

"NEVER AGAIN WILL I CALL A STRIKE"

S.A. Miners At Moral Re-Armament Conference

CAPE TOWN.

MR. P. VISSER, president of the white South African Mine Workers' Union, found time, during his recent visit overseas as workers' adviser to the I.L.O. conference, to attend the Moral Re-Armament Industrial Conference at Caux.

Moral Re-Armament claims that it can cure the world's ills by a process of inner change which makes everybody less selfish than they previously were, and only too eager to do everything possible for everybody else. Thus a new spirit of harmony and co-operation is engendered, resulting in industrial peace, and doing away, for all time, with the workers' need to strike when they want higher wages and better working conditions.

The August issue of *New World News*, the Moral Re-Armament journal, contains a picture of what it calls an "interesting delegation". It shows Mr. Visser at the conference, together with Mr. R. P. Erasmus, vice-president of the union. Sandwiched in between them is Mr. W. P. Boxall, a mine manager.

Pictures and reports in the journal show that delegates to the conference included Japanese, Indians and Egyptians, as well as representatives from Italy, Germany, Britain, etc.

REMARKABLE

Mr. Visser is reported to have told the conference "a remarkable story of industrial reconciliation and strikes made unnecessary in the African mines".

Mr. Visser said that during a recent dispute between his union and the Chamber of Mines, he proposed that an adjournment be granted "while the two sides considered the matter in the light of Moral Re-Armament".

"As a result," the report goes on, "settlement was reached within a fortnight. A management observer commented: 'This is a settlement without precedent in the industry's history'."

Mr. Erasmus is reported to have described to the conference how in 1922 he led 13,000 men under arms in the greatest strike in South African history. Condemned to death, he was later reprieved and sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment. After serving three years he was released.

FORGOTTEN FACTOR

The report goes on: "And as soon as I got out into the sunshine, I began fighting again," he said. "The only way I saw to fight the master class was with force. But the day after we saw the Forgotten Factor, a mine manager said to me: 'Erasmus, never again will I treat any man as of less value than myself'."

"I replied: 'And never again will I call a strike when we can settle our differences on the basis of Moral Re-Armament'."

The journal also reports a "remarkable reconciliation" at the conference between a Japanese trade unionist and his "bitterest enemy", the Osaka chief of police.

"I spoke no word to him," said the trade unionist, Mr. Katsuji Nakajima, "for my comrades had been beaten and dragged through the streets. A million men hated him. But Caux taught me to reach out my hands to him."

The chief of police, *New World News* states, "was profoundly moved by the apology". Whether he has since stopped beating trade unionists and dragging them through the streets is not reported.