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CAPE ARGUS

Death of Dr W. Nkomo after heart attack

Pretoria, Monday.

THE first African to be appointed chairman of the South African Institute of Race Relations, Dr William Nkomo (57), died yesterday. He had a heart attack soon after returning home from the conference on accelerated development which ended in Johannesburg yesterday.

Dr Nkomo had been actively associated since 1950 with the work of Moral Rearmament in Africa, Europe, America and Asia, the Rev George Daneel, chairman of Moral Rearmament in SA, said here today.

Addressing the 25th anniversary conference of Moral Rearmament at Caux, Switzerland, last year, Dr Nkomo had said: 'There was a time when I felt driven to bloody revolution as the answer to the problems of South Africa. But when I saw the change in the lives of White South Africans I felt it was the answer for our country, and I turned from planning for bloody revolution to the greater revolution of a change of heart.'

In Cape Town, Mr Japie Basson, United Party MP for Bezuidenhout, said today that at a time when South Africa was so greatly in need of cool but determined and enlightened leadership among all groups, the death of Dr Nkomo was a great tragedy.

'He was deeply Christian and his vision for the future was never clouded by an overdose of race and colour feelings.'

'I once heard him say that he cared for the future of the White child as much as for that of a Black child.'

'It is a reflection on our existing system that a man of his calibre was never allowed the opportunity to play a bigger role in the administration of his country,' Mr Basson said.