

What all South Africans have in common — Black leader

A BLACK SOUTH AFRICAN LEADER says that change through violence in South Africa is too ghastly to contemplate. There is a common humanity, South Africanism and purpose that can still unite black and white.

Professor Hudson Ntsanwisi, the Chief Minister of Gazankulu, was speaking at a session of the Moral Re-Armament World Assembly 'From Crisis to Cure' in Caux, Switzerland.

'Those who want violence will celebrate their freedom only over millions of graves,' he warned. 'In such a struggle there would be no winner. Both black and white will lose. The white will lose more only because he has more to lose.'

'But a way of peaceful change can be found if men change. It is downright selfishness and refusal to give up privileges that has brought this state of insecurity in South Africa. There is some system yet to find when no race would dominate another.'

Despite the lack of skilled labour, there were insufficient opportunities for black technical education, he said. 'It is a country that has not yet discovered its fundamental unity.'

He emphasised the 'real things that matter in life, that black and white share — a common South Africanism, a common humanity and a common Christianity'. 'These are the things that unite us. These are the things that some of us are trying to fight for in order to bring peace and prosperity to South Africa. Whether we like it or not, we have a common destiny and heritage. We should share a patriotism for the country in which we all live.'

The Chief Minister spoke of the lesson of Rhodesia, where violence could have been avoided, he said, if the Rhodesian Government had initiated meaningful change ten years ago. Now the whites were ready to concede what they would not give then, but it might be too late.

Egyptians welcomed

FIFTEEN STUDENT LEADERS from seven Egyptian universities have spent the last week at the Caux assembly.

The delegation has been specially selected by the Egyptian Supreme Council of Youth and Sport, and is led by Dr Ali El Fayoumi of Ain Shams University, Cairo.

Welcoming the students to Europe on behalf of the Committee for British-Arab University Visits, Peter Everington said, 'The exchange of cultural and technical information between our continents is very important. But we really need to find a moral and spiritual basis which can unite our two cultures, based on a common obedience to the one God we serve.'

The delegation is now visiting Britain.

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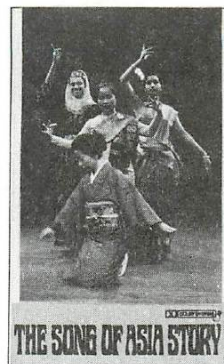
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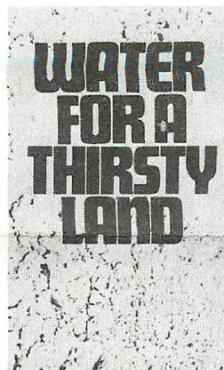
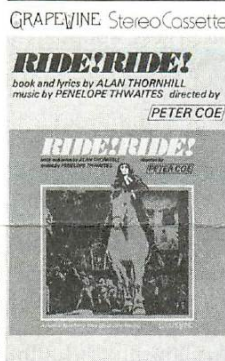
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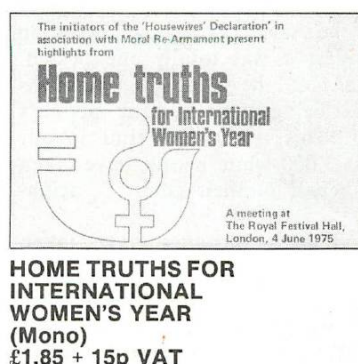
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LIKE ALL THE OLD SETTLEMENTS in the Southern Cape the history of Somerset West goes back several centuries. From the beginning white and coloured — that is those of mixed race of whom there are over two million in South Africa — built the town together, mostly living in self-contained areas, though, in some parts, intermingled.

In the 1960s the Government went ahead with its policy of establishing clearly defined areas separating white and coloured. They declared that people would develop better apart and that reasons for friction would be removed.

The Theron Commission, appointed by the Government, however, which has just tabled a massive report on brown/white relations with recommendations for many far-reaching changes for the future, says that the Group Areas Act embodying this legislation for separating living areas has increased bitterness. The report says that the coloured people regard it as 'inhuman'.

Somerset West has now focussed this issue. Despite various statements of intent many old established coloured families did not quite believe that the Government would implement the Act in all its detail to their town. But, early in 1976, the blow fell. Notices to move were served. One of the families affected was that of Peter and Shirley Gordon. The Gordons were established in the area in 1833. They became some of the first owners of land.

Six months ago they never expected to find themselves something of national figures. But it has happened. In a half-page article the Cape *Argus* describes them as 'one of Somerset West's best-known coloured families'.

Under the headline 'A Moving Decision' the *Argus* reporter writes, 'Sitting in her attractive sitting-room with the sound of children's voices floating in from the swimming pool outside, Shirley Gordon spoke of the prospect of leaving her 18-year-old home and the large property her family has owned for generations.'

'Hers is only one variation of a similar story told by most of Somerset West's coloured residents, the story that motivated 3,000 whites in this conservative town to sign a petition demanding their coloured neighbours be allowed to stay.'

It is easy to pass by a fact like that without taking in its unusual nature. I asked Peter Gordon if such a spontaneous initiative had ever come from the whites before. 'Not that I know of,' he said. 'Certainly to us in Somerset West it was totally unexpected. But it is a fact,' he went on, 'that this situation is being used to stir people's consciences. This is the first time in our history that 3,000 white people have taken action on behalf of their coloured neighbours.'

Peter and his colleagues have taken initiative on their own too. 'Four of us who lead the Action Committee on this issue approached the Government. To our surprise, a short time later we found ourselves sitting down man to man with two Cabinet Ministers, the Mayor of Somerset West and the Dominee of the Dutch Reformed Church in the town. There was a spirit there

that I had never expected. We are now hopeful of real change though nothing has yet been officially announced. Much has still to be worked out and we pray that it will be.'

A few days after this meeting *Die Burger*, the country's most famous Afrikaans newspaper, which supports the Government, wrote, 'The growing apart of brown and white is something which causes many people disquiet. The worry about the removal of Somerset West's brown people spreads far and wide. And the question arises whether the removal is really necessary.'

The paper referred to the Government's proclamations in the 'sixties concerning the town and discusses the settled nature of the community with its 9,689 brown and 12,365 white. It continued, 'Brown opinion is, today, much tougher than a decade ago. Brown men want all the more to have a say in deciding their own future. They believe that their claim to live in Somerset West is just as strong as that of the whites. They began the town together. They have always lived there. There is, for instance, the Gordon family after whom Gordon Street, the Gordon High School and Gordon's Bay are named. They have helped their town develop. And they pay their municipal taxes.'

Unexpected angle

Apart from the political developments and the possibility of 'a reprieve' on this particular issue for the coloured residents, the reporter of the *Argus* was clearly particularly fascinated by another totally unexpected angle from the Gordons. She wrote, 'If, after all, the Government stands firm by its mass-removal scheme Shirley and her husband Peter Gordon — who is Vice-Principal of a local primary school — have planned their course of action. "We're going to give our house away," Shirley said.

"We don't want more fighting and bitterness about it than there already has been. We'd rather give our house to people who will love and appreciate it as much as we do."

'If the Gordons have to move,' the *Argus* went on, 'They are turning their house over to Moral Re-Armament. "It will help them establish a centre for their good work in Somerset West. We feel very strongly about our decision to give it to them," Shirley said.'

Just nine months ago Peter and Shirley met people working for the Moral Re-Armament of South Africa. As leaders of their Methodist Church they said, 'We saw this as a way to put our Christianity more forcefully into action. We began to consider ourselves not as an isolated situation but as one of a whole force of people from many backgrounds, important and unimportant, big people or small, going through the same kind of struggles in different circumstances.'

It was a new experience for them to meet in their home an Australian Presbyterian Minister who had been Secretary of the Australian Council of Churches as well as a Cabinet Minister in his country's Government; several white Dutch Reformed Church Dominees; young men and women from Europe; black and white Rhodesians; all with one thing in common — they talked with honesty, humility and realism of what

they were going through themselves in learning to apply God's will. None suggested to the Gordons what they should do except to say, 'We are learning that God does know best if we have the courage to take Him seriously. In a time of quiet everyone can search the honesty of their own hearts and see what He says.'

New illumination began to come to the Gordons in their own situation. Peter says, 'I used to judge people in advance and put them in boxes. Now I can put things across to people because we started with change in ourselves.' Shirley adds, 'We must talk to people as people. There are still attitudes and worries I don't know how to cope with. But

Somerset West is a sleepy little town mountains and the great sweep of Falc... would never visualise it as a natural months it has become just this. Th



We shall no

by Peter

now I have hope for the future.'

One thing which has stirred them de... had nothing to do with the colour problem. It concerned their daughter Gillian. Last December she finished her school career. She is a lively, intelligent girl. But exam results were not good and she shut her parents out from any real communication with her. Her father says, 'She wanted to be a doctor in the black Homelands. But her maths results closed that door. Perhaps,' he added, 'it was a manoeuvre of God.'

The family got to know a Swedish girl and her parents who were working with Moral Re-Armament. They were impressed with their spirit together. They wondered if it could help Gillian. They decided to raise the fare and send Gillian to Europe in their care. It was a bold step. Neither they nor Gillian knew what to expect.

A month later Gillian wrote to them — and in the next weeks this letter became a talking point in Somerset West for her parents showed it to everyone:

Dear Mum and Dad,

I know that I've caused you a tremendous amount of hurt and worry, es-

pecially this last year and I am really sorry for it. I hope you will forgive me.

This time here has made me think what I was really living for. And I found that my life has been empty completely. How selfish I had been, wanting everything for myself and not caring what was happening in the world, or even among the people around me...

I've got to the point that I feel I should give my life to God, and do what He wants me to do, because He has a plan for everyone... to be able to feel other people's suffering and give all I can.

I thought of my shyness and realised I was too afraid to say what I felt and give

**set between the Hottentot Hollands
e Bay, 30 miles from Cape Town. One
storm centre of debate. Yet, in recent
this article outlines the reason why.**



Photo: Seydoux

Not be moved Hannon

my own opinion because I was always worried about what the people would think of me. Therefore I have decided to become an individual under God and to serve and take my own initiative. Also daring to do things and being responsible.

Thank you for all you've done for me,
Gillian.

When the notice of compulsory removal was served on the family and their thoughts turned to emigration, Gillian wrote again, 'Do not be deserters and leave South Africa. You will be used for the benefit of others.'

A little while later Gillian decided to stay longer in Europe to learn more before returning. She needed more clothes. She wrote to her parents who gathered some money to send to her. 'Evidently just when our cheque arrived,' Shirley went on, 'Gillian discovered that the people she was living with had run short of what they needed to pay food and other bills. No one knew that Gillian had any money. But she decided that their need was greater than hers. So she gave them what we had sent her.'

'I think she was a bit anxious as to what our reaction would be. She wrote to us

hoping that we wouldn't mind. Actually we are very proud that she learns to put others first and to care in this way. Nothing is more important than that.'

The night that the article appeared in the *Argus* reporting their decision to give away their house should it ever become necessary to move, I 'phoned the family. They said, 'From the moment we decided to hand over the future of our home to God all tension and bitterness left us.'

Of course everyone hopes they can stay. Their neighbours in the same road, who are white, have told them they want them there. This has surprised Peter. 'Sometimes when we argued over neighbourly issues like our dog,' he said, 'I could have hit out and been rude. But I didn't.'

The Gordons are already using their home in unexpected ways. Recently their big sitting-room was filled with white students from Stellenbosch University who came to meet Rhodesians Alec Smith, son of the Prime Minister, and the Rev Arthur Kanodereka. One can safely say that it was a new thing for most of those whites to be guests in a coloured home.

Peter and his Minister, the Rev Fourie, invited the Rev Kanodereka to preach in their church in Somerset West. It was one of those evenings one will never forget. Members of the white and black congregations joined the coloured people to jam the church to its doors. The singing had a full-throated quality that was startling. Kanodereka spoke first. Then he called on Alec Smith to tell his story of change and new purpose. And to give the closing prayers he unexpectedly asked a white Dutch Reformed Church Dominee to come up from the body of the congregation.

The Rev Fourie said afterwards, 'You have no idea what an evening like this has done for Somerset West.' It had been a tough week, he said. Official negotiations were proving sticky and spirits low. In addition some of his people had felt rejected by the whites when they went to attend the burial service of a white man many of them had known.

These things go deep. But one felt the healing stream of faith that the power of God was adequate for the toughest situations as one heard those men speak and then listened to the choir sing that night:

So send I you to bind the bruised and broken,

O'er wand'ring souls to work, to weep,

To bear the burdens of a world a-weary,

So send I you to suffer for My sake.

So send I you to leave your life's ambition,

To die to dear desire, self-will resign;

To labour long and love where men revile you,

So send I you to lose your life in Mine.

So send I you to hearts made hard by hatred,

To eyes made blind, because they will not see;

To spend, tho' it be blood to spend and spare not,

So send I you to taste of Calvary.

A reason for Soweto

BLACK AND WHITE RHODESIANS met together in the Methodist Church, Harare, last Sunday, to pray for their country. As the choir of the local Catholic Church sang in Shona 'God will rescue us', Rev Arthur Kanodereka, Minister of the Church and Assistant Treasurer of the Muzorewa ANC, spoke of how he had lost his hatred of white people, and introduced a group of students from Europe who had just arrived in Rhodesia.

The students — including some from Oxford and Cambridge — spoke of the experiences that had turned them from apathy, theoretical concern or drug-taking to an active responsibility for what happened in their countries and the world. They told of how friends and strangers had sacrificed to contribute to their fares.

The group drove up from South Africa in the military convoy established on the Salisbury/South Africa road link after recent killings. They were welcomed by Dr Elliott Gabellah, acting President of the Muzorewa ANC, and two of his colleagues on the national executive.

Mirror for politicians

'Rhodesia will be a deciding factor in the world's future,' *Dr Gabellah told them.* 'You are here because God has a purpose for you to be here. Politics is a dangerous game because in it we only see one side — we only see the wrong that our opponents have done. It is then that we need that mirror which shows us what kind of fellows we are. You will bring that mirror to us.'

The group was invited to the University of Rhodesia by its Principal, Professor Robert Craig; Professor Desmond Reader, and black and white students. Seven of the party stayed in the multi-racial university hostels, where they talked late into the night with students.

Accompanying the party were three young South Africans. One of them, Matthew Mpofu, a teacher from Mabopane, near Pretoria, told how he had given up a week of his vacation to come to Rhodesia. 'We cannot go it alone,' he said. 'Change in South Africa and Rhodesia is urgent. I have come here to learn how to bring God's everlasting answer to our problems.'

With him spoke Pieter Horn, a young Afrikaaner. 'One of the deepest causes of the riots in Soweto was our arrogance,' he said. 'Because of our arrogance lives have been lost. After the riots I have decided to fight on a different level to change this attitude in the whites.'



Something to teach the world

THIRTY-TWO representatives from 14 Montagnais Indian reservations, including 13 Chiefs and Regional Chiefs, met for three hours with 30 representatives of *Song of Asia* in Chicoutimi, Quebec, earlier this month.

The Chiefs and representatives, whose lands are situated north of the St Lawrence River and east of Quebec City, in the province of Quebec, represent 10,000 Indians of the Montagnais group of tribes.

Chief David Crowchild of the Sarcee of

Treaty 7 in Southern Alberta led the group from Asia and the Pacific into the room singing a traditional honour song from his people. He explained that this was the way his people honoured their heroes and war veterans.

Following a presentation from *Song of Asia*, Chief Aurelien Gill, Chief of Ouatouchouan at Pointe-Bleue, and President of the Attikamek-Montagnais Association, addressed those present.

'I remember the four key words, honesty, purity, unselfishness and love,' he said. 'As Chiefs and representatives we should keep these key words in mind and always come back to these words because they continue what our ancestors practiced in the past.'

'To get through the problems of assimilation, exploitation and acculturation, we have to get back to those moral values. And I think, in thinking of your presentation, that all tribes must go back to that source of inspiration which was there since time

began. In the so-called "political" movements of today there is no moral base.'

Referring to an apology Diane Pare, a Quebecoise, had made to the Indians, Chief Gill said, 'I have shared my convictions with you, but I don't want non-Indians to blame themselves personally for what has happened in the past. Go back to the old values and give new moral values to society. People from the Third World and Indians have so much in common. We have something to teach the whole world.'

In the last three months the cast of *Song of Asia* have given 18 presentations in seven cities and on eight Indian reserves in Alberta, Ontario and Quebec.

They have been invited to attend 'A conference for unity and responsibility' to be held at the University of Calgary at the beginning of August. It is hosted by Canadian Indians Nelson Small Legs Sr, Councillor of the Piegan Band, and Fred Gladstone, President of Kainai Industries.

What kind of progress?

Hans Ragnar Mathisen, from Lapland, is travelling with 'Song of Asia' in Canada. Last month he addressed the Berger Commission, Mackenzie Pipeline Inquiry, in Ottawa. Mathisen, Chairman of the Young Samic Association in Oslo, was introduced by George Manuel of the National Indian Brotherhood.

We reproduce his appeal to the Commission.

In a letter to 'New World News', referring to the role of minorities, he writes:

'We must fight for what God wanted us to be: brothers and sisters, equal before him and equal between each other.'

He adds, 'I need more to stand on my own feet to really fight for the uplift of my people, and not think too much of what we have suffered, complaining all the time, attacking the others, and so on. We must accept and be grateful for the part and the challenge our Creator has given us to put into the world family. Equality (and not racism) must be the attitude on which we base our work as indigenous peoples to the best of the whole world family.'

Like the Vietnamese people, the Jewish people and the indigenous people, others who have suffered and gone through it, are meant to bring back many of the lost qualities in the materialistic society of today. Therefore it is so necessary for these to be able to stand up on their feet, even if they are severely wounded, and like Christ forgive them, because they don't know what they do.

I believe the suffering of the past needs to be mentioned, because it needs to be forgiven. Unless you know the sin, you don't realise the need of getting forgiveness.'

MR COMMISSIONER, I am very grateful for the opportunity to speak here on behalf of my people, the Sami people. As a matter of fact, I was present at the funeral of Nelson Small Legs Jr, and it made me aware of the importance and seriousness of this inquiry. Violence is not an answer to the problems, but a reaction against a provocation.

The world's eyes are fixed upon Canada now: how will the world's next largest country treat its indigenous population?

Myself, I come from the north of Norway and represent the Sami people, who live in the northern part of Norway, Sweden, Finland and the Soviet Union. This area is maybe better known as Lapland. Our land and our Arctic culture are very similar to that of the North here. We follow with close interest what happens to our brothers and sisters here, because what happens here will influence other parts of the world.

We have learnt that in Southern American countries like Brazil, Paraguay, Colombia and other countries in the world, the indigenous people have had to pay the price of development: they have been shot down with guns or infected with diseases.

But another weapon is the language. For example, the word development has been used as a weapon against any reason for opposition. The question whether it is right or not to take away the resources from one people, for the use of other people, becomes complicated like this, because the dominating society is not willing to accept the simple truth of it.

The question is not whether there should be development or no development. The question is what kind of progress, and there are at least two kinds of development: good and bad.

Like the Sami people, the indigenous people of the North (in Canada) Inuit and Dene, have lived off and used this land for thousands of years: they have adapted their life to this kind of land. They have survived very well, and they have developed a lifestyle that when they use the land, they don't destroy it. They are able to live well off the land, and yet have hope for the future of their children. That is what I will call progress, and good development.

Who dare to say that newcomers and foreigners know better how this land should be developed? This pipeline might bring development to the South, I am not sure. What I know is that people in the southern cities to which this pipeline is meant to go, do have serious problems and don't seem to be happy people.

Like other people, white Canadians have got one mouth and two ears. I appeal to the politicians of Canada, who are to make the decisions after this inquiry: instead of speaking with many tongues, I hope you would listen more, both to the still small voice of the indigenous peoples, and to the still small voice in your own hearts.

I won't be surprised if those two voices spoke the same.