

A 4.40



**Philip Wilkinson
Conscientious Objector**

Born in 1963, Philip spent his early years in Pretoria, then Cape Town before he and his mother moved to Bulawayo, in the now Zimbabwe. At the end of 1977 Philip and his mother moved "down south" to Port Elizabeth. Here Philip attended Marist Brothers College.)

When he turned 16 it was time to register himself for National Service. He was not very happy about this and many arguments with his mother ensued. It put a lot of stress on their relationship.

"I have been brought up to respect all people, regardless of their colour, sex, religion or status."

Having received his Std. 8 results Philip promptly found himself a job at an hotel as a trainee chef. He enjoyed this job. For the first time he found himself able to express his feelings and relate to thoughts outside his home. He increasingly enjoyed spending lunch-times and time-off with fellow workers.

In July 1981 Philip received his call-up for National Service. After several heated arguments with his mother which usually ended with her warning Philip that "as long as he was under 21 he was to do as he was told." Philip reported for service. He did his initial training in Kimberly and was later transferred to the Eastern Province command. Whilst in the army Philip witnessed the racism between English and Afrikaans speaking troops.

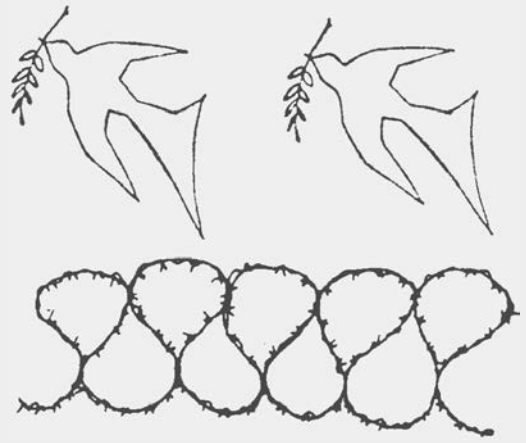
"My experience of the army and the racist attitudes within it backed up the validity of the feeling of township residents."

After completing his National Service on 26 June 1983 Philip found a job. Once again he found himself spending a lot of his free time with fellow workers.

"My policy was to treat everyone the same for I believed we were all the same. I maintained we all used the same 5 senses and all experienced the motions of happiness, sadness, joy, hate, etc. I believed in mutual respect."

SERVICE OF SUPPORT FOR PHILIP WILKINSON

CATHEDRAL OF CHRIST THE KING
JOHANNESBURG
TUESDAY 24 MARCH 1987



1. Welcome

2. Introduction

Reading of a message from Philip

3. Hymn

'Make me a channel of your peace' No 189

4. Penitential litany

Leader: O Lord, our hearts are heavy
with the sufferings of the ages,
with the crusades and the holocausts
of a thousand thousand years.
The blood of the victims is still warm.
The cries of anguish still fill the night.
To you we lift our outspread hands.

People: **We thirst for you in a thirsty land.**

Leader: O Lord, who loves us as a father,
who cares for us as a mother,
who came to share our life as a brother,
we confess before you our failure to live as your children,
brothers and sisters bound together in love.
To you we lift our outspread hands.

People: **We thirst for you in a thirsty land.**

Leader: We have squandered the gift of life.
The good life of some
is built on the pain of many;
the pleasures of a few
on the agony of millions
To you we lift our outspread hands.

People: **We thirst for you in a thirsty land.**

Leader: We worship death in our quest to possess ever more things;
we worship death in our hankering after

our own security, our own survival, our own peace;
as if life were divisible,
as if love were divisible,
as if Christ had not died for all of us.

To you we lift our outspread hands.

People: We thirst for you in a thirsty land.

Leader: O Lord, forgive our life-denying pursuit of life,
and teach us anew what it means to be you children.

To you we lift our outspread hands.

People: We thirst for you in a thirsty land.

5. Scripture reading

I Samuel, chapter 8

6. Responsorial psalm

Psalm 70

Response: Be pleased, God, to rescue me,
(People) Lord, come quickly and help me!

Leader: Be pleased, God, to rescue me,
Lord, come quickly and help me!
Shame and dismay to those
who seek my life!

People's response

Leader: Back with them! Let them be humiliated
who delight in my misfortunes.
Let them shrink away covered with shame,
those who say to me, 'Aha, aha!'

People's response

Leader: But joy and happiness in you
to all who seek you.
Let them ceaselessly cry, 'God is great',
who love your saving power.

People's response

Leader: Poor and needy as I am,
God, come quickly to me!
Lord, my helper, my Saviour,
do not delay!

People's response

7. Address by Bishop Zithulele Mvemve



8. Hymn

'O Young and Fearless Prophet'
(Sung to the tune of 'The Church's One Foundation')

O young and fearless prophet of ancient Galilee:
Thy life is still a summons to serve humanity,
To make our thoughts and actions less prone to serve the crowd,
To stand with humble courage for truth with hearts uncowed.

We marvel at the purpose that held thee to thy course
While ever on the hill-top before thee loomed the cross;
Thy steadfast face set forward where love and duty shone,
While we betray so quickly and leave thee there alone.

O help us walk unflinchingly in paths that lead to peace,
Where justice conquers violence and wars at last shall cease;
O grant that love of country may help us hear his call,
Who would unite the nations in brotherhood for all.

Create in us the splendour that dawns when hearts are kind,
That knows not race nor station as boundaries of the mind;
That learns to value beauty, in heart or brain or soul,
And longs to bind God's children into one perfect whole.

O young and fearless prophet, we need thy presence here,
Amid our pride and glory to see thy face appear;
Once more to hear thy challenge above our noisy day,
Again to lead us forward along God's holy way.

9. Address by a representative of the township youth

10. Meditation with slides and music

11. Prayer and reflection

12. Hymn

'Go Tell Everyone' No 99

13. **Concluding prayers**

14. **Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika**

Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika
Maluphakamis'u phondo lwayo
Yizwe imithandazo yetho

Nkosi sikelele
Thina lusapho lwayo

Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika
Maluphakamis'u phondo lwayo
Yizwe imithandazo yetho

Nkosi sikelele
Thina lusapho lwayo

(Woza moya) Woza woza

(Woza moya) Woza woza

Woza moya oyingcwele

Nkosi sikelele

Thina lusapho lwayo

Morena boloka

Sechaba sahesu

Ofedise dintoa lematsoenyeha

Morena boloka

Sechaba sahesu

Ofedise dintoa lematsoenyeha

(Oseboloke) Oseboloke

(Oseboloke morena) Oseboloke morena

Sechaba sahesu

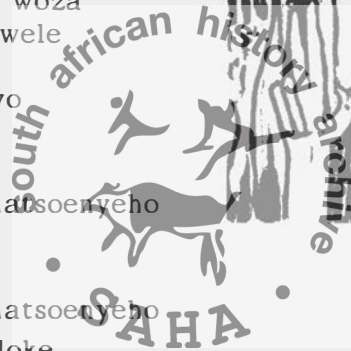
Sechaba sa Afrika

Makube njalo

Makube njalo

Kude kube nguna phakade

Kude kube nguna phakade



While at work Philip developed a friendship with a fellow worker. Philip's first visit to a township raised his consciousness.

“When travelling by road or train past townships I often wondered as to the purpose of the fences and concrete walls which surround them. I was stunned when I found out. It was like what I had read about in all those books about the Nazis suppressing the Jews.

The area bore a resemblance to what I would perceive to be a massive camp or compound. There was no activity or building which gave the impression that it was a suburb. Compared to your average white area or suburb it was under-developed and overcrowded. There were no swimming pools, parks, playgrounds, cinemas or theatres. There were no beautiful buildings. Instead I saw many match-box-like shelters and shacks. There were very few pavements and hardly any tarred roads.

Suddenly all my struggles did not seem like struggles in comparison to the struggles most of the people there must have. Despite all this suffering I did not get a knife in the back, robbed or insulted. In fact I was greeted with embarrassing friendliness.

In July 1984 Philip reported for his first camp. This was under much protest and bad feelings. In May 1985 Philip was called up for his second camp — this was with the Eastern Cape/Port Elizabeth area. On receiving this call-up Philip knew what to do — his decision had been made years ago.

Going on the camp would mean fighting in the townships against people whom he had grown to know and trust.

In June 1985 Philip applied to the Board for Religious Objectors for classification as a religious objector — i.e. a category 3 status. In February '86 Philips application was turned down. He was granted category 1 status — Non combatant service in the SADF.

On the 28 April 1985 Philip received a 1 month call-up. He refused to report. On the 29 April, Philip was arrested at an End Conscription Campaign Peace Rally in Johannesburg. He was charged for failing to report on the 6 May. Philip was released on R100 bail. His case was postponed to 29/7/86.

On 14 June 1986 Philip was detained under the state of emergency. While in detention his charge of "Failure to report" was provisionally withdrawn. Philip was released from detention on 3 October 1986 with severe restrictions being placed on him.

While in detention Philip received a 1 month camp call-up. Upon his release he applied for exemption and this was granted on the basis of him being a threat to the state.

On 21 January 1987, Philip was recharged on the April charge of 'Failure to report'. Philip will appear in a Port Elizabeth court on March 25 to face this charge.