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DARKNESS and DAWN  
in  
ZIMBABWE

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# Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
Is it too late?	
<b>1 “We are all farmers — we must co-operate”</b>	<b>3</b>
Gary Magadziri, President of the African Farmers’ Union	
<b>2 White farmer who sowed seeds of hope</b>	<b>5</b>
The story of Tim Peech	
<b>3 The bridge-builder</b>	<b>8</b>
Arthur Kanodereka’s dangerous mission	
<b>4 The rebel son</b>	<b>13</b>
Alec Smith on “laying the foundations of cathedrals”	
<b>5 Which way the University?</b>	<b>16</b>
Students who are finding a more effective way than violence	
<b>6 Unexpected moves by a professor</b>	<b>19</b>
The outcome of Desmond Reader’s apology	
<b>7 Former Minister of Finance</b>	<b>21</b>
A guerrilla leader writes to Sir Cyril Hatty	
<b>8 Shooting back</b>	<b>23</b>
Eneas Mandinyenya’s riposte to neighbouring white farmers	
<b>9 From cashier to playwright</b>	<b>25</b>
Steven Sibare starts something in a white suburb	

<b>10</b>	<b>“A privilege to be in Rhodesia”</b>	<b>28</b>
	New uses for Don and Penny Barnett’s home	
<b>11</b>	<b>No second-class citizen</b>	<b>32</b>
	Champion Chigwida’s open letter to Britain	
<b>12</b>	<b>Who will give a lead?</b>	<b>35</b>
	Eddie Cross speaks out on segregation in schools	
<b>13</b>	<b>“I had to apologise for my hate”</b>	<b>37</b>
	An African farmer speaks on life in the rural areas	
<b>14</b>	<b>“The cabinet of conscience”</b>	<b>41</b>
	A group that is bringing new thinking	
<b>15</b>	<b>What more can Britain do?</b>	<b>44</b>
	A new dimension to our diplomacy — the X factor	

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## **Introduction**

Is it too late?

This collection of stories from Rhodesia is put together for one purpose: to give hope, the most needed ingredient in all the debate about the future of that beautiful country and its most potential peoples.

We have not had much hope in the news lately. "Rhodesia — why it is already too late" is the depressing headline to an authoritative article recently. As the war intensifies and atrocities increase, voices are heard on all sides analysing, laying blame and prophesying the dreadful abyss of civil war and anarchy into which Rhodesia is about to plunge. It is indeed true, as Dr David Owen was reported as saying on September 27, 1978, that unless a settlement can be negotiated, "the war will soon become unstoppable".

The stark realities are that 3,300 were killed in the fighting in the first nine months of 1978, over 10,000 since the war began; and that the average daily death toll has risen from eight to thirty a day since the March 3 agreement. The indications at the time of writing are that all sides are more determined than ever to demonstrate the strength of their armies.

But this is not the whole picture. Amidst all the tragedies, bloodshed and bad news which the newspapers daily bring us, something of permanent importance is happening. The stories which follow of courage and forgiveness are all true. They reveal another dimension to the problems which seem insoluble.

All parties in the Rhodesian tangle — including Britain — are going to need an extra dimension of faith, hope and charity if there is to be a peaceful settlement and a transfer of power to majority rule in a Zimbabwe with new prospects. But in face of the mountainous difficulties, how can this be done?

Many experts are hard at work. May they succeed! It is hardly necessary to emphasise that on their success or failure hangs more than the future of Rhodesia. All of Africa — perhaps the balance of power in the world — will ultimately be affected.

These stories give pointers. Men's attitudes are changing. There lies the hope. If men can change, then the vicious circle of hate, revenge and fear, leading to greater atrocities on both sides, can be broken. It represents a factor, often forgotten as the diplomats try — with no matter what persistence and ingenuity — to fit together the pieces of a jig-saw that just won't fit.

Whether these men will be in time to prevent Rhodesia plunging over the abyss is another matter. God alone knows. But by the miracle of their new relationships they are laying the foundations on which the new Zimbabwe must one day stand; and by their courage and leadership they may yet bring a uniting influence to bear on the present crisis, when so many other initiatives have proved ineffective.

It is not too late for a miracle in Rhodesia today. But it is probably too late for anything else.

## 1. **“We are all farmers — we must co-operate”**

Gary Magadziri, President of the African Farmers' Union

Rhodesian agriculture is exceptional in quality and productivity. The SR 52 maize developed in the country has beaten world records three times in recent years. Rhodesian cotton, hand-picked and employing maximum labour, fetches the highest prices on world markets. Its beef, of top quality, is exported to other countries of Africa. The sugar industry developed on the low veld employs up to 40,000 people. Soya bean production is increasing. Neighbouring African countries badly need the agricultural expertise and produce Rhodesia can export.

There are two farming organisations — the white Rhodesian National Farmers Union with 6,200 members, and the African Farmers Union with 9,000 members. The latter are commercial farmers, as distinct from the subsistence farmers in the Tribal Trust Lands. Much will depend on the co-operation between these two groups.

Gary Magadziri is the President of the African Farmers Union. He has two farms and the capacity to run them efficiently, but has enormous difficulty because of the war. Although he has lost 102 of his cattle stolen and slaughtered by thugs, he believes in the future of farming. He recently arranged a symposium on “Agriculture in a future Zimbabwe”, emphasising the need to maintain commercial farming, which is the main food supply of the country, and the need for white farmers to stay on in Zimbabwe.

He has personally suffered. He does not talk about it much,

but one evening in a home in Salisbury he told how the war had affected his family. "My father-in-law has just been so badly beaten up by the security forces that he is in hospital," he said. "My wife has had a heart attack because of what happened. Now two of my African farm managers have just been abducted by the guerrilla forces because they say I am collaborating with the white man. But I know that bitterness will make things worse. I believe God has a plan for Zimbabwe and I still want to help to find that plan."

He decided one day to inform the executive of his union that he was going to approach the RNFU. Some of his colleagues called him a "sell-out", but he said, "We are all farmers — we must co-operate". He went ahead. Now a close co-operation between the leaders of the two unions has resulted.

Land and land settlement will be a vital issue in the future development. New thinking is needed. The Secretary for Agriculture recently invited Mr P. D. Abrams, the former Deputy Director of Kenya's Land Settlement Board who was visiting Rhodesia, to come and address a meeting of seventy Government officers of the Ministries of Agriculture and Lands in Salisbury. At the meeting, which was chaired by the Secretary for Lands, this retired British official, a Kenya citizen, described the land revolution whereby 1,325 white farms were purchased and 60,000 African farmers settled on the one-and-three-quarter million acres provided. He also addressed other meetings arranged by the RNFU and the university.

The present transitional government has been giving attention to this issue. It has announced a ten-year plan to open up for resettlement 8.5 million acres of under-used white-owned land in Rhodesia.

## 2. **White farmer who sowed seeds of hope**

Reproduced from *The Times*, August 11, 1978 by permission

The Macheke district seventy miles east of the Rhodesian capital of Salisbury is rich tobacco and cattle country on the watershed between the tributaries of the Zambezi and Sabi rivers. The farms stretch thirty miles north and south of the Salisbury-Umtali railway line and in the north adjoin one of the most populous tribal areas in Rhodesia, the Mangwende tribal trust land.

Eighteen months ago the people of the district, both black and white, were despondent about the future; there were numerous attacks on farms, stores, schools and road transport. There was little dialogue between the black and white communities in the district — or with their neighbours in the tribal trust lands.

Mangwende, which has been a restless area since the ill-advised deposition of its chief in the mid-1950s, was already heavily infiltrated by guerrillas, leading up to the killings at Musami mission only twenty miles away.

That situation was changed after the March 3 internal settlement agreement, largely through the efforts of one man, Mr Tim Peech, aged thirty-one, a well-known tobacco farmer.

A natural leader, who was optimistic about the future for white Rhodesians in an independent Zimbabwe, he formed the Macheke Local Defence Force early last year. He believed strongly that the deterioration of security locally was largely due to the long periods which farmers were spending away on national service in other parts of the country.

The new concept was that all local resources would be pooled, national commitments would be cut and groups of white and black police reservists would take complete responsibility for security in the area. The new arrangements, once off the ground, worked with considerable success and for more than four months there were no further attacks.

After the internal settlement in March Mr Peech felt the need to start working positively for peace. In his words, the motto should be not "seek and destroy" but "seek and discuss". He began by working politically in the tribal trust lands and despite intimidation of local people, held several meetings culminating with one of 500 people in a local beer-hall.

He explained that the white farmers wanted peace and to build up trust at the grassroots level. What they wanted more than anything was to get out of uniform and back to farming. The response was good.

As a result of these *indabas* Mr Peech arranged for Bishop Abel Muzorewa to come to Mukarakate village to address a meeting on June 9. Two thousand people attended.

The meeting was a triumph, in an area where only five months previously there had been a fierce engagement between nationalist and government forces.

By now Mr Peech was becoming aware that he would have to spend his time talking directly to guerrilla groups. He worked ceaselessly, going out over a very wide area to "seek and discuss" about thirty times.

What he was doing was beginning to bring results and by this time African children were waving at and following the local defence force groups as they moved through the tribal area and even hitching lifts from them. "Free zones" were being created and trust was being re-established.

Mr Peech was determined to push forward the area of the peace operation. He was aware that he was working against time and knew that his work was becoming more dangerous daily.

On July 13 he was returning in his lorry with his two farm guards after a discussion with a resident guerrilla group. He had heard that a new group had moved into the area but had failed to make contact with them, and decided to try one more village. The new group proved to be there and opened fire as they approached.

The guards took him for dead but a radio message was later

received saying that he was continuing discussions and should not be contacted until the next day. His body was found a mile and a half away three days later and it was evident that, unarmed and unprotected, he had been clubbed to death soon afterwards.

While Mr Peech's contribution to peace and security was exceptionally courageous, at least his is not the only area of the country where there has been a breakthrough. In two areas known to me, one to the north and one to the south-east of the capital, local people have been successful in bringing ceasefire areas into being.

Mr Peech was asked on several occasions to visit other districts to encourage further efforts. There is no doubt that despite the tragedy there is still hope and a determination to carry on the work.

CHRISTOPHER PATERSON

*The author is a director of a London publishing house and has recently returned from a private visit to Rhodesia.*

Extract from letter to *The Times* by Mr Maurice Macmillan, MP, dated August 14, 1978.

Sir,

The moving account of the work and tragic death of Mr Tim Peech in last Friday's *The Times* shows how much can be, and is being, accomplished in building up trust between black and white Rhodesians at "grass roots level". The success of his "new concept" and of his policy to "seek and discuss" with the guerrillas indicates a way forward. . . .

Despite his progress he died putting his ideas into action. With great courage and remarkable forbearance his widow is prepared to carry on his work to the extent of seeking those who killed her husband, not to destroy them but to discuss the future with them. I hope that this faith in the future of the country will be matched by other Rhodesians, black and white. . . .

Yours faithfully,

MAURICE MACMILLAN  
*House of Commons*

### 3. The bridge-builder

Arthur Kanodereka's dangerous mission

The Reverend Arthur Kanodereka is a Methodist minister with a grizzled beard, spectacles, a merry laugh and a lively capacity for a good hard-hitting argument. He has been in many tough spots. He was the minister in charge of the circuit in the North-East where the guerrilla war started. He became minister of the politically hot African township of Harare, Salisbury, and then one of the Executive of the African National Council (Muzorewa), later known as the UANC.

At the time of the formation of the transitional government by the Agreement of March 3, 1978, he was the Treasurer-General of the UANC; he was also Chairman of the Salisbury District of the Methodist Churches (black and white) — which he still is; and he was given the difficult and dangerous post of Chairman of the Committee of the UANC charged with making contact with the guerrillas to induce them to come into the "no-go areas" and stop fighting. An encouraging start was made with this work, but he has since been in trouble with his party for some outspoken criticisms and was sacked from the UANC, along with other "dissidents". He boldly pursues, however, an independent line; he is widely known and trusted by many in all the different parties and tribes; and he is now launching — often at considerable risk to himself — a new venture to reconcile irreconcilable elements and avert the threat of civil war.

His father had been an evangelist, so when he grew up he thought it natural to follow in his father's footsteps. He went to a college which trained only blacks for the ministry, so he saw his ministry as being to the blacks alone. He had no contact with whites and wanted none.

"I studied history and learnt what the white man had done," he said. "The British may have lifted us up, but then they left us in oppression. I came to think I was licensed to hate. I could read

parts of the Bible which I thought justified my anger and thought it my duty as a minister to take up my people's cause."

When he was appointed by the Methodist church to the Mount Darwin area and the war broke out there, his sympathies lay with the guerrilla fighters. The security forces arrested him three times for his involvement. He had experiences of interrogation and imprisonment which made him bitter. But there were times also when he disagreed with the guerrillas. Once they attacked a village and killed a pregnant woman. He was convinced that this was wrong and preached against it. When he heard they were after him, he knew where their camp was and went to them and said, "Here I am". They argued it out.

After seven years in that area, he was transferred to Harare, Salisbury. He had seen black men killed and white men killed. Their dead bodies made him ask himself, "Is this what God wants?" While he was still bitter and confused, he was invited in June, 1975, to go to an international conference for Moral Re-Armament being held at the university in Salisbury. "I did not want to go", he says. "I had heard that MRA was out to soften us nationalists — just as later I heard reactionary whites warn us that it was Communist. But my wife urged me to go to see what was there. May be she wanted something for me. May be she knew what my bitterness was costing her and the children."

He sat at the back and listened. He found there were other black nationalists present and was surprised also to see a number of senior white Rhodesians, including even right-wingers. He heard speakers from a wide variety of countries, including black and white from South Africa, and the revolutionary commitment they had found in common caught his interest. He talked to them over meals. On the third day he got up and asked if he could speak. He told of his experiences in the North-East and why he was bitter. "But", he continued, "I have met white men here who really care about my country and have a vision for it and for my part in finding God's plan for it. I have decided to try the experiment of listening for His guidance every morning." He

did so. One result was that he realised for the first time that his calling was as a minister to the whites of Rhodesia as well as to the blacks.

Another was that he was fully honest with his wife about many things. A new unity was born in the family. He and his wife began to visit people together. "We can go together to anyone now, because we are solid in our own home", he says.

A third was the decision to invite Alec Smith, the son of Ian Smith, to his church to speak to his black congregation. The atmosphere was tense. That week thirteen people in his township of Harare had been shot by the police during a riot. "It was a risk for me. By inviting the son of the Prime Minister at that time I seemed to be asking for trouble. There were young men there who thought violence was the only way. I was afraid." But he went ahead. The result was that a suspicious audience was won; and it proved to be the beginning of a friendship with Alec which has led to teamwork in many situations. They travelled together to South Africa, speaking in universities, clubs and to political leaders. Further they have addressed meetings together in Rhodesia.

As the war situation worsened, Arthur Kanodereka had the thought to try a further experiment. He invited all who would like to come, from whatever background, to join together each Sunday evening to pray for the country and to seek God's guidance on the way forward. There was a remarkable response from black and white. The church is just across the road from the massed blocks of hostels for black single workers — often the spark-plug of anti-white or inter-party riots. "Up to seven or eight hundred have come at a time", he says. "Some support the fighting in the bush. Others are in the security forces. After three Sundays I had to ask the people to give me a mandate to continue. When I put the question, every black and white hand went up together.

"We are discouraging sermons. Sermons can hijack us into quite another spirit. Black or white clergymen can come and use

the chance to air their ideas. Before you know it you have more division. No. People need to come to learn to give God the authority in our land.”

He has often been threatened by extremists; and has had a petrol bomb thrown at his house. Young men from one faction come to him, wanting to react violently to something done by the other side. Kanodereka says, “I tell them, ‘Go and talk to the others instead of hitting them. It is more likely to change them.’ And they do.”

When he became chairman of the contact committee with the guerrillas, he was often out of Salisbury on dangerous missions. Guerrilla representatives came to his house. Through his work and that of the committee, many hundreds of young fighters were induced, in the early months after the March 3 Agreement, to come into the No-Go areas and stop fighting. They were allowed to keep their guns, but they got the message, “Don’t fight. There is no point in more killing. Smith has promised to step down on December 31. Now wait and see if he delivers the goods”. He raised funds and got food and clothing to them.

Because he speaks bluntly to all sides, Kanodereka is trusted. Many white leaders know him and he has had frank talks with white Rhodesia Front cabinet ministers. “Once we had six girls who had been guerrillas fighting in the bush, sent to us wounded, with bullets in their bodies,” he relates. “My wife is not a nurse. We needed a doctor. If we sent them to hospital, they would be arrested after treatment. If we kept them in our house, we would be breaking the law. I had to telephone the authorities. The top white man accepted my word and sent us a doctor. We were allowed to keep those girls in our home. My wife treated them with injections. After three weeks they were well enough to go back and the authorities allowed me to send them back to the bush.”

He has also started a commercial school for unemployed youth and “orphans of the war”. Many children whose parents have been killed, or who have got separated from their families,

have fled to Salisbury in need of help. Some have tried to become guerrillas but have run away; others have been sent in by villagers who have found them wandering about in the bush. Many come in half-starved and half-naked. There are now 550 children for whom he and his wife have found homes, food and clothing, and appointed teachers to give them schooling and training for jobs.

After the dismissal of Byron Hove, the co-Minister of Law and Order in the transitional government, Kanodereka became more and more outspoken that the government was not moving fast and firmly enough to give the guerrillas confidence that a real transfer of power was intended. As a result he was dismissed from the party, but continues his work for the fundamental changes which can bring reconciliation and peace. He says, "I thank God that I am now free to move between the parties and meet the leaders on all sides. Our people have suffered enough. If we continue as we are doing at present we face civil war." His aim is not to split the UANC, nor to start political regroupings and new alliances with other parties, but to heal the divisions caused by the struggle for power. "The time has come", he says, "for general mobilisation of all who will work for reconciliation and for what is right for the country rather than for the interest of any party or tribal group. The problem is not chiefly Smith, but the selfishness in us all."

#### *Note*

Rhodesians on all sides expressed shock when Arthur Kanodereka was assassinated on December 18, 1978. He had returned home from a dangerous mission to Zambia and Mozambique with Byron Hove to put the same challenge to political and guerrilla leaders outside Rhodesia, and was preparing to launch a statement calling on his countrymen to unite "to search for what is right for our country". He was looking forward to a quiet Christmas "when I can let God show me what more I can shed from my life so that I can be more like Christ." He knew that his work was dangerous but felt that he was called by God to undertake it. He said, "I am not afraid to die. We all have to meet death some time. What matters is what we are living for when death meets us."

## 4. The rebel son

Alec Smith on "laying the foundations of cathedrals"

Alec Smith, the only son of Ian Smith, is a young man of independent character with something of his father's Scottish stubbornness. In his teens he started to rebel against being just the son of his Prime Minister father. He wanted to do something in his own right.

"I went to university in South Africa to study law, but spent most of my time breaking it," he says. He drank a great deal and took drugs. Finally, he turned up for an exam dead drunk and wrote a letter to the professor telling him what a stupid paper it was. He was sacked from the law faculty.

A year in the Rhodesian army doing national service did not cure him, but increased his hatred. He drifted into heavy drug-taking and fantasy. His only reality became the next "trip". He had already lost touch with his home and parents. Then, to their acute embarrassment, he was convicted for drug-running and sentenced to a heavy fine. To raise some money and avoid going to jail he got a job as a photographer. But it did not solve his personal problems or end his drug-taking. When he was at his lowest ebb he had an unusual experience.

"About this time I began to search into the concept of God," he says. "It was strange. I picked up a New Testament and began to dip into it. It caught my interest. I began to get a sense of God's guiding Hand in my life. I can't explain it. I bumped into a man who invited me to his church. I went. There I was faced with the challenge of Christ on the Cross. I knew I had to do something about it, but could not take the final step. For two weeks I had hell. I wrestled with my fears of the unknown. Finally, Christ came through. I gave my life to God and for the first time felt really free."

He had many things to sort out, but his new freedom bubbled over. He found strength to master the drug habit which had held

him for six years. He felt like stopping people in the street to tell them what he had discovered. One immediate result was that he was reconciled with his parents. "They were very happy about the change in me — but of course I was not always wise in my enthusiasm!"

At this point he had to take a further decision, whether to keep it as a personal experience, or move on to take responsibility for his country. "Now the big question for me was how this change related to the crisis in my nation. I discovered that there is a big difference between giving my life to God so that my problems can be sorted out and giving my life to God to work towards establishing His authority in the power structure of my country."

He chose the latter and began to work with friends who were committed to that objective. When Arthur Kanodereka invited him to speak in his church he found himself facing an all-black audience in the African township of Harare. It was a risk for both men. Alec says, "I looked to see how many people were between me and the door in case I had to make a quick getaway." He spoke humbly and added a few words in Shona. The hearts of the Africans went out to him, and the meeting ended in singing and dancing.

Over the last three years he has been working quietly to create "a cabinet of conscience" for his country, of men, black and white, who meet in the faith that God has a plan for the creation of the new Zimbabwe. The basis of their working together, he explains, is a common faith and a belief that He will use them and others like them to change the attitudes in Rhodesia in the way their own attitudes had been changed.

"I grew up taking privileges for granted," he says. "I took for granted that black men would serve me and that I would go to university as a right and that I would get a top job. This arrogance and my self-centred indifference to others has changed. Now I am happy to live under a black government. I am also happy to serve in the security forces of Zimbabwe. To me the

question is not colour but character. That is what I look for and hope for in the government of the new country."

His friendship with Arthur Kanodereka and some other black nationalists has continued and developed. When he is not in the bush serving with the security forces he lives at home with his parents. He tells his father openly what he is doing with his black friends.

In the security forces (where for a man of twenty-nine his service is now eight weeks on and eight weeks off throughout the year) he is in close touch with the younger generation of white Rhodesians. He says that in the past year the younger men have become much clearer what they are fighting for. It is not white supremacy; they accept that majority rule is coming. It is to protect six-and-a-half million Rhodesians, black as well as white, from chaos and gun-rule.

Political changes in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe are necessary and long overdue, he feels. But to be fruitful, they must be built on a change in people's outlook and attitude. "Otherwise one unjust society replaces another."

But his thinking is not primarily political; it is focussed on the art of building bridges, of re-motivating men inside his country. His constructive role would have been unimaginable a few years back. He has set his hand to the long-term task. "In our situation we do not know what is going to happen in the future," he says. "I don't say a crisis will be averted. But whatever is in store we are building the foundations of a new society. I may never live to see that new society created. But in Europe there are cathedrals that took hundreds of years to build. The men who laid the foundations never saw the cathedrals completed — but without the foundations they would never have been built."

## 5. Which way the university?

Students who are finding a more effective way than violence

The University of Rhodesia, in Salisbury, since its foundation in 1955, has claimed with some truth to be "the one multi-racial university in Africa". Over 70% of its 2,000 students are black. Its well-equipped faculties are laid out on a spacious campus in the middle of one of Salisbury's prosperous white suburbs.

It is a hot point in the nation's life. Professor Robert Craig, the Principal, describes it as "the pressure cooker". Some of his predecessors had nervous breakdowns and had to retire from the job. One of them died in harness. Craig has on his desk one of the rocks which came through his window during a student demonstration.

As the war grows, feelings between white and black are exacerbated. The white students are called up on compulsory national service to fight in the bush, while many of the black students have brothers or relatives fighting with the guerrillas.

The Students' Representative Council is a centre of confrontation. By its constitution, its President is black and his Vice-President must be white, or vice versa. In practice, since the majority of students are black, the President is always black and the Vice-President is white. Each racial group chooses an extreme exponent of their views, so it is the scene of bitter wrangling.

In 1976 the student President was banned from Salisbury after leading a demonstration against Dr Owen, the British Foreign Secretary. The white Vice-President took over his position. The black students, a majority on the SRC, quickly passed a motion of no-confidence in him. Fresh elections were called.

At this stage an articulate black student, who was favourite for President, approached a white student called Jos te Braake and asked him if he would stand in the election. "You are a man I could work with," he said.

How did this happen? Some months previously Jos had come

with fourteen other white students to meet Arthur Kanodereka for a discussion. None had met a nationalist leader before, and they hurled ill-mannered accusations at him and his people. He did not react with bitterness, but his straight talking and his deep concern for the future of all, black and white, made a deep impact. Jos saw a hope that black and white could work together for the country and decided to try it in the university. Over the next months his fresh attitudes began to be noticed, and it was this which had attracted the black Presidential candidate.

The elections went as expected. Jos, the only white candidate, became Vice-President. The first resolution passed by the Council was one of condolence with all those who had suffered in the bomb blast in a Salisbury shop. With the support of the SRC and with one of his black colleagues at his side, te Braake addressed a student meeting on the campus, urging them to stop blaming each other, put their own houses in order and move forward together.

Others were working for the same goal. Professor Desmond Reader, Dean of Social Studies, held a series of gatherings of students in his home. Black and white talked deep into the night.

Some students went further. Multi-racial groups from the university have spoken to secondary schools and at other forums. Jos te Braake recently went with a party of black and white to Namibia to pass on what they are working out to students, workers, people in Government and people in SWAPO, the militant opposition.

Professor Craig says that in spite of the worsening situation in Rhodesia, 1977 was the best year in the university, both academically and in terms of race relations, since he came as Principal eleven years ago.

It is of course a constant struggle. Recently there was a nasty incident. A group of fifteen young white thugs (possibly ex-students or service men straight from the bush) appeared on the campus late in the evening, armed with clubs and cricket bats. They went straight to the student union and then to one of the

hostels to beat up any black students they could find. Two of those who had been doing this work of reconciliation were hurt. The worst damaged, Taapano, a popular figure, good at games, came from his room to find out what the noise was. Immediately he was beaten. Breaking from his assailants, he ran downstairs straight into others who proceeded to club him. He had to be rushed to hospital where two sets of stitches were needed for his head wounds. His back and legs were covered with bruises. Next morning, on the front page of the African daily, *The Zimbabwe Times*, was a picture of Taapano's head, showing the stitches.

Taapano had already many reasons to feel bitter. His father has been in detention for the past sixteen years, except for nine months, at the Wha Wha detention camp near Gwelo. The family live near Umtali, right in the operational area. A curfew has been imposed on the village, immobilising people daily from noon until 6 am the following morning. They are some of the millions who are caught in the cross-fire between the guerrillas and the security forces.

On his return from hospital, Taapano was at once met by many of the black students urging him to lead some counter-attack. The atmosphere was tense. Only a spark was needed to set off fighting. Sensing this, Taapano did not tell them how much he was in pain, and resolutely refused to be drawn into any kind of revenge. "These men must have had their reasons," he said. "Perhaps they had seen their friends killed in the bush." Various proposals for counter-attacks came to nothing.

A few days later Taapano went with a white lecturer from the university to see his father at Wha Wha, where he is still held as one of the 200 "hard-core" men, although many of his fellow detainees have been released. Taapano was only five when his father was arrested and father and son hardly knew each other. The father gathered twenty of his friends in the camp to meet his son and his friend. First they examined his wounds. Then Taapano spoke of his experiences in the university and of his conviction that revenge was not the way.

It turned into an extraordinary meeting. The father had read several of the books of Moral Re-Armament and had been passing them round the camp. His friends all spoke of the need for unity, describing what they were doing in their compound. After an hour-and-a-half the father ended by telling his son, "Here in this detention camp we have not tribal rivalries or political factions. We are going to fight for this uniting spirit when we come out. You must go on with your moral re-armament work — and especially keep trying to reach the hardest men. Never give up! When we come out we will join you in your work. We mean this. You will see."

## **6. Unexpected moves by a professor**

The outcome of Desmond Reader's apology

Professor Desmond Reader of the University of Rhodesia and his wife were in deep gloom about the future of their country when he attended, "rather unwillingly", the final sessions of the conference at the university described in the chapter on Arthur Kanodereka. It set him thinking. He writes: "There was one member of my staff whom I realised I had seriously underestimated and under-employed. I thought of him as an academic lightweight. He happened to be the Secretary-General of the African National Congress at the time, but I had never got to know him at all well. I realised I owed him an apology.

"One morning, screwing up my courage, I went into his office and said, 'I want to apologise to you for the way I have treated you all this time. I'm afraid I seriously under-estimated

your academic potential'. My colleague's face lit up in a way I had never seen before.

"From that moment two results followed. My colleague's work improved out of all recognition, and I found he was far more gifted than I had ever imagined. He was especially good with first-year students — in fact the best in Social Science I have ever worked with. Secondly, we began to work together on a series of lunches — and later dinner parties — to bring together men who were extreme opposites. He gladly invited members of the ANC, including well-known militants, and I invited white leaders, including hard-core right-wingers, who had never met personally the blacks they spoke about accusingly in the House of Assembly. I was nervous to start with. But when these white and black from opposing camps met in a relaxed atmosphere they were surprised to discover intelligent human beings who had many interests and problems in common."

It was an important start in bridge-building which he has continued. A year later Professor Reader was invited by Reverend Kanodereka to speak in his church in Harare. Reader expressed publicly his sense of responsibility for the failure, by both British pioneers and Rhodesian settlers, to build a just social order. He asked forgiveness of the blacks present and their help in building a new society. There was an unexpected response. A young black Rhodesian rose from the body of the congregation and proposed that the church be opened the following Friday, the day proclaimed by the President, Mr John Wrathall, as a National Day of Prayer and Repentance. In spite of the fact that most blacks regarded the President's move as something for whites only, this was unanimously supported. Next Friday, black and white together packed the church for a service of prayer for the country and repentance.

The Professor is now greatly concerned with the rehabilitation work needed to rebuild the country when the fighting stops. In association with his Department and the University, the school of social work in Salisbury, under its Catholic Principle, Father

Rodgers, is tackling this task. They have already started programmes to help ex-detainees and refugees from the disbanded Protected Villages. Resettlement and community workers are being trained. The theme of this work is that all can have a part to play in building the new Zimbabwe.

## **7. Former Minister of Finance**

A guerrilla leader writes to Sir Cyril Hatty

Sir Cyril Hatty was Minister of Finance in two successive governments of Southern Rhodesia, under Garfield Todd and Sir Edgar Whitehead, in the days when Sir Roy Welensky was Prime Minister of the Federation. He came from a humble family in Britain, settled in Rhodesia over thirty years ago, and as a trained accountant worked his way up to the top. He lost his seat in the General Election of 1962 because, he says, "I told the people from public platforms of our plans to dismantle the Land Appointment Act. We spoke out. That is what lost us the election." He has been out of politics since, but he knows most of the political leaders well. He and his son have a beautiful farm twenty miles out of Salisbury; he is a director of various industries and deeply concerned about the future. The question for him has been: with the war mounting and bitterness rising, how to affect the way the nation is going, with no political power?

He met with a group of black and white over a weekend in 1974. Several South Africans were there, including leaders from the homelands. They faced the future together and sought the guidance of God. Hatty found himself, quite unexpectedly,

thinking about Herbert Chitepo.

Chitepo had been the first Rhodesian African to qualify as an advocate and to set up practice in Salisbury. But in spite of official recognition, there was an unwillingness on the part of many to accept him as an equal. He felt this deeply, and left the country, going into voluntary exile in Zambia. There he became external head of ZANU. It was Chitepo who organised the first guerrilla raids into Rhodesia; and by 1974 he had become a dedicated military leader.

Though he had never personally clashed with Chitepo, Hatty realised that as a member of the cabinet of Southern Rhodesia he must share responsibility for the attitude at the time, when Chitepo felt there was no place for him in the scheme of things. So he wrote him a letter expressing this, asking his forgiveness.

Chitepo, a revolutionary committed to violence, wrote Hatty a warm and generous reply. It ended, "The best apology, if there was need for any, is the realisation of these goals — the creation of a new society". Hatty replied at once: "Your letter gives me great hope, for it shows you and I share the same objective — the creation of a new society here, in which all are free". He had hoped to meet Chitepo, but shortly afterwards Chitepo was assassinated.

The following year Hatty took responsibility for the conference in the university described earlier, chairing a public meeting in the largest hall in Salisbury. Because of the situation in the country people said that attendance would be scanty. But it was packed out with a thousand people — black and white freely mixing, the Rhodesia Front officially represented, four of the white cabinet present, and many of the ANC Executive in the hall, with one of them speaking from the platform.

Hatty began to work with these men — Arthur Kanodereka, Desmond Reader, Alec Smith and others. When he and Lady Hatty invited Kanodereka and his wife to dinner to meet some of the leading white farmers in his district, there was astonishment. It was well expressed later by a white cabinet minister, who said,

after meeting Kanodereka, "I blame myself that after all these years I have never taken the trouble to get to know Africans of this calibre. Left to me I would be willing to entrust the future of my children to men like him."

At first Hatty felt that his correspondence with Chitepo should be kept confidential, but as he planned with the others the counter-strokes needed to answer the mounting bitterness he felt that a further move was needed. Last year, risking publicity and attacks from white colleagues, he accepted Reverend Kanodereka's invitation to his church on the National Day of Prayer and Repentance, and told the packed audience the whole story. *The Rhodesia Herald* featured the news of his apology to Chitepo. Reading the news, one militant black leader in the Salisbury township commented, "This will do much to cure our bitterness".

With the same courage he has challenged some of the top men of the country. Because he is not out for power for himself, he is heeded.

## **8. Shooting back**

Eneas Mandinyenya's riposte to neighbouring white farmers

Reverend Eneas Mandinyenya is the minister for a large parish in the Wedza District, east of Salisbury, where guerrilla warfare has heightened tension between the races.

One day he was driving home to his mission and was stopped at a road-block. One of the whites on police reserve duty mistook him for the President of the United African National Council,

and called out to the others on the road-block, "Here is Bishop Muzorewa". "Shoot him", one of them shouted, and they came towards him with their guns.

Eneas showed them his identity card, and they waved him on. But he burned inside at the thought of this cruel joke.

These soldiers, he knew, were local farmers, doing their regular stint of military service. And he knew the very man who had called out, "Shoot him". It was a man who farms near the mission. He began to hate that farmer and every other white. "I began to dislike the very sight of a white skin," he says. But he had a nagging sense that this was a wrong attitude.

Then another minister, an African nationalist leader, told him of a discovery he had made — that God could speak in his heart and show him what to do. When Eneas listened for God's direction, one thought sprang to his mind: "I must go to that farmer".

He went to the farm-house and knocked on the door. The farmer received him coldly. "Do you remember me?" said Eneas. "I am the man you threatened to shoot. I was bitter about that. But bitterness is not the way, and I am sorry for it."

The farmer's manner changed instantly. "Please come in", he said. "I will see if my wife can get us a cup of tea." They sat and talked. The farmer became interested in the work Eneas was doing at the school, and through the mission. Many of his pre-conceptions, he realised, were false. He came to a service at Eneas' church — then to a meal in his home. Eneas and his wife returned the visit. The farmer began to interest his farming friends in Eneas' work.

Encouraged by this, Eneas decided to meet other farmers. It was not easy. Sometimes he met hostility. One told him how much he distrusted Africans, and recounted incidents to back up his allegations. "I will tell you a story," replied Eneas, and recounted how he had been treated at the road-block. "But you always get some difficult whites," said the farmer. "It is the same with us," replied Eneas, laughing. "Don't put us all in the same camp!"

At one time Eneas heard that a white farmer and his wife were quarrelling. By this time he had come to look on whites as people with the same needs and troubles as his own people. He asked God to show him how to help this couple. One day his wife said, "Let us take them a gift of eggs". The farmer was just going to the fields as they arrived. Eneas went with him. They talked together, as did the two wives back at the house. When the men returned, they all prayed together. That afternoon healed that quarrel, and when, two weeks later, Eneas and his wife returned to visit the couple, they were received with open arms.

Now two of the local white farmers have joined the school council, and four contribute money to the school. The wife of one farmer teaches free of charge at the school. Trust has been built between two communities where distrust reigned before.

## **9. From cashier to playwright**

Steven Sibare starts something in a white suburb

Steven Sibare was a cashier in a supermarket in one of the white suburbs of Salisbury. In the black township he shared a room in a hostel with five others and shared bathrooms and toilet with a hundred. He counted himself lucky to have his job, but was bitter at the memory of how he was sacked from his previous work after a false accusation of stealing. He particularly blamed one white woman in that department. She had at first been good to him, but after the accusation, Steven was convinced she must have told stories about him. So he spread lies about her.

Then Steven heard Reverend Kanodereka talk about how a

man could be effective in finding the power to change first himself and then others. He decided to experiment. His first thought was to ask forgiveness from the white woman for the lies he had told and to thank her for her care in the past. Something happened through this action which lifted the blinkers of bitterness from him. He began to look at people with new eyes and with a new authority.

Formerly, when white customers referred to Africans as "boys", he used to seethe. Smiling, but firmly, he began to insist on their being called "men" instead. The others on the staff followed his example. He laughs when he recalls how cheerfully it caught on. But he felt that more was needed to create a new spirit among the staff. He wrote a letter to each of them, black or white, telling them his convictions, a difficult thing for a junior employee to do. He said that they were all confronted with grave issues — bitterness, fear, injustice, arrogance — inside their shop, in their homes, in their country and even in themselves. He told them that he had decided to change and that it was open for anyone to try. He recommended them to read a book which had helped him make up his mind.

This aroused considerable controversy. Thirteen of his colleagues bought the book. One white despatch clerk asked indignantly why he had been sent the letter, saying that it was the terrorists who needed to change. Steven answered, "If you cannot change, the terrorists won't. But if you do, the terrorists can change."

There were many developments. At one point Head Office discovered that things were going wrong in the supermarkets. The head of the firm's security branch was called in. All the black staff were interrogated in groups and he gave them an ultimatum about stealing, with a threat of searching at any time. There was much fear and suspicion. In front of all his group Sibare got up and told the head of security that he was shocked at the company's losses, but that stealing must be dealt with not as a colour problem but as a heart problem. He wanted to work

that employees really cared for the firm and that the firm should care for the employees as people.

The efforts of the security branch proved fruitless. As things did not improve, Steven wrote the head of security describing his own change and suggesting that a change in motives and in men's relationships was more important than new security rules and would make a contribution to the whole country. He had no reply, but later he went to the Head Office and saw this man again. The security chief immediately said how much he had appreciated his letter and had read it several times. "Do you still see the security men in your shop?" he asked. It turned out that it was the one shop from which they had been withdrawn.

Steven raised the issue of the poor quality of the food in the canteen, which was arousing much ill-feeling. The Head Office boss called his right-hand man, introducing Steven as "fighting for justice". They talked it over and an investigation was promised. Steven returned to the shop, went straight to his manager and told him what he had done. Soon the quality of the food improved dramatically.

Steven has since been to many of the leaders of his country. He has had interviews with white cabinet ministers in Salisbury, on whom his freedom from bitterness made a deep impression. It is not only between black and white. As a young Shona he has recently chosen to spend much of his time in Bulawayo, the city where Matabele predominate. He says, "Unless we can heal the divisions between Shona and Matabele, the majority rule that we all long for will bring not a settlement but bloodshed. I want to answer that."

He has unexpected gifts which have been released by his new freedom. He has written a play called *Turning Enemies into Friends*. In it he tells the story of Eneas Mandinyenya. In a simple but effective drama, it depicts the war situation as seen by a young black Rhodesian. It surprises people whenever it is performed.

Earlier this year a white woman who owned a farm in Gwelo,

midway between Salisbury and Bulawayo, gave her farm to be used by Moral Re-Armament as a conference and training centre for black and white. The opening ceremony was attended by the white Mayor of Gwelo and leaders of all the communities. To convey the aims and purposes of the Centre, a play was presented. It was Steven Sibare's *Turning Enemies into Friends*.

## **10. "A privilege to be in Rhodesia"**

New uses for Don and Penny Barnett's home

Don and Penny Barnett are in many ways a typical white Rhodesian couple. He is twenty-nine, a chartered accountant with good prospects in industry. They have a lovely home in the white suburbs of Salisbury and two irresistible small boys.

Until recently Don's aim was simply to get to the top in his job, to make an even more comfortable home for his family and to have a good life, with the best possible prospects for his sons. He was an intelligent agnostic. Penny wished he could find a faith, but her efforts in this direction were counter-productive.

Returning from a family holiday in Natal in 1976, instead of feeling refreshed, he was depressed. He says, "I had been on security force duty in the operational area and seen the growing rift between the races. Those we are fighting often wear no uniform. Others assist them, some voluntarily, some under threat of death. In these circumstances we whites become suspicious of every black man. The blacks of course sense this and react." He said to his wife, "Look, I just don't see an end to this. If these talks fail (the Smith/Nkomo talks) I think we should consider

moving down to Natal." Penny felt much the same. Then the talks did fail.

"My sons are third generation Rhodesians," Don says. "I always hated to think I might ditch my country which I love very much. Yet we had got to this point."

Soon after this, some friends invited Don and Penny to dinner. Among the guests were a young black couple. It was the first time Don had ever sat down to a meal with a black person. Another of the guests had served for years in the British Colonial Service in Nigeria and then lived in other parts of independent Africa. The conversation went on till midnight. In the course of it the British guest asked Don a question: "Isn't it just possible that Rhodesia could work out something new, something better, which you could show to the rest of Africa and the world?" Don realised that his aims had been too small, and that what the needs of the hour demanded was that he should make his priority the building of a new relationship between black and white.

This African couple, who were doing responsible jobs, became their friends. They had them in their home. Don and Penny started to learn to speak Shona from them. The Barnetts began to ask some of their white friends to meet them and other African couples. "One white friend, whose life is a round of wining and dining, said as he left one party, 'The most interesting evening for years!'"

The change in Don affected his home, his children, his work. He says, "Things began to shift in me. I am a long way from sainthood, but my motives are a long way from what they were three years ago. I began a scientific adventure of experiment and proof."

It involved applying a new, absolute honesty over taxes. For Penny it involved applying new methods in the school where she worked. They met opposition in some quarters. "It is not all plain sailing," Don says. "The temptation 'not to become involved' is always there. But we have made our decision — whereas last year we were ready to leave, now we are staying."

Fear is a growing issue for whites in Rhodesia. Penny says, "Many are leaving this country, sometimes as many as a thousand a month. My husband and I both formed a deep conviction that God wanted us to stay in Rhodesia to try and build a constructive answer there. But even if you know you are where you are meant to be, that does not remove fear. I had three kinds of fears: fear for my family, fear for my home, fear for my life.

"Our boys are five and six. The first fear was about their education. That is the reason a lot of people leave our country. When our schools go multi-racial, will our children be held back? Then I realised that God has a perfect plan for our children, and even if they got held back at some stage, what matters is that they fulfil His plan for them, rather than us pushing our plan on to them.

"Then my husband. All white people have to belong to the security forces. Luckily he is not out fighting much, but sometimes he has to go into the troubled areas. What if he and the children should die? I found that as soon as I gave him and the children, God's gifts to me, back to Him, that fear went.

"The biggest fear was for my life. This came up specially at the time when the missionaries were murdered. I am not afraid of dying, but what I fear is how I die. But you can say, 'If God will achieve some purpose by it, I will be prepared for the worst'. Fear comes when you demand something from God. When you give your life to Him completely, the fear goes.

"Although Rhodesia seems to be such a mess, it is a privilege to be here. I would not be anywhere else in the world."

This year Don had an unusual experience with an African friend of his. "I happen to be his boss. I heard that there were troubles in his marriage and I began to talk to him. After we had discussed many things I said, 'Even if you reject everything I say, please just try listening to "the inner voice" and see what happens.' He is a proud young man — as I am — but he did do that. One of the first thoughts he had was to see his father, whom he had refused to see for some three years. The most

amazing reconciliation took place and his attitude in his work and in his home changed noticeably.

"About two months ago he was beaten up by six young whites and his car badly damaged. Next morning I went to see him in his home. I told him how sorry I was for what my people had done to him and to our country. He said, 'I have been a fool. I told my friends that white people could change and I have sold them down the river. There is only one answer. I am going to kill. If I kill five-year-old whites or ninety-five-year-olds, I don't care.' I said, 'You have begun to listen to God. Do you think that is what He wants?'. He said, 'God is dead.'

"I did not know what to say, but I asked if we could pray together. I asked God's forgiveness and that He might show us how we could work together to fight injustice and build an answer for our nation. I told him that officially we would do all that was necessary to prosecute these men.

"A week later, after we had instituted legal proceedings, he came to see me. He said, 'I am dropping the charges.' I said, 'I won't argue with you, but I can't feel that is right. These men have done wrong and they must face the consequences.' He said, 'These men are not just thugs. They have probably lost friends and relations in the war.' There are very few people in our country who have not been affected by the fighting. But then he touched a nerve of the ideological battle being fought in our country. He said, 'I have already been approached by some men who said, "We can use this — we must press charges and we can use this to start a riot in the city."

"My friend said, 'I would hate my name to be linked with the horrors that would result. I am sorry for what I said to you when you came to my home. I would have killed you if I had had a gun. But I see now that we will never find the answer to the hatred and division in Rhodesia on that basis. I feel I am meant to forgive."

The Barnetts, because of the way they now live, have the confidence of many of the top nationalist leaders. One of them

told some visitors, "You don't need to tell me of the change in Don Barnett; I knew it as soon as I saw him." The wife of another leader, who calls herself "the most bitter woman in Zimbabwe", often comes to their home. Africa is always unexpected, but one of the surprises is the love she has for the Barnetts and their two small boys.

## **11. No second-class citizen**

Champion Chigwida's open letter to Britain

Champion Chigwida is a senior foreman in a factory. He lives in the African township of Mabvuku, on the outskirts of Salisbury. One of his brothers is a college lecturer. Champion too has an able mind, but was not able to go to university as his brother did, because there was not enough money to send both. One night he had a dream. He found himself surrounded by a wall; and in the dream God said to him, "You built that wall yourself. Break it down and step out". He knew that the wall was his own imprisoning feeling that he was a second-class citizen in his own country.

He broke the wall down. There are whites who would say that because of what he has done since, they have come to realise that they have had a part in making Africans feel boxed in by that wall. But Champion had the conviction that it was his wall and he had to step out.

He described his experience: "Life didn't mean anything to me. I am a shift supervisor in a factory, but I had nothing to live for, nothing to care for. I did not qualify for the vote, so I couldn't

express my feelings. I longed for freedom and the more I thought about it the more bitter, frustrated and angry I became. Every time I heard someone speak about democracy — a dirty word in my ears — my blood pressure went high. In the name of 'democracy' I lost my freedom to enter any hotel, and some jobs were exclusively for the white man. The few who ruled enacted the laws that opposed the ordinary man. I bought things on the black market because I wanted to evade tax. I hated the white man.

"But God can change a man, I know, because I gave Him the chance to speak to me. He said I was not a second-class citizen, as I had often thought of myself. The black man, like the white man, was made in the image of God.

"From that moment I became — and even felt my mind and soul — free."

Champion saved money and was eventually able to travel to Caux in Switzerland to join the international conference for Moral Re-Armament there. He said of his time there, "I shared a room with a white man who owned nothing and spared nothing for himself. He shared his thoughts with me and, eventually, I did the same. I felt the need to treat my wife in a much better way than before."

On getting to Britain he met many British and talked about his situation at home. Before he left, he wrote an open letter which was widely circulated:

Dear British friends,

As an ordinary man I want to tell you what the ordinary man in Rhodesia wants to say to you. As an assistant commandant in the Rhodesian Red Cross Society in Salisbury, and also a church councillor in Mabvuku African township, I know what ordinary people feel. My parents live in the Tribal Trust Lands.

The fighting that is going on at the moment will live in people's minds for generations. We feel very discouraged

when we read of some people outside Rhodesia encouraging the war. I know it has managed to bring Ian Smith to the conference table, but the damage it has caused is terrible.

It is the children of the ordinary man who are fighting and being killed every day. Wives have lost their husbands and some people have been crippled to such an extent that they will never be able to work for themselves. Some families are without food because of the whites leaving Rhodesia. For every white man that leaves Rhodesia, two men are without work; and for an average family of six that means that twelve are without an income, but they still have to pay rent and find money for food. . . .

You in Britain seem to show that you hate Ian Smith and the Rhodesian whites, your brothers, but that does not help us. . . .

Democracy has been a traditional British way of living. You have shown the world how to implement its ideas and I wonder if you cannot now risk trying it on Rhodesia. We are still looking to Britain for that type of democracy, of an individual's right to say what he feels and to exercise his vote. We know that your Foreign Secretary, Dr Owen, is working hard to bring a settlement in our country and we wish his efforts every success. But we often wonder why you have to listen so much to those outside Rhodesia. We very much resent the interference of other outside influences in our affairs. We say to you: please listen to the ordinary man inside Rhodesia.

I remain a faithful subject of Her Majesty,

Yours sincerely,

CHAMPION CHIGWIDA

On getting home, Champion has taken action. In the past two years he has got a youth movement going in his township to take the youth off the thuggery and rioting that goes on. In his factory he has given leadership. Taking note of the discrimination,

the poor quality of the food, the lack of communication, the foul language and the many things wrong between white and black in the works, he wrote a full letter describing it to the Managing Director. He said, "I knew I risked my job." Two days later, the Managing Director sent for him and he found himself in front of all the Board. The Managing Director said, "Champion, you sent me a letter. Will you please repeat what you said." Champion did so. Then the Managing Director added: "I want every one of these points put right." This is being done.

Champion is beginning to think for the country. He often works on the night shift. While others are sleeping, he seeks God's guidance on what to do. Often he rings up his friends in the night and says, "I have had a thought!" From these thoughts stem important initiatives. As a result, he has been to see three of the cabinet, a member of the Executive Council and other national leaders. Champion musters others to go with him on these interviews. He goes in, no second-class citizen, with clear thoughts of what to put to these men. Speaking as an ordinary man, he challenges the leaders, white and black, to give the moral leadership the country urgently needs.

## **12. Who will give a lead?**

Eddie Cross speaks out on segregation in schools

Mount Pleasant, in Salisbury, is a suburb that lives up to its name. When cynics joke about the Rhodesian whites being ready to defend their country "to the last swimming pool", they are thinking of places like this, with its spacious homes and gardens,

bougainvilleas and jacaranda trees.

The recent legislative changes have enabled a few black families to move into these homes. More will follow; and their children will be entitled to attend the Mount Pleasant schools on the same basis as the whites.

It is this prospect which has made some white parents decide to leave the country. They fear a lowering of standards. Others fear what may happen if white and black school boys and girls are encouraged to mix too freely.

Last month a meeting was called for parents of the Mount Pleasant High School. They met to consider a motion to separate the boys and girls, and that one of the Mount Pleasant schools should be for Boys only, the other for Girls.

The hall was packed. The chairman, fearing that emotions might get out of hand, made an opening statement warning people that each speaker might only speak once; no long speeches and no arguments would be allowed. The chairman himself was obviously nervous; and the parents grew tense as they listened to him.

Among them sat a young couple, Eddie and Jeanette Cross, whose thirteen-year-old boy attends the school, and whose nine-year-old girl will go there soon. Eddie is a dynamic and respected economist, who has the courage of his convictions. For many years, he and his wife have opened their home to train black and white teenagers, both boys and girls, in Christian values and standards. As he sat and listened to the chairman, Eddie had the strongest conviction to be the first on his feet and give a sane lead, with faith in the future.

As soon as the chairman sat down, he rose. Speaking from his own experience, he assured the gathering of parents that white and black children can work and play together in the most normal, healthy way; that he and his wife were glad that their own children would have the opportunity to know black children at the school; that the proposed segregation would only cause bitterness; that black parents have exactly the same hopes and

fears for their children as white parents have. The school's doors should open without fear to welcome black children, and show the way to the country.

What followed astonished Eddie and Janette themselves. Not one voice was raised in favour of the proposed "sex segregation". Instead, one after another speakers got up to support what Eddie had said. The applause grew with each speech. At the end, when the vote was taken, only twenty-one out of the hundreds present voted for segregation.

### **13. "I had to apologise for my hate"**

An African farmer speaks on life in the rural areas

The following statement from an African who must remain anonymous tells its own story:

"I come from the northern part of Rhodesia where the war started. I have been farming all my life. We Africans have been fourth-class citizens in the country. There are whites, Indians, coloured and lastly Africans. This led to armed struggle. I supported this armed struggle to the hilt. My aim was to eliminate all whites out of Rhodesia. I supported the guerrillas with food, even with directions to show them where the white men were.

"I was arrested four times. The security forces came to my house in the middle of the night, blindfolded me and shoved me into a truck and took me to some place, I didn't know where. I was tortured several times. When I went in I weighed 200 pounds. When I came out I was less than 115.

“While I was in prison all our families were moved into a protected village. We were not warned. A truck would come to the homestead of a farmer with some soldiers. They loaded everything in and took everyone to the protected village. You were just shown a peg with your name and all your stuff. You were dumped there. You were left to build your own huts and granaries. I was in prison myself and all this was done by my wife. You can imagine how bitter I was.

“My hate grew more and more. I lost nearly all my property. My cattle were killed by the security forces. My brother was killed through the war. Then my sister’s husband also. My wife had to look after all their children, as well as ours, twenty-one in all, in the protected village.

“After some time I was released. I decided to go to visit my friend Arthur Kanodereka in Salisbury. I wanted to go and share my difficulties with him and ask where I should start again. When I entered his office, to my surprise I found Alec Smith in that office. I could not understand it, and was furious. I took my friend to be a traitor. How could he come to make friends with a white man and, on top of that, the son of the Prime Minister, the man I hated most of all? Alec was introduced to me and stood up to shake my hand. I was reluctant — I did not want to, but anyway we shook hands.

“I had to put up for the night at that house. My friend began explaining to me that Alec was a changed man and that I should leave the past behind. He told me about absolute honesty, absolute purity, absolute unselfishness and absolute love. But all that went through one ear and out of the other.

“Next day, on Arthur’s advice I went to meet some friends of his who lived in a Salisbury suburb. That was my first day to enter a white man’s house and sit next to him. I have never done it in my life. They told me about Moral Re-Armament.

“Well, this troubled me a lot. It couldn’t go out of my heart. I left the place but it kept on. I tried to shove the idea away from me, but I couldn’t. So one day I decided I would try this

listening to God and try and abide within those four absolutes. So many things happened. I won't go into details of the apologies I had to make to many people — and so on. But I will give one instance.

“When I listened my conscience told me to apologise to the highest man in the district, the man in control of the soldiers, the police and every civilian in the area. It was hard, but the inner voice told me to apologise for the hate that I held against this white man. It took me some time, but at last I decided to do it.

“To get into this man's office was very, very difficult. Anyhow, I tried my best. It took me three days. Daily I stood by the door guarded by soldiers and his messengers, but they would not let me go in. On the third day I decided I was going to force my way in. I stood next to the door, and as soon as he passed through his men who were standing up and saluting him, I just managed to shove my way through and follow him. Well, the door shut behind me and of course these men did not have the chance of pulling me back.

“I struggled with my brain when I was following this man, not knowing what I was going to say to him to start the conversation. He was a very, very hard man. He went into his office, me following, and round his desk. Then he saw me. He said, ‘Who are you?’ I explained who I was. He quickly recognised me. He said, ‘Oh yes, I know you. Now I believe today you have come to tell me the truth and are going to tell me exactly how these guerrillas operate.’ You can imagine, my heart was beating. But, through God, I said to him, ‘I have come to apologise for the bitterness I had against you, and not you alone but all the white men. I hated you and each time I thought of you, if I had a gun I would have shot you. Now I have come to apologise.’

“He looked at me for some time and at last he said, ‘But I feel I should have been the one to apologise to you.’ We looked at each other for some time, no one talking. My thoughts went round and round. I thought I was going to get myself into gaol, but I told him nothing more. I decided to move away from his

office and said goodbye and went off.

“This is one of the things that I thank God to have been led into. I have no bitterness now. I still support this struggle, but I support it in a different way. People are dying in Rhodesia daily. I have seen people dying. We can’t carry on like this. Who is going to rule this country if everyone is killed?”

There have been many developments since this African farmer took this step. One of them has been that a young black administrative officer, who worked in the same office and heard this story, was so interested that he called at the MRA home in Salisbury to make more enquiries. What was most on his mind was how to tackle the bitterness between blacks and whites in the district. He had a long talk. Since getting back to his district he has written:

“I strongly believe now that it is not the other tribe or the other race which is one’s enemy. It is the selfishness, pride, fear, dishonesty, lies, suspicions, hatred and lust for power which all combine to make one’s enemy. Right or wrong, I view this universe as a ruined village, and that each villager has a duty to do, a duty to help in the reconstruction of the ruined village. I see that people have lost faith in one another and many have lost control of their temper and their tongues. Spilling blood has become the order of the day. It is not only the universe which is in ruins, but I personally think I was in ruins and that I have to reconstruct myself first before I start reconstructing the world.”

## 14. "The cabinet of conscience"

A group that is bringing new thinking

The big question is whether these individual initiatives, splendid as they may be, are more than minor sparks of hope which quickly die in the cold night air. "Politics is about power," say the realists. "And realism requires us to count the number of guns on each side. We are dealing with shrewd politicians in Ian Smith, Joshua Nkomo, Robert Mugabe and the others → who are furthermore armed men engaged in a desperate war struggle, in which no side has yet been defeated. Each is bidding for power and, human nature being what it is, each is much more likely to pursue his present course than to change it for humanitarian reasons."

There is truth in this. But it is unrealistic not to take into account also the ideas that govern men's minds. And all history shows that a handful of men, a creative minority, has often been the instruments of vast changes in society.

This is also true of the men with ideas based on the ideology of class war, now interpreted as race war, in which hate is a legitimate weapon and violence is a necessary precondition of victory. It is no accident that certain guerrilla groups are at the present time conducting a propaganda campaign in the villages where they are able to hold meetings (sometimes lasting all night) which are specifically anti-Christian. Large numbers of men and women who would normally pack their churches on Sundays are obliged to listen to young men who tell them that Christ was the son of a prostitute, that Christianity is a form of white men's imperialism and compel them to burn their Bibles. What is astonishing is how strong is the hold of their faith on the great majority of Rhodesian Africans. Chiefly at stake is the thinking of the younger generation. In this intelligent strategy of disruption, chief targets have been the schools (over a thousand have been forced to close as a result of guerrilla action), the churches, missions and hospitals.

There is a war of ideas going on. Realism requires that the

state of this war be taken into account as much as an assessment of the power struggle in terms of guns and political support inside and outside Rhodesia.

Men whose human nature has been changed and who are prepared to demonstrate it in practice boldly, undeterred by opposition, bring a new element into the situation. Such men include a significant number of whites who have had the courage to face the fact that if their faith is a form, not a force to be applied to changing the structure of their society, their life-style actually makes propaganda for the Marxists.

The men described in this book are nearly all in touch with each other and, insofar as they work together, they are becoming a force. A group of them, black and white, who have access to the leaders on all sides, meet together regularly. They are nicknamed "the cabinet of conscience". They are not saints and they would be the first to admit that they have a long way to go. They meet with no fixed agenda. They talk as friends with honesty about their mistakes or their current difficulties. They would probably differ on what is the best political solution to the problem of a settlement in Rhodesia. But they are united by a conviction that the only hope is that the political leaders should be guided by what is right for the whole country rather than by party or group self-interest. They think for these men and explore together the way forward. In a time of quiet they seek the wisdom of the Almighty to know what to do next.

They have discovered, as a matter of experience (not as a doctrine or theory), two interesting results. First, that some illumination comes to them as a group which they would have missed had each been pursuing his own individual path, no matter how noble. It may be some fresh insight, or it may be some common plan of action, but it seems there is collective wisdom to be found in a team who, even in the most tricky situations, seek the mind of a superior wisdom together.

Secondly, some thought almost always comes to some of them on a next step to be taken. Very often it concerns something

which it would be helpful to put to one of the leaders. It is obviously not possible to publish here the important confidential conversations that have resulted. But two examples can be given. It was in the course of a quiet weekend at a hotel with twelve black and white friends that Sir Cyril Hatty had the disturbing thought that he owed Herbert Chitepo an apology and should write to him in Lusaka. He obeyed the thought and, as it turned out, his letter and the remarkable reply took place just before Chitepo was tragically assassinated with a bomb in his car.

Another concerns a senior white Rhodesian civil servant. Stan O'Donnell was Secretary for Foreign Affairs for nine years, until he retired last year. Rhodesia's Chief Scout, and District Governor of Rotary, he is well-known to all the political leadership. Australian-born, he has a tough bluntness which is not common in the Whitehall type of diplomat.

Last year, his much-loved eldest son, who had played for Rhodesia at rugby, was flown back from the front with a piece of shrapnel in his brain. He lay in the intensive care unit for two weeks. His mother and father turned to God, in a way — as Stan puts it — that they had never turned before. Their prayers were answered in two ways. The doctors had said that the boy would become a vegetable, but by a miracle he recovered. Today he is holding down a job and drives himself round Salisbury. The second miracle took place in Stan himself. He tells people, including militant blacks and white ministers, 'I have learned the difference between asking God to rubber-stamp my plans and asking God to make me fit to play a part in His plan.'

Now he meets and works with "the cabinet of conscience". When the critical point came up of the "blocking mechanism" of the number of white seats in the future House of Assembly in the negotiations before the March 3 agreement, there was strong feeling amongst Rhodesia Front whites that legislative safeguards were essential. Stan's thought was, "The whole subject ought to be dropped. There are no such safeguards. Any government could sweep them aside. The only safeguard is trust."

He said so bluntly, in all the circles in which he moves.

On another occasion, when there was great division threatening, one of the "cabinet of conscience" expressed his concern about what a certain political writer might do: "He often makes things worse". After a time of quiet, Stan went to the phone and rang up the man. "Hello, Bill," he said, "I suppose you're writing about all this?" "Just working on it now," said the other man. "Well, God has given me some thoughts to put into your mind," said Stan and he read them out. The other responded. "I'll ring you back this afternoon and go over what I've written." Next day the paper carried an article with the note which Stan had struck, stressing the need to restrain passions and keep the country united.

## **15. What more can Britain do?**

A new dimension to our diplomacy — the X factor

The brutal question remains: What now? Is there more that Britain can do besides continuing all possible pressure on every side to hold all-party talks?

Many in this country have been deeply stirred by the latest atrocities and by the brutal counter-killings. But we tend to fall into two groups — those who blame Ian Smith and those who blame David Owen. Blame will not help. Attitudes in Britain may have to change as much as those in Rhodesia. The blamers on all sides have much in common: they are cynical, they are self-righteous and they are despairing. What is needed now is hope and a stirring of wills to action.

These stories show that there is a core of black and white in Rhodesia dedicated to making a settlement work. Our policy should take this into account and, besides continuing all efforts to get the conflicting leaders round a table, should be designed to assist such men so that they can affect their leaders.

But how much do we in Britain care? Rhodesia is in many ways a test of what Britain stands for in the world, of what we conceive our role to be. It is not so much a question of finding a suitable political formula as demonstrating an attitude of mind. The choice is between the minimal-involvement-overseas approach, while we concentrate on our economic problems and our standard of living at home, and that of a determination that millions of Rhodesians, for whose future we are responsible, do not go down in chaos.

Without an agreement which Nkomo, Mugabe, Muzorewa, Sithole, Chirau and Smith can be brought to accept, the prospects of intensifying war are indeed terrible. But these leaders and other outside powers will quickly sense our fundamental attitude. It is one thing to continue the long-standing British and American efforts to get a negotiated settlement, but with the proviso that unless all parties agree there is nothing we can do; it is quite another to take the approach which says: "We cannot allow a blood-bath to happen!"

There are ideological forces at work. The war will be won in the end by the ideas which capture the hearts and minds of the guerrillas and the ordinary people in the villages and townships. As the efforts of Tim Peech and the others show, guerrillas can be won to a different way. So can hard-core whites. Rhodesia is still a country with deep Christian roots. The main actors in the drama all claim to be Christians. The overwhelming majority of the people want peace and a settlement based on reconciliation and a new Zimbabwe ruled by a democratically elected government, in freedom. In all the changes of war and the hazards of diplomacy, the force of a persistent stand by Britain and America on the fundamental issues of principle cannot be over-estimated:

- \* We stand for a full transfer of power to majority rule, based on free and fair elections, and are resolved to make that possible;
- \* We take no sides in the dispute for leadership. We are not for, or against, Nkomo, or Muzorewa, or Mugabe, or Sithole, or Chirau. Only the people of Rhodesia should decide who should lead them. We will not be arrogant enough to presume to judge one man to be more suitable than another to lead Zimbabwe;
- \* Our deep concern is to see the war and suffering ended and the new Zimbabwe launched in a way that will benefit all Africa, with all the development aid we can muster. Though we have many international interests to consider in relation to Rhodesia, all these are secondary to the main focus: what is best for six-and-a-half million people of Zimbabwe, for whose future we are constitutionally responsible.

The stronger and clearer our stand on these issues of principle and our refusal to get side-tracked in the complexities of diplomatic bargaining, the better the chances of other African states — notably Nigeria which has a key part to play — taking the same stand. None of the Front-Line Presidents want a Zimbabwe in chaos.

The genius of Africa is the unexpected, the capacity to change. Certainly no settlement will be possible, or end the war, unless fixed positions and frozen attitudes change drastically. Fortunately Africans (including Ian Smith) do not set as much store by "consistency" as Western intellectuals. The transformation of Kenyatta from a leader of Mau Mau to a statesman whose generous attitude induced many whites to stay; the reconciliation with the Ibos after the civil war in Nigeria; the hope provided by the ending of seventeen years of civil war in the Sudan, and the recent astonishing reconciliation between General Nimeiry and Sadiq el Mahdi, who had led a coup against him — these are African precedents for something quite unexpected which could

happen in Rhodesia.

To get a settlement it may be necessary for Britain — and America — to venture in fields which lie beyond the normal scope of diplomacy: for example, in the art of personal reconciliation between the leaders — perhaps enlisting the help of Generals Nimeiry and Obasanjo, of the Sudan and Nigeria, in order to do so; in sufficiently winning the trust of Ian Smith to be able to help him to take the most courageous step of his life; in readiness to take risks by a bold intervention of some kind, in order to ensure free and fair elections and to save life.

There is still the making of a miracle inherent in the Rhodesian situation. With this approach, the time may come when, under certain conditions, Ian Smith and the transitional government might invite Britain and America's help in order to conduct internationally acceptable elections. The stumbling-block is Smith's distrust of Britain. Yet if this could be overcome, and this step were taken, an entirely new situation would be created. The key may be for Britain to treat him differently and establish trust, no matter what the past. It is not because his policies have been right, but because the issues are too important to do anything less. Can a British representative give him confidence in our intentions? Mistakes have been made on both sides. If we admitted that for a start, we might strike a surprising response (as Dr Owen did when he first visited Salisbury). Let us be honest enough to face the truth that there has been a personal antipathy and a desire in some quarters to see Smith humiliated. Now, in a situation on the verge of "unstoppable war", a new start is needed.

It would help also if we could see ourselves as others see us. In the perspective of what is happening in the world, our quarrel with our brother whites in Rhodesia — and their bitterness towards us — is a sectional division within a white tribe. Nearer to reality would be to see ourselves as one of the rich nations of the world holding on to selfish advantage and a privileged position *vis-a-vis* the poor nations; and that our situation is not substantially

different from our fellow whites *vis-a-vis* the blacks in Rhodesia. We do not have to abandon our principles, but we do have to abandon our self-righteousness if we want them to change.

"There are mountains of distrust to be overcome," said Mr Ivor Richard, the British chairman of the 1977 Geneva conference on Rhodesia. Since then the mountains have not diminished, but grown: tribal rivalry of black against black; the growth of private armies of different black leaders; least excusable of all, the towering distrust of the British for Smith and of Smith for the British. From this flows a steady stream of suspicion which poisons all attempts at negotiations.

In the experiences recorded in this book, one note recurs: the power of forgiveness to break deadlocks. It is not an easy element to bring into modern diplomacy. But it has been done. It is worth remembering, in the developing ideological "scramble for Africa", a remark made in the 1930s by Michael Borodin, a pioneer of Communism in China: "The Christian doctrine of forgiveness, so little practised yet so often preached, and seemingly so innocuous, is the greatest single enemy to the dissemination of Communism".

By contrast, Kenyatta's words, enlisting the white farmers in his *Harambee* campaign to build a new, united Kenya after the Mau Mau uprising, were: "Where I have wronged you, I ask your forgiveness. Where you have wronged me, I forgive you."

Is it inconceivable that some such word can be spoken between Britain and Rhodesia?

With a new approach and by a miracle of timing, some completely new element may come into the situation and an agreement be reached which the rival African leaders could accept. God knows how precisely it could be done. But there is a solvent at work inside the country. It is a factor which might just tip the scales.

One of the white Rhodesians who works with many of those described in this book is a well-known leader who at first said to them, "I believe in all you are doing, except that I cannot go

along with you in your belief in God; I am an agnostic." One of them replied, "Let's not argue about the existence of God. Let's call it the X factor." After some months this man said, "I have been watching the development of your work, which is certainly more effective than what any of the political parties are doing. The X factor seems to be operating. I accept that it exists — and we must somehow catch it."

Diplomats and statesmen accepting the X factor, and heeding it, can yet find the inspired plan for a settlement in Rhodesia.