

22.6 PETITION OF PROTEST 2 BR N VAN DER DUSSEN AGAINST A DECISION OF SYNOD 2003 (Artt 19, 66, 69, 254)

- A. The Petition of Protest is stated.
- B. **Decision:** The Petition of Protest is referred to the Petition of Protest Commission 6.
- C. Dr AL Rheeder reports on behalf of the Petition of Protest Commission 6.

D. PETITION OF PROTEST Decision that is being protested

As found on the web at <http://www.gksa.co.za/sinode2003/liturgies/rapport.htm>

"3.2 Matters that the Synod have to make decisions on

The 2001-versification justly deserves a place alongside the 1936-versification in our church liturgy/life.

Decision: Approved."

Preceding information

In paragraph 3.2 the following is stated:

"4. Next to involvement in the process of versification, the Deputies asked for comments of the churches. Much commentary was received. Additional to the involvement with the process of versification, the Deputies asked for commentary from the churches. The Commission went through it and found that the Deputies paid attention to all the comments and that Appendix A is a condensed summary and argumentation of the comments."

In the volume of comments there were comments regarding the work method of the Deputies that were not presented to the Synod in Appendix A.

Especially:

From Gereformeerde Kerk Die Kandelaar

Church Orderly protests

"1. It puzzles us that the Deputies already make it known publically long before the return date for comments and the evaluation of it, already in May 2001 (in the foreword of the test volume): "also note that the Deputies plan to advise at the Synod of 2003 that this versification, after it has been approved, be published alongside the existing "Totius-versification" in one volume."

The Deputies thus already made a decision on the new versification before any comments from the churches have reached them. Apparently they regard note and evaluation of these comments as unnecessary. With this the mandate of the Synod 2000, namely to make the new versification available to Church Councils for evaluation and comments, is virtually set aside. The intention of the Synod decision is clear, namely that the evaluation and comments from the churches had to be considered by the Deputies before they could come to a decision? With this work method they essentially mute the Church and with that their decision and recommendation becomes invalid. "

Form Gereformeerde Kerk Elandskraal

The Church Council of Elandskraal wants to indicate the following to you as Deputies: With reference to the Deputies' letter of May 2001 that was published in the volume that was sent to all churches, the following: With reference to the Deputies' letter of May 2001 which were sent to the churches in the volume, the following: We quote: "The Deputies plan to recommend at the Synod 2003 that this versification, after it has been approved, be published in one volume alongside the existing Totius versification". --- It is our opinion that it is a premature expression of a point of view by the Deputies as a result of which the congregations were positively influenced in

favour of the new versification. The fact that the Deputies only present a version of the comments received from the congregations, creates the impression that the Deputies themselves will not pay any attention to the comments.

From Br N van der Dussen

Open Letter to the Deputies Introduction of Cloete-versification

It is with disappointment that I had to read in *Die Kerkblad* of 21 November 2001 that you have already decided what you are going to recommend to Synod 2003.

It is disconcerting that you have already decided what you are going to recommend in spite of your communication that there will be time to comment on the versification until February 2002.

It is further disconcerting that you have already decided that there will not be room for the adjudication of the versification Psalm by Psalm, verse by verse, word for word.

Does it serve any purpose to spend further time on comments, or is the entire exercise only a bluff so that you can say that you have done your work so that you can execute your predecided points of view?

Your public statements in *Die Kerkblad* edifies the impression that already exists that the Cloete-versification will be imported notwithstanding the protests that exist.

In the light of your public statements it is crucial that you guarantee the several protesters against the versification in the GKSA that you will present every protest in its entirety to the Synod; that you will measure every protest against the Word and the Word alone and will only present such comments on protests to Synod.

It is impossible to interpret your statements in *Die Kerkblad* as other than that any comments that are addressed to the Deputies is a waste of time and gifts.

Brotherly greetings

Nico van der Dussen

It is necessary to go through the entire volume of comments for the sake of the context, as well as further writing in this regard.

Ground of Protest 1

The above-mentioned protests in the presentations to the Deputies question the work method of the Deputies. The essence of the protest is that the Deputies acted contrary to amongst others the Word as confessed in HC, Su 42 by deciding beforehand what the findings will be.

Ground for Protest 2

The Deputies presented selective comments to the Synod by not referring to the above-mentioned protests against their work method in their Report. The treatment of matters in a church manner requires total openness. It is once more contrary to the confessions as formulated in HC, Su 42.

Ground for Protest 3

Synod neglected to thoroughly see to it that all comments were suitably handled by the Deputies, and consequently by the Synod.

The protester admits that he, due to time constraints, has not worked through the entire volume of comments to compare it to the Report. There may consequently be more examples where the Deputies neglected to present the comments adequately and completely to Synod 2003.

Your attention is furthermore directed towards the Minority report that states: "*3.1.1.4 The Commission Members Liturgical had almost no access to or insight into the comments and criticism that were sent to the Deputies by the Churches (Church Councils). Only after it was already too late to evaluate it thoroughly, was it mentioned that it was available for insight.*"

There is no indication in the Acta that the Synod did take the complete volume of comments into consideration to confirm that the Deputy report is indeed a thorough summary.

Conclusion

The decision was made without a consideration of all the relevant information. No attention was given to especially whether the work method of the Deputies were according to the demands of the Word, especially where protests regarding the work method were handed in to the Deputies.

The decisions are contrary to CO, art 30, since the work method that was followed can not be the church method, especially to decide what will be recommended before all the comments are even considered.

Request

That the decision be recalled, and that the evaluation of the work is done all over from the start with a process that is without any prematurely decided outcomes.

E. REPORT OF COMMISSION

1. Mandate

Petition of protest 2 – br N van der Dussen against a decision of Synod 2003.

2. Matters that the Synod should take note of

The following persons testified in front of the commission: proff HF van Rooy and PH Fick (present advisor).

3. Argumentation

3.1 *Background argumentation*

The protestor claims that the deputies who were involved with the 2000 reversification did not adequately consider the comments that were sent to them. The protestor bases this claim on the foreword of the test edition of the 2001-reversification in which it is stated that “the deputies plan to recommend at the Synod of 2003 that this versification, after it has been approved, be published in one book alongside the existing Totius versification”.

This foreword is dated May 2001 while the return date for comments for the churches was February 2002. From this the protestor makes the deduction that the 2001 versification was accepted by the deputies beforehand in such a way that they did not mean to consider any comments after May 2001. The protestor thus questions the screening process to which the 2001 versification was subject.

The protestor further claims that certain churches and individuals' comments are not reflected in the concluding comments of the deputies (Acta 2003:646-658). The protestor also claims that deputies in such a way disobey HC, Sun 42.

3.2 *Ground for protest 1*

3.2.1 Argumentation

3.2.1.1 The protestor misunderstood the quotation from the 2001-versification. In the foreword the deputies merely state that they are of the intention to include the Totius versification in a new Psalm book if the Synod should approve the 2001 versification. This statement was not meant to cut out any comments, but only to address fears that the 2001 versification could possibly replace the Totius versification.

3.2.1.2 The protestors' claim that the comments are not reflected in the report of the deputies is not valid in terms of the assignment to the deputies. This protest has already been rejected on the whole at the Synod of 2006:681, 1.3.3.

3.2.1.3 The protestor does not indicate any further how HC, Sun 42 offers any grounds for his protest.

Decision: Points 3.2.1.1 to 3.2.1.3 noted.

3.2.2 Finding

3.2.2.1 The petition of protest does not succeed on ground for protest 1.

Decision: Approved.

3.3 *Ground for protest 2 and 3*

The grounds for protest deal with the way in which the comments on the 2001-versification were treated by the Deputies and Synod 2003. A petition of protest from the GK Pretoria-Rooiwal already served in this regard at Synod 2006 (Acta, 2006:669, 21.6 – with the consequence that these grounds for protest can not serve again in terms of article 46 CO.

Decision: Approved.

4. **Recommendation**

The petition of protest does not succeed in its entirety.

Decision: Approved.