

Uittreksels uit Kuyper oor Verpligte Inentings

1. Uit sy *Gemeene Gratie*, Vol. 2, (sien dit hier): <https://archive.org/details/degemeenegra02kuyper/page/528/mode/2up>

Kuyper reken dat dwang deur die Owerheid t.o.v. inenting is "ongeoorloofd" omdat die owerheid niks te sê het oor ons liggaam of dié van ons kinders nie:

Van dwang der Overheid spreken we nu niet. Die is steeds ongeoorloofd. Over mijn lichaam, en het lichaam van mijn kind, heeft de Overheid niets te zeggen. Tegen Overheidsdwang zal deswege ons protest in naam van onze burgervrijheid steeds blijven uitgaan. Maar uit dat oogpunt bezien we nu de zaak niet. We leggen de zaak thans uitsluitend voor aan de consciëntie der ouders. We vragen, wat het zesde gebod hun als plicht oplegt ter bescherming van het leven van hun kind. En we zouden zoo gaarne aan wie nog aarzelen later het bitter berouw besparen, dat we helaas, bij zoo menigeen zagen, als bij het graf van een geliefd kind eindelijk toch besloten werd, om de kinderen die men nog behouden mocht, te laten inenten. En dit doel nu kan en zal o. i. bereikt worden, zoo blijkt dat Gods Woord bestrijding van alle lijden en ziekten eischt;

2. Uit *Ons Program* van die Anti-Revolutionêre Party. Die onlangse Engelse vertaling word hier aangehaal. Sien veral die laaste afdeling (seksie 204).

§ 201 CONTAGIOUS DISEASES

Finally, more difficult than the question of burial is the question of contagious diseases. It is not that one need hesitate for a moment to dissect that piece of existing legislation. Unless we are mistaken, laymen and specialists are in complete agreement that no law could be more ineffective, sloppy, and unenforceable than our Contagious Diseases Act. Yet leaving that act for what it is, no one should make a secret of it that we are confronted here with an extremely difficult issue, one that every legislator will probably continue to stumble over.

An effective law, after all, would require knowing (1) which diseases are contagious; (2) whether they are contagious in their incubation period, through physical contact, or through the air; (3) whether the virus is spread by clothing, bed linen, furniture, feces, and so on; (4) whether a third person can be a carrier of such a disease; (5) whether they can be transmitted over a distance by letters and such.

Next, if all this were known, one would have to have the power, depending on how the data turned out, to consign the ill person and his housemates to complete isolation.

At present, neither is possible.

Medical science has not advanced very far in discovering the laws that govern communicable diseases. It is known that measles are contagious already when a person has it without his knowledge. About cholera we still have nothing that can pass for knowledge. About typhus we know that not the patient himself but his excretions are contagious. About the plague it is believed that everything causes the disease to be

transmitted in the most horrendous manner. That mere touch transmits leprosy. That syphilis, too, spreads horribly even by a single breath. And that in the most common epidemics, diphtheria, scarlet fever, and smallpox are believed to communicate their viruses also through third parties or inanimate objects.

As to the second point—complete isolation—the main difficulty resides first of all with our doctors themselves who are daily in very close contact with the infected patient and yet immediately thereafter visit other families again to touch a patient with the same hand that a short while ago touched the infected patient. But the difficulty extends further: it is impossible, for the sake of one ill person in a large family, to keep all the other family members away from their workplace, and it is unthinkable to bar all of them from the streets and shops and to cut them off from all contact with others.

Truly efficacious measures, it should be kept in mind, will never be available in the case of contagious diseases.

It is not the case that an infected person may not be restricted in his movements.

Everyone who believes in the divine origin of the Mosaic law knows otherwise from the law on leprosy (see Leviticus 13 and following). But restriction of movement is not always warranted, inasmuch as most infectious diseases are of quite a different nature than scabies or leprosy and can therefore not be controlled in the same manner.

§ 202 WHAT CAN BE DONE

The little that government can do will probably come down to this.

(1) Whenever deadly epidemics are spreading like wildfire, the authorities should open sick bays where sufferers can be taken who are not being looked after and where they can receive proper nursing care, free of charge or for payment. Also, the authorities can publish what is the best advisable lifestyle; what is recommended by way of preventative measures, and what should immediately be done at the outbreak of the dreaded symptoms. Medicines ought to be made available to the needy free of charge (if private initiative is not forthcoming). The authorities should issue ordinances to regulate the use of cabs, order the burning of feces in infected houses, have houses disinfected from which a patient was removed ill or dead, and set the time at twenty-four hours within which bodies have to be taken to the mortuary.

(2) During calmer epidemics, though still of a very serious nature, such as smallpox, typhus, diphtheria, and scarlet fever, the authorities should require doctors to register cases and order destruction of any feces, followed by disinfection. Anyone entering such houses has to be warned. Anyone leaving such houses to step onto the street or enter a shop or a church, must be made to wear a white armband, and any children of such a family should be prohibited from attending school.

(3) During minor epidemics, such as measles, the authorities should refrain from taking any measures. First of all, there is no way to fight a disease that is mostly transmitted during the incubation phase. Moreover, minor epidemics scarcely warrant such an infringement of personal freedom and would only rouse the repugnance (which is not negligible) of all respectable mothers and eager schoolchildren.

§ 203 ALWAYS RELATIVE

The reason why we do not recommend posting warning signs on houses is that this only causes alarm, works unequally for shops and private homes, and gives doctors occasion to turn a blind eye. We agree that licensed shopkeepers should be subject to stricter regulations than private persons, but this should be expressly stated in the law; and

persons who leave the sick room and enter the shop to help customers should have to undergo a prescribed method of disinfection. But whatever is tried in this matter, the best measures will always be frustrated by the nature of the illness, the demands of daily life, and the unwillingness of the imprudent.

And if the government does not wish to stiffen this resistance but cause it to diminish, then as a servant of God it should demonstrate in such critical days that it has a heart. Then it should not, like a violent accomplice of unbelieving science, turn against the nation's religious beliefs that only intensify in times of epidemics. Rather, when God's judgments break out the government ought to share in the spirit of awe that stirs the souls before the majesty of God. Rather than prohibiting prayer services it should itself proclaim a day of prayer. In this way its solemn decisions and actions will underscore the impression that as a government it is powerless to ward off the plague that is visiting the nation and that it knows no better refuge for deliverance than to humble itself before almighty God.

§ 204 VACCINATION

For this reason alone, compulsory cowpox vaccination should be out of the question. Our physicians may be mistaken and government may never stamp a particular medical opinion as orthodox and therefore binding. Moreover, compulsion can never be justified until the illness manifests itself and may therefore never be prescribed as a preventative. A third reason is that government should keep its hands off our bodies. Fourthly, government must respect conscientious objections. In the fifth place, it is one or the other: either it does not itself believe in vaccination, or if it does, it will do redundant work by proceeding to protect once more those already safeguarded against an evil that will no longer have a hold on them anyway.

Vaccination certificates will therefore have to go—and will be gone at least from our free schools. The form of tyranny hidden in these vaccination certificates is just as real a threat to the nation's spiritual resources as a smallpox epidemic itself.

Abraham Kuyper, Our Program: A Christian Political Manifesto, ed. and trans. Harry Van Dyke (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015), 248–249.