

Obituary

# The Rev. Arthur Kanodereka

**T**HE Rev Arthur Kanodereka, who has been assassinated in Rhodesia, was a Methodist minister, who since 1975 had accompanied Mr Alec Smith, son of the Rhodesian Prime Minister, on Moral Re-Armament tours in Rhodesia and Europe. He was 48.

Until August he was treasurer of Bishop Muzorewa's United African National Council.

Believing that the country was drifting towards civil war he had visited Patriotic Front leaders in Zambia and Mozambique in the past two months. He appears to have suffered the fate of a man who attempts the thankless task of go-between among hostile factions.

### Unorthodox link

Since 1975 he had been minister at Harare, a black township near Salisbury and appears to have been abducted from his church. His body was found in his own car and he had been shot twice.

It was at Harare that he invited Alec Smith to speak, the week in which 13 people had



**The Rev. Arthur Kanodereka**

been shot by police at the township during a riot. A suspicious audience was won over and an unorthodox black-white link formed.

For Arthur Kanodereka was no Uncle Tom. Originally he saw British rule as oppressive and his sympathies were with the guerrillas. He was minister in the Mount Darwin area from 1967 to 1974, arrested three times by security forces, interrogated and imprisoned.

But he opposed guerrillas who had attacked a village and killed a pregnant woman. He went to their camp to argue it out.

After his transfer to Harare in 1974, he attended a Moral Re-Armament conference. From that time he realised his ministry was to whites as well as blacks.

### Hundreds won over

He invited both races to his Sunday evening services and got such a remarkable response that he was threatened by extremists and had a petrol bomb thrown at his house.

As chairman of the contact committee with the guerrillas this year he induced hundreds of young men to stop fighting by visiting no-go areas.

But as the transitional government made slow progress, he found it more and more difficult to induce guerrillas to stop fighting. He was dismissed in August for his criticism of the slowness of the transfer of real power.