

**A *CRITICAL* ANALYSIS OF THE
STRUCTURAL DYNAMICS OPERATIVE
WITHIN THE BAPTIST UNION OF
SOUTHERN AFRICA (BUSA) FROM 1960 -
2005 AND AN EVALUATION OF THESE
DYNAMICS IN THE LIGHT OF BUSA
ECCLESIOLOGY**

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SUMMARY

After highlighting the events that gave rise to the writing of this dissertation, the writer proceeds with a **critical analysis** of the structural and leadership dynamics of the Baptist Union of Southern Africa (BUSA) from 1960-2005. Beginning with the formation of BUSA in 1877, he shows how that the South African Baptist Missionary Society (SABMS – the Missions arm of BUSA), established in 1892, developed in a parallel manner alongside of BUSA and questions whether the two bodies were ever one. Throughout the dissertation, he points out how, up to the late eighties, the structural and leadership dynamics of BUSA tended to favour one culture above the others who, in fact, were in the majority.

The writer identifies the key trends within each decade from 1960-2005 with regard to BUSA's structural dynamics and views the following two events as causing a major turnaround resulting in great transformation during the 1990's. They were:

1. The withdrawal of the Black Baptist Convention from BUSA in 1987 and
2. The turbulent 1989 National Assembly in Kimberley.

He also asserts that the "affirmative" appointment of the first multi-cultural BUSA Executive in 1997 actually "saved the day" for BUSA and avoided future splits.

The writer proceeds to evaluate BUSA's structural dynamics during the period under review in terms of the essential functions of the church, namely, kerygma

(proclamation), diakonia (diaconal service) and koinonia (fellowship). BUSA was strong in kerygma but weak in koinonia.

He finally concludes that the “separate development mentality” prevalent within BUSA during its formation and the review period was not as a result of Apartheid but, as his research has revealed, namely

- (i) British colonialism certainly influenced the formation and initial development of BUSA. The cultural divide between “colonial whites” and “emerging blacks” who were accustomed to a social separation between the two groups was certainly a factor. Likewise, the manner in which Europeans perceived the Bantu in the 1870's.
- (ii) The Missions philosophy prevalent in Europe and America round about 1877 was to form native, indigenous churches that would be “self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating”. The motto of the SABMS was “the evangelisation of the Bantu by the Bantu”. It was felt the young churches arising out of mission work would be independent and not dependent upon or controlled by mother bodies that helped to establish them. It is thus not surprising that BUSA through the SABMS followed the same policy.
- (iii) The British Baptist ministers who came to South Africa prior to and following the arrival of the 1820 Settlers came with the express purpose to minister to the British immigrants in the Cape and British Kaffraria. Missions to the Bantu was **not** necessarily a part of their agenda. As indicated in this dissertation, it was the

German Baptists and not the British who were key factors in the establishment of the SABMS.

- (iv) The new SABMS was based upon the British model which saw the Missions Society as an entirely separate entity from the Union, but in close association with it.

The unjust policy of apartheid, which was implemented and enforced by the South African Nationalist Government from 1948 to the early nineties, cemented and added the “cherry on the top” of the separate development and ultimate separation between BUSA and the Baptist Convention. It provided the ideal context for continued British colonial thinking and practice with regard to the Bantu. Hence the exclusion of the latter from the main BUSA Leadership structures for most of the period under review.

In the final chapter, the writer offers some guidelines which he trusts will prove helpful to future BUSA Leaders and Executives.

KEY WORDS

Baptist Union of Southern Africa (BUSA)

Baptist Convention of S A (BCSA)

South African Baptist Missionary Society (SABMS)

Special Associations

Critical Analysis

Merger

Black/White separate development

Structural and Leadership Dynamics

Transformation

Autonomy

British Colonialism

Future Guidelines

CHAPTER 1

1. INTRODUCTION

We are very grateful to God for those who have written materials and books on the overall history of the Baptist Union of Southern Africa (hereinafter referred to as BUSA). They have done us proud and helped to preserve our history. However, it has been my discovery that almost all those who wrote the history of our beloved denomination hailed from the “white” community and as such viewed and interpreted developments from within BUSA from their perspective and background. In making such a statement, I am mindful that those who have written have done so both with integrity and an attempt to be as objective as possible.

The problem is that in spite of the above attempts to bring BUSA and the South African Baptist Missionary Society (SABMS) – the Missions arm of the Union, which, consisted exclusively of Bantu peoples together in the early 1900’s, by 1960 the Baptist Union continued to operate along two separate cultural parallel lines with those of the White community dominating both the Union and the SABMS structures. BUSA failed to integrate the new indigenous churches into the very structures that gave them birth.

The methodology used is that of a critical analysis. In addition to the few books available on BUSA history cited in the Bibliography, the BUSA Executive Minutes from 1960-2005, i.e. 45 years (135 sets of minutes) and the BUSA Annual Handbooks for the same period, were the main source of research and information.

Whilst critiquing BUSA's structural and leadership dynamics over the period under review, the writer hopes that the article will also serve as an important historical document for BUSA and its future.

The purpose of this dissertation is therefore:

To **critically** examine some of the structural/leadership dynamics that were operative within BUSA from 1960 to 2005 from an "other than white" perspective and to evaluate them in the light of our Baptist Ecclesiology.

In order to clearly understand this dissertation it is necessary that we provide a brief overview of BUSA and share my personal involvement with BUSA and the events that caused me to write this dissertation and engage in the necessary research.

1.1 The Baptist Union of Southern Africa

BUSA was formally constituted in Grahamstown in 1877 that is 131 years ago! Over the past three decades BUSA has grown to become a fully multi-cultural and multi-lingual denomination and at our 125th National Assembly which was held in East London during September 2006, BUSA consisted of 499 fully constituted member churches and approximately 164 "Fellowships" the bulk being new churches that are not yet fully autonomous. By autonomous, we mean churches that are:

Fully and legally constituted

Self-supporting

Self-governing

Self-propagating

This is in keeping with our Baptist polity and our BUSA constitution that states: “We as Baptists believe in:

“The CHURCH as the whole company of those who have been redeemed by Jesus Christ and regenerated by the Holy Spirit. The local church, being a manifestation of the universal church, is a community of believers in a particular place where the Word of God is preached and observed. It is fully autonomous and remains so notwithstanding responsibilities it may accept by voluntary association” (Baptist Handbook, 2004-05:451).

The churches and fellowships are located in **seven Territorial Associations** within the Republic of South Africa. They are the Baptist Northern Association (which includes churches in Gauteng, the North West Province, Limpopo and Mpumalanga) and the Western Province Baptist Association, which have the largest number of churches. Then we have the Natal Baptist Association, Border Baptist Association (with East London as the center), Eastern Province Baptist Association (with Port Elizabeth as the center), Free State Baptist Association and Baptist Association of the Northern Cape.

1.2 Personal Involvement with BUSA

I hail from a family of seven siblings and grew up very poor amongst the “Coloured” community of the Cape Flats, Cape Town. At the age of 12 (1963) I came to know Jesus Christ as my personal Saviour through the ministry of the Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa and because of doctrinal reasons namely, the issue of Believers

Baptism took out membership with the Athlone Baptist Church in 1970 and have been with the Baptists ever since. In February 1974, I enrolled as a full-time student of the Baptist Theological College in Johannesburg and graduated with a Diploma in Theology in November 1977. The Diploma was later upgraded to a Licentiate in Theology.

After graduation, my wife Naomi (whom I married in 1975) and I were involved in Church planting in Mitchell's Plain, Cape Town (1977 – 1983) and Bloemfontein (1984 – 1985). Thereafter, we ministered in a therapeutic pastoral situation in the Bethelsdorp area of Port Elizabeth (1986-1990).

It was also during these years that with God's grace, I completed three degrees by correspondence with the University of Southern Africa viz. a BA (majors in Biblical Studies and History), BTh (majors in Missiology and Systematic Theology) and Honours BTh with five papers in Missiology. In 1991 we commenced a new ministry as the Regional Co-ordinator of the Western Province Baptist Association. This can be viewed as a milestone within BUSA since we were the first "other than white" couple to serve in the capacity of Regional Co-ordinator. The former "missionised" were at last becoming "missionaries"!

This exciting ministry lasted for just under 12 years and during that time it was my special privilege to be instrumental and involved with the planting/development of over 35 new churches in different parts of the Western Cape and that amongst most of the cultural groups of our country. In September 2001 God bestowed a great honour when by the free vote of our National Assembly which was held in Hilton,

Pietermaritzburg, I was privileged to be elected as the first “other than white” General Secretary of the Baptist Union of Southern Africa. By God’s grace, I am currently into my third term of office, which expires in September 2011, the Lord willing.

Prior to being appointed to my current sphere of ministry it was also my privilege to serve our Baptist Union of Southern Africa as its President for the 1975 – 1976 BUSA year; as a member of the now defunct National Christian Education Department and as chairman of our Baptist Missions Department Board for a number of years.

1.3 The Baptist Union Executive

The Baptist Union Executive currently comprises 36 members and consists of the Officers (President, Vice President, Ex-President) the National ministry department heads and representatives from the 7 Territorial Associations. The 7 Associations have proportionate representation in terms of their number of churches and it is strongly recommended that the main race/cultural groups within a particular Territorial Association be included among their representatives. Thus for example, the representatives from the Western Province Baptist Association will of necessity include Coloured folk since that is the main population group of that particular area etc. This structural dynamic only came into being in the mid-nineties and could be seen as a kind of Affirmative Action to replace the previous National Executives which consisted almost predominantly of members from the White community.

2. THE KEY EVENTS THAT GAVE RISE TO THIS DISSERTATION

There are two events, which are in a sense inter-linked that caused me to pursue this dissertation:

2.1 The Hilton “Impact Consultation”

At the beginning of 2004 a key member of our Claremont church in Cape Town collated and analysed 12 years (1994 - 2002) of Baptist Union Local Church statistical data as recorded in BUSA Annual Handbooks. Since the inception of BUSA a book with the details of all member churches/statistical data, pastors as well the minutes and reports of the Annual National Assembly has been produced in what is referred to as the Baptist Union Handbook. It is published annually.

The above report was submitted to and discussed by BUSA Executive who called for a special Indaba known as the “Impact Consultation” in Hilton, Pietermaritzburg during May 2004. Approximately 80 folk comprising 36 Executive Members and 44 non-Executive members (the bulk of which were youth/young adults) from the seven Territorial Associations of BUSA gathered for 2,5 days to discuss the trends within the Union as revealed by the Report. Some of the trends were alarming and a cause for concern e.g.

- Whilst the number of churches in BUSA were increasing, the number of members were dropping from 115 members per church in 1994 to 80 members per church in 2002.
- The number of children being ministered to dropped by 60% within the 12-year period and the trend line indicated further negative growth.

- The number of Sunday school teachers declined from 11 per church to 4 per church over the 12-year period.
- BUSA's personal membership only comprised 0.1% of the SA population. Evangelism was a missing factor.

The issues of (1) the relevance of BUSA in the 21st Century and (2) the effect of post-modern dynamics upon the church also featured prominently at the consultation.

The Hilton Consultation was certainly a disturbing wake-up call and left me asking certain questions such as:

- “Why was all this happening now when there was a General Secretary from another culture?”
- “Should I continue in my position as General Secretary/CEO of the Baptist Union?”
- “How do the Black and Coloured churches which at that time constituted over 50% of BUSA membership respond to the issue of Post Modernism which was so strongly emphasized by the White youth and some leaders from our White churches. However, the Consultation ended on a good note and it was agreed to work towards addressing the negative trends that surfaced.

At the BUSA Executive meeting, which took place after the Impact Consultation, it was agreed to:

- Circularize the churches with the findings of the Impact Consultation.
- Hold Regional Impact Consultations within the Territorial Associations.
- Hold a special Impact Consultation session at which Territorial Associations will report back at the 2004 National Assembly during September 2004.

2.2. The Meadowridge Baptist Church Proposal to the 2004 National BUSA Assembly held at Stellenbosch

Based on the findings and discussions of the 2004 Impact Consultation, the Meadowridge Baptist Church which is one of our largest local churches within our Union and also one of the biggest giving churches to the ministries of the Union submitted the following proposal to BUSA National Assembly which met at Stellenbosch, Cape during September 2004. It is necessary to print both the preamble to and the proposal itself to better understand my feelings and concerns.

The preamble and proposal reads as follows:

16.2 PROPOSAL FROM MEADOWRIDGE BAPTIST CHURCH

“Motivated by a sincere love for the Baptist family of churches and appreciation of our Baptist heritage and with an unwavering commitment to our shared Biblical principles we make the following proposal:

PREAMBLE

There was a time when Baptists in this country were known to be people who reached out in evangelism. We were and still are driven by our desire to see all people come to a knowledge of Jesus Christ and be saved by His grace. Despite our commendable church planting efforts and some encouraging examples of growing churches, the Baptist Union is not growing as we should and we do not seem to be as effective in reaching out to the lost as we once were.

Statistics shared at the recent, highly significant, Impact Consultation held in Hilton, showed that the BU is not keeping up with the growth of our population and is experiencing an exodus of youth and children from our churches.

We are concerned that, generally speaking, Baptist churches are not being effective in reaching a new generation of South Africans. If the current trend continues, the BU will become an insignificant part of the church of Jesus Christ in this country in the near future.

We believe that we should take our newly adopted mission statement seriously, viz. that we should “impact this generation with the Gospel”. We need to look again at the way we “do church” as individual congregations and also as a Union of churches. We are concerned that the current leadership structures of the BU are not ideally suited to meet the challenges we face.

We propose that this Assembly gives attention to the leadership structures of the Baptist Union in the light of the following challenges we are facing:

- The lack of spiritual vitality in many of our churches and perhaps in our BU as a whole.
- Traditionalism within Baptist churches. Some of our accepted traditional methods of doing ministry are no longer working and have become irrelevant.
- Our ineffectiveness in relating to a post-modern and increasingly secularizing world.
- Our increasing ineffectiveness in reaching and discipling children and youth within and through our churches. This is even more disturbing given that the majority of our population is under the age of 25.
- The need to make an impact for the Gospel in the growing middle-class societies and the political leadership of our nation.
- The changing demographics and pressing needs of our country, such as the HIV & AIDS pandemic, poverty, urbanization and population growth as well as the influx of immigrants and opportunities to impact other African countries.

In light of the current growth dynamics of our Baptist Union and the many challenges we are facing, we believe that the way our Union operates nationally and regionally needs to be re-examined. In particular, the leadership structure should reflect the following values.

1. **Continuity in Leadership.** There needs to be more continuity in spiritual leadership, traditionally that exercised by the President of the Union. This could become a full-time, longer-term position with a different title. This person should not become bogged down with administration, but should be free to exercise leadership within the BU and give guidance to churches and associations.
2. **Anointed Leadership.** God gifts, appoints and anoints certain individuals to exercise a ministry of leadership that has as its focus the building up and strengthening of churches outside of their home church. We have always had individuals like this among us however,

(No-where are we implying that we should move to a new form of leadership that would compromise the principle of the autonomy of the local church. Individual churches would be at liberty, as they are today, to either accept or reject any ministry offered to them. Our leadership's authority and influence would be grounded in our respect for them and our recognition of their spiritual gifting).

3. **More Relational Leadership** (Less administratively-oriented Leadership). Currently, in the BU, our model of leadership is administration-oriented and needs to move towards being more relationally oriented. Currently the BU tends to be somewhat bureaucratic in the way it operates for example with our "parliamentary style" Assembly. Spiritually, our Union needs to be led by people with the gift of leadership (Romans 12 v 8) and not by people with administrative gifts, as important a function as administration is.
4. **Team Leadership**. Team leadership is a much more Biblical, healthy, safe and effective form of leadership. Our multi-cultural context also necessitates that leadership within the Union, be exercised by a culturally diverse team of spiritually gifted and anointed individuals.
5. **Visionary Leadership**. These leaders should be visionaries, leading the BU in casting vision, in breaking new ground, keeping pace with the external changes in our environment and leading the Union in cutting-edge ministry. These leaders will also give guidance and set the tone at the Annual Assembly, which would become more inspirational in nature.
6. **Resourceful Leadership**. These leaders will remain in touch with persons, organizations and resources that can be helpful to all local churches.

PROPOSAL

We propose, in light of the above that the 2004 Assembly:

1. Affirms the need for a change in how leadership operates and functions within the BU, at both national and regional level.
2. Appoints a commission consisting of 12 people namely; the President and General Secretary of the BU, the last two Presidents of the BU, 2 others chosen by the Executive and 6 people elected directly by this Assembly. Their task will be to investigate this matter, to consult widely, to report regularly to the executive on its progress and finally to bring recommendations and proposals to the 2005 Assembly". (Baptist Handbook, 2004-05:420)

The Preamble of the Meadowridge proposal endorsed much of what happened at the Impact Consultation and whilst it contained some good recommendations, it also raised a number of questions in my mind. These include:

- i) Does any one local church have the right to evaluate the Spiritual vitality of another local church or the Union as a whole? Could this not be perceived as pride or arrogance?
- ii) Was the then leadership of the Union, which at the time was multi-cultural in nature (see paragraph on The Baptist Union Executive in Chapter 1), not anointed of God?
- iii) Was the multi-cultural team leadership called for in the proposal evident in the life of the local church requesting it?
- iv) Was the Union truly administration-oriented considering the General Secretary spent 180 days per year on the field encouraging pastors, assisting new church plants, sharing vision etc? Was the church in touch with what was happening in BUSA at the time?
- v) Since 2004 was only my 2nd year as General Secretary, I felt the proposal was premature. We were not given the time or the freedom to lead. It was in fact the General Secretary who requested the National Executive to implement the Impact Consultation.
- vi) Was the cry for a “charismatic type” of General Secretary which, at the time, would only be found amongst the “White” community?
- vii) Why the restructuring of the Union now that “other than White” churches were in the majority?

After discussion and tense debate the National Assembly adopted the MBC proposal and appointed a 12-person Commission to look at the possible restructuring of the Baptist Union. The post-Assembly Executive added another two persons, namely the Baptist Union Vice-President and the South African Baptist Women's Department President.

In spite of my plea to the National Assembly that, in voting they be careful to appoint a multi-cultural Commission, we ended up with an imbalanced Commission consisting of "9 whites and 5 other than white". The Black folk, which were fast becoming the majority group within our Union, only had two representatives on the Commission. Were we once again going to be dominated by a White Western mentality with regard to the future structure of the Baptist Union? Have we not learnt from history?

2.3 The 2004/2005 Baptist Union Commission

At the first two meetings of the Commission, it was clear that there were two basic differences of opinion with regard to our point of departure.

There were those who said "Let's forget where we are as a Baptist Union and look at what the "Ideal" Baptist Union should look like "structurally". On the other hand, there were those like myself, who argued that we need to begin where we currently find ourselves as well as how we got here (our history).

We have a real history that is not all glamorous, particularly in the area of race relations and structure and as is often said “the one thing about history is that we never learn”.

Given the above factors as well as my current position, I sensed the need for a document highlighting some of the structural/leadership dynamics of the past 45 years and critically assessing them in the light of our Baptist Ecclesiology. Hence this dissertation.

3. IMPORTANT PRE-1960 DEVELOPMENTS

In order to understand the structural developments of the years 1960-2005, it is necessary to briefly trace some important developments that took place during the preceding years. These include:

3.1 The initial formation of the Baptist Union of Southern Africa and the understanding of the British and German Baptists with regard to “autonomy”.

3.2 The formation of the South African Baptist Missionary Society.

3.3 The formation of the Bantu Baptist Church.

The above developments, I believe, actually set the tone for the structural dynamics of the Baptist Union of Southern Africa during both the Colonial and Apartheid years and contributed in no small way to the parallel separation of Whites and Blacks within BUSA and ultimately to the separation of BUSA and the Baptist Convention of SA.

3.1 The Formation of BUSA (1877)

Professor C J G Muller in his book on South African History states that in the mid-1800's, British Kaffraria (in the Eastern Cape) was reserved for the Gaikas as a separate British Territory under personal supervision of a British High Commissioner. However, the presence of Whites, interference with tribal customs, the agitation for lost rights and the demand for more land in over-populated areas, unsettled the more primitive Blacks (500 Years – A History of South Africa, 1981:198). These events and the attitude of the Fingoes who were British citizens, ultimately led to the Gaika-Gcaleka Rebellion in British Kaffraria during the 1870's.

The formation of BUSA took place during the Gaika-Gcaleka rebellion or what is termed in the 1878 Baptist Union handbook as the “Kaffir War” (Batts, nd: 27). The Rev A Batts writing about the arrival of the Rev G W Cross who was the new minister for Grahamstown says “when he arrived in Grahamstown in 1877, the country was in the throes of the Gaika-Gcaleka rebellion, the young men of the city were called to the Colours, and he saw his congregation being depleted of its young manhood. He was not long in deciding his course of action. He sought permission to go to the front as Chaplain, and the front was not many miles from Grahamstown, but his application was refused. He then volunteered as a Trooper, and was accepted” (Hendricks, 1959:47).

It is interesting to note that in 1878, i.e. the year following the formation of BUSA, no Assembly was held due to it being the year of the Kaffir War. BUSA was born within the context of this war which, as indicated above, involved Whites (British) fighting

against Blacks (Gaikas). Our first General Secretary (British) fought as a trooper against the Gaikas. The following questions can thus be asked: “Did the attitude of Whites towards Blacks as a result of this and the various wars in British Colonial South Africa have an influence on White/Black relations during the formation of BUSA and later the SABMS?”

The formation of BUSA took place 57 years after the arrival of the 1820 British Settlers and 20 years after the arrival of the first German Settlers. The latter came to the Cape as a result of the Crimean War in Europe. Both groups included key Baptists who were to become instrumental in the promotion of the Baptist cause in South Africa.

In July 1877, the Induction Service and welcome of the Rev G W Cross, the newly appointed pastor of the Grahamstown Baptist Church, also provided the opportunity for the formation of BUSA. Seven churches sent 11 delegates – six pastors and five laymen to consider the draft constitution and by-laws and form a Baptist Union “The following churches were represented: Alice, King William’s Town – two churches, English and German: Grahamstown, Port Alfred and Kariega, as a single group: Cape Town and Port Elizabeth”. (Hendricks,1959:47). The 1877 Constitution included:

Item 3 – Declaration of Principle

“While this Union is composed of churches and individuals holding the immersion of believers to be only Christian Baptism, **it fully recognizes the right of every**

separate church to interpret and administer in and for itself the laws of Christ” (Hendricks,1959:48).

Item 4 – Objects of the Union. These are simply stated as follows:

- “1. To obtain accurate information regarding the organization and work of the churches.
 1. To promote unity and brotherly love.
 2. To extend its principles throughout South Africa.
 3. **To maintain the right of all men everywhere to freedom from legal disadvantages in matters purely religious.**
 4. To supply a means of cooperating with other churches in communities as occasion may require.” (Parnell, 1997:68)

Dr Syd Hudson-Reed makes an interesting observation when he states that

“the inauguration of the Baptist Union in 1877 represented a unifying identity between the English and German-speaking Baptists who were in Church structure somewhat differently composed. Whereas the English Baptist observed open communion, the German Baptist practiced closed communion. Whereas the English Baptists were a loosely knit association of Churches within the Union, the German Baptists represented a closely-knit unity within the German Bund. It is not without reason therefore that the vexed problem of the relationship of the autonomy of the local congregation and the need for interdependence in Union evoked much discussion” (Hudson Reed, 1977:39)

The Rev Hugo Gutshe who represented the German Baptists at the formation of the Union, entitled his 1881 Presidential Address “The Unity and the Peculiar Formation of the German Baptist Church” (Baptist Handbook, 1881-82:13-20). In contrast to the British who emphasized single and solitary autonomous churches with a strong emphasis on individual liberty, Hugo Gutshe concluded: that “it would violate the principle of Christ if the body was dismembered into single and independent limbs. A union of all members into one compact body seemed appropriate. Of the structure of the German Churches he stated,

“Although we strictly adhere to this doctrine, this fact is not in the least changed hereby: all our German Churches form one Church ... We believe such proceedings to be Scriptural and not dangerous for the independency of a Church”

As a consequence of this unity the German Churches had only one Confession of Faith, which had been submitted and accepted by all as an expression of that which we desire to aim at, viz. to be one in Christ. (Jonsson in Hudson-Reed, 1977:40)

This difference in understanding with regard to the autonomy of the local church has for many years plagued BUSA particularly in the area of injustices experienced by oppressed race groups which, constituted part of the Baptist Union. Some of these issues will be highlighted later. Jimmy Hendricks one of the great Missionary/Statesmen of BUSA acknowledges that “the Union ... has not been silent on the matter of freedom for all men everywhere from legal disadvantages, although, there has been a hesitancy at times to take an unpopular stand, particularly on racial matters “ (Hendricks,1959:49)

3.2 Formation of the South African Baptist Missionary Society (SABMS – 1892)

Whilst the “honoured title of “Founder of Baptist Churches in South Africa” belongs to one of the 1820 British Settlers by the name of William Miller, all South African Baptist historians are agreed that it was the German Baptists under the leadership of Rev Hugo Gutsche who laid the foundation for Baptist Missionary endeavours in South Africa. “It needs to be remembered however that the British Baptist Missionary Society, which had been established in 1792, did not initiate a work in the Cape Colony because the London Missionary Society had taken charge of Christian work among the indigenous Blacks. Notwithstanding this, for the first forty years of Baptist work in the Cape, the British Baptist Missionary Society was largely

responsible for the settling of Baptist ministers in the English-speaking Baptist Churches in the area”. (Jonsson in Hudson-Reed, 1977:45). Hence the seeming lack of missions on the part of the English Baptist Churches.

Gutsche was strongly influenced by the great German Baptist Missionary Pioneer Johan Oncken whom he served as personal assistant in Germany. “It is not surprising to find that Gutsche’s first missionary meeting was held eight weeks after his arrival and within six months a missionary committee was operating in the church. As its first missionary, the church appointed not a minister but a teacher, Miss Harding. The church had started a school at Thabo” (Hudson Reed, 1977:22). Two years after his arrival, the German church appointed Mr and Mrs Carl Pape as pioneer missionaries and ministry among the Xhosa people of Thabo.

Gutsche was a real missionary at heart. “When he arrived there were no Baptist church buildings in British Kaffraria. Within twenty-five years he had built twenty-five churches. He set about his task methodically, securing plots, forming building committees, and organizing work parties to cart stones and burn bricks. ‘Planned giving’ was an important part of his preaching ministry. Gutsche never opened a church which was not free of debt” (Hudson Reed, 1977:21)

The German initiative inspired the English churches to engage in Missions to the indigenous peoples including Dutch folk. It also led to the formation of the Afrikaanse Baptiste Kerk and the South African Baptist Missionary Society (SABMS) in 1892.

The SABMS was formed exactly 100 years after the formation of the British Missionary Society which was initiated by William Carey. It was constituted at the Annual Assembly held at the Taylor Street church. The objective of the society cited in its constitution is “the diffusion of the Gospel of the Grace of Jesus Christ among the aborigines of this country”: (Baptist Handbook, 1892-93:33)

Furthermore, “the new missionary society was based upon the British model “as an entirely separate entity from the Union, though in close association with it. This was inevitable in the parent society, as it was much older than the Baptist Union of Britain. But in South Africa we find that in 1895 only seven churches out of twenty-two had contributed to the Society. This led in the early years to an exodus from the Assembly when missionary business was considered” (Roy and Hudson Reed, 2001:25)

Whilst the model proved suitable for the British it became a stumbling block to the development of our “united” Baptist witness in South Africa as this dissertation will reveal. Stuart Akers rightly asserts

“The model adopted in 1892 set patterns for the development of the work. It was a model based on the Mission Society being in one country and the church developed being in another country – far away. This resulted in the development of a church or churches which were not organically linked to the sending body. I see this as one of the basic reasons for the new black churches being developed independently of the Union. New white churches were brought immediately into the Union but Black churches were “Mission” churches”. (Roy and Hudson-Reed, 2001:25)

What a tragedy that indigenous Black churches were not integrated then into BUSA.

The SABMS excelled as the missions arm of the Baptist Union and eventually became the main focus of the denomination's life. As the number of works amongst the indigenous Blacks grew, missionaries who served the churches "became known as "superintendents" caring for, guiding, helping and encouraging the churches. Their aim was to help the Black churches to become self-supporting, self governing, self propogating or fully autonomous individual local congregations" (Roy and Hudson-Reed, 2001:54). However, it was only in the mid 1970's that the first two Black churches were accepted as fully-fledged members of BUSA in their own right.

It needs to be noted that attempts were made to bring the Union and SABMS into closer co-operation for example:

- In 1919 the President of the Union was appointed as chairman of the SABMS.
- In 1924 it was agreed to operate under one Executive.
- In 1938 the SABMS constitution was annulled and replaced by a series of by-laws of BUSA. It then switched from being a separate entity to becoming a department of the Union (Roy and Hudson-Reed, 2001:29).

In spite of the above attempts, by 1960 the Baptist Union continued to operate along two separate cultural parallel lines with those of the White community dominating both the Union and the SABMS structures. BUSA failed to integrate the new indigenous churches into the very structures that gave them birth.

CHAPTER 2

THE 1960'S - THE "STATUS QUO" YEARS

The 1960's can be referred to as the "Status Quo" years. These were some of the years that South Africa experienced the evils of apartheid at its worst and many evangelical churches, including Baptists, were influenced by the socio-political status quo prevalent at that time.

1. THE SOUTH AFRICAN BAPTIST HANDBOOK

Each year, the Baptist Union of Southern Africa produces the South African Baptist Handbook. This is an official document of BUSA which, amongst other things, includes the address and telephonic details of all BUSA Committees, Pastors, Missionaries, Churches, etc. It also includes the Executive and Departmental Reports of the Annual Assembly held in September/October of the previous year.

At the beginning of the 1960's, almost all of the leadership positions and National Standing Committees of BUSA were occupied and consisted mainly of folk from the White community (see 1960-1961 Handbook). However, it needs to be noted that for many years following its inception, the key BUSA leadership positions were occupied almost exclusively by British and some German Whites. Even indigenous White South African Baptist leaders struggled for recognition within the British/German-born BUSA. This highlights the Colonial tendency of the time.

A quick glance at pages 7-20 of the 1959-60 SA Baptist Handbook, which lists the Pastors, reveals the point we are trying to make. The pastors are categorized and listed in alphabetical order, under the following headings:

EUROPEAN

Ministers

Probationer Ministers

Student Ministers

S A B M S

Missionary Superintendents (White)

Missionaries (White)

Mahon Mission Branch (all the White Missionaries)

Medical Missionaries (White)

COLOURED

Ministers

Missionary

CHINESE

Ministers

INDIAN

Ministers

Student Ministers

BANTU

Ministers

Probationer Ministers

Evangelist

MAHON MISSION BRANCH

Ministers (Bantu)

Evangelists (Bantu)

(Baptist Handbook, 1960:6-22)

What is more alarming is that this pattern was in every Annual Handbook up to **1970!!** Are not all pastors equal before God? Why then the need to emphasize that you are a Bantu or Coloured Pastor or missionary? **(See Appendix I)**

This fact is further endorsed by the fact that in the minutes of the early sixties, where applicants for ministerial recognition from the European churches were simply referred to as “applicants” whilst others were referred to as “Coloured applicants” (BU Executive Minutes, October 1963:5).

In 1963 the BU Executive mandated the Revs L G Tudor and S Hudson-Reed to write a “History of Baptist Churches of Southern Africa”. A draft outline presented to the Executive listed the first two Chapters of Section I which focused on Baptist Beginnings in South Africa as follows:

(1) The European Churches

- i. 1820 British Settlers
- ii. The German Settlement
- iii. The “Afrikaanse Baptiste Kerk”
- iv. Beyond the Limpopo, the Rhodesias and the Federation.

(2) The Multi-Racial Opportunity

- i. The S.A.B.M.S.
- ii. The Indian Church
- iii. Coloured Churches and Missions
- iv. The Chinese Church

(BU Executive Minutes, March 1963:2)

This, once again, reveals the “status quo” thinking and practice within the BUSA during these peak years of apartheid. Although other cultures were referred to as “the Multi-Cultural Opportunity”, such opportunity was not grasped by BUSA and smaller culturally-based Baptist Unions **developed alongside** of the predominantly White Baptist Union. The gulf was widening all the time.

It is also interesting to note how the Afrikaanse Baptiste Kerk, which was also an autonomous and culturally-based union, was included amongst the “European” churches.

Likewise, during the 1960’s, the Ministerial Education Committee’s Students Progress Reports first listed all the European students in alphabetical order. They were simply listed as “students”. The same report then listed “Coloured Students” as if this was a separate species (BU Executive Minutes, March 1966:150).

A. Theological Education and the Status Quo

At the March 1963 meeting, the BU Executive received the “Memorandum on Theological Training for Coloured Students” from a sub-committee formed in the Western Cape. In its response, the Executive amongst others “ ... reiterated that, though **hostel facilities are not provided** theological training at the Baptist Theological College is available for Coloured students”. It needs to be noted that the late John Hiebner, a school teacher from the Coloured community in Cape Town, was the first and only “other than white” who studied at the Baptist Theological College (BTC) in Johannesburg from 1953-1955. He was followed some 20 years later by two of his local church members who studied from 1974-1977! They were Charles Dickson and the writer. All three of us experienced the same frustration! We were, by law, not allowed to live at the Theological College hostel facilities since they were located in Parktown (Johannesburg) – a white area! Furthermore, the law at the time only permitted **two** theological students from an “other than white” culture to study at BTC and that over a period of four years! Thus, two other students of colour could only enrol after Charles and I had graduated. Because we could not

live on the College premises, we travelled some 15 kms to BTC in the mornings and 15 kms at 21h00 each night! Upon reflection, it is sad that the BTC College Council and BU Executive at the time towed the line with regard to the Government's status quo and that at the expense of human dignity as mandated and recorded in the Word of God! Thank God for those Christian denominations who faced similar situations in the 60's and 70's but did not allow the State and its dehumanizing policy of apartheid to dictate to them! One can thus understand the cry for a Theological College for the "Coloured" students during the 60's and 70's. The SABMS, to which all the Black congregations belonged, had their own Theological College in Fort White near King Williams Town.

B. 1966 BUSA National Christmas Appeal

In 1966, the National Christmas Appeal was earmarked for Coloured churches needing to relocate because of the application of the Group Areas Act. A leaflet was prepared advertising the purpose of the appeal. Interesting enough is the fact many Anglican and Catholic congregations and even Muslim mosques refused to move or demolish their buildings during the application of this inhumane act, e.g. in District Six, Cape Town. Baptists from BUSA, unfortunately, yielded to the political status quo at that time (BU Executive Minutes, June 1966:170).

C. Changes in and on the BU Executive

In 1963 the Rev Dr Chris Parnell, who immigrated to South Africa from Britain during the 50's, succeeded the Rev C M Darroll as General Secretary of the Baptist Union. Prior to his call to ministry, he served as a chartered accountant in England. During his term of office, a Trust Funds Committee came into being (October 1964) and a

National Christian Education Board was established. Dr Parnell had a great love for the Coloured community and strongly supported the development of Coloured churches on the Cape Flats.

Dr Parnell was keen and worked hard to see other cultures represented on the BU Executive which, until September 1964, only comprised voting members from the White community. Thus, in October 1964, the Rev A J Maye represented the newly formed South African Association of Coloured Churches. The latter Association changed its name to the “South African Baptist Alliance” in October 1968, claiming the name “Coloured” was offensive to some of their group. By virtue of their numbers, the Alliance was granted an extra representative on the BU Executive in March 1968. The Rev A J Maye was thus the first “other than White” member (1964) on the BUSA Executive which came into being in 1877!

In March 1966, the Rev D N Nathaniel became the first Indian member on the BU Executive. He represented the Natal Indian Baptist Association, which was accepted as an “Association” of BUSA at the 1965 Annual Assembly.

Following the formation of the Bantu Baptist Convention (1966) and its acceptance as an Association by BUSA Assembly, the Rev T M Snyman became the first Bantu/Black member of the BU Executive since the inception of the BUSA and SABMS. The Rev T M Snyman was accompanied by the Rev T S Akers (White), who served as the other representative of the Bantu Baptist Convention.

The above developments were very significant in the history of the BUSA. However, it needs to be noted that the BU Executive members above were **representing “Ethnic groups” and not member churches of BUSA!** This was in keeping with political status quo at the time and, amongst others, this development ultimately led to the parting of ways by the Black Convention, Indian Associations and BUSA at the end of the 80’s and early nineties.

2. THE INAUGURATION OF THE BANTU BAPTIST CONVENTION (1966)

The Bantu Baptist Church, which was established in 1927, grew phenomenally and by 1996 had reached a certain level of maturity. Roy and Hudson-Reed (2001:37) write:

“The Bantu Baptist Church was not established as a completely autonomous and independent body. It was still under the direction and control of the Union through the Society. The Executive of the Union accepted its ministers and churches. Decisions made by the Bantu Baptist Church Assembly were subject to the veto of the BU Executive although it is doubtful if the veto was ever used. The purpose of the veto was to prevent doctrinal aberrations as had happened in other groups.”

Thus in 1966, after four years of intense deliberations, the Bantu Baptist Church became the Bantu Baptist Convention of Southern Africa, with the Rev T M Snyman from New Brighton Baptist Church (PE) as its first Moderator. However, it was **not only** the formation of the Convention but of **Convention and Associations** (Baptist Handbook, 1966-67:81). The very structures prevalent in BUSA were now being duplicated in the Black Church, highlighting once again the parallel development of two separate Baptist Unions.

The Rev W T Edmunds, who served as the Secretary of the SABMS at the time, says:

“If it be asked what the essential differences are between the old Bantu Baptist Church and the present Bantu Baptist Convention, it can be said: (a) The Bantu Baptist Convention is vested with powers of self-government in the acceptance, discipline, and ordination of men, and in the governing of its own affairs in a way the old Constitution did not allow. In the previous set-up the SABMS Executive had the right to veto. The previous Assembly was at best an advisory body. To-day the Assembly is the final court of appeal for its constituent churches. (b) The local churches were previously knit together in a presbyterian fashion. Today they have bonds which bind them in Associations in a Baptist concept. (c) Local churches hardly existed before. The churches were either part of a circuit or more often considered themselves members of a super Baptist Church with many branches, much after the Methodist fashion. Now each church has its own Constitution and is **learning the meaning of autonomy** with the emphasis on Christ being the Head of each local Church.” (Baptist Handbook, 1966-67:81)

Edmunds further states:

“It is hoped that by this development the African churches will feel (a) that the work is truly indigenous (b) that they have arrived at a maturity they had not had before; (c) that they will feel that having been given recognition in this way they ought also assume greater responsibility for their finances; (d) that they will now feel that as they have been “missioned” by the European Churches they, in turn, have a responsibility to send out missionaries.” (Baptist Handbook, 1966-67:82)

The hope expressed in point (d) was unfortunately not realized by the time the Baptist Convention parted ways with the Baptist Union in 1987. As stated, the Bantu were “missioned” by the Europeans. Who then were the Bantu to missionise?

During the same year, i.e. at the 1966 BUSA Assembly, the Bantu Baptist Convention was granted Special Association status by the Assembly and entitled to two representatives on the BU Executive. Thus, for the first time since 1892 (the formation of the SABMS), Blacks were represented on the BU Executive! However, it was only in 1977, some 11 years later, that the first two Black Churches took out membership with BUSA. The churches of BUSA Special Associations also had the privilege of dual membership.

In highlighting the new “Special Association” status afforded to the Convention, Dr Chris Parnell is quoted in “No Turning Back” as saying: “The Convention was now part of the Baptist Union.” Is this an admission that up to 1966 the Convention was never really a part of the Union? He further adds that the event signified that

“the Convention was no longer a separate body under SABMS control. It was an association of churches of similar standing to the Western Province Baptist Association or any other recognized BU Association. Up until this date, the BU/SABMS Executive had been composed of white persons. From this point on, until today, the BU has been led by a multi-racial body. The Convention and the Indian Associations were now recognized and each body elected representatives to the BU Executive and met on equal terms with everybody else.” (Roy and Hudson-Reed, 2001:39)

The question can be asked, just how equal was BUSA? Whilst equality seemingly prevailed on the BU Executive and that through “indirect representation”, it was lacking at BUSA Assembly and local church level. The formation of the Bantu Baptist Convention also reveals the British mindset with regard to autonomy as focusing on independence rather than interdependence – both at national and local church level.

Due to the negative political connotations attached to the name “Bantu” during the Nationalist Government’s tenure, the Bantu Baptist Convention eventually changed its name to “Baptist Convention of Southern Africa” and remains such up to the present time.

3. SURPRISE OF THE 1960'S

In concluding this chapter on the 1960's, it is interesting to note that during the latter part of the 1960's, there was great debate on the BU Executive as to whether BUSA should continue to be a member of the Christian Council of South Africa (which later became the South African Council of Churches [SACC]). A document entitled "Should the Baptist Union withdraw from the South African Council of Churches?" was tabled and discussed by the October 1968 BU Executive. After voting, it was agreed to retain membership of the SACC. This is surprising, considering the socio-political ethos at the time, the multi-cultural make-up and political agenda of the SACC, as well as the fact that the BUSA Executive then was predominantly White.

3.3 The Formation of the Bantu Baptist Church

The motto of the South African Baptist Missionary Society (SABMS) was “The Evangelization of the Bantu by the Bantu” and on 25 February 1927, the Bantu Baptist Church was born. The service took place at Tshabo near King Williams Town, where SABMS work began. The inauguration was attended by both Executives of the Baptist Union and the SABMS plus 75 Black pastors and evangelists.

The event also provided Black churches with a sense of unity. In his report as Secretary of the SABMS, Dr Ennals, made the following observations:

- “ A. This name marks the Church as belonging to the Bantu people.
- B. Every Race has its own special characteristics, and therefore its own special gifts to bring.
- C. We have endeavoured to help our Native Churches towards self-expression and closer co-operation.
- D. In constituting the Bantu Baptist Church, the power given to its deliberations is advisory only and subject to the veto of the Committee of the South African Baptist Missionary Society.
- E. There is another reason for essential European control for advantage of the work – the advantage of “stored experience”.

Why was the Bantu Church not divorced from the parent society and was Dr Ennal’s comment really valid? Does the Black man need the White man’s “stored experience”?” (David Reid, 1976:22-23)

Point B is a nice way of ignoring our new humanity in Christ, whilst point E smacks of Missionary Paternalism, which was so prevalent at the time.

However, it needs to be noted that “the Bantu Baptist Church was not established as a completely autonomous and independent body. It was still under the direction and

control of the Union through the Society. The Executive of the Union accepted its ministers and churches. Decisions made by the Bantu Baptist Church Assembly were subject to the veto of the BU Executive although it is doubtful if the veto was ever used” (Roy and Hudson-Reed 2001:37).

The formation of the Bantu Baptist Church like that of the SABMS cemented the foundation for two separate Baptist Unions which developed in a parallel way alongside of each other and never really became one truly united family in Christ. The writer will attempt to highlight this throughout this dissertation.

CHAPTER 3

1970'S – THE YEARS OF REFLECTION

The seventies can be described as the years of Reflection for much time was spent on evaluating the past, examining the present and planning for the future with regard to the structures of BUSA.

1. COMMITTEES WITH REGARD TO STRUCTURE

During the seventies there were basically three committees that focussed on structure and related issues. They, unfortunately, only comprised members of the White community and were:

1.1 The Co-ordination Committee which looked at the overall structure of the departments of the Union with a view to correlating their administration resources and activities and sharing their personnel.

1.2 The BU Structure Committee which was in existence for almost a decade and saw itself as dealing with different areas of investigation to that of the Co-ordination Committee. In 1976,

“the following proposals were presented on behalf of the Structure Committee, **not for final acceptance by the Assembly but in order that the Committee and the Executive might be provided with some guidelines for their further consideration of these matters:**

- (a) The General Associations (i.e. South African Baptist Women's Association and South African Baptist Men's Association) shall no longer be members of the Baptist Union.
- (b) The roll of Personal Members as **members** of the Baptist Union shall be discontinued. Those whose names already appear on this roll and who continue to meet their commitments be retained on a roll entitled "Friends of the Baptist Union" but no further additions shall be made to this roll. Personal Members shall have the right to attend the Assembly and, at the discretion of the President, participate in its deliberations but without the right to vote.
- (c) Those whose names appear on the Ministerial Lists of the Baptist Union shall no longer be **members** of the Baptist Union. Ministers shall however in their individual capacity, have the right to attend the Assembly and, at the discretion of the Chairman participate in its deliberations but without the right to vote.

The proposals were put clause by clause. After considerable discussion, clause (1) was accepted subject to such acceptance not excluding the right of the Assembly to approve (a) representation of the SABWA and SABMA on the Executive, and/or the presence of representatives of the SABWA and SABMA at the Assembly on the same basis as that proposed in the case of Ministers and Personal Members. Clauses (2) and (3) were accepted and proposed." (Baptist Handbook, 1976-77:191-192)

Through this resolution, the Structure Committee was wanting to endorse the fact that the "Baptist Union is and should be a Union of churches, not a union of associations of churches, nor a union of individuals, churches, associations of churches, and associations of certain church members" (BU Executive Minutes, October 1974: 3-4).

This Committee was also responsible for proposing constitutional changes to the Assembly e.g. the composition of the Executive and definition of the different Associations. These are referred to in the next chapter.

1.3 The Denominational Work Review Committee

This Committee was appointed at the March 1976 BU Executive which minute reads:

“14. DENOMINATIONAL WORK REVIEW COMMITTEE:

14.1 Composition of Committee:

It was agreed to appoint a Committee of six, three members of which, in the first instance, should concern themselves with Baptist Union matters and three with SABMS matters, before meeting together.

The following were elected – Revs. G Dennison, D Macpherson, TM Swart (Baptist Union) and TS Akers, REA Goetze, Dr JN Jonsson (SABMS).

14.2 Terms of Reference:

The following Terms of Reference were accepted:

A. The Baptist Union of SA:

1. To conduct a general investigation into Baptist Union activity to note those areas where the function of one department may overlap that of another.
2. To conduct a detailed investigation into the activity of each department within the Baptist Union with particular reference to:
 - (a) The intrinsic value of each department, committee or project to the denomination.
 - (b) The practical use of each department made by the denomination.
 - (c) The proportion of finance expended by each department on administrative and promotional activity in relation to direct services to the denomination.
3. To make recommendations for the expansion, contraction, merger, or closure of any department, committee or project.

B. The SABMS:

1. To conduct a general investigation into SABMS activity similar to A1 above.
2. To conduct a detailed investigation into each department of the SABMS similar to A2 above.
3. To review the whole activity of the Missionary Superintendents, especially noting:
 - (a) Their direct or indirect administrative responsibilities to the churches of the Convention.
 - (b) Their direct or indirect responsibility for the erection of church buildings.
 - (c) Their specific Missionary responsibilities.
4. To make recommendations concerning the more effective use of our missionary manpower for missionary purposes as such.
5. To examine the financial involvement of the SABMS with the churches of the Convention and **to note whether such involvement has had**

beneficial or adverse effects upon the development of autonomous Baptist churches amongst Africans.

C. Denominational Training Institutions:

To examine the possibility of re-siting our Baptist Theological Training Institutions with the purpose of making a more economical use of manpower and resources for the training of our ministers.” (Baptist Union Executive Minute, March 1976:7)

Although the brief included an investigation into SABMS activity it was most unfortunate that Black pastors were not part of the investigation highlighting once more the paternalistic nature of Baptist Missions in the seventies. It also endorses the writer’s view that two parallel unions were operating alongside of each other.

The three committees referred to above often overlapped in terms of their work. However, all their work, research and consultation with Associations and cultural groups, culminated in the Denominational Work Review proposals adopted by the 1978 Baptist Union Assembly held in East London and recorded as follows:

“DENOMINATIONAL WORK REVIEW:

The General Secretaries outlined the concepts envisaged in the Denominational Work Review Proposals, namely, a greater involvement by the Territorial Associations in the work of the Denomination and the co-ordination and integration of the work programmes of the various departments of the Baptist Union and SABMS. After they had answered questions from the floor of the Assembly regarding the detailed information provided in the booklet which had been made available to churches and delegates, the President submitted the proposals one at a time and after certain amendments the following proposals were accepted:

1. The Baptist Union and Baptist Missionary Society administration and functions be combined as set out in the concepts contained in the Work Review Document.
2. The Territorial Associations be called upon to:
 - 2.1 assume responsibilities with regard to the church-related ministries in their respective areas.

- 2.2 set up committees for church-related functions
- 2.3 incorporate the work of the Field Committees
- 2.4 co-operate in the promotion of the Denominational Budget
- 2.5 amend their constitutions to authorise any contractual relationship with the Baptist Union
- 3. The Baptist Union Executive be authorised to operate through two Boards as set out in the Document.
- 4. The present Home Missions, Evangelism, Youth, CED, Standing Committees become National Councils, with the authority and functions as set out in the Document.
- 5. Fellowship in Finance to continue as a central budget and collecting operation and that the Denominational responsibilities (central functions) and approved association requirements for functions delegated to the Associations by the Executive be funded through Fellowship in Finance.
- 6. The attached list of posts is proposed as a guide with the following considerations in mind:
 - a. That a transition phase is accepted as necessary.
 - b. That the number of posts be limited to those at present approved.
 - c. That all posts will only be filled in consultation with the Departments, Associations and Committees concerned
- 6.1 A part-time Treasurer
- 6.2 A part-time Editor of the SAB Magazine
- 6.3 A part-time Evangelism Co-ordinator
- 6.4 A part-time Evangelist
- 6.5 A part-time Youth Co-ordinator
- 6.6 A part-time Team Ministries worker
- 6.7 A part-time Christian Education Co-ordinator
- 6.8 A part-time Christian Education Officer
- 6.9 A full-time Publications Co-ordinator
- 6.10 A full-time Home Missions Minister
- 6.11 A full-time St. Helena Minister
- 6.12 4 full-time Compounds Workers
- 6.13 4 full-time Workers among the Indians
- 6.14 2 full-time Hospital Chaplains
- 6.15 A full-time General Secretary
- 6.16 A full-time Missions Secretary
- 6.17 2-4 full-time Area Co-ordinators
- 6.18 2 part-time Area Co-ordinators
- 6.19 5-7 full-time Missionary Posts
- 6.20 A full-time Builder

Note:

- 1. These proposals do not call for the creation of more posts numerically than are at present approved by the Denomination –

- but rather suggest the renaming of certain posts and the revision of job descriptions.
2. No changes are envisaged in posts at our training institutions and details are therefore not included.
 7. The Proposals be implemented as at 1st January, 1979 as far as practicable with the understanding that the alteration of certain posts and administration procedures may require a transition period.
 8. When once the Denominational Work Review Proposals have been accepted by the Assembly, they be submitted to the Structure Committee with the request that it seeks a Constitutional Structure to accommodate the proposals. It was further noted that special attention would need to be given to the relationship of the Territorial Associations to the Union.
 9. Notwithstanding the acceptance of these proposals by the 1978 Assembly, it is recognised that it shall be competent for the subsequent Assemblies to review them, and the desirability of their implementation, in the light of the progress, or lack of it, toward the attaining of the goals envisaged." (Baptist Handbook, 1978-79:191-193)

The Denominational Work Review proposals were fairly well received and certainly brought Territorial Associations on board with the National Ministries and Central Functions. Some of the Missionary Superintendents became Area Co-ordinators of Territorial Associations.

The Denominational Work Review Committee also proposed that the BU Executive be divided into two Boards, namely:

- “1. The **Development and General Board** which will assist existing churches and provide a platform for fellowship and decision making for these churches, at the Assembly.
2. **The Missions Board**. To evangelise, pioneer new work, plant new churches and encourage existing churches in evangelism and outreach.

The boards shall function through National Councils and Standing Committees. The Boards shall have power to make decisions within accepted policy and budget. The boards shall meet twice a year in February and in June/July and comprise the following persons:

- i) The Officers
- ii) One half of the members of the Executive serving on each board.

- iii) Up to 3 further persons co-opted by the board. Such persons shall not be entitled to Executive Status.” (BU Executive Minutes, June 1978:307-308). **See Appendix II.**

The unforeseen and unplanned New Missions Trust of the Baptist Union spearheaded by the Rev Herbie Beerens in the 1980's (discussed in the next chapter), took the Union by storm and both reshaped and confused the thinking of many with regard to some of the Denominational Work Review proposals. As a result, the proposed two Boards never ever got off the ground.

In concluding this section on Denominational Work Review, one wonders “How much consultation there was with our daughter body – the Baptist Convention of South Africa? If there was consultation, was it adequate? Was the direction clearly understood by the Convention leadership and their local churches, and more so, was the direction acceptable to the Black churches?”

2. SOUTH AFRICAN BAPTIST ALLIANCE

2.1 Withdrawal from BU Executive

A significant development during the seventies was the dissolution and subsequent withdrawal of the SA Baptist Alliance from the BU Executive. The Alliance basically comprised churches from the Coloured community in South Africa and the then Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe).

The late Rev AJ Maye who represented the Alliance at the June 1977 BU Executive meetings, informed the members that “in view of the fact that a number of Coloured

churches had felt that the Alliance was now redundant and had resigned from it, the Executive held in May this year agreed to recommend to the Annual meeting of the Alliance to be held in September that the Alliance be disbanded” (BU Executive Minutes, June 1977:17).

Thus from 1978 until 1987 the Coloured churches had no direct representation on the Baptist Union Executive. The desire was strongly expressed for recognition of identity as a member of a united Baptist family – the new community in Christ and not in terms of ethnicity.

2.2 Reaction to the State President’s attendance at 1977 BU Assembly Centenary Celebration

At the same Executive meeting cited above, the Rev AJ Maye informed the BU Executive that Executive of the SA Baptist Alliance had decided that the Alliance members would absent themselves from the Inaugural Meeting of the 1977 Assembly Centenary Celebrations owing to the presence of the State President in his official capacity. This resulted in lengthy discussion and after Mr Maye outlined some of the reasons for the Alliance Executive’s action, the Executive responded as follows: “This Executive respectfully makes an earnest plea to the Alliance to consider its decision for the following reasons –

- 1) In order to remove the prospect of widespread publicity which would obviously be hurtful to the image of the whole Baptist family.

- 2) In order to maintain the unity of our whole Baptist family in our humble thanksgiving to God for His goodness to us over the past 100 years.

In making this request, we assure the Alliance and the group to which they belong that we recognise the deep hurt they are suffering, and express our earnest desire to see, by all legitimate means the achievement of necessary changes.

The BU President was commended for his action in meeting informally with the leaders of the Alliance churches in his home recently.

It was agreed that the BU President, Vice-President and the General Secretary meet with the representatives of the Alliance at the earliest convenience to share the above-mentioned proposals with them” (BU Executive Minutes, June 1977:19).

Given the tense political situation prevalent in the country at that time, the reaction of the Alliance is understandable. However, after consultation with BU Executive sub-committee, the Alliance Executive rescinded their decision and agreed to leave the matter of attendance to the individual conscience of those concerned.

2.3 Request for Theological College in the Western Cape

At the beginning of the seventies, the Executive regularly discussed a memorandum from the Rev P Louw who represented the Alliance, with regard to the establishment of a college in the Western Cape for the training of Coloured pastors. After careful

investigation and various discussions between the BU and Alliance Executive, the 1972 Assembly agreed to the establishment of the “Western Province Branch College”. Dr Chris Parnell the then General Secretary of the Baptist Union became its first principal. Whilst the College began with a few Coloured students, it quickly became multi-cultural and today it is an autonomous college known as the Cape Town Baptist Seminary with a fairly multi-cultural staff and faculty.

3. FURTHER OBSERVATIONS REGARDING THE 70'S

3.1 Race Relations

When one reads the BU Executive Minutes of the seventies you can't but help to notice **how many times** it is emphatically stated that “the Baptist Union recognised that it is a multi-cultural body” (BU Executive Minutes, October 1974:5; BU Executive Minutes, October 1975:4).

Yes, this may have been true at the time but, were the cultures in membership during the seventies happy within the Union? Were they accepted and recognised as equals within the local body of Christ? The SA Baptist Alliance is a case in point. Furthermore it is noteworthy that the Umgeni Road and Jouberton Baptist churches were the **first black churches** to be afforded full membership status with BUSA in 1977. **This was 50 years after the inauguration of the Bantu Baptist Church!**

The BU Executive tried to address the issue on a number of occasions. This is evident

from the resolutions passed during that decade, e.g. the resolution on race relations passed at the 1976 Assembly following the outbreak of the political riots in the country:

“This Assembly of the Baptist Union of South Africa regrets and deploras the outbreak of violence in our land in recent months. Notwithstanding the causes which gave rise to it, violence breeds violence, and imposes a strain upon human relations which sets back progress in social, racial, economic and political spheres. We acknowledge with gratitude the important role of all who were involved in containing the riots, many of whom gave no thought to their own safety or comfort. Nevertheless, we appeal to the authorities to continue to ensure that the riot police are adequately trained in methods of crowd control, with the use of fire-arms only in a final extremity.

This Assembly notes that the principal victims of the current unrest are members of the African, Coloured and Indian Communities, who have seen some of their homes, hospitals, businesses, schools, libraries, crèches and other amenities senselessly damaged or destroyed by unruly elements within their own communities. We assure the members of our churches and all peoples in these areas, of our deep sympathy.

Whilst the Assembly takes full cognisance of the role of agitators and vandals in these disturbances **it notes that a root cause has been a sense of frustration, leading to hatred. Such attitudes arise out of social, educational, economic and political disabilities experienced by the African, Coloured and Indian Communities.** Many of these grievances have been ignored by a large section of the White community for too long.

We welcome the assurances given by the Government that these grievances will receive immediate attention and the preliminary steps taken in this direction. We consider this to be a matter of desperate urgency. All people, of all groups, who exercise political, administrative, commercial, and industrial power in our land must review their attitudes towards those who do not share these powers, with the intention of eliminating discrimination.

We urge the Government to expedite the removal of all petty apartheid, and those discriminatory laws which weigh most heavily upon our African, Coloured and Indian peoples.

We express our appreciation of, and support for, the Hon. Prime Minister in the positive lead he has taken in creating a climate favourable to the consideration of these matters including meeting with Community

CHAPTER 5

THE 1990'S – THE BEGINNINGS OF TRANSFORMATION

The 1989 Annual Assembly, and the events surrounding it, can be viewed as a “watershed” in the history of BUSA. The issues were basically twofold and caused great unhappiness amongst the “other than White” delegates, especially those from the Coloured community. The issues were:

- (a) The Assembly accommodation which was allocated on the basis of racial lines.
- (b) The choice of the South African Defence Force (SADF) military barracks for the meetings.

The latter particularly proved to be a very sensitive issue, since political and racial tensions were at an all-time high within South Africa in 1989. The Assembly Arrangements Committee, which at the time was predominantly from the White community, had gone against the BU Executive’s advice and utilized the SADF military barracks for meetings and meals. The 1989-90 Baptist Handbook sums up the events in the following manner:

“Change of Assembly Venue: Two protests at the choice of the army base as an Assembly venue were made – one during the First Session and immediately preceding the In Memoriam Service, when the agenda does not permit discussion, and the other by another delegate on the second day after the morning tea break, when in a hard-hitting speech the delegate explained why he could not remain at the Assembly. Several delegates spoke in support of the reasons for the protest, namely, that the SADF was perceived as a symbol of oppression and part of the system which maintains the status quo of the apartheid policy. These too indicated that they would have to leave the Assembly. After considerable

discussion the Assembly was called to a prolonged time of prayer. Then, in support of a proposal from the Officers, the Assembly agreed to move from the army base to the Baptist Church immediately after lunch.

The Lord graciously over-ruled, and over the weekend – particularly at the Ministers’ Fraternal and the Assembly Morning Service – there was evidence of reconciliation and healing.” (Baptist Handbook, 1989-90:164)

The Kimberley Assembly followed hard on the heels of the “abrupt and sudden withdrawal” of the Baptist Convention of South Africa (BCSA) from the proposed merger with BUSA in 1987. However, together the two events could be seen as ushering in the beginnings of transformation within BUSA. This is clearly evidenced in a number of happenings, structural developments and changes in approach towards oppressed cultures in the 1990’s. The following stand out clearly in an overview of the nineties:

1. THE 1990 BU PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

The 1990 Assembly was held in Roodepoort and at the event the Rev Andrew van den Aardweg was inducted as President of BUSA. He served as a BUSA pastor in a number of churches and in the then Rhodesia from 1948 to 1966. From 1966 he served as a Chaplain in the SADF and eventually rose to the rank of Brigadier-General in the Chaplaincy. It was quite ironic that a SADF employee was elected as Vice-President of BUSA at the stormy 1989 BU Assembly! However, God greatly used him and his Presidential Address in 1990 clearly surpassed all expectations. We were “blown out of the water” by what we heard from the lips of an employee of the SADF!

“ ... the Rev A van den Aardweg chose as his theme for the Assembly and for his Presidential Year “The Unchanged Gospel’s Answer to a Changing Society”. He stressed the need to work for change in our society and toward unity within the Baptist family at all levels.

During the year we have seen historic changes taking place in our country, with the removal of legislation that has supported the ideology of apartheid, bringing to an end for many, long years of oppression, humiliation and suffering and heralding a new day of hope and expectation for us all.” (Baptist Handbook, 1991-92:90)

The other supporting papers that he chose for the Assembly were:

- The Realism of the Gospel in a Sinful Society, presented by Rev E Andre
- The Responsibility of the Believer in a Complex Society, by Rev A Scheepers (the writer)
- The Structuring of the Church in a Changing Society, by Rev T G Rae

The selection of topics speak for themselves. In fact, the writer believes it set the tone for transformation within BUSA.

In 1990, the BU General Secretary, Terry Rae, met with the Executive of the predominantly Black Eastern Baptist Association (EBA), which was at that time “technically” still part of the BCSA, but fellowshipping with BUSA.

“Many of the brethren had felt uninvolved during the Kimberley Assembly where they felt that the Baptist Union catered for Whites only. It was also felt that the Baptist Union recognized the Convention, but did not give the same kind of recognition to the ex-Convention churches now in membership with the Union. It needed to recognize the Associations as members and not merely as observers. It appeared from discussions with the EBA Executive that a very real need existed for greater representation on the BU Executive from the Black community and that that same community should be more involved in planning for Assemblies, The Way Ahead etc. More meaningful involvement and participation was the cry that had been heard.

During the Executive discussion of the report **it was felt that the Baptist Union would need to be reconstructed to reflect more adequately the nature of its constituency.**” (BU Executive Minutes, October 1990:16)

2. THE ROLE OF THE BU EXECUTIVE IN TRANSFORMATION

In reading the minutes and Assembly reports of the nineties, one is gripped by a new dynamic and new dimension with regard to the attitude, approach, progressive thinking and bold leadership of the Executive. This is evidenced in several ways and helped to facilitate the process of transformation.

2.1 *A change in attitude*

The BU Minutes of the nineties reveal a greater understanding and sensitivity of the Executive towards those who were outspoken in their criticism of the Baptist Union and its perceived racial composition and oppression, e.g. posters advertising the 65th Anniversary of the Baptist Convention included a statement claiming the Convention was celebrating “five years of autonomy from oppression” (BU Executive Minutes September 1992:33). The Executive responded by writing to BCSA, congratulating them on their anniversary and granting them approval to write and invite BUSA churches to their celebrations. BUSA President and General Secretary also attended the celebrations.

Likewise, this conciliatory attitude is evident in:

2.1.1 The gracious manner in which the Executive dealt with the removal of **Dr Graham Cyster’s** name from the BU Ministry Lists and the resignation of the **Revs Desmond Hoffmeister and Johan Kock** (two of the key spokesmen at the 1989 Kimberley Assembly). All three were from the Coloured community.

2.1.2 The response of the Executive to the accusations leveled at it by the **Baptist Convention's National Awareness Campaign held in Barkly West** during 1990. The writer represented BUSA General Secretary at the Campaign and Dr Parnell attended in his personal capacity. A strong antagonism towards BUSA surfaced at the conference. In response, the BU Executive forwarded the following letter to the Secretary of the BCSEA:

"We write to express

1. OUR REPENTANCE for the hurt we have caused in the past by our attitudes and behaviour. While different perspectives have undoubtedly given rise to deep hurts and misunderstandings, we assure you that these have been unintentional, and have probably resulted from the differing circumstances in which we have lived in South Africa. This is further testimony to the fact that we need each other as brothers and sisters in the Body of Christ, to teach each other that His Church transcends all human barriers and divisions.
2. OUR HURT at being criticized and accused of many wrongs and evils, without the opportunity either to face the allegations and, where necessary, to repent and change our ways, or to answer the charges in order to clear up the misunderstandings that have arisen. We have been further hurt and grieved as Christian brothers when letters expressing the differences and divisions have been distributed around the world, while very little communication on these issues has taken place between you and us. Our Lord calls us to speak to each other when we have grievances against one another. We are willing to listen to you and to talk with you.
3. OUR HOPE that we will come together as brothers in Christ to resolve our differences so that we may either become ONE Baptist Witness in Southern Africa, or at least respect and love each other as fellow workers in God's Kingdom, if we are to continue as TWO non-racial Baptist bodies at the present time.
4. OUR DESIRE for continuing negotiations and discussions towards meaningful unity in facing the great challenges of our country in these days of change." (BU Executive Minutes, June 1990:15-16)

The letter was printed in the “Baptists Today” magazine – the official publication of BUSA.

2.2 A change in Denominational Structures

The BU Executive of the nineties was also instrumental in leading BUSA through some major structural changes:

2.2.1 The greatest and most significant of these was the change in **the composition of the BU Executive**. At the beginning of 1990, the BU National Executive, which consisted of the Officers, Assembly/Elected Members and Association Representatives, was still predominantly “White”. Out of a total of 19 members, only three were “other than White” – all six regional associations were represented by Whites. However, with the bold leadership of the Executive and after a process which began in October 1990, a “new look” Executive came to the fore. In 1997, the practice of electing six members from the floor of the Assembly (which were historically mainly from the White community) fell away. The BU Constitution as amended by the Assembly and the Executive now consisted of

“9.1.1 The Officers of the Union.

9.1.2 Four representatives from and elected by each Territorial Association, **such number to reflect the total constituency of the Association**.

9.1.3 One representative from each recognized Board.

9.1.4 Such other members but not exceeding four in number as may be co-opted by vote of three-fourths of the Executive members present at the meeting dealing therewith.”

(Baptist Handbook 1997-98:410)

I believe that this decision and the “affirmative action” on the part of the Executive actually saved the day for BUSA. For me, it was **one of the most significant changes in our history** since it:

- gave recognition to the different cultural groups within BUSA;
- ensured direct participation of all cultures and regions in the affairs of the Union;
- provided an Executive platform for cross-cultural interaction, growth and development; and
- is still operational within BUSA at the present time (2008).

This new direction, which began in October 1990, greatly facilitated transformation within the leadership structures of the Union, e.g. in 1991, the writer became the first “other than White” Area Co-ordinator of BUSA. This was followed by George Ngamlana who became the first “other than White” Associate General Secretary of BUSA from 1994-1997. The latter also became Area Co-ordinator of KZN in 1999 and the first Black BUSA missionary to Africa in 2005. Sydney Dyasi became the Area Co-ordinator of the Border Baptist Association in 2000.

Clive Jacobs became the first ever “other than White” to preach the Union sermon at an Annual Assembly in 1995 and followed the writer as Area Co-ordinator of the WPBA in 2003. In 2005, Salwyn Coetzee became the first BYSA National Director of colour. In 2006, Linsay Rinquet, a PhD graduate and alumnus from Cape Town Baptist Seminary, became the first “other than White” to occupy the position of principal of one of our theological seminaries.

Likewise, the role of BU President, which for many years was occupied only by Whites saw other cultures rise to the occasion.

2.2.2 Special Associations

The nineties also saw the **phasing out of Special Associations** which could be perceived as a “cultural window-dressing structural mechanism”. This is confirmed by the Rev P Daniel’s (one of the Indian representatives on the BU Executive) report to the Executive on the decision. “He stressed the last paragraph (of the BASA’s report) in which it was stated that ‘we welcome the decision of this Executive to remove our ‘privileged status’ on the grounds that this promoted ethnicity” (BU Executive Minutes, September 1993:31).

The Special Associations were phased out in 1994/1995 with strong objections from BASA and the ABK. BASA never had a single church in membership with the Union! They were invited to become General Associations of the Union but, after many meetings and much persuasion, only the ABK took up the offer. This meant that they no longer had representation on the National Executive. The ABK was accepted as a General Association in 1995.

2.2.3 Missions

The Rev T D Pass, who commenced as **Missions** Secretary in 1990, retired in December 1991. After six years “in the wilderness”, the Missions Board finally inducted Rev Dr Eric Robbins as the new Missions Developer in 1998. Prior to Dr Robbins’

arrival, a new Missions Policy was adopted by the Executive and Union. The appointment of a Missions Developer became an Executive Appointment in consultation with the Missions Board and the Missions Developer was no longer an Officer of the Union. The size of the Board was reduced and the Executive, Assembly and missionaries each elected three Board members for a period of two years.

2.2.4 Theological Education

After much reaction to the concept of “collecting their own funds” in the early nineties, both the Baptist Theological College (BTC, Randburg) and the Cape Town Baptist Seminary (CTBS) were set free by the 1997 Assembly to do so and were no longer a part of the Central Functions budget. After initial years of teething problems, the two seminaries were able to hold their own and continue to do so until today.

The issue of transformation also impacted on our seminaries and the Rev George Ngamlana became the first Black full-time lecturer at BTC (Randburg) and served in this capacity from 1995-1997. In March 1999, Dr D Morcom, principal of BTC, expressed concern that only four full-time Black students were enrolled at BTC.

In June 1997, the BU Executive appointed a Theological Commission.

“It was proposed that:-

In the light of the crisis facing our Theological Institutions, and in a conscious attempt to discern God’s will, we propose that this Executive appoints a commission in order to:-

- 1 *examine/determine the most effective means of training Baptists*
- 2 *investigate the viability of having 2 colleges and:*
- 3 *to report to the next Executive meeting with definite proposals.*

(BU Executive Minutes, June 1997:25)

The Commission presented the BU Executive with three models. Initially, the Executive opted for model 3 (one residential college and one correspondence college). This was an extremely sensitive issue with the College faculties, especially the Cape Town Seminary, since such decision would imply the phasing out of one of the residential colleges – which one? However, in June 1998, the BU Executive changed to Model 2 provided that “priority be given to distance learning at the various levels (Cape Town to continue with the Certificate of Pastoral Ministries programme, with Randburg concentrating on the Diploma and Licentiate levels” (BU Executive Minutes, June 1998:25).

This was endorsed by the 1998 BU Assembly, which adopted the following resolution:

“Having carefully examined the training of Baptists, the Executive is grateful to God for the existing residential and correspondence programs of the two Colleges, However, in order to offer more effective training for the entire Baptist constituency, the Baptist Union needs to aggressively develop distance learning programmes” (Baptist Handbook, 1998-99:418).

The Commission assisted with the process of transformation and accelerated the development of the distance learning (theological education by extension) programme. By September 1999, the Cape Town Baptist Seminary (CTBS) reported an enrolment of 366 students (the bulk of these were from previously disadvantaged communities). CTBS also reported that up to that date, 54 certificates had already been issued!

CTBS celebrated 25 years in 1999 and BTC 50 years in 2001. The Baptist International Seminary (BITS), run by the Southern Baptists and operating at the Old Fort White premises, officially closed its doors in December 1996.

2.2.5 BWD and Youth

In terms of the new BU structure adopted in the nineties, the **Baptist Women's Department** (BWD) and **Baptist Youth of South Africa** (BYSA) became Boards of the Baptist Union with representation on the National Executive.

In 1998, the Baptist Publishing House at Baptist House, Roodepoort, was officially closed and Christian Booksellers in East London became the official publisher and booksellers of BUSA.

2.2.6 New National Ministries

The 1995 Assembly agreed to the establishment of a new standing committee called **BU CARE** (Baptist Union Community Assistance and Relief) and agreed to the following missions statement: "To motivate and enable Baptist Churches to witness to Christ through social concern and social action that will empower deprived communities to address their physical, social and other needs, and to provide relief where necessary" (Baptist Handbook, 1996-97:227). This proved to be a significant development and was long overdue.

The year 1991 saw the establishment of the **BU Ministry Board**. It was tasked with overseeing all aspects of ministry within the Union. These included:

1. Applications for ministry recognition and ministry regulations.
2. Interviewing applicants.
3. Ministry Studies Committee.
4. Recognition and evaluation (ministry lists, etc.)
5. Theological Consultative Committee.
6. Care and Discipline.

The Board was composed of the President, General Secretary and eight Executive members with power to co-opt. It functioned through a number of sub-committees. (BU Executive Minutes, March 1991:8)

2.2.7 New National Leadership

The nineties also witnessed a change in the BU National Leadership.

- The Rev Trevor Swart retired as General Secretary of BUSA in 1992 and was replaced by the Rev Terry Rae in 1993. Trevor became the Area Co-ordinator of the Baptist Northern Association in 1993.
- Dr Rex Mathie resigned as principal of the Baptist Theological College (Randburg) in 1993. He was followed by Dr Donald Morcom in 1994.
- The Rev Peter Holness resigned as Principal of the Cape Town Baptist Seminary in 1992. The position was filled by Dr Gerhard Venter in 1993.
- Dr Eric Robbins assumed the role of Missions Developer in 1998.

- In terms of the new structural developments, Mr Jeremy Lock was appointed as the first Administrator of the Baptist Union on a full-time basis from 1 January 1993.

2.3 A change in Race/Gender Relations

2.3.1 The Executive was also proactive in addressing **the issue of racism**. In 1991, the Executive agreed “that the need for a forum exists which will concentrate in the main on the movement of the Baptist Union towards being a South African union, that is **non-racial in practice and leadership**. This would include a programme that could assist local churches to move through the pain and process of reconciliation.” (BU Executive Minutes, June 1991:29)

Likewise in 1991, “the Executive reasserted its unequivocal rejection of Apartheid as a sin and it committed itself afresh to work towards the establishment of a just society in South Africa” (BU Executive Minutes, March 1991:30).

In 1998, the Rev George Ngamlana represented BUSA at the Baptist World Alliance Conference against Racism in the USA. This was followed by seminars at the National Area Co-ordinators Conference, Regional Associational Conferences and at the 1999 BU Assembly in Bloemfontein.

At the initiative of the Executive, Trust Fund income designated for White works was changed for Home mission projects in all cultural groups. The same applied to bursary funds.

3. RECONCILIATION BETWEEN THE BAPTIST UNION AND BAPTIST CONVENTION

After the breakdown of merger talks in 1987, the relationship between the two bodies was rather strained. This was exacerbated by the events surrounding the 1989 Kimberley Assembly and especially the move of the two coloured pastors Des Hoffmeister and Johan Kock from BUSA to BCSA. They were two of the key protesters at the Kimberley Assembly.

However, in June 1991 BCSA requested the renewal of talks with BUSA and confirmed that they were still working towards merger. In its response, BUSA agreed to maintain “fraternal relationships” with BCSA but were at that stage not keen on merger. The BU Executive was more focused on getting cross-cultural relationships within its own constituency in order. Thus a kind of “yo-yo” relationship prevailed between the two bodies in the early and mid-nineties.

In June 1990 the BU Executive agreed to transfer the properties used by churches in membership with BCSA and registered in the name of the BU/SABMS to BCSA, “it being understood that the Convention would undertake to transfer in due and proper course the properties to the local churches” (BU Executive Minutes, June 1990:14).

The latter became a bone of contention and, in spite of assurances by BCSA Executive, it is questionable whether transfer to the local churches by BCSA actually happened. Eventually BCSA placed all their local church property under the control of BCSA.

The two Committees met fairly regularly between 1991-1996 and in 1996 the Committee representing BUSA at the talks reported to the BU Executive that the two Bodies had declared their intention to work towards reconciliation by January 1997.

After a “hiccup” relating to anti-BUSA Press Statements by BCSA in the Border area, representatives of the two Bodies met for a joint prayer retreat prior to the 1996 Assembly. The Assembly affirmed the Executive’s actions in pursuing the aspect of reconciliation with BCSA.

The breakthrough came in June 1997 when the BU Executive agreed to make a statement to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. It was also agreed that the Statement would contain the following:

- “1. *Explain how the Baptist Union is constituted. The number of churches, members and composition. The way in which the Churches and the executive functions. The Executive does not presume to speak for the churches.*
2. *Express gratitude to God and recognize the political miracle that has taken place in the move to democracy. Acknowledge that the process to reconciliation has a long way to go. Acknowledge the work of the TRC and our commitment to continue to pray for it.*
3. *Deal with the apartheid years. Briefly mention that there have been Baptists that have worked against injustice and that there are those who have cared for those who were hurting.*
4. *Confess sins of omission in that we did not do enough in opposing the structures and the status quo, and that our resolutions were not*

always translated into actions. That we were often guilty of paternalistic / racialistic statements. That we were insensitive to the division that has occurred within our ranks.

5. *Conclude that we are aware of our shortcomings, that the Baptist Union has genuinely become a non racial body and desires to work toward reconciliation and that we commit ourselves toward working toward reconciliation.”*

(BU Executive Minutes, June 1997:30)

Both the General Secretaries of BUSA (Rev T Rae) and BCSA (Rev D Hoffmeister) testified before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

A second prayer retreat between representatives of the two bodies was held in November 1997.

Finally in May 1998, God answered prayer and a historic forum took place between members of BUSA and BCSA in Colesberg in the Northern Cape. An open invitation was extended to “whosoever will” from both constituencies. The writer was privileged to be present at the event. With the exception of the Natal Baptist Association, all the other Associations of BUSA were represented.

God effected reconciliation and the Colesberg Resolution was accepted by the representatives present:

BAPTIST FORUM AT COLESBERG 14 & 15 MAY 1998

On 15 May 1998 I signed my name to a dream. The dream was the Colesberg Resolution which followed two days of meetings between delegates from the Baptist Union and the Baptist Convention, seeking to address the hurts, anger, bitterness and pain of our past. God met with us in a remarkable way as we confronted, confessed and forgave, and found a peace around the Communion Table, as the Lord Jesus met with us and united us in His love.

The resolution which our President, Brian Jardine and I signed, was a dream that having begun to deal with the pain of our past we could go on to unite our two Baptist Bodies. This is a dream that has been in my heart since our first merger talks in the 1980's which culminated not in merger as we had then hoped, but in the division between the Union and the Convention.

It is my sincere hope that this dream which is expressed in our resolution at Colesberg should become a reality.

The reality of our situation is that since 1987 both bodies have developed significantly and separately, as the Lord has directed us and focused each of us on the needs of our country at this time. This development has caused the Baptist Union and the Baptist Convention to go down different tracks of theological emphasis, of ministry purpose and of forming relationships with other Christian groups. The reality is that some of these differences which have developed over the last eleven years need to be addressed. At the Colesberg meeting the Baptist Union drew attention to some of these differences which stood in the way of a merger, not the least of which is our different theological standpoints. It is my sincere hope that these issues will not be insurmountable as we seek to make the dream a reality.

I have been committed to this process especially over the last few years, as Convention and Union leadership have met together on various occasions for prayer and dialogue. We are conscious that God has worked mightily to heal the pain of our past. We are also conscious that as two Baptist Bodies in South Africa, there is a challenging road ahead for the dream to become a reality.

I thank those who have prayed for this process of reconciliation between Baptists in South Africa and ask for your continued prayers as we seek the

affirmation of our churches at this year's National Assembly, to move forward under God's guidance.

Special thanks for those Baptist Bodies that have helped sponsor our meetings together.

TERRY RAE
GENERAL SECRETARY
ENDORSED BY THE OFFICERS OF THE BAPTIST UNION
AND CONSULTANTS TO THE GENERAL SECRETARY
(BU Executive Minutes, June 1998:30-31)

For the BU General Secretary, Terry Rae, this was a dream come true!

The 1998 BU Assembly responded favourably to the Executive's report on the happenings at Colesberg and adopted the following resolution:

'The General Secretary read from Eph 4:32ff. He then reported events that had led up to and taken place at Colesberg earlier in the year, resulting in the resolution before the Assembly. The following resolution was accepted.

That this Assembly:

- "1. **Receives** the report of the Colesberg forum, acknowledging the remarkable way in which God has brought healing and reconciliation;
2. **Endorses** the actions of the June Executive in endeavouring to heed God's voice;
3. **Affirms** our commitment to the process of merging with the Convention and calls on all Associations and local churches to continue this process;
4. **Recognises** that there may be differences in theological and other issues which could stand in the way of merger. This Assembly authorises the Executive to establish theological and other

(Baptist Handbook, 1998-99:414)

Following Colesberg, the Merger Talks continued in earnest. At the March 1999 BU Executive, the GS reported on the post-Colesberg meeting between the two Bodies:

“ ... Areas of concern and commonality has been identified. Both groups had confirmed a common commitment to the authority, inspiration and sufficiency of Scripture; the deity of Jesus Christ, uniqueness and atoning work of Jesus Christ; a personal experience of salvation through repentance and faith; Baptist Principles; and all the major doctrines which are clearly taught in Scripture and summarized in the historic Christian Creeds. The BU’s Declaration of Principle, the 1924 Statement of Belief and the Statement of Baptist Principles are equally acceptable to the Convention. The Conventions newly drafted Missions Statement met with the approval of the Union representatives. Both groups shared the commitment to strengthen the local church in fulfilling its mission.

Considerable discussion had taken place on the question of hermeneutics and on the meaning and validity of contextualisation as understood by the Baptist Convention. It was **agreed** by all that a radical contextualization in which the text becomes subservient to the situation, is invalid for evangelicals who are committed to a high view of Scripture. However all theology is contextual both in the sense that we are all influenced by our situation, and that we must apply the gospel to our particular context.

In response to a Convention concern that the term “conservative” has a negative connotation for many within a global context, it was **agreed** that we should rather talk about our desire to be faithful to the doctrines of scripture. Convention representatives spoke about their favourable interaction with the wider ecumenical community, and in particular the South African Council of Churches, and expressed the desire for a united Baptist presence in the wider Christian community.

BU representatives shared the decisions of recent assemblies on this matter, nevertheless it was **agreed** to continue in an open spirit.” (BU Executive Minutes, March 1999:29)

However, it was recognized by the BU Executive that while Reconciliation is a Biblical Imperative, it is also a process which will take time. It was, therefore, agreed to issue the following summary for discussion by the Executive Committees of both Bodies:

“Steps to take and Areas to look at

1. A Theological Committee to continue dialogue on theological foundation.
 2. Another group/committee to focus on those issues of concern that were listed but not yet discussed.
 3. Create an environment of openness, interaction, fellowship and joint worship, give access to resources for such encounters.
 4. Conduct a deliberate audit of geographical areas of conflict and specific situations of conflict, and manage these.
 5. Debate on Theological Education (including the various Theological Institutes, as well as Winter School of Theology).
 6. Involvement of other Baptist Bodies in South Africa.”
- (BU Executive Minutes, March 1999:29)

As a way forward, the following statement was made:

“In adopting the report, the Executive:

- 1) **Accepts** that the Baptist Convention and BUSA stand on the same doctrinal base.
 - 2) **Agrees** on the need to effect genuine reconciliation at the grassroots level of local churches and territorial associations.”
- (BU Executive Minutes, March 1999:29-30)

Other Key Developments in the 1990’s

- **Church Growth** was a major factor in the Nineties. In 1990 the BU Assembly adopted the “**95x95**” vision of the Way Ahead Committee led by the Rev TG Rae to plant 95 new churches by 1995. At the 1995 Assembly the number stood at 107 new churches planted. The 1995 Assembly agreed to extend the vision and adopted “**Grow 2001**” trusting God that by 2001 the 107 churches planted will

The year 1996 witnessed the biggest intake of new churches within the history of BUSA. A total of 56 churches were received into membership. The bulk were from the former Transkei Baptist Union (32) and former Convention churches that joined the Union.

- The nineties also witnessed the **amalgamation of former BCSA Regional Associations with those of BUSA's Regional Associations, e.g.**
 - The Border Baptist Association (BBA) amalgamated with the Eastern Baptist Association (EBA) of the Convention formed the new Baptist Union Border Association (BUBA) linked to BUSA.
 - The Orange Free State Association (BCSA) and the Northern Cape Association (BCSA) amalgamated with BUSA's Central Baptist Association (CBA) linked to BUSA. Eventually, the Central Baptist Association changed its name in 1995 to the Central Association of Baptist churches (CABC).
 - In Natal a member of former Convention churches joined the Natal Baptist Association of BUSA.

Given the poor history of BUSA with regard to the development of Black work since the inception of the Union, these amalgamations were “nothing short of a miracle”.

- The **Transkei Baptist Association** severed links with BCSA and dissolved on 25 March 1995 and transferred its property to BUSA. All of its 32 churches became members of BUSA.

CHAPTER 6

THE NEW MILLENNIUM – NEW DEVELOPMENTS

Since this dissertation focuses on the years 1960-2005, we will only be looking at key developments up to 2005.

The following were some of the developments with regard to BUSA structures during the first half of the New Millennium.

1. “THE BU IN THE 21ST CENTURY” CONFERENCE

BUSA began the New Millennium with a conference entitled “Baptists in the 21st Century”. The conference was held at Gariiep Dam in the Free State from 15-18 February 2000 and the writer was privileged to be one of the organizers. Key delegates were identified by both the BU Executive and the Associations. An open invitation was also extended to any members from our BUSA constituency who felt they had a contribution to make. The conference concentrated on the following ministries and areas:

- **“A New emphasis on Youth and children**

The need to change fundamental perceptions of the people in the churches towards children’s and youth ministry was acknowledged.

- **Social Action linked to Mission and Evangelism. Three gateways of opportunity we need to go through as churches**

Reaching the AIDS sufferers in our country.

Job creation opportunities in our churches.

Disaster Relief.

- **Mission and Evangelism** – reviewing the direction of mission in the denomination including:-

Strengthening the Association mission thrusts.

Reaching Muslim people as well as addressing the inner city challenge.

Association-based church planting.

Every Church a Missions Church.

- **Church and Pastoral** – “Stronger Churches to help weaker Churches. Developing and promoting partnerships.

The following was noted:

The need to encourage multi-cultural church partnerships.

The need to encourage gender equality.

The Statement on Baptist Principles and models of local church government compatible with Congregationalism be reviewed before this Assembly.

- **Theological Education**

The colleges to be encouraged to continue making excellent and affordable theological education even more accessible and equipping all cultural groups. The appointment of Black lecturers.

- **BU Structure**

Boundary lines of the Associations required further consideration.

The General Secretary’s job description be reviewed with a view to a new focus and title i.e. “National Co-ordinator”.

- **Pastoral Care**

The pastoral care aspect of the Ministry Board function including the care of those under discipline be reviewed.”

(Baptist Handbook, 2000-01:366-367)

- 1.1 The discussions on structure focused upon: ***the possibility of redrawing the boundary lines of the Territorial Associations.*** It was suggested that “the Northern Cape be taken over by the Western Province Baptist Association

After much debate and numerous discussions by various sub-committees and the Associations involved, the following eventually resulted:

- (i) The CABC divided into two Associations, viz the Free State Baptist Association (FSBA) and the Baptist Association of the Northern Cape (BANC) in September 2001.
- (ii) The WPBA agreed to take BANC under its wings and assist its development.
- (iii) The BBA and EPBA rejected any notion of merger at the time. They both felt it was not practical.

1.2 The second area with regard to structure was that of the **General Secretary's role in the 21st century**. At the 2001 June Executive meeting held in Port Elizabeth, the Executive adopted the following:

“The Bloemfontein Conference declared the need for a visionary leader whose primary function was to promote the Baptist Union Mission Vision. At the Millennium Conference the primary need of the denomination in addition to promoting the mission vision was the strengthening of the associations, and it was agreed to change the job title to that of National Co-ordinator/General Secretary.

In the light of the above, a major part of the revised job description will relate to the Associations, viz:

- a) To assist the Area Co-ordinators in the development of the Associations to their optimum level of performance; and
- b) To work alongside, inspire and encourage Area Co-ordinators.

Alongside this associational emphasis, the National Co-ordinator will continue to provide leadership at a national level, viz.

- a) To promote and develop the national Baptist Union Mission Vision, i.e. church planting, missions and evangelism, social concern, theological training and discipleship, and children's ministry;
- b) To represent the Baptist Union at Baptist world bodies, on denominational boards, and to facilitate international partnerships; and
- c) To co-ordinate the administrative functions within the Baptist Union of Southern Africa.”
(BU Executive Minutes, June 2001:4)

1.3 However, after much discussion and debate, the March 2002 BU Executive meeting agreed to retain the title of General Secretary and added that “the General Secretary is also the National Co-ordinator” (BU Executive Minutes, March 2002:20).

2. THE LAUNCH OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN BAPTIST ALLIANCE (SABA)

It is interesting to note how things turned around in 2000-2001. The very Baptist bodies, who up to the 80's had been Special Associations of BUSA with representation on the BU Executive and who all with the exception of the Afrikaanse Baptiste Kerk (ABK) withdrew/resigned, were now talking of an Alliance of Baptist Bodies in South Africa! This could be perceived as part of the process of reconciliation, which was

facilitated by the Baptist World Alliance and the American Baptists. BUSA was represented by the previous General Secretary, Rev Terry Rae, who played a key role.

Thus,

“On Saturday, 4 August 2001, the South African Baptist Alliance was officially launched in the Durban City Hall. Five autonomous Baptist bodies in South Africa (all with an historical connection) formed this Alliance in order to a) build good relationships between Baptists in South Africa, b) co-operate together in evangelism, church planting, missions and theological education and c) unite our voices against ethical, moral and spiritual decline in our country.

The Alliance is not going to set up an office with any full-time staff but will function through a committee represented by four members from each body. This Committee will meet at least four times a year to discuss and foster co-operation in ministry between the five bodies. We give thanks to God for this “linking of hands” between Baptists in South Africa as we stand upon similar statements of faith and hold the same Baptist Principles.” (Baptist Handbook, 2001-02:247)

In the initial years, good relationships were built between the different Baptist Bodies. However, the organization only met twice per year in the 2-3 years following inception. Four times per year was very ambitious. Furthermore, points (b) and (c) were never really realized. It thus raises the question: “Was SABA the personal agenda of a few leaders both national and international? How committed were the Executives and constituencies of the member Bodies?”

2.1 Three Colleges on One Campus

In March 2001, Prof Morcom, the principal of BTC, reported to the BU Executive that meetings had taken place between BTC (Randburg), the ABK Seminarium and Convention College. He then presented a proposal that official talks be instituted

between the three colleges with a view to amalgamating. The proposal was endorsed with much enthusiasm and with the launching of SABA, the concept generally received much support. Thus, motivated by the desire to express our Christian unity with fellow Baptists, the 2001 BU Assembly in Hilton passed the following resolution:

“This Assembly agrees to the participation of the Baptist Union of Southern Africa in a process which will lead to the establishment of a Co-operative Baptist Seminary at Kempton Park (hopefully starting on 1st January 2004) involving the BTC, the Baptist Convention College and the ABK Seminarium, on the understanding that:

‘The three colleges, whilst sharing a common campus, will maintain their present theological commitment and legal status’;

‘A legal contract will specify the legal identity and the financial rights and responsibilities of each college’;

‘The BTC Council, Executive and Assembly will continue to exercise their present function and powers’;

‘Each of the three colleges will appoint representatives to a Central Administration Board responsible for the daily administration of the Seminary’.” (Baptist Handbook, 2001-02:374-375)

Needless to say, many discussions at all levels took place between the BU Assembly in September 2001 and the BU Assembly in 2003, when the matter was finally settled. The discussions between the three main role players were not always cordial and past hurts (which were supposed to be forgiven and settled at the Barkly West Reconciliation Conference in 1990) often surfaced. Likewise, concerns and differences of opinion were expressed at both the Convention and BUSA Assemblies and Regional Associations.

In 2003, the BU Executive informed the Kimberley Assembly that, whilst the idea of “3 Colleges on One Campus” was an exciting concept, it was ‘practically impossible and politically untenable’. Three basically ethnic Baptist colleges operating separately on

one campus were just not synonymous with the New South Africa! It was, therefore, agreed not to pursue the matter any further. This decision of BUSA was not well received by both the Baptist Convention and ABK.

3. THE 2002 BU OFFICERS/AREA CO-ORDINATORS' BOSBERAAD

One of the features of the late 90's and early 2000's was that of the Annual meeting/s of Regional/Area Co-ordinators and the Officers of BUSA.

At the Area Co-ordinators' meeting prior to the 2002 September BU Executive and Assembly, it was agreed to hold a 'Bosberaad in the Bush' near the Kruger National Park from 26-27 November 2002. A preliminary Agenda was presented to the September 2002 BU Executive. This included the following areas:

1. *Structure of BU.*
 - a. *Revisit our purpose statement.*
 - (i) *Why do we exist as a national body?*
 - (ii) *What are we doing together"*
 - b. *Assessing the effect of Devolution.*
 - c. *Discussions with ABK to fully join BU.*
 - d. *Number of Associations.*
 - e. *North and South Denomination.*
 - f. *Staffing for Associations.*
 - g. *Downsizing totally.*
 - h. *Re-look at Departments.*
 - i. *Regionalisation of areas.*
 - j. *Maximising the denomination's finances.*
 - k. *Alternate models of funding. Affiliation fees – increasing.*
 - l. *Structure and function of Assembly/Executive.*
2. *Ethos of the BU.*
 - a. *Independence vs Inter-dependence.*
 - b. *Fully culturally inclusive.*
3. *Local church "buy-in" to Union.*
 - a. *Image of Union in church.*

- b. *Regional Meetings to promote Union.*
- 4. *Functions of Area Co-ordinators*
 - a. *Are they using their time correctly?*
 - b. *Should Area Co-Ordinators be Pastors or Managers?*
- 5. *Colleges*
- 6. *Other*
 - a. *Reaching the future leaders of the land.*
(BU Executive Minutes, September 2002:10).

A survey based on the above was circulated at the Assembly and the information was fed to the Bosberaad. The Bosberaad was also requested to give special attention to the restructuring of BUSA Finances.

Furthermore, the Bosberaad took note of the 2002 BUSA Statistics which revealed the following:

**CULTURAL COMPOSITION OF BUSA CHURCHES
(A rough survey of the 2002 Handbook)**

	Constituted Group of Churches (about 450)	Total Group of Churches (about 600)
BLACK	36%	42%
WHITE	38%	31%
COLOURED	16%	18%
ASIAN	4%	4%
MULTICULTURAL	6%	5%

Note how by 2002 the number of “other than White” churches were in the majority.

The following folk were in attendance at the Bosberaad: Rev N J Coertze (President), Dr G Venter (Vice-President), Dr M Pohlmann (Past President), Dr E Robbins (Missions Developer), Rev A Scheepers (General Secretary), Mr T Martin (Finance & Admin Secretary); Area Coordinators/Association Representatives: Revs S Dyasi (Border), L Ward Able (Free State), K Segoi (Northern Cape), C Jacobs (WPBA), G Ngamlana (NBA), S Mann (TBA), D Reid (EPBA and Minute Secretary of the Bosberaad meetings).

The Bosberaad held intense discussions on most of the issues listed on the Preliminary Agenda above. It made recommendations to the BU Executive regarding the restructuring of Central Functions. This included the Central Office, the Annual Assembly, the BU Executive and the Colleges.

The Bosberaad also called for consistency and synchronization between Central Functions, the Associations and BUSA Departments, e.g. we have eight presidents, i.e. the BU President plus seven regional Association presidents. The same applies to the Women’s Department – eight Presidents! This means that we have 16 presidents, with 16 different themes within the same Union! Likewise, we are funding eight different entities in the same Union! This sounded crazy and was a real eye-opener.

The Bosberaad also recommended the following as a way forward:

“5. THE WAY FORWARD

- 1) We must allow our thinking with regard to the future of the Union to form into proper Biblical structures based on gifted spiritual leadership and driven by the purpose of our Union. We should encourage more prayerful and careful selection of BU Executive reps.
- 2) We need to explore the possibility of reducing the size of our executive.
- 3) a) We need to explore the possibility of departments and the executive meeting within the same week.
b) The current composition and role of the Finance board needs to be reconsidered.
- 4) The assembly needs to be re-structured so that there is a progression from what God has done, to that which we envisage through to the acceptance of the budget. The continuance of the Assembly Union Sermon needs to be seriously reviewed.
- 5) All departments including the colleges need to have their own mini “bosberaad” to determine:
 - a) if they really exist for the churches or if the churches exist for them
 - b) whether they are currently functioning within the proposed purpose statement
 - c) what adjustments need to be made in terms of the proposed structure if it is accepted.
- 6) Churches need to be encouraged to adopt a more biblical basis of decision making rather than simple democracy, which so easily divides.
- 7) **All BU Executive reps (i.e. associations and departments) to fully discuss the recommendations of this draft document with their respective executives and come prepared to make concrete decisions at the March Executive. Given the serious financial state of both the Union and Associations we cannot afford to procrastinate!”**

(Bosberaad Report to BU Executive, March 2003:7)

Following the Bosberaad, items 3) (b), 4) and 5) were successfully implemented. Item 3) a) was implemented on a trial basis and found to be highly impractical.

The greatest contribution of the Bosberaad to BUSA was that of “a purpose statement for BUSA”. The words “in Territorial Associations” were added to the original Bosberaad’s version and adopted as BUSA’s purpose statement at the 2003 Assembly in Kimberley. It reads as follows: **“Under the Lordship of Christ we exist as a multi-cultural fellowship of inter-dependent churches, functioning in territorial associations, to impact this generation with the Gospel”** (Baptist Handbook, 2003-04:408)

The outcomes of the Bosberaad were enthusiastically received by those who attended **but** rather cautiously by most of the Executive members and Territorial Associations. However, much of what was recommended has actually been implemented over the subsequent years.

The March BU Executive responded in the following way and this was communicated to the churches:

- “8.8.3.1 The Executive accepts the principle of a far greater coherence, and unified vision, within the Union without ignoring the different needs of the Territorial Associations.
 - 8.8.3.2 In the light of the financial pressure throughout the Union and the Associations, and duplication of structures, the Executive accepts the need to rationalize some of our structures in an attempt to make our total ministry more efficient and cost-effective.
 - 8.8.3.3 This Executive recognizes that biblical leadership is based on call and giftedness and that this principle should be applied in electing, and exercising, leadership within our union.”
- (BU Executive Minutes, March 2003:12)

Although the recommendations were not fully implemented, the Bosberaad will remain a watershed within the structural dynamics of BUSA.

4. THE IMPACT CONSULTATION

The “Impact Consultation” followed the Bosberaad and was held in Hilton, Pietermaritzburg during May/June 2004. It could be described as one of the few “intergenerational Executive Conferences” of BUSA. It basically examined statistical data of BUSA and identified trends operative within the Union over a period of 12 years. The consultation is discussed in greater detail in 2.1 of Chapter 1.

5. THE BU COMMISSION ON RESTRUCTURING AND FINANCE

The foundations of the Commission are also clearly elaborated in Chapter 1 of this dissertation (see 2.2 – page 7 and 2.3 – page 12).

It was originally envisaged that the Commission would only meant to meet for one year, i.e. 2005. However, due to a technical BU constitutional difficulty, viz. the failure of the Commission to forward their proposal and supporting documentation to the churches 65 days prior to the Assembly, the matter could not be voted upon at the 2005 Assembly. Instead, the following proposal was adopted:

“Whereas the Assembly has received the report of the commission and by straw vote endorsed the general thrust of the report with regard to the Meadowridge aspect but not the financial report as in the booklet (Fish Hoek Baptist), the Assembly tasks the Commission and the Executive to hold workshops throughout the Associations with a view that member churches would be able to participate meaningfully in the debate when the commission report is debated at the 2006 Assembly.

NB: The Post-Assembly Executive agreed to call a National Imbizo/Consultation of all interested pastors/leaders and church members to discuss the BU Commission's proposals and to give input with regard to the future funding and restructuring of the Union."

(Baptist Handbook, 2005-06:413)

The Imbizo was held at Baptist House, Roodepoort, during March 2006 and comprised representatives from all over the country.

Much money (BU funds) was spent on the Commission over the two years and literally everything, e.g. Departments and Associations of the Union, went into limbo during that time. All were waiting for the outcome of the Commission!

After a lengthy debate at the East London Assembly in 2006, the Commission's proposal was finally put. "33.4% of the delegates voted in favour, 66.1% voted against and 0.5% abstained and were spoilt papers" (Baptist Handbook, 2006-07:356-357).

Amongst others, the Commission called for:

- A radical restructuring of the Union, e.g. the election of the National Executive.
- A National Leadership Team (NLT) of "gifted folk" that will be recommended by a National Call Committee appointed by the churches at an Assembly.
- The NLT to be led by a National Leader appointed by the NLT. The NLT members will serve for three years. With the exception of the National Leader, the rest of the team will be volunteers. Eventually, the NLT will replace the Executive of BUSA. Associational/Regional Representation would thus fall away.

- The appointment of a National Administrator who will be solely confined to administration. The position of General Secretary will fall away.
- The establishment of an increasing number of Regional Fellowships (Associations) or Hubs.
- One Central Budget as opposed to the Central plus Associations. This would imply only one set of bank accounts. The Associations would thus cease to be financial entities.

Needless to say, some of the above proposals, especially those relating to the NLT, evoked lots of negative reaction, particularly amongst the Black Community. Blacks were just beginning to rise as the majority within BUSA and now all of a sudden, the structures must change to meet the White Western mega-church leadership model.

BUSA needed time to expose and learn from Black leaders within our constituency. Furthermore, the way in which the NLT was to be elected was very complicated and the thought of a possible predominantly White NLT being the BU Executive again for three years at a time as opposed to the current multi-cultural Executive model, was anathema!

When the outcome of the vote was announced at the East London Assembly, most of the Black delegates present broke out in jubilation. This said volumes to the writer!

However, a number of good recommendations surfaced from the Commission and the BU Executive promised to gradually implement them. The biggest problem with the Commission, as with the “3 Colleges on one Campus”, was that there were no “nuts and bolts” as to how the proposals were going to be implemented in practice.

6. BUSA DEPARTMENTS

6.1 Finance Department

- During the first half of the new decade, BUSA was plagued by Annual Financial Deficits, eg. at the end of 2002, the Accumulative Deficit stood at over R750 000! In an attempt to help rectify the situation, the weighty Finance Board was replaced by a smaller Finance Committee with power to act on behalf of the Executive. The 2003 Assembly adopted the following proposal submitted by the Fish Hoek Church:

- “Resolved that:**
1. *the Finance Board be dissolved.*
 2. *the Executive appoint a formal sub-committee comprising at least 4 (four) Executive members, plus 2 (two) persons with financial expertise.*
 3. *the sub-committee will meet concurrently with the Executive.*
 4. *the sub-committee will have power to act on behalf of the Executive at all times.*

- Motivation:**
1. *There will be a saving in costs.*
 2. *The new finance sub-committee will have power to act rather than being merely an advisory body.”*

(Baptist Handbook, 2003-04:410)

Thankfully, God in an amazing way used Dr Chris Parnell (BUSA General Secretary 1963-73) who was over 80 years at the time, as well as the

small BU Foundation Committee established at the end of 2005, to help us wipe out the entire deficit by the time of the Bloemfontein Assembly in 2007!

- Mr Jeremy Lock retired as Financial Administrator in 2000. He was succeeded by Mr Terry Martin. Terry downed tools at the end of 2003. He was followed by Mr Denis Payne.
- The Welfare and Relief Commission was disbanded in 2002.

6.2 Baptist Missions Department (BMD)

- The BMD held their own Bosberaad and adjusted the way Mission Board representatives were appointed to the Board.
- A new position, that of Resource and Relationship Co-ordinator, was created. The Rev Mark Walters was the first incumbent. When he left for mission work in Morocco in 2004, the position was filled by Rev Tony Christian.
- The Mineworkers' ministry was decentralized to the Free State Baptist Association in 2000.
- In 2002, the Rev Credo Mangayi, from the Democratic Republic of Congo, was appointed the first full-time Director of Baptist Union Care and Relief (BU CARE). BU Care later changed its name to Deeds of Love (DOLM) and was registered as an NPO with the government in 2004.

- The first BUSA resolution on HIV & AIDS was passed at the Hilton Assembly (Pietermaritzburg) in 2001.

6.3 Baptist Theological Seminaries

- The early years of the New Millennium witnessed an aggressive development in the area of Distance Learning with affordable and accessible theological education.
- The Baptist Theological College (BTC) celebrated their 50th Anniversary in 2001 and Prof Donald Morcom resigned as principal of BTC in 2001. He was followed by Dr Martin Pohlmann in 2004.
- Dr Gerhard Venter resigned as principal of Cape Town Baptist Seminary (CTBS) at the end of 2005. He was followed by Dr Linzay Rinquet, an alumnus from CTBS, in 2006.
- As a result of new Government Legislation, both Seminaries registered as Section 21 Companies during the period under review.

6.4 Baptist Women's Department (BWD)

- Mrs Lesley Brandt became the first full-time Director of the Women's Department in 2002. She was followed by Mrs Patricia Ihlenfeldt in 2005.
- The Women's Department took over the administration/ministry of the Bible Way Correspondence course from the BMD in 2000. It is basically a ministry to prisoners.
- The BWD became part of BUSA national budget for the first time in 2002.

- The introduction and development of the Hidden Treasure Charity Shops by Mrs Terry Basson in 2003 became an important facet of the BWD's practical and missions ministry in the early years of the New Millennium.

6.5 Baptist Youth of South Africa (BYSA)

- BYSA provided an important ministry for and to Youth at the beginning of the New Millennium. The ministry included STEAM, Impendulo, WOW and Fusion Teams.
- The Rev J Benn resigned as Youth Director in 2000. He was followed by the Rev Salwyn Coetzee who served from 2000-2005. The latter helped to make BYSA "debt-free" by the time of his termination of services.
- BYSA Annual Summer Camps celebrated 21 years in 2003.

6.6 Pastoral Care

- The care of Pastors and their spouses featured prominently on the BU Executive's Agenda since the "Baptists in the 21st Century" Conference and continues to do so until today (2008). Likewise, the BU ministry regulations and procedures were "beefed up".

It is interesting to note the number of changes with regard to BUSA leadership from 2000-2005. New Millennium – new leadership!

6.7 Territorial/Regional Associations

It is interesting to note how Regional Co-ordinators disappeared from the Associational scene. By 2005, only the Western Province Baptist Association and Baptist Northern Association had full-time Regional/Area Co-ordinators.

Harold Froise resigned from the Central Association in 2000. George Ngamlana left KZNBA for Zambia in 2004. David Reid retired from the EPBA in 2005. None of them have been replaced.

The main reason is the lack of funds and the inability of the poorer/weaker Associations to sustain such a position. However, ministry continues in all of the regions. Those without Area Co-ordinators are serviced and assisted by the National office and run by regional Executive Committees. Thus, with God's help, BUSA has managed to marry a fairly strong central function with that of devolving and developing regional Associations.

The New Millennium also brought with it a number of challenges regarding the new South African Government legislation with regard to the Labour Relations Act, NGO and PBO status of local churches, etc.

7. BUSA CORPORATE THRUSTS

7.1 EQUIP 2005

The 2001 BU Assembly adopted the “Equipping Today’s Church 2001-2005” vision. This was a four-year discipleship strategy on getting back to Biblical basics and was aimed particularly at the newer churches planted in BUSA from 1990-2001. Over 300 new churches were planted during that decade.

The vision also involved getting gifted BUSA pastors/layfolk to write our own materials. A number of Discipleship booklets were and continue to be published.

The 2001 Assembly also agreed to join the Operation Sunrise Africa (OSA) evangelistic program spearheaded by Campus Crusade. It involved reaching 50 million people in 50 cities within 50 days from 1 July-19 August 2002.

7.2 Impact 2010

God, in an amazing way, led BUSA to adopt the vision of Impact 2010 at the 2004 Stellenbosch Assembly – the same Assembly where the proposal with regard to a Commission for Restructuring and Financing of the Union was accepted!

The thrust focuses on four pillars:

- Church/Spiritual Renewal
- Church Health
- Church Growth

- Church Community Impact

The flow is logical since a renewed church is a healthy church; and a healthy church is a growing church; and a growing church is a glowing church – “Let your light so shine amongst men ...” (Matthew 5 v 16/Matthew 25).

The slogan for Impact 2010 is:

“Each one reach and disciple one (Evangelism)

Each one plant and nurture one (Church planting)

Each one send and support one (Missions)

Together impacting this generation for Christ”

Our key text for Impact 2010 is Romans 1 v 16: “We are not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ for it is the power of God that leads to the salvation of everyone who believes” (even in the 21st post-modern century!)

Impact 2010 is a local church vision facilitated by Central functions. Some of the goals of Impact 2010 are:

- Double local church membership
- Double number of BU member churches
- Double number of youth and children being reached
- 300 churches with Youth/Young Adult ministries
- Double number of Children's Workers/Teachers
- 300 churches “missions involved”

God has and continues to bless this missional thrust and it has brought renewed spiritual life and vigour to many a dying congregation.

OTHER 2001-2005 DEVELOPMENTS

- The Annual **Treverton/Mooi River Christian Education Conference** was officially terminated in 1999/2000 due to declining interest.
- The **Mahon Evangelical Church** withdrew its General Association status from BUSA in 2001.
- The **BUSA/North Carolina** (USA) partnership officially ended in 2001.
- The **BUSA Historical Society** celebrated its 40th Anniversary in 2004.
- The 2004 Assembly adopted the struggling **Baptist Association of the Northern Cape** (BANC) as a “mission” of the Union.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS AND ECCLESIOLOGICAL EVALUATION

1. CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

In reading the BU Executive Minutes and Baptist Handbooks for the years 1960-2005 and assessing the structural dynamics of BUSA one must concur that from inception, two semi-separate denominations developed parallel to each other, viz. BUSA and BCSA, and eventually parted ways in 1987.

In my observation, there was never really a real “marriage” between the two Bodies but rather a “courtship” or “living together”. If the relationship is to be perceived as a “marriage” then I conclude that the foundations were wrong. Hence the marriage never survived!

It is interesting to note that in 1960, the number of fully fledged members in the then “European” churches of BUSA stood at 12 816 (see Appendices 3 and 4), whilst those of the Bantu and SABMS churches stood at 24 930 members (see Appendix 4) – almost double that of the European churches! Likewise, Europeans occupied 163 places of worship whilst the Bantu folk occupied 272 places of worship. This immediately raises some questions: If all evangelical Baptists are recognised as equal in Christ, then

- Why were Bantu churches not incorporated as members of BUSA by 1960?
- Were the Europeans afraid of being “outvoted” by the Bantu?

- Were the Bantu not “good enough” or acceptable to be incorporated in BUSA? Were both groups not part of the “new humanity in Christ” as revealed in Scripture?
- Why were the SABMS Missionary Superintendents so slow in guiding the Bantu churches towards autonomy?

The decision by the BU Executive and Assembly to grant the Baptist Convention and the Indian Baptist Bodies “Special Association” status with direct representation and a vote on the National Executive “without them being an integral and equal part of BUSA” could and in fact has been perceived as “window dressing” and an “appeasement of conscience”. It is seen as an attempt to showcase the multicultural nature of BUSA and tended to take the focus away from local church level where the problems of racism really existed. Thus, up to the 1990’s “other than White/ethnic” Associations were “attached” to the Leadership/Administration structures of BUSA but **not** really an integral part of those structures.

There are many in BUSA who are unaware of our history and **wrongly** believe that the “separate development mentality” prevalent within BUSA during the heydays of the old South Africa were as a result of the wicked policy of Apartheid. This is inaccurate, for my research has revealed that:

- (i) British colonialism certainly influenced the formation and initial development of BUSA. The cultural divide between “colonial whites” and “emerging blacks” who

- (ii) The Missions philosophy prevalent in Europe and America round about 1877 was to form native, indigenous churches that would be “self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating”. The motto of the SABMS was “the evangelisation of the Bantu by the Bantu”. It was felt the young churches arising out of mission work would be independent and not dependent upon or controlled by mother bodies that helped to establish them. It is thus not surprising that BUSA through the SABMS followed the same policy.
- (iii) The British Baptist ministers who came to South Africa prior to and following the arrival of the 1820 Settlers came with the express purpose to minister to the British immigrants in the Cape and British Kaffraria. Missions to the Bantu was **not** necessarily a part of their agenda. As indicated in this dissertation, it was the German Baptists and not the British who were key factors in the establishment of the SABMS.
- (iv) As pointed out in Chapter 1, the new SABMS was based upon the British model which saw the Missions Society as an entirely separate entity from the Union, but in close association with it.

The unjust policy of apartheid, which was implemented and enforced by the South African Nationalist Government from 1948 to the early nineties, cemented and added the “cherry on the top” of the separate development and ultimate separation between

BUSA and the Baptist Convention. It provided the ideal context for continued British colonial thinking and practice with regard to the Bantu. Hence the exclusion of the latter from the main BUSA Leadership structures for most of the period under review.

2. ECCLESIOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Heyns and Pieterse (2004:57) in their book “A Primer in Practical Theology” assert that theologians are generally agreed that the essential functions of the church are kerygma (proclamation), koinonia (fellowship) and diakonia or diaconal service. These are normative theological concepts which represent the ideal operation of the local church but can be applied to the church corporate as well.

Baptist Ecclesiology would wholeheartedly endorse the theological concepts of kerygma, koinonia and diakonia with regard to the local church. It often speaks of the local church as the “gathered community.” Two of the principles held dear by Baptists in BUSA and included in their Statement of Baptist Principles are:

- (1) The **Church** as the whole company of those who have been redeemed by Jesus Christ and regenerated by the Holy Spirit. The local church, being a manifestation of the universal church, is a community of believers in a particular place where the Word of God is preached and observed. It is **fully autonomous** and remains so notwithstanding responsibilities it may accept by voluntary association.

- (2) The **Congregational Principle**, namely that each member has the privilege and responsibility to use his/her gifts and abilities to participate fully in the life of the Church. We recognise that God gifts His Church with Overseers (who are called Pastors or Elders) whose primary function is to lead in a spirit of servanthood, to equip and provide spiritual oversight and Deacons whose primary function is to facilitate the smooth functioning of the Church. This principle further recognises that each member should participate in the appointment of the church's leaders, and that a constituted church meeting, subject to the direct Lordship of Christ and the authority of Scripture, is the highest court of authority for the local Church.
- (Baptist Handbook, 2000-01:397)

As a corporate Body of Christ, all three concepts were prevalent within the development of BUSA. However, Pieterse (2004:570) rightly observes, that at times one of the functions often overshadowed the other two, thereby creating an imbalance.

In evaluating the 45 years of BUSA history, I find that **Kerygma** (proclamation) was one of its strongest points. Baptists have throughout their history been known as "People of the Book" with a strong focus on Missions and evangelism. William Carey, the great British Baptist, is recognised as the "Father of Modern Missions". The strong emphasis on **kerygma** is evident in the growth in the number of churches and converts within both BUSA and the SABMS. In 1960, the overall number of churches in BUSA and the SABMS stood at 138 and the number of members stood at 40 551 (see Appendices 3 and 4). In 1980, i.e. twenty years later, the overall number in BUSA and Baptist

Convention (formerly SABMS) totalled 304 churches, 695 preaching places and 57 648 members (Baptist Handbook, 1981-82:111-133).

From its humble beginnings with just seven churches in King William's Town in 1877, BUSA grew phenomenally and today has churches in every province of South Africa. The proclamation of the Gospel resulted in tremendous church growth.

There is no doubt in my mind that kerygma was the strongest focus of BUSA during the 45 years under review. This was followed in second place by **diakonia** or diaconal service.

Although the missions endeavour of BUSA was rather paternalistic in nature, much good was done for SABMS churches through the ministry of the mother body. The SABMS and Convention were not entirely on their own but up until the beginning of the 80's, were largely funded and serviced in a big way by BUSA. This service was evident in a number of ways, for example:

- The provision of Missionaries and Missionary Superintendents for the development of the Black Churches.
- The erection of many church buildings and manses for SABMS churches. A full-time missions builder was even provided for this purpose.
- The theological training of Black pastors and evangelists and the provision of a Bible School at Debe Nek in the Eastern Cape.

- The institution of a Pension Fund for Black Pastors.
- The development of a full-scale hospital in Hammanskraal, north of Pretoria.
- A very effective ministry to foreigners working on the gold mines in the Free State.
- The Annual and regular Missionary parcels and boxes provided by the Baptist Women's Association of BUSA, etc.

The above were some great and notable achievements which cannot easily be written off. They certainly assisted the development of the SABMS/Convention Churches and helped them to make an impact upon the communities in which they were located.

However, the ministry of diakonia tended to focus almost exclusively on the material well-being of pastors and churches of the SABMS. E.g. During the second half of the 1960's, the BU Executive split into groups at some of its meetings and looked at some of the problems, trends and possibilities facing the denomination. These often focussed on matters such as the "health of our membership, our young people and our witness to the world" (BU Executive Minutes, June 1969:334). Whilst recognising that these matters were and are important, the Executive of the 60's failed to adequately address the turbulent issues of injustice, e.g. Apartheid, pass laws and the Group Area Act, experienced by the bulk of its constituency, i.e. Blacks within the SABMS and the "other than White" cultures in membership with BUSA.

A good worded resolution was placed at Assemblies on occasions but, unfortunately, very often had little effect upon most leaders and local churches enjoying the privileges of the apartheid socio-political status quo.

Kononia (fellowship) and especially genuine **fellowship with one another** can be rated as one of the great weaknesses in the all-round development of BUSA during most of the 45 years under review, especially in apartheid South Africa. The strict adherence of the National Executive and especially local European churches to the socio-political status quo often hindered true and genuine fellowship in the Body of Christ. Many local churches hid behind a false perception of autonomy, majoring on independence rather than interdependence in the Body of Christ and a real care for one's brother in Christ. This weakness was further exacerbated by the strong focus on only planting homogeneous churches during the apartheid era thus excluding cross-cultural fellowship.

The false understanding with regard to autonomy is highlighted by a statement of the BU Executive in 1966: "Multi Cultural Services. Agreed that this Executive re-affirms its conviction that each church within our Union possesses **the inherent right to decide whether its services shall be multi-racial or uni-racial** according to their understanding of New Testament principles" (BU Executive Minutes, March 1966:137). Was this not also the thinking of the Dutch Reformed Church during Apartheid South Africa? How could such practice foster true Biblical fellowship. Was the Baptist principle of autonomy being misused to "cover up" real Biblical principles?

Furthermore, national events such as the Annual Assembly, pastors' and women's conferences, etc., provided opportunities for fellowship, but many folk of colour perceived this as "superficial" for once the national or regional event was over, that was the end of the cross-cultural fellowship. Oft-times leaders of two Baptist churches from different cultures located not far from each other in the same town would only meet at national events for fellowship. Having said that, it needs to be noted that there were those local churches who genuinely sought fellowship with Baptists of other cultural groups. However, these were in the minority.

One more thing needs to be said with regard to fellowship. The Baptist Union in its history passed many excellent resolutions at its National Assemblies. These included a number of resolutions against the injustices and wickedness of apartheid. However, very often "under the guise of autonomy", these resolutions were never translated into action at local church level by those not affected.

In summarising the first six chapters, one must conclude that up to the late-eighties, the structural and leadership dynamics of BUSA appear to favour one cultural group within the Union. This was definitely influenced by the socio-political ethos of that day.

As previously stated, the turning point for the writer came in 1987 with the breakaway of the Baptist Convention and the turbulent 1989 Annual Assembly held in Kimberley. A legitimate reason for the protest at Kimberley would be the frustration that had been

building up over the years as a result of the failure to recognise the community in terms of the leadership structures of BUSA. The “Coloured” SA Baptist Alliance had already disbanded in 1977 with a view to becoming an integral part of BUSA and its structures. These events caused a major re-think in the Union and with the bold leadership of the Rev Terry Rae (my predecessor) and National Executive during the 1990’s, led to great transformation within BUSA. Chapter 5 bears witness to this fact. Today, we are a real rainbow Baptist family incorporating all the cultural and language groups of the new South Africa.

Leaders. We pledge to him and to the members of the Cabinet, the prayers of all our people in this critical period.

The Assembly commends the above Resolutions, and their implications in the realm of personal conduct, to all our churches and church members.” (Baptist Handbook 1976-77:190-191)

Following the passing of these resolutions, the Executive recognised the need to educate our BU membership in relation to their calling in a multi-racial society and established “The Human Relations Committee”.

3.2 Centenary Celebrations

In 1977 the Baptist Union of Southern Africa celebrated 100 years of God’s goodness. The celebrations were jubilant and a special Centenary Fund was launched to financially assist theological students and pastors wishing to further their studies. However, it could also be viewed as a sad occasion for in 100 years of our history, BUSA had not produced an “other than white” President! Yet, it repeatedly claimed to be a multi-cultural denomination!

3.3 Other Developments

- The seventies also witnessed a change of General Secretaries. The **Rev Trevor Swart** took over from Dr Chris Parnell on 1 August 1973.
- The Missionary Secretary of the Union the Rev Jimmy Hendricks, was called home in 1973.
- The **Indian Baptist Mission** was afforded Special Association status in 1976.

- In the latter part of the seventies the Baptist Union embarked on the Bold Missions Trust Evangelistic program.

CHAPTER 8

THE WAY AHEAD

This dissertation has shown that historically BUSA's track record with regard to race relations is not a very exciting one. However, thank God for the transformation during the 1990's!

The very fact that BUSA, in spite of its history, theological and cultural diversity, is still a united rainbow denomination today is nothing short of a miracle and the grace of God.

As pointed out in Chapter 1, the BU Commission erred with "their point of departure". One cannot simply ignore history and historical trends but needs to learn from history! By 2004 (the implementation of the BU Commission), BUSA had already been in existence for 127 years!

Future BUSA Leadership at both National and Regional level would do well to learn from history and, with God's help, in charting the course forward:

1. Realise that the current (2008) rainbow BUSA family of over 670 churches and fellowships is made up of White western and African traditional; first world and 2/third world; urban and rural; haves and have nots.

2. Strive to maintain the unity of the Body in spite of our theological and cultural diversity by:
 - Being sensitive to and as far as possible accommodating all groups.
 - Recognizing our equality in the Body of Christ. The notion that “only White is right” is unbiblical and a thing of the past. In Christ, we are all equal regardless of our colour, race, culture or tribe – Revelation.
 - Listening to and learning from each other’s cultures. Currently BUSA comprises those of a White Western mindset and those of an African traditional mindset. We need to recognize God’s gifts to the Body in all cultural groups and such gifts must be determined and assessed on the basis of Biblical criteria and not White western leadership dynamics. Eg, from a White perspective, a Black leader may not display “charismatic” leadership qualities **but** observe such Black leader within the context of his own culture and you will find a real gifted leader! African traditional culture can teach us many lessons, e.g. the Biblical principle of caring which is aptly displayed in the concept of the extended family. However, our God is supra-cultural – He is above culture and not bound by any particular culture. Thus, at all times, we need to strive for a Biblical worldview and find “middle ground” – our new humanity in Christ (Ephesians 2).

3. Spare no effort to maintain the principle of receptivity with regard to BUSA Leadership Structures. This is imperative given the demographics of our country, as well as the current composition of BUSA. No core or major cultural group

During the period of transformation in the 1990's, I have often heard it said, particularly by leaders from our White community, "we must not appoint people on the basis of colour but on the basis of their giftedness." Unfortunately, this principle was not heeded by those who propagated it for, as this dissertation shows, it took over 100 years for BUSA to recognize that **God had also gifted** "other than White" leaders. Some of our very gifted Black leaders, e.g. Pastors William Duma and John Hiebner, were not really recognized for who they were during their time. All too often, the criteria for denominational leadership is determined according to White Western values, e.g. the BU Commission proposals.

4. Continue to aggressively promote the Biblical concept of the stronger churches helping the weaker ones (Philippians 2 v 1-5). The Impact 2010 slogan includes the statement: "Each one nurture one." This needs to happen across cultural lines.
5. Encourage and support the development of multi-cultural churches; multi-cultural pastoral teams and multi-cultural local church leadership especially in the urban areas.

6. Guide BUSA local churches to become “missional” churches in the 21st Century.

Future Relationship with Baptist Convention (BCSA)

1. It must be clearly stated that when BCSA severed ties with BUSA in 1987/88, it was **mainly and mostly** the then Transvaal churches of BCSA that broke away. As indicated in this dissertation, the bulk of BCSA churches in the Eastern Cape, Free State, Northern Cape and KZN joined BUSA. This explains why key BCSA pastors who joined BUSA at the time could not understand why the BUSA leadership focused so much attention on the BCSA fraction that broke away and seemingly paid little attention to the majority of BCSA pastoral churches who linked with BUSA!
2. It is now just over 20 years that BCSA parted ways with BUSA. In those 20 plus years, BCSA developed and established its own identity as an independent denomination. Therefore, just as in the case of a married couple that has been divorced for 20 years, any talk of merger again of necessity has to be on equal terms and involve “give and take” on both sides. BUSA cannot simply expect BCSA to “return home” and join BUSA again! Likewise, BCSA cannot expect to negotiate on the basis of 1987/88 terms.

In the meantime, we need to make every effort to promote and maintain the cordial relationship and working together that we enjoy with BCSA at the present time.

It is the writer's sincere prayer that future BUSA leadership will not repeat the mistakes of the past but clearly demonstrate to the world our unity in diversity as we strive to "maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4 v 3).

Finally, it has not been the purpose of this dissertation to negate the excellent work done by those who served BUSA and the SABMS in the years gone by. Their commitment to God, His cause and BUSA is without question. However, it needs to be noted that this dissertation is a "**critical analysis**" of the structural/leadership dynamics operative within BUSA during the years under review. Hindsight teaches us many things!

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Secretary : Rev. W. O. Maasch, 108, Kitzinger Avenue, Brakpan.
Treasurer : Mr. D. E. Mackenzie, P.O. Box 218, Springs, Tvl.

Central

Chairman : Mr. A. H. Storer, Kimberley.
Secretary : }
Treasurer : } Mr. W. H. Winfield, P.O. Box 650, Bloemfontein, O.F.S.

Eastern Province

President : Rev. P. M. Jones, Uitenhage.
Secretary : Rev. C. S. Winter, 13, Villiers Road, Walmer, Port Elizabeth.
Treasurer : Mr. L. I. Davis, Port Elizabeth.

Natal

President : Rev. Jas. Walker, Pietermaritzburg.
Secretary : Mr. V. Clark, "Lynwood", Main Road, Hillcrest, Natal.
Treasurer : Mr. C. H. Hardaker, Durban.

The Baptist Union of Central Africa

President : Rev. A. W. van den Aardweg, B.A., Umtali.
Secretary : Rev. C. S. Surmon, P.O. Box 280, Salisbury.
Treasurer : Mr. E. Crutchley, Gwelo, S.R.

United Cape Eastern

President : Rev. J. A. Hendricks, B.D., King Williams Town.
Secretary : Mr. W. H. Munday, 9, Hebbes Street, Cambridge, East London.
Treasurer : Mr. A. H. Benkenstein, King Williams Town, C.P.

Western Province

President : Mr. M. Grapentin, Cape Town.
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**MINISTERS IN CONNECTION WITH THE BAPTIST
UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA
AND
THE SOUTH AFRICAN BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY**

* Signifies without pastoral charge under B.U. of S.A.

† Signifies Missionary under the S.A.B.M.S.

§ Signifies Missionary of the Mahon Mission Branch.

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S.A. BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY
Summary of Field Returns as at 30th June, 1960.

FIELD	Buildings.	Preaching Places.	Preachers and Other Workers.	Members.				Rolls.		Total Number of Baptisms During Past Year.	Sunday Schools.			
				Added.		Removed.		Last Year.	This Year.		Schools.	Teachers.	Scholars.	
				Baptisms.	Transfers.	Deaths.	Erasures & Transfers.						Last Year.	This Year.
Ciskei	33	78	308	268	69	31	221	2243	2328	268	38	64	2457	2259
Pondoland	14	40	120	88	176	28	45	1501	1692	88	26	27	848	928
Transkei	43	76	180	230	51	24	150	2231	2338	230	22	25	802	660
Northern Transvaal	23	109	153	250	134	35	230	2542	2661	250	26	48	1838	1480
Transvaal, etc.	88	292	464	387	634	93	570	9335	9693	387	81	173	5424	5008
Lambaland	40	†	272	109	4	16	12	1083	1168	109	44	95	1522	1524
Mahon Mission Branch	31	208	326	202	42	70	240	5116	5050	202	105	142	3261	3264
Totals	272	803	1823	1534	1110	297	1468	24051	24930	1534	342	574	16152	15123

† Preaching Places in almost every village.

SUMMARY AS AT 30th JUNE, 1960.

	Churches and Missions	Ministers and Missionaries.	Places of Worship.	Lay Preachers and Readers.	Members.						Rolls.		Number of Baptisms During Past Year.	Sunday Schools.				
					Added.			Removed.			Last Year.	This Year.		No. of Sdhoools.	Teachers and Workers.	Scholars		
					Baptisms.	Transfers.	Otherwise.	Deaths.	Transfers.	Otherwise.						Last Year.	This Year.	
1. European Churches ..	110 Churches	74 Ministers 10 Prob. Ministers 20 Student Ministers	}	163	99	712	580	317	108	598	440	12353	12816	961	172	1442	11305	1179
2. Coloured Churches and Missions	12 Churches 12 Missions	1 Student Minister 6 Ministers 6 Superintendents		21	2	136	13	34	9	13	53	1280	1388	178	68	318	4023	465
3. Indian Churches	1 Associa- tion 2 Churches	2 Ministers		14	14	58	37	—	12	—	—	1299	1382	58	21	32	733	78
4. Chinese Churches	1 Church	1 Minister		4	2	—	10	—	—	—	—	25	35	—	3	15	216	30
5. Bantu Churches and Missions (S.A.B.M.S.)		6 Supt. Missionaries 5 Area Supt. do. 26 Missionaries 45 Ministers 38 Prob. Ministers 5 Student Ministers 56 Evangelists		272	1823	1534	1110	—	297	1468	—	24051	24930	1534	342	574	16152	1512
		Totals		474	1940	2440	1750	351	426	2079	493	39008	40551	2731	606	2381	32429	3264

Ministers without Pastoral Charge under B.U. of S.A. 28.

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