

MRA International Assembly Salisbury, Rhodesia – June 1975



Presiding at the opening meeting:
(l. to r.) Alec Smith, the Mayor of Salisbury, Sir Cyril Hatty,
Dr. Elliott Gabellah.

Creating the New Society

Can sanity come out of crisis?

Across the world — in Ireland, Indo-China, the Middle East — men see no way but conflict to redress grievances and bring justice. Statesmen talk of detente, and prepare for war.

Southern Africa is one flash-point. Yet there, at a time of mounting violence, a new voice of hope is making itself heard. Prominent Rhodesians, black and white are speaking with that voice to their country and the world.

Dr. Elliott Gabellah, vice-president of the African National Council; Alec Smith, the Prime Minister's son, and Sir Cyril Hatty, a former Finance Minister, are three who are doing so. During the first week of June they led the way at an international assembly of Moral Re-Armament held in the University of Rhodesia. In an interview on television, at public meetings and through the press and radio, they called for "the change in people which alone will make political changes work", for the building of "the new society where all are free to do what is right, in a continent that is hate-free, fear-free, greed-free and famine-free."

More than a thousand Rhodesians responded, and came to the assembly. Among them were cabinet ministers and members of the ANC executive; African men and women just released from detention, and right-wing M.P.s; farmers, business men and national trades union leaders, black and white. People joined them from twenty countries.

This report gives extracts of what was said and decided.

Dr. Gabellah: 'Operate without fear'

"We have tried all sorts of conferences. We have planned all sorts of strategy. They have failed.

Rhodesia could be the starting point of a world crisis, of World War III, of bloodshed which we do not want.

I appeal for men, black and white, to come forward, God-guided and without fear. We are even afraid of our own people. We say things we should not be saying because of what people will say. We need men who will say what is right. Men who will operate without fear. Then this country of Rhodesia will bring the answer.

In this country we live under great strain of fear. Black fears and mistrusts white. And I have often heard white men say: 'I do not know what the black man feels.' Of course he does not, if he himself fears the black.

Crooked leadership creates a crooked kingdom. Such a kingdom will fall. At the moment we find men who want nothing but self-glorification. Politicians make politics a problem because they are a problem themselves. Man is the problem that causes the problem. We need men led by God to lead the people.

I have learnt the greatest science I have ever heard of in my life — the science of listening to God. When you listen to God, He tells you straight. There are no "ifs". It is: "Do this. Don't do that." It is time we learn the do's and don'ts of men of God. Our problems now need men who will listen, so that God gives that inspiration which is imbued with His answers.

Let us adopt a rule:— We are not going to look at who is right but at what is right, because there cannot be two rights. Let us start now and move forward and we will provide the answer for this Rhodesian situation, for this subcontinent and for the world.'

Alec Smith: 'Bridge the gap'

'I am passionately in love with this country. So I am looking for a solution, a way to bridge the gaps, the divisions. We claim to be God-fearing, but it would be foolish to deny that we have problems. They are not unique. All over the world there are problems similar to ours.

God has a plan to heal the divisions and if we commit ourselves to that plan we will overcome hatred, prejudice and injustice. We have the opportunity of providing an answer not only for ourselves. If we can live together peacefully, the world can.

We will solve our problems when we all start with ourselves and examine where we need to change. Many things I did needed sorting out.

I want to apologise to the South Africans present at the Assembly for having hated white South Africans more than anything in my life.

I did your country a lot of harm while I was at university there. Hate and prejudice have nothing to do with colour, age or nationality. They go in people's hearts. When I committed my life to God, I had conclusive evidence how to overcome prejudice. God turned hate into love.'

Sir Cyril Hatty: 'Bring needed change'

'I long to do something about increasing food production in a world which is facing famine. Just think of what Rhodesia, Mozambique, Zambia and Malawi could do to feed the world! If two or three nations can work together for a common objective, we will get not only the food production we need, but also the overtones of character building, and above all we will do the one thing we want to do; that is by thinking of other people we will make Africa free.

We need to carry on the spirit of this conference — to listen to God, and to bring about the change we need in order to get our new society here in Rhodesia and let it overflow the borders. We need to carry out the theme — "Africa, the answer continent".

AFRICA - the answer continent...

Over one hundred of all races came to the assembly from South Africa. Seven of the eight homelands were represented. Black and white came from Kenya, Zambia, Swaziland and Botswana.

From Ethiopia, men in responsible positions in Eritrea and Addis Ababa sent a message: "The old way of the gun has proved a bitter experience in many parts of the world", they say. "We believe in this way of militant obedience to God's direction."

"If the divisions in Rhodesia can be answered, it will be a convincing demonstration that we can bring answers to the whole continent."

Here are extracts from the speeches:

The Hon. Chief Lucas Mangope, Chief Minister of Bophuthatswana, South Africa

'We stand on the threshold of challenging developments in Southern Africa.

As a black South African I have suffered indignities, humiliations and deprivations. If the time and the intensity of subjection to such treatment justified bitterness, I would be bitter. But I do everything to eradicate it from my spirit because I know bitterness destroys in the end.

Discrimination is not only personal; it has the backing of the force of law and the policy of the ruling white government. But there is a very welcome change of attitude among the whites in South Africa. This has given rise to an attitude of expectancy for meaningful change to come about in my country.

As a homeland leader, I wish to see the development of our human material as priority number one — training to acquire skills, to become more productive and so be able to clamour for more wages.

The answer to our problems in Southern Africa lies in Moral Re-Armament. As a leader of my people, I have not set the example I should have. But since my visit to the MRA world assembly at Caux last year, I am much more effective in speaking for my people and against the wrongs.

The problem is with man. Once we are righted, the wrongs will be.'

Marie van Selm, from a pioneer South African family

'I grew up with a tremendous fear of the Africans. Where there is fear there is hate. Where there is fear and hate there is cruelty. It didn't occur to me to meet Africans. When I decided

to take my part in this fight, something broke in my heart. I had to put right what was wrong in my family and with other people. It set me free from fear. I learnt to serve Africans.

I am as my nation is, arrogant, adamant, self-righteous, materialistic and bitter. Unless God deals with us every day, heaven help us.

There are some of our people in South Africa who think we can maintain the status quo with our armed forces. That will not be the answer. Some of us feel we can do it through goodwill. But goodwill is not big or powerful enough at this stage of the game to do anything at all. We need the wisdom of God Almighty and His guidance every day.

There is statesmanship in a man like Chief Mangope, who leaves the past behind and takes on the future without bitterness, for all the races in South Africa. I would willingly serve a man like that as our Prime Minister.'

The Rev. A. T. Kanodereka, Harare, Salisbury

'As a minister in the war-torn North-East of Rhodesia, I saw white men killed and I saw black men killed. When alone, I prayed for them both. What is the answer to this suffering?

I have found Moral Re-Armament to be the only way out for our country. It has come at the eleventh hour. This is the time of challenge.

I have been very bitter. In my seventeen years as a clergyman, I have hardly talked to white people. Today, for the first time, I talked about our country with a white Rhodesian. We talked about the moral needs. I said: "We will find a solution if we begin with ourselves."

Basil Kew, Bulawayo farmer, Rhodesia

'I was born in South Africa. I came to Rhodesia to farm. As the years went by, my arrogance and superiority grew. The time came when I couldn't keep my labour on the farm — I think I had been black-listed. I saw no answer.

At a meeting, a man said: "When a man listens, God speaks." Rather sceptically, I decided to try it, and before I knew what had happened, I'd written down three words: "Apologise to Peter."

That shook me. I knew it wasn't a thought of mine. Peter was a little African boy I'd given a thrashing to. I tried to push that thought out of my mind. For two weeks I battled. I argued that I would be a laughing

Bremer Hofmeyr, South Africa

'We white South Africans are never going to change apart from the black South Africans. At a conference like this we begin to glimpse what we have done to others, and how deep is our need for change.

We have seen the vision ahead of God's new world for which we want to give everything. I, for one, will work for the day when I have no privilege as a white man at the expense of the lack of privilege of somebody else.'

stock, my labour would leave me, I wouldn't have any authority any more; but in the end I did it.

I don't know what it did to him, but it created a miracle in me. It was like an apology to all people of other races, to all Africans. I completely lost my arrogance and my superiority, began to appreciate the Africans around, and from that day I have made many friends with Africans around Bulawayo and throughout Africa.

Arguing never changed me. When I listened to God and was obedient, the miracle happened.'

Wycliffe Khagula, official of the Kenya National Federation of Cooperatives

'I want to end corruption in Kenya. When my country got independence, my main aim was to get very much money and live comfortably. I was a civil servant and I used my position to get bribes. This was the easiest way of getting money quickly.

The standard of absolute honesty was a challenge to me. I asked myself whether I was part of the cure or the disease in my nation. I decided to change immediately and to put right what was wrong, with the people who were concerned.

In my country, after twelve years of independence, we still allow ourselves to be driven by ambition, jealousy, hatred and greed. I have decided to take the idea of MRA across Kenya, no matter what happens, because I know that this is the only way freedom for any country can be guaranteed.'

Jane Khagula, translated by her husband from the Luhya language

- 'My husband used to drink and I was a very bitter wife. When he came home late, I used to throw the food at

Voices of Southern Africa...



The Hon. C. J. Claassen, Pretoria



William Mumanyi and Naboth Muchope Salisbury.



Dr. Elliott Gbellah — the opening meeting.



Suzan Daneel — addressing South Africa.



At the opening meeting.

...and of the world



Rongo Tomoana, New Zealand.



Fred Small, New York dockers' leader, with Chief Mangope.



A 45-minute interview on Rhodesia Television.



Robin Prickett, N.Z., Sir Cyril Hatty meet African farmers' leader.



Les Dennison, Britain, in Harare township.

... *hate-free, fear-free, greed-free*

him! When he told me he had changed, I didn't believe it. But when he started to help in the kitchen and look after visitors in our home, I told him. "From now on I have given up the bitterness in my heart." Our children now understand that we both live happily.

Our home is small but many people pass through it day and night. If we wives can find this idea, we can help our husbands to take it to every land.'

The Hon. Judge C. J. Claassen, recently retired Judge of the Supreme Court, Pretoria, South Africa

'The very selfish politician can be changed. This is my own experience.

Southern Africa is tremendously wealthy. If the states and nations could co-operate on a peaceful basis we could create here the new society of Southern Africa that could supply Africa with food and industrial requirements. Personal and national prejudice, hate, fear and greed stand in the way.

I had to start with myself. I had to be absolutely honest and apologise to men of other nationalities for my wrong racial attitudes. I want to say, particularly to all the Africans present: "My attitudes of racial discrimination and prejudice were wrong. I am sorry. Please forgive me".'

Professor M. E. R. Mathivha, Professor of African Languages, University of the North, South Africa:

'It is better for us to be on the offensive now. The whole system of democracy has become so apologetic. Let us be angry for a little while and then when the anger calms down we will be friends. The best friends are those who have fought the hardest.

In my university we don't have students who sit there and accept. We have had many unrestful days. The students are on the offensive. And they make the nation of tomorrow.

You are not going to win the battle on the defensive.

The present leaders in our homelands were brought up in Christian homes. They have a method of reconciliation. These people will soon pass off the stage. What is going to happen? People will say that the message of reconciliation and hope has achieved nothing. What then? I am asking both black and white.

Mrs. H. Kachidza, wife of the Treasurer of the African National Council, Rhodesia, sent a message from the assembly to 2 000 women at the Royal Festival Hall, London, meeting on the theme "Home Truths for the International Women's Year":

"At a time when the world is divided by fear and hate, women can build bridges between families, nations and races. We are committed with you to build the most important bridge of all — the one between people and God".

June Chabaku, social worker and drama producer, Johannesburg, South Africa

'I am a rebel. I went to London to study speech and drama. A group involved in the theatre of the black people offered to pay for my lodging and part of my fees. I went to Caux on the way. When they heard, they withdrew the money. I suffered. I didn't even have enough to pay for my lunches.

These people said: "Forget your fight for MRA. Come and be on our platform. Speak about the unjust laws in your country. Everyone will help you in your studies." But I refused. I stood for something bigger than hate.

The person you hate is the very person you've got to win. Because he

Let us not give the young people cause to despair. If there is despair, there will be no country in Southern Africa. And before God we will be responsible. That is why I am asking you to take up the offensive. Invade wherever you think there is something wrong. Invade it with a message of a man who will bring reconciliation. Go to the enemy camp and invade it. Even sometimes at the peril of your lives.

Who is going to be the homeland leader tomorrow? That young fellow who is struggling, who is leading a strike. And what is he going to do? Let's help him not to be revengeful but to be forward-looking.

God has put black and white in South Africa to show the world the way.'

Five students from the University of the North also addressed the conference. One of them, **Billy Marivate, a postgraduate biology student,** said: 'Moral Re-Armament is an ideology which keeps the stream of history flowing in God's direction.'

undercuts everything you do. When you unite — you become a force.

There is much wrong in my country. There is much for me to fight for. We've got to have the passionate spirit of Christ to see what is evil, to say it is wrong, and to put right what is wrong in people's lives.

Some will attack us. But if someone throws a brick at you, take that brick and build a home. He will never forget it.'

The Rt. Rev. Paul Burrough, Bishop of Mashonaland

'We must have the courage to recognise that we who are rich are going to have to live more modestly. This world cannot go on supposing that we can continue to bring mass technology into the developing world, and so reap a harvest of success.

The rich must be much more honest in our view of the world and in the demands we make upon it. And this will hurt us.'

Kenneth Sithole, teacher, Umvuma, Rhodesia

'Born black, I was brought up to believe that I was an innocent African suffering from white supremacy. I grew up to believe that I was meant to do something about it. My father was a politician and gave me a good education. I knew that when I became educated I would fight for the good of the Africans.

At college I met the challenge of Moral Re-Armament. I started to look at myself more closely and critically. I realised I wasn't even treating my fellow Africans the right way. I looked down upon my step-mother as a disturbance to the family. It took me six months but when I apologised to her I felt I could go on with the world struggle.'

Suzan Daneel, graduate nurse, Pretoria, South Africa

'God can only use people who are 100 per cent free. God gripped me by the scruff of my neck and brought me here. I had to give my life to God and He helped me springclean it. He held up the four standards of absolute honesty, purity, unselfishness and love. I started with the things that had built up a wall between me and my parents, and me and my friends. It is as simple as that. It is we who complicate things.

I can't accept Communism or the crumbling ideology of the West. Here I have seen a vivid picture of an alternative to both.'

Outreach of the New Man

"The birth of the new man" is one of the aspirations of the Frelimo government in Mozambique. No new society is possible without a change in its raw material — the men and women who must build it.

Speakers at the Salisbury sessions demonstrated such a change, and its outreach into economic and social conditions.

Les Dennison, Branch chairman, plumbers' trade union, Coventry, England

'For twenty-two years, I was dedicated to the ideology of Marx.

A man with a world ideological concept and a revolutionary passion does not just think for this next minute; he plans for tomorrow, next month, next year, and ten years ahead. In the cadre of the Party, I was trained in how you can exploit the situation in Africa to further world revolution. We were planning this in 1948. What is happening now is no accident.

How many business men, how many sound trades unionists, think beyond tomorrow or next week, in a real, dynamic way? This is what Moral Re-Armament is all about.

As a Communist, I got my blazing passion from a conscious hate. I hated the degradation, the poverty, the exploitation and inequality that I and my people as workers suffered, and suffer now. On the basis of class war, I took this into the heart of industry.

It took a more revolutionary concept to change a man like me. I meet many people who talk about Communists — and immediately you can sense the anti-Communist thing in them. Any Communist will get the better of any man who is anti-Communist. You have to blaze with a conviction and a vision for the world so big that that man says: "That's what I want!"

Moral Re-Armament challenged my thinking. It showed me how to fight in a more effective way. As a serious revolutionary, I had to accept this idea.

I took it into my home and into industry. For the past fifteen years, I have seen it reconciling the irreconcilable. The man who accepts God's guidance and stands up and spells it out — he will be followed.

This I long for every boss to do, as well as every worker. I long for men of every class and race to change and get this idea, so we can bring an answer

together not only to Rhodesia, but to the whole world.'

Nelson Marcellino, founder and first president of the dockers' union, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

'When I decided to live my life according to absolute moral standards, I found unity with my worst enemy, the man who had come to kill me.

We dockers lived in violence, in a climate of terrorism. With my former enemy, we got groups together from our two rival trades unions, and we went together to the conferences of Moral Re-Armament. Many other of our colleagues, the dockers, decided to clean up their lives. Some of them married the mothers of their children.

In a little while we were able to unite the two trades unions, and then we started a campaign together for the moral and material recovery of our port. We got rid of stealing. We got rid of the political strikes. We also got rid of the guns and knives. We made a film about our experiences. It has been dubbed into twenty three languages and has gone round the world.

We have got into this fight because only through MRA will we be able to build a world where there will be work for every unemployed hand; where we can bring food to the empty bellies of the world; where we can give a satisfying idea to every man, no matter what his class or race or creed is. This is the greatest revolution of our century.'

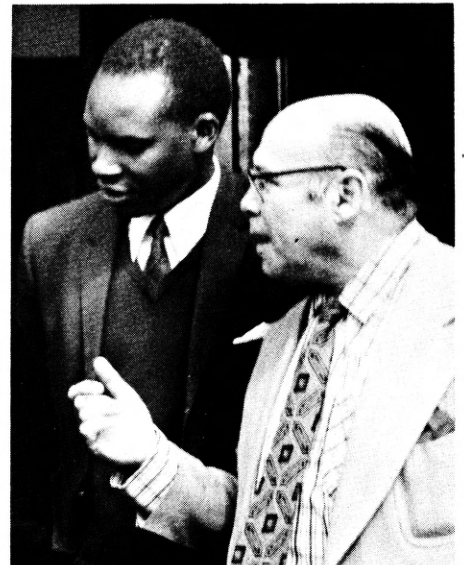
Robin Prickett, Sheep farmer, New Zealand

'New Zealand is responsible to see that the people of Asia are adequately fed. It may be the responsibility of Rhodesia to see that Africa is fed.

Some of my fellow farmers and I opposed a strong farming and commercial lobby, which wanted to introduce sugar beet into New Zealand to save overseas exchange. A sugar beet crop in New Zealand would have had a disastrous effect on the economy of Fiji, 1 500 miles away. We took this action because we had a moral as well as contractual obligations to Fiji. A sugar beet industry has so far not been introduced.

The farmer needs to be responsible for his product, from the pasture to the plate of the consumer.'

Further copies of this report available from Moral Re-Armament, P.O. Box 2142, Salisbury. 10c per copy.



Marcellino, Brazil, and Khagula, Kenya.

"A Meeting of Continents"

Representatives of Southern Africa will be welcomed this year at "a meeting of continents" at the world assembly centre of Moral Re-Armament in Caux, Switzerland.

This was announced at the Salisbury sessions. The Caux assembly will be held from July 15 to September 14.

There will be seminars, meetings and informal discussions at the Caux assembly. People are free to attend for longer or shorter periods during the conference.

At Caux, Rhodesians and South Africans, black and white, will be able to play their part and to meet representatives of other countries in a way not possible elsewhere.

Like all the work of Moral Re-Armament, the Caux assemblies are financed out of sacrifice. In order to help those who may not be able to pay their full fares, a travel fund has been set up in Southern Africa. Contributions towards this and other expenses involved in advancing this work, will be welcomed. Cheques should be made out to Moral Re-Armament, P.O. Box 2142, Salisbury, Rhodesia; or P.O. Box 101 44, Johannesburg, Republic of South Africa.