

28 SEPT 1953

P.E. EVENING POST.

M. R. A. backed by trade union leader

LONDON. — Mr. Sibnath Banerjee, of India, President of Hind Mazdoor Sabha, the 800,000 strong socialist trade union, was one of the group of trade union leaders from Britain, America, Sweden, Africa and India who has answered, point by point, the statement about Moral Re-Armament issued to the press by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions.

Mr. Banerjee, speaking at Caux, said the I.C.F.T.U. bulletin said it was his union who have made the inquiry about Moral Re-Armament.

"I am unaware of any discussion about M.R.A. on our executive board or of any instruction from my union to make any official inquiry about it."

Mr. Banerjee said that the I.C.F.T.U. claimed a neutral attitude in political and religious matters "yet they have issued a seven-page attack on that great world force of Moral Re-Armament. Many of the points in this attack are familiar to us because they were used by Moscow radio in their broadcasts against M.R.A."

"I offer my unqualified apology now to all of you and to Dr. Frank Buchman because my union has been used to bring an attack on M.R.A. The charge of M.R.A. interference is absurd because everywhere M.R.A. unites the trade unions which is their greatest need at the present time."

"This ideology may well prove to be the road on which millions from East and West can travel together to a new world of social justice, security and peace."

Finance question

Referring to suggestions that M.R.A. worked in an undemocratic manner, he reported that in India it had been the masses in "the textile, docks, shipping, engineering, railway and other industries" who had supported M.R.A.

Mr. Banerjee continued, "In my recent tour of investigation in Britain, Holland and Germany I found that it was men from mines, factories and mills who saw in this great force the hope of world peace."

Stating that he had gone thoroughly into the question of how M.R.A. was financed, he said: "I am completely satisfied that this whole work is run on a voluntary basis. No full-time worker in M.R.A. receives any salary whatsoever; the yearly accounts of M.R.A. in every country are audited by registered chartered accountants and deposited with the proper authorities."

"I have been to Moscow, the heart of communist culture, I have been to Benares, the heart of Hindu culture and to London and Washington, the heart of capitalist culture, but although I have been at the World Assembly at Caux less than 30 days, I have learned more about socialist living in that time than 30 years of socialist thought, struggle and practice have taught me!"

'Unity in labour'

Standing with the president of the Hind Mazdoor Sabha was Mr. Rajan Mukherjee, vice-president of the West Bengal section of the union. They were also joined by Mr. H. N. Trivedi, secretary of the Indian National T.U.C., from Bombay.

Referring to the trade union colleagues with him on the platform, Mr. Mukherjee said: "The unity we have found here is the answer to those who are spreading calumnies about M.R.A. All our unions are members of the I.C.F.T.U. and we left the World Federation of Trade Unions because we did not like the power politics of communism, yet this is an attack on moral standards which are essential in the fight for social justice."

Referring to the division in the ranks of labour, Mr. Mukherjee said, "Moral Re-Armament is a fundamental factor in the world. It brings unity in the ranks of labour itself."

Mr. Trivedi said, "I want to say as a trade unionist that M.R.A. has never interfered in my trade union. M.R.A. gives no ready-made solution. It fights for every trade unionist to do his job better."