan [homeland state]. He called me to address the staff. This is what the SAP called 'agitation'. The SAP came to the meeting as we moved to the manse. It was 22 June, just a few days after Soweto. They took us to Bushbuck police station where we were separated. I was held for fourteen days,



then under the Terrorism Act for six months. Si was in the same place but I only realised this when we were being transferred to Modderbee. During the fourteen days the interrogation was heavy. For two days I went without food thinking that these guys were trying to incriminate me. There were threats of torture and this second time electrocution to the heads, and hands. After this you are in a muddle and you 'sing', but you don't know what you've said. During this time I was sleeping on the floor.

The North was an area where it was difficult to find place to work so I was not at home at this time. I was living in single quattras, although I'd married in 1976, I had left for Masana from work. From 1976 to 1978 I was in Modderbee often. It was comfortable there. I could write letters, and the family knew where I was. There were also visits from lawyers. The only loneliness was due to disagreements with friends when in order to avoid physical conflict you withdraw yourself. There is a temptation to abandon your convictions. You feel sorry for being detained for a cause when you feel you could be with your family. Your clothes begin to wear out. My wife was pregnant at the time, and the baby died. My wife told me about this infant in Modderbee. It was a baby and when the news came of the baby's death it was very frustrating.

In 1980 there was a bus boycott of the L.D.C development corporation.

They had the monopoly. We brought 'Hambagoya' into the townships, a campaign to travel for half price. This boycott lasted for a year. I knew they were going to detain me. They would travel at fast speed, screeching outside where you were, look at you laugh and then repeat the process in the evening. Come one Monday and I was going to work, and they took me to the Zebedele Citrus Estate and I lived there for three months, one month without anyone knowing. I was held under Section 6 of the Internal Security Act. I was interrogated again. They are not honest. They ask you about underground organisations and your activities with them. They try to link your activities with them. When you are relaxed someone comes from behind you and you are slapped with a 'warm klap' [a hard slap across the ears and side of the face]. When people want to incriminate you with lies it eats on you. When you've been assaulted they hold you for a longer time under section six, so you are unable to prove assault. I was held for three months in solitary confinement. We were arrested in August and sometime in October were transferred to Modderbee. One warder used to say, 'Oh the old customer has come.' The six months there were like a school. They gave us newspapers, encyclopedias, and place to cook food, bought with money from the SACC. Most of the guys were students from Port Elizabeth, for example Nkoseli Jack. There were twenty one of them and eight of us. It was a school of debate, but being

married and having a family caused you to worry.

Then in 1986 I was in Kroonstad and a minister. It was just before the State of Emergency 9 June. Funerals gave rise to the SAP shooting another person, and so another funeral. I protested this action, and for this was detained. They took me to a police station in the township. They pack you like pilchards in the police station. They put a person you don't know in the cell for two weeks, and then take him out, so you don't know whether he is an informer or not. The food was bad porridge and soup of some kind. I was the last one to be interrogated. I was accused of 'agitating a hunger strike', and my wife was allowed to see me to try and persuade me to break the hunger strike. Although this was detention without contact, I was getting these short visits. So this was a positive consequence for my action. Through successful court action we were transferred to prison.

This detention lasted a year and eight months. It was very painful because in June 1987 they released a number of people, but whilst I was detained I could receive my books and finish my honours. I was transferred to Kroonstad Prison in October. There were four hundred people there. It was winter, and after a few days of our arrival they

reduced the quantity of food. This is when we began the hunger strike. I chaired the meetings on the football field. There were committees in every cell to attend to those who were breaking the strike. So I was taken off to the police station [Maokeng] at midday. They interrogated us the next day and warned us, and we were taken to single cells. This was a blessing in disguise after forty people all crammed together and sleeping in one cell, with one washing place. The nakedness of the old in front of young boys and sons was very degrading. Justice Steyn came and we appealed to him. We told him that we lived by reading, and depriving us of this was mental torture. Although we were in solitary we could communicate with one another in other cells. At ten am there was a fifteen minute break, or an hour depending on their mood, when we could meet together, and then the prison doors were opened and we could talk in one cell, except on week ends.

Did prayer play a role during your detention?

My faith emerged strongly in Modderbee. There were many priests there, Moselani, Farisani, Mayatola. There were services and Bible studies, and they kept one going. I started enjoying the Bible, reading it, and by 1980 I was candidating [for the ministry]. I was an inspirer of these services. The one minister said that he wouldn't pray in Modderbee, because God

and prayer weren't there. The chaplain to the prisons had problems with us. He told us to stop sinning and doing these things that caused trouble with the government. He was judgmental and so we chased him away.

How did torture affect your faith?

When you are not grounded in the Bible you feel guilty, and sometimes you say that this world has no God. This Bible speaks of liberation but it's just a gimmick. It is as though the prison is real but the Bible is not. You can abandon faith. My story is what is happening to me, there is no dawning of the Daniel day. You see the Jesus route more than any other. You question the existence of the God of the Old Testament, who helped so many in the Old Testament, but doesn't come to deliver you. You feel that this God belongs to the oppressor.

When I became a Christian minister, I was able to understand my later detention better. I based my reading on the New Testament. I became a gnostic and divided the Bible in two. The Old and the New Testament. St. John's gospel, St. Paul, and the Jesus way, and above all the cross were important. 'Eloi, eloi, lama sabachtani' [My God, my God, why have you forsaken me]. You say perhaps it's through that light that you've stood for the truth, and for that truth you will suffer and it is later generations who

come after you who will see the endurance you had, and the hope that endures. You see your enemy as inspired by evil and not God.

What was the effect of detention on you after you were released?

My personal life deteriorated, because my health deteriorated. You are not as healthy as people who have not been detained and you need to accept this. When you are pushed too much the anger of the experience resurges and is worse. Looking at Sharpville today I have the feeling of frustration. The people you went to jail for are making life for the community difficult, and they say they are in the struggle. Did what we experienced or suffered for pay any dividend when we are now killing one another. On the other hand suffering produced criminals , there was no time to teach discipline, and teach about what people are suffering for.

End of interview.

## APPENDIX I

### INTERVIEW WITH TERRY SACHO

Date: June 1992.

Place: 39 Galway Road, Parkview, Johannesburg.

Denomination: Catholic.

Position within denomination: Ordinary member.

Age at time of detention: 29

Experience of detention

Tell me about your detention.

It was from 11 September 1984 to 30 November 1984. I didn't think that I would be detained. Although I was involved politically, in social justice issues, I was never involved to a degree that I expected to be detained. I was detained under Section 29, I later learned the reason why the state detained me was that they wanted me to give evidence against a friend.

I was held in solitary confinement and I tapped into the goodness of people, and their humanity. I had a very strong belief in the goodness of humanity, and I used this to tap into others. It was only afterwards that I had to come to terms with evil. I knew that I had to have social relationships in order to survive, and so after my initial intense

interrogation when I was help in Jeppe police station, I was left alone for most of the time when I was held in John Vorster Square. There I was able to develop relationships with the woman guards. They found it difficult to understand why I was imprisoned, and I counselled them. One woman guard was very distressed when she was found out playing a board game with me and told that she shouldn't talk to the prisoners. I ignored the sense of being dehumanised and looked for their humanity in order to tap into them. For instance one day a brigadier come to visit prisoners. He wasn't like other senior policeman. Instead of asking questions at the entrance of the cell, he actually walked into the cell to talk to me.

I was also able to challenge the guards and interrogators. Every day when the guards came around saying, 'Klaer of versoekte' [complaints or requests], I would say that I had a complaint. When they asked what it was, I would say that I wanted to know why I was here. I didn't know why I was being held. I also asked Captain Truter when he was interrogating me if he had ever had a black friend. He said 'Yes'. I then asked him if he wanted this friend to enjoy decent housing and education. Again he said 'Yes'. I then pointed out that this was exactly what I wanted, so this could not be a Communist plot.



In fact my relationship was so good with the guards that when Anne came to fetch me from John Vorster she was shocked at my friendly approach to the guards and policemen. It was only afterwards that I fell apart.

Did prayer play a role during detention?

Before detention God was located outside myself in the suffering of the poor, and a commitment to them. Detention put me in touch with God's personal love for me. I had a photo of my father with me, and this reminded me of the incredible love of God. I never felt abandoned. To get through detention it was enough to know that God loved me. This was a very superficial experience, but knowing God's love for me was the first step of the beginning of a deeper religious experience with God. When I tapped into the guards and interrogators, I was also tapping into God in them.

What role did the Bible have for you during your detention?

I found the Psalms very meaningful. My mother was dying of cancer at the time, so she was allowed to see me twice. She organised for me to have the picture of my father, and also wrote notes in my copy of the

Jerusalem Bible. She wrote a list of all my friends names in the Psalms. The Psalms and Isaiah both speak about enemies, on having enemies and recognising the enemy and dealing with the enemy. I read the Psalms daily. I was also concerned with Christ in relation with other people. St. John's gospel had great depth, but St. Paul made me furious with his anti-woman stand. When Father McGrail who I had known since I was six visited me [the visit was organised by my mother getting hold of Bishop Orsmond] I spent most of the time talking about this.

Did you feel supported by the church?

Yes. I was particularly affirmed by Archbishop Hurley who gave me a pride in being a Catholic.

What was the effect of detention on you after you were released?

I felt dread afterwards, and had to come to terms with evil. The dread was so great that I felt I had to sign a confession which I had made in detention, as I was afraid of being redetained. I had this fear and dread long afterwards, until David's [Webster] death. Then my anger was so profound that I no longer cared what the state would do to me.

I never questioned God . I thanked God for the experience as a counsellor and activist in DPSC. Firstly politically it allowed me to express solidarity with other detainees. Secondly by sharing my own personal experiences it gave a therapeutic component to my counselling.

Two other things helped me cope with detention. One was having intimate dialogue with friends who were not present, and yoga was a spiritual exercise which helped to keep me centred with my body, since even though I was alone, I was being watched.

End of interview.

## APPENDIX J

### INTERVIEW WITH DOMINIQUE SOUCHON

Date: 2 February 1993.

Place: Yeoville, Johannesburg.

Denomination: Catholic.

Position in denomination: Ordinary member.

Age at time of detention: 27

Experience of detention

Tell me about your detention.

On 12 June 1986 I was detained under the State of Emergency regulations. I was expecting to be detained, as I was involved in many organisations in the Eastern Cape, and the security police were very keen to do their job. There was a personal war between us, and we had first name run-ins. I was expecting to be detained for two weeks.

How I was detained, was that a group of us involved in white politics had strategised who was likely to be detained, for whom hiding was a possibility, and who should attend a meeting hosted by Sash [Black Sash], at which a lawyer would outline the emergency regulations. As part of the left you couldn't not pitch at a meeting of Sash, as this created

fear within Sash. So when I arrived at the hall in P.E. [Port Elizabeth] where the meeting was to take place, I was detained at three p.m., together with Mike and five people from ECC. The cops had introduced two women spies into the meeting.

I was taken off separately, and first taken home so that they could search the house. The guy who took me had several run-ins with me before this. He was dangerous and threatened me., and told me that he would break my fingers. He could fly off the handle easily. I had two things in mind:

1) I wanted to engineer things so that he parked the vehicle in front of the house so that my girlfriend could see that I was being detained. This I managed to do.

2) I thought of escaping via the back. I said to myself that I need to lock the back gate from the inside, as the cop was rather lazy he wouldn't stay with me, and so left me with his sidekick. I locked the back door, and opened the front door which he walked through first. I then had to make a quick decision whether to escape or not. I decided that it would only be two weeks, and that it would be useful propaganda etc, so I went with him. I really wanted to see if it would work though.

They dropped me off at a police station where they were processing all

the detainees, and they did all the normal things. A district surgeon was doing the check ups, and I asked him if he would take the same kind of stand as doctor Wendy Orr. He got pissed off with me and reported me to the cops . After this we were left in the cells without supper, but gained sympathy from a conscript who organised us rations.

The other detainees were taken off to prison, and I was left in police cells, with instructions to keep me in isolation. There for a week or two they didn't have a Bible to give me, in fact they never got me one, and I made a fuss of this every single day. The local cops screwed up isolation, so I was in a cell with a working class fraud, and an old jail 'dood' [slang meaning person], who told me his story.

17 June the security cops were back and wanted my passport, which I said I didn't have, and I complained about [not having] my Bible. Then on 18th and 19th June a heavy experience. Four of them came in wearing balaclava, woke me up, insulted me, said they were taking me to Pretoria, pushed me about, made me take a cold shower, and then left, leaving a young cadet behind. I was completely shit scared, balaclava, etc, this was not good. They quoted Romans 13, and demanded to know how I could say that I am a Christian. I answered them. My major fear was that they

thought that I had information that they needed, and that they would beat it out of me, and I had no useful information. I knew from other people's experience that at four a.m. they would pitch again so I got into bed fully clothed and decided to sleep. At four a.m. they pitched again and I couldn't place them . They were all intelligent and smart arsed. They started to talk about my sister's death earlier in the year, and as I was completely resolved about this, I was prepared to talk to them about this. I only discovered what they were trying to do , when I saw a psychologist about six months later. It was because of my faith that I was able to work through my sister's death. I really felt protected by God in this situation.

At the end of two weeks Captain Beeton pitched up, and we the police station. I was nervous about him, particularly after my recent experience. He took me to North End Prison. When I realised that he was leaving I was relieved, and when he saw this he shouted, 'I'm still going to get you.' But it was too late, he was already on the other side of the bars.

I realised that prison was a bureaucratic institution, and I decided to operate at a bureaucratic level. I was in prison for five months. I was taken to a punishment cell, with two adjoining cells, where I was kept for another two weeks in solitary. The cell is three feet longer than the bed

, and has a bucket, and that's it. The ordinary prisoners were great, they had an incredibly developed sense of justice. They regarded two weeks in a punishment cell as being unfair, and not being taken to see a magistrate as even worse.

During this time the cops came to see me to say I had to sign a deportation order, and that I had forty eight hours to write a response to the minister without access to a lawyer, to appeal. So I wrote a response, and got a reply in three days refusing my appeal, and saying that I had twelve days within which to write another. I communicated with a guy in an awaiting trial cell. I could communicate with him. I'd yell for him, and the other awaiting trial people called him, saying 'Michael telephone.' He organised to get a message to bishop Evans who could contact my folks. The deportation thing was useful, as everyday I was in jail, was another day in the country., this was a sense of daily victories.

After that I was transferred to a cell with four other comrades from Grahamstown and P.E. One was taken out for questioning in Louis le Grange, which raised new fears for us. Here the new bishop Coleman came to see me, and I eventually got access to a lawyer.



How did you cope with solitary?

Being in solitary was boring, and I wasn't sleeping well. I was worried about the cops fetching me at night . I asked the warders if the cops could fetch me at night. They said that they could, but this would be inconvenient for them, and difficult as well. The Wendy Orr incident made them want to put a distance between themselves and the cops.

It is a bit difficult to recall. I sang a lot of hymns, particularly 'He sent me to proclaim good news to the poor. I also received a Jerusalem Bible, and a breviary in prison, through the visits from the prison chaplain, who was very remarkable. He was a genuine mystic, humble and unobtrusive. On a political level I would equate him with the Red Cross. He wouldn't take a message to the bishop, or tell me what the bishop said, and this caused a struggle between us as I said I couldn't play ping pong.

He was physically affectionate, and broadened things beyond the political sphere. I come from a religious Catholic family, where I developed a gut level understanding of the link between justice and faith. By the time of my detention, I had developed an understanding of a theology of justice through my contact with Albert Nolan and CATHSOC [Catholic Society].

Even when I was at school my family were friends with priests who had contact with Steve Biko. The chaplain, however, included me in his mission for humanity as a whole, and told me I was supporting him. He was very open with me, and shared his ministry to others in the prison, as well as his own personal mystical experiences. I could understand the power of God working with mysticism, and maybe my motive [for seeing him] was seeing someone in solitary, but he was subversive at a fundamental level.

He asked me to pray for a kid in Bop. who had been detained naked by the Bop. police. I cried and asked how his mother was, and he told me this was really strange, because although I knew nothing about his background, the boy had never known his father, only his mother.

What role did the Bible have for you during your detention?

The Isaiah passage which I received on a bookmark , about ' I formed you, you are in the palm of my hand, and even if your mother forgets you still I love you', was a useful passage. Psalm 58 also spoke to me. It is a 'lekker' vicious psalm. There was a major issue I was trying to resolve about my detaining officer. How does one deal with this *one* [slang term

meaning a person] that is a menace to all and everyone concerned, and yet is God's creation.

One way of understanding this, is that a comrade said that Christ said love your enemies, he doesn't say make your enemies your friends. It means that the bottom line is this, that the meaning of the gospel that you are propagating and working on means that you will arouse the enmity of some, and these are those you must love. For me this revelation was that I'm loving this person as an enemy which necessitates different loving to a comrade or friend, and is more difficult.

I put this into practise with the warder and his second in command. The second in command was gay and Bohemian with a dark side that was authoritarian and pro the regime. The cops had threatened to expose him so he had to be a stool. He took a shine to me and obviously had mixed emotions about me. It was a tactical exchange on one level, and on the other level he exposed a lot of weakness. So I had to think fast, and for me there was a clear understanding, this *one* is the enemy but that doesn't mean I have to annihilate him. But when he played hardball, he really played hard.

What was the effect of detention on you after you were released?

There was a new understanding of time. I had to learn that what usually takes twenty four hours outside in terms of communication and response takes fourteen days in prison. This has a connection with prayer and response with God. Things take time and that's alright in terms of waiting for a response.

I learned the importance of anniversaries. Anniversaries of all kinds are important. Every year since my detention come April to June my life falls apart, my world feel unsafe, and is only this year I think that I understood the connection between this falling apart and my detention. On a fundamental level there is a loss of faith in others.

End of interview.

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