

## **SACBC ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD PROTESTS AGAINST POLICE CRACKDOWN IN NAMIBIA (19/8/87)**

The administrative board of the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference telexed the South African State president, the Transitional Government of National Unity, Windhoek, the South African Administrator General, Windhoek and the Council of Churches in Namibia that Conference members are "greatly perturbed at the countrywide crackdown in Namibia. Police acted against church leaders and workers, trade unionists and members of the political wing of Swapo.

The board spoke of particular distress on learning that the Rev Hendrik Witbooi, an elder of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, was rounded up without regard to his dignity as church leader.

Five internal key leaders in Namibia were arrested under the Terrorism Act, while the homes of a number of clergymen throughout the territory were raided by the police.

"If police measures are a reaction to the pursuit of freedom and to genuine Christian involvement for social and political justice, the bishops ask the South West African Police and South Africa's administrator general in Namibia to give witness to their own Christian principles by affecting the immediate release of those arrested.

"Namibia is one of the territories served by the Catholic Bishops' Conference and the Catholic Church is a member of the Council of Churches in Namibia. We are also concerned that human rights and dignity be protected and respected everywhere."

Signed by: Bishop Wilfrid Napier, president of the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference on behalf of the administrative Board.