

STATEMENT

On

PROLIFERATION OF LAWS

2 October 1980

The news that the government intends scrapping the over 800 laws that over govern our lives at present is good news indeed. The ancient Romans used to say that silly and unjust laws make an ass of the law, and only serve to make those who administer or observe them look silly and cruel. This measure, however, will only be credible and beneficial to the vast majority of our people in as much as all laws, statutes, byelaws and regulations etc., consigned to the scrap-heap contain all those involving any kind of racial discrimination. For it is in this field THAT WE ARE NOT only over-governed, but mis-governed at the moment. Even the bench, of which south Africans are justly proud, is obliged to hand down judgements based on laws which belong to the scrap-heap. Even highly respected members of our police force tell us, as reported in The STAR, October 1st 1980, that “it had never been the task of the police to search for people contravening the Group Areas. Police investigated charges brought to them by members of the public”. How tragically true this is throughout our land; we members of the public bear a terrible responsibility for dislodging our neighbours from their rightful homes. A terrible weapon of inhuman disaster is placed in the hands of the public, which can make statutory criminals of people “because of their bid to fulfil their basic need for housing”. (cf. Star, Oct. 1)

I appeal, therefore, to all right-thinking and Christian-minded people to live and let live. Denunciation of another's right to live and grow cannot be in accordance with a Christian conscience. Nor can those who do this be said to love their neighbours as themselves for the love of God, as Jesus Christ loved them. This is interfering with the basic human needs of one's neighbour. My call, then, is for Christian charity, justice and forbearance – in the name of Him who wants all to be saved and to come to the full knowledge of the truth.

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