

## 15.4 PETITION OF PROTEST: GK ORANIA – THE ACCEPTANCE OF A DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AT THE NATIONAL SYNOD OF 1985 (Artt 19, 32, 180)

- A. Br GL Erasmus state the Petition of Protest.
- B. **Decision:** The Petition of Protest is referred to Petition of Protest Commission 1.
- C. Rev C Aucamp reports on behalf of Petition of Protest Commission 1.

### D. PETITION OF PROTEST

#### 1. Decision that is protested

Paragraph 3.8 *RES-testimony on human rights* (Acta 1985:651)

3.8.1 The Synod expresses its high appreciation for the insightful and thorough Report “RES testimony on human rights” and considers it a unique and valuable contribution from a pure Reformed point of view on the controversial theme of human rights. The critical analysis of the different viewpoints on this matter is objective and emphasise the necessity of a Scripturally founded perspective.

**Decision:** Approved.

Paragraph 3.8.2 The Synod decides to have the “Pastoral Statement: a call to commitment and action” (see 2.8.4) and the “Declaration on human rights” (see 2.8.5) translated, printed in pamphlet format and published, and to have it made available to church councils and congregations.

**Decision:** We suffice with the information in the Acta and the information piece regarding the Acta.

This Petition of Protest deals with the acceptance of the ‘RES testimony on human rights’, both the way in which this Testimony in the Report became a valid decision at the Reformed Ecumenical Synod in Chicago 1984 (RES 1984) and at the National Synod of the GKSA 1985 (Synod 1985), and its content.

This RES-testimony on human rights – which then became a GKSA-testimony – comprises two parts, namely the Declaration on Human Rights (Appendix A = Acta 1985:633-637, 2.8.5) and the preceding accompanying Pastoral Statement (Pastoral Statement: A call to commitment and action), (Appendix B = Acta 1985:629-633, 2.8.4). The translated *Testimony*, translated as per instruction of the Synod and given to the churches (Acta 1985:651, 3.8.2), is used in this Petition of Protest.

**Abbreviations:** In this petition the following abbreviations are used:

RES = Reformed Ecumenical Synod

Pastoral Statement = Appendix B

DHR = Declaration of Human Rights = Appendix A

Testimony = both the preceding, in other words Appendixes A + B

Acts = Acts of the Synod 1985

Abbreviations of Bible book names are without the full stop at the end.

#### 2. Formal protest

##### The Decision was passed in a disorderly manner

The Deputy Ecumenical matters (international) of the GKSA presented a Report of the RES in their Report on the session of the RES 1984 in Chicago that was accepted by the GKSA Synod 1985 for its own account. This means that the RES Report did not go through the orderly process of Point of Description, mandate, Study Report and decision, but rather came onto the GKSA Synod table from outside the GKSA Synod and not as a Point of Description according to CO artt 46 and 86 via the churches.

- 2.1 No Point of Description and request with the mentioned theme came to majority meetings from the churches asking that there should be judgement or study with regard

to the mentioned matters in connection with human rights. There was thus no mandate to this effect according to CO art 49 where Study Deputies or the Deputies involved received a well-defined mandate with regard to human rights.

- 2.2 However, the Report of the Deputy Ecumenical Matters did serve in an orderly fashion. It is the RES-testimony on human rights and the Pastoral Statement that was presented as part of the Report, and which was consequently accepted as a decision, that was not part of a Point of Description on the Agenda.

The mentioned declarations therefore did not develop from the GKSA and did not come onto the table in an orderly fashion. Such behaviour by the Synod 1985 is therefore synodocratic and with that estranged from the entire presbyterian church governance system and consequently contrary to the Church Order of the Reformed Churches in South Africa in its entirety. It is contrary to one or more of the following Church Order articles:

Artt1 en 86: ‘...maintain the good order in the Church of Christ ...’ ‘...but shall endeavour to uphold these articles until it be otherwise ordained by the general synod after the churches have had the opportunity to advise the synod by means of the respective church councils.’

Art 30: There was a deviation from the “ecclesiastical manner” and with that the CO;

Art 31: There is a conflict with the articles of the CO;

Art 46: where it was determined that Petitions of Protest be dealt with as/like Points of Description (Acta 1991:526-528)

Art 49: as above par 2.2;

Artt 17, 84 en Belgic Confession, art 31: where the basis of presbyterian church governance is fixed as Biblical and dominance, and with that synodocratism, is eliminated. Christ rules over his church and all the other aspects of governance are subsequent to that.

### 3. Fundamental Protests

The Testimony is in several ways contrary to the Bible and our Reformed doctrine.

- 3.1 Pastoral Statement, 1st par: *While we as Christian Churches stand together in the tradition of the classical Reformed Confessions, we confirm again the Biblical doctrine that all people everywhere were created in the image of God and that they therefore were bestowed with God-given rights. This persuasion is originally and permanently founded in God’s work of creation and redemption as the sustained guarantee of the correct relationships within every human community.*

DHR par 1 says the same: *In the light of these Biblical perspectives, as they are understood within the tradition of the Reformed Confessions, we confirm with our hearts and mouths the worldwide validity of Human Rights as the God-given freedom and responsibility of all people—*

DHR par 2: *We confirm that Human Rights are originally and lastingly founded in God’s good order for creation, which did fall into sin, but which is currently redeemed in Christ Jesus. Therefore we gladly accept the Biblical command that rests on us to protect Human Rights, to protect it and to exercise it as a crucially important way of dealing with our people justly and to persue justice and peace in a broken world.*

The postulate that man has been given human rights based on his creation in the image of God, is without Scriptural foundation and there is no attempt to prove it from Scripture. The call on the tradition of the Reformed Confessions is also futile, because not Reformed Confession mentions any thing of this nature.

- 3.1.1 Human Rights is no Biblical reformed concept, but comes from the auspices of humanism and liberation theology. Jesus Christ himself teaches us in Matt 7:15 eo 27 that the tree will be known by its fruit, that good trees bare good fruit and bad trees bad fruit; that you don’t pick grapes from thorns and figs from thistles; that a good tree can not bare bad fruit and the other way around. Christ repeats it in Matt 12:33 eo. It does not have to be argued or proven that humanism and liberation theology is bad fruit. Sin can not be converted in its roots, as the attempt is now with Human Rights.

- 3.1.2 If man is the image of God founded in his *creation* and has therefore *originally and lastingly* been bestowed with certain rights, *God's work of redemption* is actually not necessary.
- 3.1.3 Since *God's redemptive work* is necessary for the reparation of God's image in man, it means that the accompanying 'rights' will only be valid for the chosen believers. These 'rights' will then only be repaired in believers, because Christ did not die for all people (*pro omnibus*) and work reconciliation for all as is stated in the Declaration (HC LD 20 and DD, 2.1.8). The unconverted person does not display knowledge, holiness and justice and is not so according to creational qualities anymore.
- 3.1.4 It is true that the Bible tells us that we have to honour the image of God in order to be the image of God. In these cases the point is always the life of the person as applicable to the 6th commandment (Gen 4:10; 9:5,6; James 3:9; HC, LD 40; DD, 3&4 :1). Man, even fallen man, was created wonderfully – Ps 139 sings its praises, but it especially sings God's praises as creator of that wonderful human being.
- 3.1.5 The complete person, well created in true knowledge, justice and holiness (Eph 4:24; Col 3:10) is image-bearer of God (Belgic Confession, art 14; HC, q/a 6), and does not need rights, because he is fully equipped to live according to all God's commandments in love with his fellow man. Rights will serve no purpose. Therefore the extension of this concept to the point where God bestowed rights on people as image-bearers, originally and lastingly, is impure addition of meaning.
- 3.1.6 Fallen man can only hate God and his fellow man out of himself (oa 2 Tim 3:1-5). Only the reborn person, in whom the image has been restored, can show love towards his fellow man, especially fellow believers (Eph 2:1-6; DD, ¾:16). Just behaviour towards our fellow man is based on the love with which God first loved us in Jesus Christ, and not in the mistaken rights of all people based on their creational qualities (2 John 3-6; Heb 10:24; 1 John 2:1-11; 4:7-11). The love that we continually bestow on our fellow man, is throughout the Bible tied to obedience to Christ and is not in an effort to uphold so-called rights. When Jesus was requested to order that one brother share his inheritance with the other, He rejected it as greed (Luke 12:14).
- 3.1.7 In the Bible we do read of the rights of the widow, the orphan, the poor, the oppressed, the pitiful, the daughter (Ex 21:9; Deut 10:18; Isa 10:2; 40:27; Es 22:29) etc, even the king (1 Sam 10:25). However, in each case it has to do with rights in accordance to His law, according to God's law in protection of one man against another: a right that GOD gives (Pro 29:26; Rom 8:3,4) from there the commandments (Rom 7). The right of man is thus no created quality, but rather a gift of grace from a Father who shows his compassion to fallen people and He finalises it in Christ Jesus our Redeemer and Mediator. In each case the right has to do with doing right, speaking right, in a juridical sense. It is necessary, and God commands it of all people, because the sinful man hates God and his fellow man and therefore acts to benefit only himself instead of regarding others higher than himself (Eccl 12:13; Phil 2:3).
- 3.1.8 The DHR gives an additional definition of Human Rights as *the God-given freedom and responsibility of all people*. How does this first par of the DHR fit in with the first par of the Pastoral Statement? It is rather more a Biblical sauce over a humanist foundation of Human Rights. The DHR repeatedly refers to the *freedom* and then the right to free exercise of rights (DHR par 4.4, 4.5, 4.7, 4.9 4.10), and in this definition it is connected to *responsibility* – but without responsibility because the freedom seems to be absolute.
- 3.1.9 'Human Rights' go back much further than the humanism or the French revolution (Protest, 3.1.1). Already in Gen 3 the devil comes with it: *Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"* question of doubt, right to freedom limited. *"You will surely not die,... your eyes will be opened"*. Lie and futile promise and own rights in view

*And you will be like God, knowing good and evil.*” – the other image of God that they remember besides justice is – injustice!

Claiming a right outside what God awards, is sin and leads to judgement.

3.1.10 In DHR par 4 *But we openly reject our active and passive complicity to the transgression of the commandment of love.*

Here Human Rights and the commandment of love (second table of the law?) are used as synonyms in par 4. This third definition of Human Rights is also grasped out or thin air without any proof from Scripture and is unscriptural and sinful addition to the Bible.

3.2 The unscripturality of the concept ‘human right’ in the Declaration becomes clear in further statements in the Declaration’s Pastoral Statement (Appendix B) and Declaration of Human Rights (Appendix A):

3.2.1 *In the exercise of Human Rights we are responsible before God, the Judge of all people on earth* (Appendix B, Pastoral Statement, 2nd par).

(a) God [and Christ] did not command us to exercise Human Rights, but rather to love each other (ao Matt 22: John 15:12). The exercise of Human Rights here subtly becomes a replacement or equivalent of the commandment of love and with that God’s Word is changed, contrary to His commandment in ex Deut 4:2; Rev 22:18 (also see 3.2.8 of the Petition of Protest).

(b) To state the exercise of Human Rights as a command from God, ascribes demands to God that He does not make, and then for rights that are not primarily founded in ‘the image of God’.

(c) False presuppositions (image bearer – carrier of Human Rights according to the creation of man as image bearer) lead to a falsification of God’s demands.

3.2.2 Pastoral Statement, 2nd par: *As image bearers of God we are all under the responsibility before God’s countenance to deal justly and impartially with our fellow human beings across the whole earth. Therefore others’ justified claims on us and our justified claims on them are all subject to God’s sovereign claim on all of us. In that rests the glory of God amongst his people.* (Together with this Pastoral Statement, par 3.)

It is unscriptural language to rename claims – and this justified – as God’s claims.

(a) The glorification of God rests on obedience (John 17:4), not on the erroneous rights and forthcoming meeting of responsibilities.

(b) Justified claims here rest on the faulty heresy of the existence of basic ‘created’ Human Rights. In a sinful existence God calls and commands us to act justly and impartially towards our fellow man with the Bible as guideline regarding what is just and impartial. It is for instance not impartial to choose a faithful marriage partner, but God commands us to do so (2 Cor 6:14; 1 Cor 7:39) with thorough motivation.

(c) A Christian society based on ‘justified’ claims is no God-glorifying way of life. God commands us to servitude embedded in love, not self-vindicating claims on rights – and then called justified (2 Cor 5:9; Gal 5:22; Eph 5:2; 21; Ex 20:12)

(d) It is the language of our time that we have to empower ourselves with knowledge of our rights. In so doing you will be able to uphold yourself in this world of ‘justified claims’. This is no Biblical term or attitude (1 Pet 3:8-14; Matt 5:10).

(e) The more Human Rights are emphasised and justified, the less they come into their own in practice. These are moral values without God, a humanist philosophy against which we are warned in for ex Col 2:8 and Rev 13:11. (see here the so-called School Oath).

3.2.3 From par 4 Pastoral Statement: *...We can adjust words from the penitential psalm of David, which, like us, pleaded guilty on the charge of the rape of Human Rights.*

(a) David mentions nothing about human rights, only transgressions before God. He penitence in Ps 51 was for adultery and murder (6th and 7th commandments), not the abuse of Human Rights. Adultery does not form part of the Declaration.

Indeed, this is more than adjustment of David's words, it is a distortion of God's word, a hook onto which they hang the entire Declaration.

- (b) Sin is disobedience to God's commandment, to miss our God-given purpose. Human Rights has become the collective word for the Pharisees' torah, transmissions of people, philosophies (Matt 15:9: *They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men*)
  - (c) Verse 5 of Ps 51 is not quoted, but is skipped. It reads: *Surely, I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.* David's inability to be just due to the fall into sin and consequent original sin refutes any created right.
  - (d) Indeed this is an adaptation of David's penitential psalm – adapted to stir up collective guilt, characteristic of the liberation theology.
- 3.2.4 From Pastoral Statement, par 7: *...The dehumanising deformations that sin cause, should rather strengthen the dire need for us to enthusiastically work for the restoration and conservation of Human Rights. The brokenness of society strengthens the urgent and hasty call to continually address Human Rights issues. We may not close our eyes or ears for the fate of the poor and the disadvantaged. We may not remain quiet.*
- (a) It is God who saves man from its misery, not our maintenance of supposed rights.
  - (b) As previously, Human Rights stand on the foreground under the false pretences that it is the will of God.
  - (c) There is a difference between the poor and the disadvantaged. Typical of liberation theology, God sides with the (relatively) poor. The rich have to pay to please this human rights-god of the liberation theology.
  - (d) We will always have the poor with us (Matt 26:11). That does not mean that we don't see their need, but rather that we help those who are in need (see Luke 10:37).
  - (e) It is irresponsible to support the poor merely because of their poverty, while some don't want to work. Last mentioned are strengthened in their laziness, which is a sin (2 Tim 3:10; Prov 6:6 and statements in Proverbs).
  - (f) HC, q/a 27; Matt 5:10-12; we confess that God in his providence also determined poverty and that we receive from His Father hand. Do we want to be wiser than God?
  - (g) It is God who saves us from our misery, not our vindication of supposed rights.
- 3.2.5 From Pastoral Statement, par 8 (and 9): In the introduction with which believers can only concur, the indicator turns back to Human Rights with...*We pray for the courage of our persuasions to enable us to, like Christ, be advocates and practitioners of Human Rights.* Nowhere in Scripture did Christ reveal himself as advocate or practitioner of Human Rights so that we would have to follow Him in that. And this while Christ explicitly declares that He is not appointed as judge (Luke 12:14) in earthly things. In this way we take Christ in service for and of our own insights.
- 3.2.6 From Pastoral Statement, par 10: *Like Christ, our Lord, we are called to show special care for the poor and the needy. In experiencing the life of Christ in our own lives by doing this, we are image bearers of God by acting just towards our fellow man, so that God can see his image in Christ and in ourselves and in others repaired. Such discipleship necessitates the dismantling of racial, ethnic and other false partitions and walls of separation. Because in Christ every unbiblical form of discrimination has been weighed and found too light. The rights of our fellow humans should be our passion. Although sacrifices will be necessary, a movement in that direction is joyful. The results of the restoration of Human Rights remain satisfactory.*
- (a) According to Pastoral Statement, par 2 and Declaration par 2, all people have been bestowed with God-given rights, being image bearers. In this paragraph, however, it is stated that in caring for the needy and the poor and in just actions towards our fellow humans, God's image is restored in us and in others. This is unscriptural because *'it is more blessed to give than to receive* (Luke 4:6; Acts

20:35) and *let your left hand not know what your right hand does*' is exchanged for self-satisfying maintenance of Human Rights for yourself and others.

- (b) Man restores the image of God that already exists according to the Pastoral Statement. Scripture does not teach this anywhere.
- (c) *'that God can see his image in Christ in us'*, we, whose best works are full of sin (Isa 64:6)! What an arrogant statement!
- (d) There is no Biblical necessity, neither condition for the dismantling of racial, ethnic, or other false partitions for living the blessing.
- (e) Such different racial and ethnic groups are the consequence of the sinful work at Babylon which God himself brought through language confusion. Nowhere does He command that these 'partitions' be dismantled. It will exist until the second coming of Christ (Rev 21:26).
- (f) Restoration of Human Rights is here seen as synonymous/supplementary to care for the poor and needy, and then to such an extent that it is lasting. In no way can this statement be biblically justified, because the poor will always be with us. The needy are not 'restored' when we show him mercy. Restored to what or into what? The document declares that the 'restoration' occurs in and through Christ's reconciliation. We can not give a hand (DD ¾:16).
- (g) 'Lasting satisfaction' by practising Human Rights is no Biblical concept. Human beings can not relief the fate of the poor permanently, because this lies with God. Lasting satisfaction is no goal in itself for the giver or the receiver, because the glory of God is the goal.

3.2.7 Pastoral Statement, par 11: *When we act as such we should avoid two extremes: isolating ourselves from the world's problems and the permissive heresy of endangering the integrity of the church.*

- (a) When looking at the previous paragraph, this doesn't make sense. The as such refers to the preceding act of showing Biblical mercy. When we act as such there is no room for isolation! Because then we do not act mercifully and we do not serve Human Rights (Luke 10:25 ao).
- (b) There is no indication of how the integrity of the church can be endangered when we act mercifully. As seems from the previously mentioned arguments, the glory that should come to God shifts to man when we are talking about Human Rights.

3.2.8 Pastoral Statement, par 12: *We must therefore guard against identify our task fulfilment with one of the two dominating ideologies of our time: individualism (capitalism) and collectivism (communism). In fact, neither one of these two systems are a positive advocate for Human Rights. We must therefore be enthusiastic guardians of the freedom of churches to proclaim a pluralist lifestyle as a Biblical alternative in the persuasion that this view of society offers the best founded hope for a free and responsible exercise of Human Rights in the set-up of all the Godly determined institutions in society.*

These introductory words of the paragraph seem strange with regard to a Biblical point of view.

- (a) The origin of the entire concept of Human Rights comes from the humanism, which is collectivistically inclined and was adopted by the communist liberation theology to put the capitalist west in the accused bench and to cover up communist transgression, giving communism moral high ground.
- (b) The equation/identification of individualism with capitalism is doubtful. It chooses a certain exploiting form of capitalism that is estranged from the Bible in any event.
- (c) The equation/identification of collectivism with communism is equally doubtful. It chooses a specific type of collectivism, namely communism, which has never been Biblically justified, and yet on paper regards Human Rights highly.
- (d) What is this ideal Biblical alternative called *pluralist lifestyle*? The dictionary defines it as *philosophy that sees the entire reality as multiple individual*

*independents; opposite monism.* The Pastoral Statement gives no indication of what is meant by the term or how it can be Biblically justified. We may not let ourselves be lead by philosophies (Col 2:8), but through the Word of God.

- (e) *Pluralism* has to apparently be accepted as Biblical among the dominating ideologies. Such a choice is then part of the freedom of the churches and basically every church is then entitled to choosing her own position of preference. The norm of the Word has to move aside for the sake of human choice. Because *without fear or favour we have to plead for the religious freedom of every religious community to openly practice its persuasions within the legal system of the country* (see Protest 3.2.10.4.5).
- (f) If *all the Godly determined institutions in society* come from God, where does man or the church or the synod get the right to judge or give preference to any such an institution? It is not the terrain of the church to determine societal institutions (Belgic Confession, art 36 and CO, art 30), but to testify God's will.

3.2.9 Pastoral Statement, par 13: *In this way we can expose the basic causes of injustice and start to apply the only effective cure. Then we can stand strong when we remind our different governments and other authority figures of their duty: not to give or begrudge, but to protect the God-given rights of people all over. To this calling we commit ourselves: to serve as Biblical voices for the voiceless masses, oppressed and suffering people, to serve as powerful advocates for the rights of the powerless and needy people in their own countries and all over the world.*

- (a) In concomitance with the previous paragraph it is clear that correction of the so-called Human Rights of the oppressed must be the task of the church by way of advocacy, not the proclamation of the gospel. There is no efficient cure against extortion and oppression except the Gospel. Practice showed again and again that the emphasis of so-called rights leads to increasing discontentment and lawlessness and does not lead to peace in the Biblical sense. We are caught in between; we have to administer the cure. With the Gospel? No, with the restoration of Human Rights! In this way man becomes his own messiah.
- (b) In the 'prophetic' voice of the GKSA with the government, the government has not been confronted by this RES Declaration of Human Rights, but with the Bill of Human Rights as entrenched in the constitution, instead of *so says the Lord with the Gospel*. The Pastoral Statement, par 14 states it clearly: *Where they [Human Rights] are not part of the legal system, we must as for recognition in the constitutional law. Where Human Rights are transgressed, we have to call for justice loud and clear. Where ruling governments trample Human Rights and eliminate opposition, we have to share in the fate of the suffering church and all people in prayer and in Christian empathy, and encourage them to avoid unbiblical submission and plead for reformation.* Reformation towards Human Rights or in congruence with the Gospel? It is clear that the restoration of Human Rights have come in the place of the Gospel as *the only efficient cure*.

3.2.10 The declaration on Human Rights (Appendix A = DHR) forms an integral part of the total declaration and can actually not be read separate from the Pastoral Statement. Like the Pastoral Statement, the content and points of departure and certain specific rights as formulated in DHR par 4, are unscriptural in several places and contrary to our Confessions.

3.2.10.1 DHR par 1, Appendix A: *...we confirm again with heart and soul the worldwide validity of Human Rights as the God-given freedom and responsibility of all people:*

- (a) See Protest, 3.2.1: It is only a pretty but empty statement, a 'sweeping statement'. Nowhere in the Bible are the freedom and responsibilities of the created man indicated or qualified as Human Rights.
- (b) Nowhere in the DHR is this 'definition' used as such in this context. Only the 'right' and accompanying 'freedom' are emphasised. As derivative it has to be

scripturally founded, otherwise it is an unscriptural addition to Scripture, and that is prohibited (ao Deut 4:2).

- (c) The words *with heart and soul* reminds of and indeed indicates the formulation of Belgic Confession art 1 and confirms the Declaration as a new confession concerning Human Rights, contrary to CO, artt 86 and 50 (Open Declaration).

3.2.10.2 DHR par 2(a): *We confirm that Human Rights are originally and lastingly founded in God's good order for creation, which did fall into sin, but which is currently redeemed in Christ.*

- (a) In no way is it shown in Scripture that Human Rights are originally founded in God's good order for creation. It will have to be proven that such rights are necessarily part of the good order. God created everything so that it was good, in other words in true justice and holiness (Gen 1:31; Eph 4:24). Gods justice (essential characteristic) which shows in man's image bearing, is changed here to the ownership of Human Rights that is bestowed on people by God. That is no Biblical teaching. See Protest 3.2.1.
- (b) Human Rights, falsely connected to man as God's image, are further typified as *lasting*. That which has been damaged by sin (and is confessed as such) can not be typified as lasting in the context of the Declaration. This damage (*fall into sin*) is typified as the opposite of that which is good, so that love for God becomes hate, and there is an inability to do good (HC, q/a 5).
- (c) How are Human Rights *currently redeemed in Christ*? Regardless of the nonsensical formulation, we are once again confronted with unbiblical general doctrine of redemption as is indicated in Protest 2.3.1.
- (d) According to the liberation theology sin lies in structures – 'restore' the structure and the sin is gone.

3.2.10.3 DHR par 3: *...We have been slow to rectify the permanent consequences of the committed transgressions...*

How is something that is permanent, rectified? This statement probably indicates what is known as restitution as we saw in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (but without truth and without reconciliation in the Biblical sense). This kind of formulation emphasises the neglect to bring the matter of Human Rights on the table through study – see Protest 2.1.

The entire paragraph 3 is a confession of guilt with regard to Human Rights – Right that have no Biblical foundation and an induced guilt complex full of liberation theology.

3.2.10.4 DHR par 4: In this paragraph the Declaration comes to the actual content of 'Human Rights', also in its demanding character – man's right to life: life; basic necessities; marriage and family life; freedom of worship; religious freedom; work; freedom of association; political participation; freedom from discrimination; the judiciary; fair share in the richness of creation. Here it is clear that the demand and the right passes responsibility and is therefore unscriptural (with the exception of the first right, the right to life, which has been partially Christianised due to the exclusion of active abortion).

3.2.10.4.1 *The right to life* (see DHR par 4.1 Appendix A for completeness)

- (a) It is true that God demands life from our fellow men, as is entrenched in the 6th commandment, although we all deserve death from God due to our sins. However, in the Bible respect for life is not a right, but a responsibility we have towards our fellow men and God (Gen 9:5,6).
- (b) The fact that God seeks the blood of a person by demanding the life of the murderer, is absent (Gen 9:6; Rom 13:4; HC, Su 40). This omission of God's demand comes down to an omission from God's Word, which is prohibited (Deut 4:2; 12:32; Prov 30:5, 6; Ecc 3:14; Rev 22:18, 19). The seriousness is showed in Num 35:30-33 where God's curse rests on this neglect.

- (c) The root of manslaughter, namely hate and God's commandment to love our fellow men (Matt 22:37-39), is omitted in the DHR. It is pure humanism that is in favour of a moral ethics, but without God. Apparently it is in accordance with the humanist rejection of the death penalty.
- 3.2.10.4.2 *The right to basic necessities* (DHR par 4.2 Appendix B)
- (a) God's commandments are valid for all people (Ecc 12:12) and it is He who demands that the needy be cared for, it is not a right that the needy may come and demand.
- (b) The DHR goes further by saying that the resources of food, clothing, shelter, energy and health care should be *distributed fairly*. It is a simple addition to the 'area' of the 8th commandment (HC, q/a 111) that does not occur anywhere in the Bible and is even contrary to it (Gal 6:10) in places where believers are asked to discriminate in favour of fellow believers.
- (c) The fact that God commands that he who does not work, may not eat (2 Tess 3:10), doesn't serve as qualification to be in contention for the *fair distribution*. The demanding, poor person is the highest norm and not God's standards.
- 3.2.10.4.3 *The right to marriage and a family life* (DHR par 4.3 Appendix A) *that demands that unbiblical obstacles to a free choice of marriage partners be removed...*
- (a) At first sight this 'right' seems acceptable. *Biblical 'obstacles'* are possibly limitations such as 1 Cor 7 and 2 Cor 6:14, which are not mentioned, because they do not fit this highly acclaimed right to freedom. The parents' responsibility towards for instance children from mixed marriages who struggle with the rejection they receive from communities, are not addressed. This so-called right to freedom are demanded for all people regardless of whether they use it responsibly in God.
- (b) It is clear that the DHR is busying itself with social legislation such as the law against mixed marriages of the Apartheids regime. A limitation on freedom of choice with regard to marriage is typified as unbiblical without any Scriptural proof. This implies that the patriarchal system of the Biblical times is also unbiblical as in the history told in The Book of Judges 11:36.
- (c) Once again the 'right' stands out above the responsibility, a right that is not founded Biblically. 'Right' is neither responsibility nor calling.
- (d) This 'right' stands separate from the primary responsible marital duty of believers that separates the marriages of believers from that of non-believers (1 Cor 7:16; 2 Cor 6:14, 15). The believer has no right to free marital choice if God forbids it in his Word, neither does the non-believer (Ecc 12:13).
- 3.2.10.4.4 DHR par 4.4, Appendix A: *The right to freedom of worship – which asks of us to step in for the sake of persecuted religious communities, amongst Christians and other groups, so that they can have the opportunity to gather in places of worship without obstacles, discrimination or retribution.*
- (a) Christ's answer to the devil (Matt 4:10): "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only'" is thrown overboard for the sake of the humanist demand for freedom of worship which essentially demands that everyone should be free to worship who they want. It is pure intercession for idolatry (1 Cor 10:19, 20).
- (b) It is essentially a proclamation that all religions are equal, also Satan worship, because all should have the same right to this freedom. Christian churches no demand rights for the enemies of God based on the rights that are inherent to man being the image of God!
- (c) The Biblical doctrine that our salvation is in no-one else than Christ and that there is no other name on earth through which we can be saved (Acts 4:12), is rejected with this 'biblical awarding of rights'.

- (d) This view is contrary to what we confess in the Belgic Confession, art 36, namely that the government also has the task of protecting to 'holy Word ministry', to counter and exterminate all idolatry and false religion, to destroy the kingdom of the antichrist and to promote the kingdom of Jesus Christ, to have the Gospel proclaimed everywhere so that each person can honour and serve God as He commands in Scripture...'.  
 3.2.10.4.5 *The right to religious freedom* (DHR par 4.5, Appendix A) There is no essential difference with the previous right to freedom of worship. The same unbiblical doctrine is honoured in this 'right'. Idolatry should receive a fair chance – and that is a right!
- 3.2.10.4.6 DHR par 4.6, Appendix A: *The right to work – which calls us to reformation of economic systems that exploit some people, of work circumstances that tear people's lives apart, rob them of meaningful employment and that withhold a fair payment from them.*  
 It is clear that this 'right' is aimed at certain practices of the Apartheid regime with its influx control, work reservation and migrant labour that can not easily be approved of in practice. However, it is about more than that, namely the reformation of economic systems.
- (a) All these malpractices are condemned in the Bible, but not based on the right of the sufferer, but based on our call to act justly as God's command to all people. It is an inseparable part of the commandment of love (Matt 22:37-40).
- (b) The matter that should actually reform is the refusal, resistance and avoidance of work by the person who rebels against the commandment of the Lord (ao Gen 1:28; 2:15; Ex 20:9; Prov 6:6; Eph 4:28; 2 Tess 3:10). The best Reformed labour practices do not provide a right to work, but rather the responsibility to serve others in compassion through labour.
- 3.2.10.4.7 *The right to freedom of association* (DHR par 4.7 Appendix A) *that asks of us to promote specific societal structures; this includes organisations that offer opportunities for life enriching diversity of voluntary associations in which a person, true to their separate persuasions, can organise to reach legal aims and goals – be it cultural, social, economic, political, educational, scientific or relaxing, or has other aims; and which protects the rights of labour unions, as voluntary associations of workers.*
- (a) Apart from demanding a 'right' as with all the other points, this DHR demands that the church and believers in turn have to busy themselves with matters that are not ecclesiastical, contrary to CO, art 30;
- (b) All persuasions etc, regardless of whether they are Biblically tested, are treated equally. It has not been tested according to for instance 1 John 4:2, 3. This heresy resembles Col 2:8 in that the humanistic philosophy has abducted the Reformed doctrine as loot.
- (c) Also qualified (voluntary) unions count amongst those whose rights have to be defended, in spite of the fact that few, if any, unions will qualify Biblically with regard to the promotion/maintenance of Biblical work ethic, which is one of the basic parts of the 4th, 5th and 8th Commandment.
- 3.2.10.4.8 *The right of citizens to have part in the political activities of the nation in a responsible manner* (see DHR par 4.8 Appendix A for complete 'right')
- (a) In accordance with par 3.2.10.4-6, there is an equal demand for rights with regard to political practices, irrespective of whether these practices have been Biblically tested. That gives the communist party the same 'right' that the Christian, which comes down to sanctioning evil, contrary to the Word of God (Rom 1:32).
- (b) This 'right' includes the qualification that involvement in political activities should take place 'responsibly'. In no way is this responsibility defined or qualified as Biblically tested. The freedom is the highest norm.

- (c) Once again the GKSA finds itself on terrain that is not ecclesiastical, contrary to CO, art 30, just as in the previous paragraph.
  - (d) 'Citizens' includes all citizens and awards all citizens (which is not Biblically but politically qualified) the right to have responsible involvement with the political dispensation. This 'responsibility' can only be evaluated 'Biblically', and is not even qualified as such;
  - (e) The DHR here promotes the cause of unbelievers to promote their anti-God ideas, and even claims that they should have the right and the freedom to do so, contrary to Rom 1:32: *Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practise them.*
- 3.2.10.4.9 *The rights to freedom of choice in education (DHR par 4.9 Appendix A) – which calls us to defend the right of the family to choose the kind of school that the children will attend, without there being any unfair disadvantages tied to such choices, so that all school systems, regardless of their religion or philosophy, will have equal legal status before the government.*
- (a) Once again the church finds her on the terrain of the state, contrary to CO, art 30;
  - (b) Inherently all religions have the same status and with that Christian education has the same status as heathen education. And this while the LORD commands us to teach our children His ways (Deut 6). Here the church is called to guarantee false religious education for everyone as a "God-given right ... originally and lastingly founded in God's work of creation and redemption as the sustaining guarantee of the correct relationships within every human community" (Letter, par 1, Appendix B)!
  - (c) This 'right' gives Reformed parents consent to educate and to have their children educated in the antichristian state schools of the RSA, contrary to their promise with the baptism. God will not be ridiculed!
- 3.2.10.4.10 *The right to freedom from all forms of discrimination (DHR par 4.10, Appendix A) – which calls us to advocate Human Rights for all, regardless of their race, colour, ethnic origin, religion, gender, language, social status, political persuasion, wealth or property.*
- This 'right' is contrary with Scripture that commands us to discriminate. But then discrimination based on belief. The other matters or persons are drawn in to deter believers with a false feeling of guilt from Biblical discrimination (and to then praise him as tolerant?) If God calls us to investigate whether a spirit is from God (1 John 4:1 ao), we can not part the result of such an investigation from discrimination (distinction), also not when we are commanded to do good to all people, but most to the brothers and sisters in the faith (Gal 6:10). So we are once again called as advocates of evil.
- 3.2.10.4.11 *The right to impartial execution of public law (DHR par 4.11; Appendix A).*
- (a) This 'right' seemingly comes closer to the Bible than any of the other 12 rights in the DHR par 4, except that the command of the Lord to believers in for ex Ex 22:21, 22 concerning the strangers and the widow, are here renamed as right, which opens the door for a demanding rather than a humble person; on the 'wronged' receiver in stead of the compassionate giver to whom God gave this command.
- 3.2.10.4.12 DHR par 4.12 Appendix A) *The right to a fair share in the rich resources of creation, which calls us [while these given things in creation are developed but also protected against exploitation and pollution], to counter consumer greed and to eliminate the utter poverty of the needy around the world (brackets where inserted for the sake of clarity).*
- (NB Here to divergent concepts are grouped together, nl *right to a fair share in the resources and counter consumer greed and protection of the resources from exploitation and pollution*, which does not have to do with the particular

'right', in other words out of context. Last-mentioned deals with man's stewardship of the earth over which man should rule. For fairness one can indeed argue that exploitation, greed and pollution decrease the 'fair' share of the poor.)

- (a) Nowhere in the Bible is anyone awarded a **right** to a share in the never mind a fair share (fairness that is defined by whom according to which norms). This is purely the language of the communist and the liberation theologian, the language of the dragon in the robe of the theologian. After the poor person's 'right' to basic needs is met (so that there will be no poor person left in Israel?) in DHR par 4.2, another 'right' is added – to which Biblical purpose? It is an internal contradiction, because this 'right' can be marked as *consumer greed. The leech has two daughters. Give! Give! they cry* (Prov. 30:15). The communist undershirt is hanging out.
- (b) The earth belongs to the Lord in its fullness (Ps 24:1 see 1 Cor 10:26's unexpected application). It is not for man to decide who may share in it or even what a fair share would be. We can and must use it gratefully
- (c) In HC, q/a 27 we confess regarding the provision of God: *The almighty and omnipotent power of God through which He still sustains and governs the earth and all the creatures so that foliage and grass, rain and drought, fertile and infertile years, food and drink, health and sickness, wealth and poverty, all do not fall on us by chance, but from his Father hand.* In this 12th demanded 'right' none of this humble confession comes to its right, only the demanding man (Luke 12:13-15).
- (d) From an unbiblical awarding of 'Human Rights', another addition is made (*and to eliminate the utter poverty of the poor across the entire earth*) which is another forbidden addition to the Bible. We will always have the poor with us and God ultimately determines who will be rich and who will be poor. *The prophets are prophesying lies in my name. I have not sent them or appointed them or spoken to them. They are prophesying to you false visions, divinations, idolatries and the delusions of their own mind* (Jer 14:14).

3.2.10.5 DHR par 5, Appendix A: *In this continuing implementation of the RES-1984 Report on The Church and its Social Calling, we confirm our responsibility towards the task of the church. This goes for the preaching, pastoral, diaconal and community searching ministry of the church – to be a living and powerful advocate and practitioner of a Biblical view on Human Rights as a determining part of the church's task to equip a Christian community for its testimony in the world.* (With this the DHR paragraphs 6 to 11 Appendix A, which calls member churches of the RES to promote the Human Rights of all and for all).

Several statements in this paragraph is highly doubtful, mainly because it is founded on an unscriptural view of the calling of the church with regard to Human Rights.

- (a) The task of the church (and believers) is thoroughly described and defined in the Bible in so Matt 5-7. In terms of the existence of church in a church denomination, the existing denomination is a testimony according to the Word of God, not an overarching authority that spells out the church's calling in the world from above.  
The concept Human Rights in this Report is no Biblical term, but rather a humanist one as has been explained in par 3.2 of this petition of protest.
- (b) We may be advocates and practitioners of anti-biblical philosophies where man stands demanding instead of humble before God and the world.
- (c) We may not compromise and support the world in its demand for equal rights and proclamation of its humanist doctrines. With that we call wrong right and right wrong, the lie becomes the truth.

3.2.11 In conclusion. In the Declaration it is repeatedly declared that the promotion and maintenance of Human Rights is in effect an obedience of God's command to love, be it partially or completely. According to our Reformed doctrine we uphold the Law out of gratefulness (ao HC, Su 1). In LDday 32 we confess what this entails:

- 1) Christ bought us with his blood;
- 2) Renewed through his Spirit according to his image
- 3) So that we show with our entire lives that we are thankful for His good deeds
- 4) He is praised by us
- 5) We receive confirmation of our faith through the fruits thereof
- 6) And our fellow men can be won for Christ.

In the declaration some of these aspects are addressed, but then unbiblically extended to Human Rights as a result of man as image of God/Christ. Nowhere in the declaration does the upholding of Human Rights appear as a life of gratitude, because that would contradict the main idea – our upholding of the rights of people, our reparation of the image of God, our proof to the waiting world that their demand for self-stated justice – which we sanction – is met, in stead of the glory of God.

<p><sup>4</sup>Net om U wil te doen soos in u Boek - die wonderskrif wat nooit vergaan – dit klaar van my geteken staan, dit wil ek HEER van ganser harte soek.</p>	<p><sup>5</sup>Nou sal ek U geregtigheid laat hoor; daarvan in groot vergadering vry-uit die blye boodskap bring uit dankbaarheid tot sanglus aangespoor.,</p>
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Ek bied u hart en hande  
in wilge offerhande –  
al wat ek is en het;  
diep in my ingewand  
waar liefde en ywer brand,  
draag ek u heil'ge wet  
(Ps 40:4,5 Totius beryming)

U trou wat nooit beswyk het,  
u heil wat ons geblyk het -  
u guns oneindig groot  
sal ek my hulde bring  
in groot vergadering.  
van vriend en vreugdgenoot

3.3 The Declaration on Human Rights entered the GKSA as a fourth confession, similar to that of Belhar or the Kairos document, without any testing. In the meantime it has infiltrated the reformed foundation like a malignant cancer so that the government's declaration of Human Rights is on equal footing, just without the words: So says the LORD.

If one compares the presentations (prophetic testimony?) of the GKSA Deputies for contact with the government and the Portfolio Committee of the Department of Domestic Affairs (*Die Kerkblad*, Nov 2006) with Paul's 'presentation' on the Areopagus (Acts 12:22-33), the differences are striking.

The first mentioned starts with the rejection of homosexuality as (rightly so) against the creational order according to which God instated the monogamous marriage. Then there is reference to the Christian ethic for social standards of the population that should be normative for the government's legislation. So it continues with a call on the psychology and Christian love of the church and society towards homosexuals because of their right to fully humane treatment. Homosexuals have the responsibility to withhold them of any form of homosexual behaviour and can not claim any right to a homosexual marriage. Paul in turn calls on God as creator and sustainer of creation, and he sees man as completely dependent on God. God commands that man has the responsibility to honour and obey him, also because of His coming judgement after the resurrection from death.

It is clear that there is a totally different point of departure and that there is no mention of so-called rights with Paul – only God's right to command and to judge over his creation.

#### 4. Concluding remark

Human Rights has no place in the theology or religion of the Calvinist reformed life and therefore of the GKSA. God alone has rights to command man to serve and honour Him in obedience to his Word. We may not present Satan's seductive words normatively as reformed and then act as if it is part of the Reformed tradition. We may not serve God and the Devil, but should resist the devil.

### E. REPORT OF THE COMMISSION

#### 1. Argumentation

##### 1.1 With regard to "formal protest"

1.1.1 The protestor claims that the RES-declaration came on the table of the Synod in a disorderly fashion since no point of description came from the churches asking for a ruling on matters with regard to human rights. It came via the Report of the Ecumenical Matters. He claims that the Deputies did not receive a well-defined mandate with regard to human rights in terms of art. 49 CO.

1.1.2 However, the Deputies involved received the mandate to attend the meeting of the RES in 1984 in Chicago and to report on it.

1.1.3 The GKSA was at that stage a member of the RES and reporting on what happened at the meeting was logically part of the mandate to the Deputies involved.

##### 1.2 With regard to "principle protest"

1.2.1 Three documents of the RES that dealt with human rights served at the Synod of 1985:

1.2.1.1 A 154 page "RES testimony on human rights" was published in book format.

1.2.1.2 A Document "Pastoral Statement: a call to commitment and action Declaration".

1.2.1.3 A Document "Declaration on human rights".

1.2.2 All the protestor's principle protests are aimed at the content of the "Pastoral Statement" and the "Declaration", and are also quoted from the translated versions of the two documents, while the content of the "Testimony" is not quoted at all and is not protested.

1.2.3 The Synod only took a decision regarding the "Testimony" by expressing its appreciation for it, with a motivation. No decision was taken regarding the other two documents against which the protestor is protesting, except for the suggestion that it should be translated and published in pamphlet format, which was declined. The decision was: *We suffice with the information in the Acta and the information piece on the Acta.*

1.2.4 The protestor thus founds his principle protests on a document which the Synod at no stage took for its own account, or of which the content was not accepted by the Synod.

1.2.5 The protestor therefore protests a decision that was never made by the Synod.

1.2.6 The protestor goes as far as to claim that the Declaration of Human Rights "*snuck into the GKSA as a 4<sup>th</sup> confession similar to that of Belhar or the Cairos-document*", while the Synod did not even make a decision on the "Declaration".

**Decision: Points 1.1.1 to 1.2.6 noted.**

#### 2. Findings

2.1 With regard to the "formal protest"

The protest does not succeed.

**Decision: Noted.**

2.3 With regard to the "principle protests"

The protest does not succeed.

**Decision: Noted.**

#### 3. Recommendations

3.1 The protest does not succeed.

**Decision: Approved.**