

A change of conscience

NOT LONG ago Chief Mangope gave me a surprise when I interviewed him in Salisbury. He admitted that politicians do not always say what they mean on the public platform.

There was no surprise in what he said, only in that he was quite prepared to admit it openly.

I wrote the story with some apprehension, expecting him to call me the next day to complain he hadn't said it. He didn't.

This small episode in a reporter's life is recalled this week because here in Salisbury is a man who was a dedicated communist in England for 22 years, an activist (that's a euphemism for trouble-maker) and a man so dedicated to the downfall of democracy (at least what capitalists understand by democracy) that he called his own son Karl after Marx.

All the way

Les Dennison was on his feet in a Salisbury Methodist hall a day or two ago talking about God, quoting Solzhenitsyn and warning Rhodesians about the evils that face them.

Now I'm no more sceptical than the next hard-faced journalist, believing that if a man is a hardcore communist for 22 years he's got to be all the way with it.

And if he says he has changed his mind he's either kidding us mightily or something pretty drastic has happened to him.

The world is rightly suspicious of the man who comes into your camp saying: "I'm now on your side".

The answer lies in what they call moral re-
armament.

A colleague suggested that was merely calling upon God to assist communist ideals.

But be that as it may, I cannot help being fascinated by a militant communist of long standing, told to examine his conscience, who comes up with thoughts of purity, honesty, love and unselfishness.

So let's have a look at what he said, as he ex-

**WISH I'D
SAID IT**

IF YOU forgive people enough you belong to them and they to you, whether either person likes it or not—squatter's rights of the heart.—James Hilton,

plains how in recent years his revolutionary passions were diverted to make what he calls the "cross of Christ" regnant in the hearts of our leaders.

"It was meeting revolutionary Christians, whose discipline, passion, single-mindedness of purpose and world ideological vision matched and challenged the disciplined world revolutionary concept of Marxism.

"These men put me, a trained Marxist, on the defensive—a rare and intolerable position for any committed Marxist."

He says he challenged them to come up with their disciplines and standards and they responded with honesty, purity, unselfishness and love. These

standards, they said, would be absolute.

"I immediately recognised such a code of discipline would necessitate a greater discipline than I accepted within the Communist Party."

Well, you have to believe it. It happened 16 years ago.

The key to Mr Dennison's change appears to be the word discipline.

He warns the Western world it may fall if it does not grab hold of some.

Moral fibre

He suggests Britain, South Africa, Rhodesia and others might not have the moral fibre to survive the growing sickness, as he puts it, of materialism.

He asks, as Solzhenitsyn has asked, whether our surrender to materialism as the main aim of our life on earth will not bring about our downfall in the face of ruthless political philosophies and

their enforcement by the communists.

And that, coming from a man with Les Dennison's background, makes you think, doesn't it?

Walrus