

# A WEEK OF HISTORY

By The Honourable C. J. Claassen,  
Judge-President of South-West Africa.

I have spent the past week in Umtata, the capital of the Transkei. I am firmly of the opinion that for the future of race relations in South Africa, this is one of the most important areas in the country. The decisions taken here and the lines of conduct decided on may be vital for the future of Southern Africa.

Race and colour conflicts in Africa and other parts of the world, and the clash between East and West, have their roots in the fear, the sense of insecurity and the selfishness of all classes, races and nations.

Is there a force which can turn back this tide of moral defeat and selfishness leading to chaos in the nation?

## AN INSPIRED IDEOLOGY FOR DEMOCRACY

After weighing the evidence pouring in from all parts of the world, I am convinced that the

answer is to be found in the life work of Dr. Frank Buchman and the inspired ideology for democracy — Moral Re-Armament.

### SPECIAL MEETING OF CHIEFS

Last week I had the unique opportunity, together with members of the M.R.A. international team, of attending a meeting at the Great Place at the invitation of the Paramount Chief of the Western Pondo, Victor Poto Ndamase. It was a special meeting of his chiefs, headmen and counsellors. There were about 150 of them. Many had travelled as many as

100 miles in response to the summons of the Paramount Chief. What was it all about? Some time ago the life of the son of the Paramount Chief had been miraculously transformed by meeting Moral Re-Armament and the Paramount Chief wanted the elders of his tribe to hear the message of MRA.

It was a colourful meeting. Many interesting, intelligent and searching questions were asked and satisfactorily answered. Then the visitors were asked to withdraw and the Paramount Chief conferred with the elders of his tribe. Thereafter he triumphantly and with great joy announced that they had unanimously accepted the message of MRA as giving the right lead for the tribe.

The next morning I was very happy to learn personally from Paramount Chief Sabata of the Tembus that MRA had in the past few months produced a remarkable change in his own life. This corresponded to what happened to me some years ago. Moral Re-Armament transformed my life, and I needed it very badly. There were certain items of income I conveniently forgot to mention in my income tax returns, until the challenge of absolute honesty came along. I told the authorities and paid up what was due.

### MRA MEMBERS IN UMTATA

There has been during the past week an international force of Moral Re-Armament in Umtata. Besides men and women from Europe and America, they included lecturers from Stellenbosch, Pretoria and Witwatersrand Universities, farmers from the Karroo and students of all races, including Mr. Jan Loubser, the former President of the Afrikaans Students Bond. Present also were: Mr. Manasseh Moerane, Vice-President of the 16,000-strong Federation of African Teachers; Rev. George Molefe, Principal of the Newell Bantu High School in Port Elizabeth; Dr. William Nkomo from Pretoria and others. There was also a team of Coloured leaders from the Cape led by Mr. P. Sonn, Executive Members of the Coloured People's National Union.

Mr. Moerane, addressing one of the meetings, spoke of his recent trip to the United States and its contribution to the all-African play, "Freedom." Mr. Moerane said, "Many of us with 'Freedom' came from countries that are criticised for their own policies. But when we took it upon ourselves to apologise to the other races you began to feel that there is no problem that cannot be solved by MRA. You began to realise that MRA is not just a personal matter of what happens to me, my wife and my children, but it is a force for remaking the world."

Following Mr. Moerane, Dr. Herman Malan, Senior Lecturer at the University of Stellenbosch, paid tribute to the new type of statesmanship men like Moerane are giving the world. He said, "We Europeans pride ourselves that we have heads and can think. But the Africans have both heads and hearts and the great contribution they will give us in this country is to teach us how to use our hearts."

### POLITICAL ISSUES CAN BE SOLVED

Working with these changed African and Coloured leaders one immediately becomes aware of a senior statesmanship which is an immediate challenge. They speak with the voice of authority that is

acceptable by men of every continent and race. They are indeed ambassadors with a new voice, speaking with unselfish motives and an experience of the Cross which has remade them. They carry a message of a new unity based on absolute standards and the guidance of God. It is far above political issues, and once you enter this realm of change—national and international—there comes the certainty that political issues can be solved.

During the week an MRA ideological play "We Are Tomorrow" was performed twice in the Ju-

bilee Hall which was packed out each night to such an extent that overflow meetings of 200 people had to be held. On Friday night the Mayor, Mr. F. G. Airey, welcomed the MRA force and introduced the play to a packed audience in the Town Hall.

I believe that this has been indeed a week of history in the Transkei; it is seeing the birth of something new in the whole of South Africa and this continent, as we decide to live to make the other man and the other nation great.

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