

RDM

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LEADER PAGE LETTER

Basis of Unity

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To the Editor, "Rand Daily Mail."

Sir.—For four days over Easter, Johannesburg was host to people of all races from all over Africa who had come to attend the Assembly for Moral Re-Armament. European, African, Indian and Coloured leaders from Kenya, Rhodesia, South-West Africa and the four provinces of South Africa were among the 500 delegates.

The most arresting feature of the Assembly was the part played by students from the Universities of Stellenbosch, Fort Hare, Natal, Pretoria, Witwatersrand and Cape Town. African, Afrikaner, English-speaking and Coloured students spoke from the same platform and for the first time in our experience found reconciliation and unity in the common task to build a new Africa and a new world.

IN AFRIKAANS

A group of students from the University of Stellenbosch declared their intention of taking the play "We Are To-morrow," which they have just translated into Afrikaans, throughout South Africa.

A group of Fort Hare students pledged themselves to pay any price to build unity in South Africa.

We saw a preview of the all-African film "Freedom," the first to be written and acted by Africans from all parts of the continent. Dr. William Nkomo, co-founder and former President of the African National Congress Youth League, who plays a leading role in "Freedom," said: "No matter what power is at the head of this country, if the people of South Africa decide to live the ideology that will make them God-guided, the future is safe."

Among the many African leaders who attended the Conference was Mr. P. Q. Vundla, chairman of the Western Native Township Advisory Board, Johannesburg, who has most consistently fought for the rights of his people. He described how his life had been changed through meeting an official of the Native Affairs Department whose attitude and approach were entirely different from what he had expected.

Mr. George Golding, president of the Coloured People's National Union, introduced four members of his executive who are headmasters of Cape Coloured schools. They told how their mistrust of the white men had been changed into the fight for what is right for all races through the change they had seen in the lives of white people.

ONCE BITTER OPPONENTS

We both have been for years in student affairs and were completely at a loss for a basis of unity and co-operation between students of the different groups in the national sphere and international sphere.

We have seen this week-end that freedom, unity and democracy are empty phrases without the personal responsibility of the individual. We have seen freedom and unity reaching their highest reality when men surrender everything to the will of God and decide to obey Him alone on the basis of absolute moral standards.

We have been leaders of student organisations which have often bitterly opposed one another and whose divisions have contributed largely to the division in our country.

We found reconciliation and unity on this new basis.

We saw among 500 people representing every racial group and every political opinion, that new dimension of unity which most South Africans long for and yet despair of ever achieving. We are convinced that it is the greatest destiny of our age and generation to create a new type of man, and statemanship under the leadership of God. Students can be pioneers in this. We commit ourselves unitedly to fight shoulder to shoulder for this end with students from all races and nations.

TREVOR COOMBE.
JAN LOUBSER.