

Speech by Johannes Mallah, given at the Town Hall, during his visit to Warwick District, May 1988

My Dear Friends,

I am happy to be with you this evening as a guest. I am thankful to my hosts who, through the Council of Europe, contributed to my coming here, This is an opportunity to meet our partners on common ground to discuss global issues. I would like to express my thanks to them for their dedication and congratulate them for their efforts in trying to promote an awareness of the realities of a wider world community. The existence of linking groups and the moves being made by the Council of Europe gives us in the "Third World" an inspiration that we are not alone in our attempts to visualise and propagate in our local communities a fairer world community and a feeling of global interdependence of mankind, despite our diverse backgrounds.

In the past, countries in the North have been linked to countries in the South by various means - physical, political, social, economic etc. All these links and their effects on both communities. I crave your indulgence to dwell a little on the political links that existed between, the two communities.

At one time, the world map was shaded with a few dominant colours as marks of ownership and' identification. That link between a "mother" Country and the so-called dependent countries was indeed a political link. One harmful by-product of that link was a master-servant relationship, which left in its wake feelings of superiority and deep-seated prejudice against those fated to play servile roles. Those were feelings and attitudes are one side of the coin. On the other side of the coin, those in servitude were made to accept that they were inferior and, therefore to be ashamed of, and reject their background, culture and their very existence.

With all the above points raised as a background. I believe there is a surge in perception about the world environment, a powerful feeling that the human race is one community in a "global village". Today, links are looked upon as a source of information promoting international understanding at community and individual levels. 'As members of community links, one of our aims is to create friendship and mutual understanding and to make people more and more aware of the interdependence of mankind. It is our duty to make provision for young people, who will have to spend most of their lives in the twenty first century, and devise strategies for resolving issues of development, peace, and conflicts of the 1980's. They need to be presented and challenged with the real interdependent and multicultural nature of the world in which they live.

Notwithstanding all the efforts being made to make people all over the world aware of our interdependence, there are many hurdles and misconceptions which we have to challenge and overcome.

In the first place, those who were colonised and accepted their inferior condition mentally have to be set free to feel truly human, and reconstruct [-illegible-] shattered backgrounds and culture, to enable them to make a worthwhile contribution to world events.

Secondly, those who have been on top most of the time, now also have to [-illegible-]ated from their prejudices and woken up to the fact that their position of privilege is not natural, and that they have a responsibility . [-illegible-] less fortunate positions.

Thirdly; we have to make enormous efforts to comprehend other peoples' lifestyles and accordingly modify our own for a better and mutual relationship.

These are difficult challenges, but they can be overcome, with re-education and commitment of people in both north and south. Multicultural evenings,

publicity, exchange visits, involvement in development projects, are some of the ways open to us to achieve global interdependence. All sectors of the community have to be involved in one way or another.

And, at this point, on behalf of the One World Link community in Bo, I am extending an invitation to you to visit Bo to cement the friendship I am offering you. The people in Bo will be pleased to receive you.

Thank you.