



The Church of the Apostles
Episcopal

September 23, 1994

Ans 22.10.94

Mrs Sheila Burnett
20 Milner Road
Grahamstown, 6140
SOUTH AFRICA

Dear Sheila,

I was saddened to hear from Michael Harper about Bill's rather sudden death.

I have been out of the country for a time, and wish I had been able to respond to you rather more quickly.

It is difficult to take in that Bill has gone. He has had an astonishing impact on thousands of individual lives—not least my own—as well as on the life of the Church as a whole. He was a distinguished Christian statesman, and a prophetic leader. I am convinced that he had no small part in preparing the ground for the extraordinary developments which have occurred in South Africa over these past months and years.

I was both blessed and impressed by the way he chaired the SOMA International Board meetings. He was able to keep a firm hold on meetings, keeping discussion from drifting aimlessly, while at the same time showing tremendous love and patience towards the members of the group.

I still look back with gratitude on articles he wrote in Ichthus in the 1980s, and also vividly recall sermons I heard him preach. Two that stand out in my mind, and which I have referred to repeatedly, are his expositions of the rich young ruler, and the cursing of the fig tree. Both were rich in wisdom and insight.

We have lost a spiritual giant, a man gloriously gifted and used by God, one whose life has helped bring change and transformation not only to individuals but also to political and ecclesiastical structures.

His reward will be great. "Well done, good and faithful servant...come and share your master's happiness".

Margie joins me in assuring you of our love and prayers in this excruciating time of loss.

Yours in the love of Christ,

David Harper