

Moral Re-Armament helped MP's wife fashion a new life

BEING a politician's wife is not all corsages. It is a job that requires a depth of understanding, adjustment and involvement.

Betty Beazley has led that sort of life and has succeeded. The wife of an Australian politician of 32 years' standing, she attributes her relatively easy adjustment to her position to her links with Moral Re-Armament.

Casual, informal, friendly and highly interested in people, Mrs Beazley is in Rhodesia with her husband on a 10-day visit at the invitation of Moral Re-Armament.

A sportsmistress who as an athlete held the Australian record for the

half-mile for 10 years, Mrs Beazley gave up her career when she married the youthful Member of Parliament, Dr Kim Beazley, 31 years ago.

Living in Perth, Mrs Beazley had to adjust herself to a life in which her husband was away for half the year in Canberra, 3 000 km away, returning once a fortnight for a weekend at home.

FAMILY

"We had a family of three children, so in the early years I was in the home taking the responsibility. We'd take the children to Canberra once a year so they knew where Dad was," she said.

"My husband decided he would give all the attention possible to the children when he was home and I decided I'd hand over the reins to him then so that sharing of responsibility worked."

Moral Re-Armament came into the Beazleys' lives five years after their marriage. Dr Beazley, on an overseas visit, was invited to the world centre of MRA at Caux in Switzerland.

He intended to stay seven days—and stayed seven weeks.

LEADERS

"It was the same year the leaders of France and West Germany had been there and the great reconciliation between the two countries had come about," Mrs Beazley said.

"My husband felt he saw history in the making and he attributed the reconciliation to Moral Re-Armament.

"When he returned home, the only thing I could say was 'how changed you

are'. I didn't know of MRA and that one of the concepts is the ideology of change, that situations can change if people change."

Mrs Beazley was so interested in her husband's change, she was agog to begin herself.

"We've never looked back," she said simply. "We've been practising the hour of quiet thought in the morning for 25 years now and living our lives to the MRA standards — honesty, purity, unselfishness and love — as far as possible."

Mrs Beazley's pride in her husband, who retired from politics last year, almost dominates her conversation.

She recalled that when he was Minister for Education, one of the first thoughts that came to him during one of his early morning "think" periods was that every child's need should be met.



MRS BEAZLEY

"This meant the rich child, the poor child, the Catholic, the Protestant, the gifted, the handicapped, the Aborigine, the migrant and the white child.

"It was an amazing concept that started off a tremendous amount of legislation, breaking down prejudices and sectarian-

ism. This concept, dubbed the Needs Policy, did away with so much division and prejudice . . . and it stemmed from that initial thought."

The Beazleys now live in Perth when they are not travelling. But a good deal of time is spent in visiting other countries.