

**SPECIAL FILM ISSUE
ON
DR WILLIAM NKOMO**

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A MAN FOR ALL PEOPLE



NEW WORLD NEWS

FOR MORAL RE-ARMAMENT



With Kumalau Tawali from Papua New Guinea, Paul Tennessee from Guyana and Francis Matthew from India at the MRA World Assembly, Caux, Switzerland

'It has always been my dream to break the shackles of the oppressors of the world. But we also need to break the chains of hate and pride in ourselves. Then we in Africa will exclude no one and shall move with men from all parts of Africa to make that continent great.'

A YEAR AGO this week a great South African died—Dr William Frederick Nkomo. A film has just been completed about his life—*A Man For All People*.

We are devoting this issue to the man and to the film because we believe that his life and commitment bring a ray of light into a situation where even moderate men have become desperate.

Dr Nkomo discovered that it was a more revolutionary principle to change your opponent than to liquidate him.

When he gave up the idea of bloodshed as the solution for his country's ills some colleagues attacked him. One was Councillor Eginah Mzazi of the Ciskei. She has written to us to say that because of Dr Nkomo's commanding leadership and steadfastness she too is now committed to forwarding his work.

A Coloured leader, Peter Swartz, also observed this transformation. He writes, 'The changes wrought in a radical African nationalist such as Dr William Nkomo created tremendous hope for better racial understanding and tolerance in Southern Africa and even the world.'

Some people seem to believe that by some quirk of destiny the most racially bigotted people of the world have congregated in the southern tip of one continent. Others would have us believe that the chief motive of the people there is the advancement of Christian civilization and that the care they give to the underprivileged is grossly underestimated.

Dr Nkomo believed that all people of all races inside and outside South Africa desperately needed change in their lives. He burned to answer all discrimination. He suffered under it as a young man and until the end of his life. His indictment of injustice was described in *Dimension*, paper of the Methodist Church of South Africa, as 'a hurricane of fire which shocked people into a new search for freedom.'

Dr Nkomo never attacked his country from abroad but always spoke his mind at home. In 1970 he was attending a celebration of Swiss National Day. He was asked to speak. Some expected him to denounce the restriction and segregation of his people.

He stood up, from his wheel chair, and said, 'As a South African today I want to thank the Swiss people for their hospitality to our first President, Paul Kruger, when he was exiled from our country after the Anglo-Boer War.'

Dr Nkomo wrote last year in *South African Dialogue* (McGraw-Hill): 'South Africa could, if only the opportunity were given it, shape a pattern of racial harmony and co-existence. Our faith in the creation of a more just society based on the recognition of individual worth could be restored to us, making it possible for us once more to "go forward in faith"—the call made to the people of South Africa by J H Hofmeyr, many years ago, at a time when it was easier to hope than now.'

THE EDITORS

THE MAKING OF THE FILM



THE FILM, *A Man For All People*, is about a black South African. But the first pictures were shot in Belfast.

There, just nineteen months ago, Dr William Nkomo led a team of twenty—black and white—from his country. The sight of these people working together brought hope to that stricken city. It was there, as Nkomo met the leaders and people on both sides of the barricades, that filming began.

He went back to South Africa. In his home of Atteridgeville, near Pretoria, his people sensed that he had not long to live. They decided to thank him for his life of leadership by holding a day in his honour. They called it 'Nkomo Day'. The whole township turned out with flags and bands. They drove him in triumph through the streets. Neatly dressed children lined the route—the children he had helped to educate, in schools he had founded and as Chairman of the School Board. Pictures of this event are in the film.

A few weeks later, the same crowds mourned his death. Thousands from all over South Africa came to his funeral. The newsreels filmed it, and made their record available.

A film unit from Britain went to South Africa to film the background and complete the story. The Nkomo family welcomed them. So did the 'Nkomo Day' committee. They moved from the brown plains of the North, where William Nkomo was born, to Cape Town in the South. They filmed the crowded cities and wide farm-lands, the glory of mountain and sea that is South Africa.

Chief Gatsha Buthelezi, Chief Executive of the four million Zulu people, invited them to the Shaka Day celebrations; the leaders of the government and opposition parties in the Coloured Peoples Representative Council received them in their Assembly buildings; Indian professional, business and political leaders met them in Natal; editors of the major newspapers, both black and white, conferred with them; South African Government officials co-operated. Comrades of his ANC years told what Nkomo had meant to them. Men of all races said how he had enlisted them in 'a greater revolution' to answer hatred.

Many films have been made recently



Research for the film



On location above Atteridgeville

on South Africa. Some, dealing superficially, only deepen the divisions between man and man, race and race. William Nkomo saw beyond a divided South Africa to a land that could be a pattern for the world. He rose above his own hurts and hates by heeding the voice that speaks in every humble heart, whether its owner be black or white or brown.

The film unit interviewed a spokesman of the 'black consciousness' movement. He knew Nkomo's way of seeking a higher wisdom. 'This film', he said, 'must be God's property and not made to please any company.'

Not to please black or white, Left or Right, but with the straightness of God's truth—that is how William Nkomo spoke. With that voice he will speak to the world in *A Man For All People*.

HEMM



African National Congress days

TEN THOUSAND attended William Nkomo's funeral and *The World* had the banner headline 'Death of Dr Nkomo Stuns South Africa'.

Dr Nkomo was the first African delegate to the Conference of the National Union of South African Students.

He was the first African to be President of the South African Institute of Race Relations.

He was the first African to have a South African school named for him in his lifetime.

He was the first African in the country to form, with his son, Abraham, a father-son medical partnership.

Dr Nkomo's grandfather was born a slave and he himself was born in poverty. He fought his way up but never forgot the poor. In 26 years of medical practice he never rendered a bill; people paid as they could.

In a country where men often fear other men, flatter other men and bully other men, he called no man his master and so he called his soul his own.

He worked in the African National Congress with Chief Albert Luthuli, later a winner of the Nobel Peace Prize. But the leadership was not militant enough for him, so with others he broke away and founded the African National Congress Youth League, dedicated to violence and revolution.

Later he came to question the effectiveness of this approach. When he met students from the University of Pretoria, a bastion of white Afrikanerdom, who gave up their superiority and challenged the selfish philosophy of white South Africa, he took a stand against hatred and violence. At a conference of all races of Southern Africa he said, 'Here I have seen white men change, I have seen black men change and I have decided to change.' Later he declared, 'Any idea that excludes any other group is too small for the age in which we live.'

He was launched on the lonely revolutionary road of those who refuse to come to terms with wrong and still refuse to enflame hatred against the wrongdoers. In this way he became a challenge to the conscience of countless South Africans.

At his funeral, Dr Alex Boraine, then President of the Methodist Conference,

THE MAKING OF THE MAN

said, 'He was without doubt one of South Africa's greatest black leaders and at the same time the helper of hundreds—perhaps thousands—of whites to understand that in degrading black men they diminished themselves.'

Nkomo fought a continual battle against division and discrimination. He built his family a good home in the African township of Lady Selborne. This was subsequently declared a 'white area' so he was compelled to sell his home and build again elsewhere, at Atteridgeville. One night his home was petrol-bombed. He believed it was done by a group of Africans who promoted the tribalism he resolutely opposed. All his life he fought the battle against sectionalism whether promoted by white or black.

His other battle was to improve the lot of urban Africans. To the end he opposed the Government conception that his citizenship and rights lay in an African 'homeland' where he had never

lived and not in Pretoria where he had lived all his life. Because he succeeded in fighting his battle without hatred on a moral level he drew a line across every political conception.

Nkomo was a great realist—about himself, about others, about Africa. 'Unless we in Africa get the redirection of a moral ideology there will be chaos and anarchy on the continent,' he declared. He fought to raise up a leadership that could not be bought by money, women, liquor, power or position, and this he fought for in a humble down-to-earth way.

To one audience he said, 'I am going to tell you something of which I am very ashamed, but perhaps it may help somebody. One Christmas Eve I went to bed drunk. I woke up in the night. My bed felt like a boat, and the boat was sinking. Something said to me, "Whither are you sinking?" I felt terrible. Then before my mind passed Abraham Lincoln, William

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The Nkomos with Dr Frank Buchman: 'He awakened us to our rightful destiny, to lead our people so that they are led by God.'



Nkomo family, 1954

**'He listened to the inner voice that speaks in every humble heart
—whether the owner be black or white or brown'**

**'I'm fighting for a
hate-free,
fear-free,
greed-free
continent peopled by
free men and women'**



Abraham Nkomo said at the MRA Assembly in Caux in January 1973, 'My father was able—through the absolute moral standards that he learned here—to infuse into his own family and into the political struggle of his people something which made him a man worth commemorating in this film.

'He was one generation removed from people who had been enslaved by white people in their own country. Yet the grandson of a slave was able to learn here what he was able to impart to the former enslavers of his parents. He was able to teach them the important lessons of co-existence and fellowship among the peoples of men.

'In this world, where we have learned so much technologically and scientifically, and yet remain so backward in the things which involve the relationship of man to man, a black man from an emergent society was able to contribute much to build better relationships between people of different colours.

'Therefore it is my pleasure to identify myself with this world-wide force in the struggle to emancipate men from their sins and shackles, so that they may be able to stand shoulder to shoulder irrespective of colour and creed and class for the construction of a better world for all of us.'

Portia and Abraham Nkomo (above and on the right of the large family group)



DR WILLIAM NKOMO and I have been friends for twenty years. I was asked to speak at his funeral and I told thousands of people who were gathered there that his change had changed me.

When I heard him say that he had shed his hatred and bitterness towards the white man, I realised that it was the attitude of superiority and the arrogance of white men like myself which had caused the bitterness and the hatred in the hearts of the black men.

I asked God to forgive me and I apologised publicly. It may be that every white man in this country, maybe every white man in the world, needs to face up to this.

Since then I have committed myself, with many others of all races, to put right what is wrong in this country.

George Daneel, Minister of the Dutch Reformed Church and former Springbok Rugby player, speaking in the film



MERYL CHRISTIAN says, 'I only briefly met Dr Nkomo but I will never forget what he said to me. He said, "The answer for South Africa will come from people like you who are willing to fight hard and are not afraid." I knew I was someone full of fear, especially when things got out of my control. It was this one sentence that turned a key in my heart.'

PIETER HORN, electronics engineer and son of an Afrikaans farmer, says, 'It is one thing to work alongside Africans but a very different thing to serve and care for them as equals. I was asked to do just that for Dr Nkomo because of his bad health and poor eyesight.

'One day I was talking about South Africa with him and went on to tell him what I thought of the political situation there and what I thought ought to be done about the Africans, and how their affairs should be run.

'During this time he was quiet and listened, and when I eventually finished he said, "Why do you think you know better than us what's best for me and my people?"

'That made me think and I realised for the first time that that was the way I treated other people and especially Africans. I had to rethink my whole way of living—what I was living for and what I was going to stand for in life.'



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Wilberforce and other men who had done great things for their fellow men. The voice said to me, "There you belong". I have never touched a drop of liquor since.'

As he fought to bring change to South Africa so he fought that other nations should help bring that change by what he called 'constructive contact'. To an industrial audience in Europe he said, 'I want to appeal to the leaders of the workers and management to take on South Africa in a new way. Any effort to stop the economic development of South Africa will mean that the very people that some of you are trying to help—my people—will suffer from starvation, malnutrition, and lack of suitable housing. But if men like you everywhere will bring a new humanity to industry and commerce, bring something new in social conditions, you will make a contribution to produce God's family on earth.'

South Africa's largest daily newspaper, *The Star*, wrote on his death, 'In this sorely divided country, the loss of a single builder of bridges between the racial groups impoverishes South Africa as a whole. The non-whites have lost a great leader and the whites an invaluable counsellor.'

BH

'I saw white men change and I saw black men change. And I myself decided to change.'



South African headmasters arrive with Dr Nkomo at London airport on their way to Northern Ireland. The Minister of Community Relations there told them, 'You are superlative social engineers. You speak a language we ought to know and listen to.'

He was fearless in telling the truth to friend and foe. If a man's behaviour was wrong he did not fear saying so. He spoke strongly against people who contributed or listened to idle gossip. He spoke strongly against people who delighted in seeing others in misery. He rebuked the oppressors and comforted the miserable. He mixed freely with the rich and poor, educated and illiterate, white and black. All sections of the people felt he was their man.

Thomas Nkwana



Addressing a mass rally in Johannesburg in 1972

We students in South Africa felt a new light when he was elected the first black President of the Race Relations Institute.

Billy Marivate

Willie was friend and father to me. Yet more than twenty years ago, as an African nationalist, he spoke of the flood that might come and take the Asians along with it into the sea.

Dr G S Pillay

He was a father to the fatherless. No one knew it but he paid for my two youngest children's education after my husband died.

Mrs K Vundla

The small and modest dwelling is always open to people, no matter what their station or race—as becomes a warm-hearted man who practises non-racialism in his daily living.

Race Relations News (January 1972)

One of the foremost outspoken black leaders... here is no racialist demagogue but a true South African patriot who wants justice for all in his country.

The World, Johannesburg



We learnt from him that men must change and fight injustice without fear or favour and without bitterness. In this way he had a following on both sides of the colour line. The plight of the urban African was close to his heart, and his homeland, though South Africa, stretched from here to the whole world.

Professor Hudson W E Ntsanwisi
Chief Councillor of the
750,000 Shangaan people

'I COME FROM South Africa. It's a country bedevilled by racial divisions and from early on I committed my life to the battle to break the yoke of foreign oppression and I made it my task to fan the flames of hatred in the hearts of young Africans.

I supported the cause of the African National Congress and all the political struggles of my people. But together with many young people we felt that the older people were going too hat-in-the-hand to the authorities and we wanted a more dynamic and militant organisation to fight for the freedom and independence of the black people in South Africa, so we formed the African National Congress Youth League.

It was as I was fighting in that League that I met Moral Re-Armament, and for the first time I met white men and black men who had changed. What shook me most was to meet rabid Afrikaner nationalists who had found something bigger to live for and who were prepared to apologise to me and to other African nationalists for their former attitude of hatred and arrogance. When they spoke like that to me that moved me. I began to realise that instead of planning the liquidation of people, I could sit with them, and listen to God's guidance, to plan for a new South Africa together with them.

I am no less a revolutionary because I listen to God, but I have renounced the path of violence, of hatred. I hate passionately the things that divide men and I'm fighting with greater passion for the things that will unite us above every affiliation, above race, above colour.

The greatest need of the world is not to look at colour but to realise that the biggest thing that man needs is to attend to his character. When we have men of character in the world, then all men will be able to stand shoulder to shoulder together as the sons and daughters of God.

Many people ask which way will Africa go, and at this moment I believe Africa is confused. There is a crisis in character—men who were united when they fought for the freedom of their continent and countries have now allowed self-interest and other things to take precedence in their lives, and unless we can get an incorruptible type of leader who will not be bought with money, with position, with success, and the promise of other things that all these things can offer, then Africa will be doomed. Other ideologies are dividing us and we need the ideology that begins when a man begins to listen to God and to live by absolute moral standards. Then he need no longer have a blueprint because he needs to know nothing more except to be sure that he lives at the Cross and he moves as God guides.

When the world moves that way, there will be an end of anarchy, an end of confusion, an end of chaos. There will be the rebirth of a new world.'



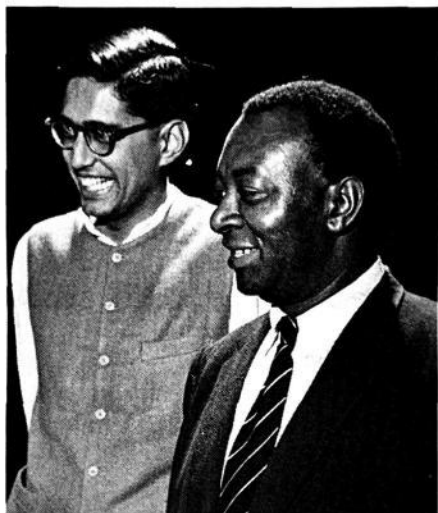
With Habib Bourguiba, President of Tunisia (left)



With Richard Nixon, now President of the United States



With Dr A G Fraser, founder of Achimota College, Ghana



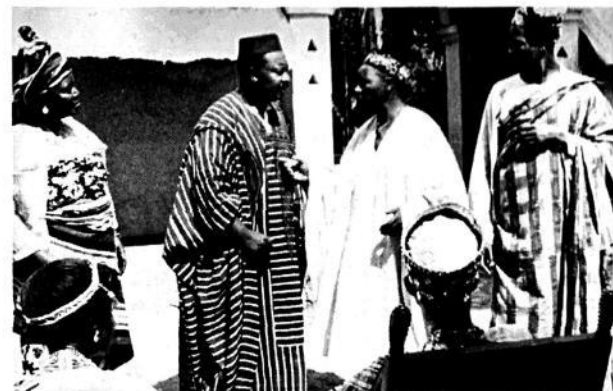
With Rajmohan Gandhi



In Ireland with Cardinal Conway (right)



In Japan with Mohammed Masmoudi, Tunisian Foreign Minister, and George Molefe of South Africa



Playing the part of Palaver in the all-African film *Freedom*

MRA Productions

A MAN FOR ALL PEOPLE

16 mm Eastman Colour

26 minutes Price £81

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