

HOPE FOR TOMORROW'S AFRICA'

When the Emir of Kano proposed, at Caux last year, that an MRA conference be held in Kano, there was an enthusiastic response. It seemed to be only we on the home front, faced with non-working or non-existing phones, cars, electricity, water supply, who were tempted to be less enthusiastic. We give all praise and thanks to God for sustaining us!

Last month's conference was attended by 150 people from 14 countries. The Emir had arranged a free flight for 120 from Lagos, and in Kano we were overwhelmed by his hospitality. Most of us arrived in time to see the Durbar Celebration – a breath-taking event, when traditional rulers and their entourages, on horseback and glamorously attired, greet the Emir. Pierre Oko-Mengue from Cameroun counted 1,200 horses!

The Emir spent a lot of time at the conference despite his busy schedule. We began each morning with spiritual input from Muslims and Christians alike. Plenary sessions dealt with crucial issues facing Africa. Our Kenyan friends' account of their Clean Election Campaign challenged and inspired us all. General Yakubu Gowon, former Head of State, arrived unannounced one day, and spoke about his own experience of reconciliation. Dr Yusuf Al-Azhari gave him a copy of the Somali Peace Accord, signed in Ethiopia by 26 of the 28 factions.

For those of us hosting our guests in Lagos it was close to a miracle to have a water supply and electricity throughout most of their stay. Now that they've left we are back to normal!

A conference report is in the making. Do let us know if you want to receive it.

Amina Dikedi Paul and Sylvia Agbih

Dr Al-Azhari wrote of the conference:

It was a miracle to see Moslems and Christians, as believers in the oneness of God, accept that we can live together in peace and love, and that religion should never be an obstacle to co-existence.

At the conference, taboo subjects were taken up. Kano's radio, TV and press reported our discussions on such topics as the qualities of leadership Nigeria and Africa need. The conference communiqué gave a challenge to cure greed and corruption at all levels of society.

Everyone acknowledged that MRA's principles – to look on oneself and change first, before trying to

change others – are the only remedy for Africa. If we continue slowly but steadily, with the help and will of the Almighty Creator, we can heal the wounds of history that sustain cycles of revenge.

COMPARING EXPERIENCES IN CHINA

Last month, Jim and Tui Beggs, Howard Grace, Fiona Leggat and I were in China at the invitation of the Chinese Association for International Understanding (CAFIU). It was the fifth visit in the Sino-British exchange programme – Jim and Tui were gracious in being part of it – and has started building links between CAFIU and Australia.

This was the best visit that I have been part of. Our friendship with our CAFIU friends is now strong. We enjoy each other's company, laugh a lot, trust each other and discuss many matters honestly. This helps in all our other, often rather formal, conversations.

The theme of this visit – enhancing moral values in our respective societies – enabled us to have good conversations. We share a sense of need. As one professor said, 'Many Westerners come to talk about trade and technology, or to tell us what we should do. You are the first to come and compare experiences about this vital area of moral and spiritual values.'

We spent ten days in Beijing – where CAFIU had arranged a day-and-a-half seminar with senior figures from the Education Ministry, the Beijing Municipality and the Communist Party – Changzhou, Zhiangjiagang, Suzhou and Shanghai. CAFIU plans to send a delegation to Caux again this year and would like to send a further group to UK next spring.

Please be in touch if you would like our report.

James Hore-Ruthven

HONG KONG MEETING

In Hongkong at the end of March, some of us met to exchange views on our effort to bring the essence of MRA to Chinese people the world over. Six Chinese from Hongkong and four from Taiwan were joined by 11 people from Australia, UK, Canada, USA and Japan. It was a valuable time. Understanding grew between the Chinese and the non-Chinese. Ideas for the future were considered. We hope to continue such gatherings, perhaps every two years.

Jenny Leung

RESPONSE TO PLEA FOR HELP IN JAMAICA

In Jamaica last month, the *Daily Gleaner* carried a front-page story entitled: 'Governor-General to head Inner City Commission'. The story described one outcome of an MRA conference in Kingston initiated by Governor-General Sir Howard Cooke.

During the three-day conference, a young inner-Kingston resident spoke passionately about the tragic level of violence, and pleaded for help. Some of the conference participants decided to get involved, and Sir Howard agreed to take leadership. Initiatives are already being developed.

At the conference opening, 350 people – many of them prominent in Jamaican national life – heard guest speaker Michael Henderson speak on forgiveness in personal and national life. The Rev Evans Bailey, Chairman of the MRA Jamaica Trust, said that he had encountered MRA in the 50s, when Louis Byles and others helped to resolve a major industrial dispute. He rejoiced at this opportunity for Jamaicans to have access to this idea.

Robo Orogun

A WEEK IN MARRAKESH

A dream of many years has become true: a week-long visit of our Tunisian friends Hatem and Rakia Akkari to our Moroccan friends. Open-hearted and honest talks led to meaningful relationships. New friends were made among people of our generation; a university lecturer, for instance, who has the ear of both the Islamic fundamentalists and the Westernised leadership. This visit can be seen as a first step in the creation of a team in the Maghreb.

Frédéric and Nathalie Chavanne

FOR A CHANGE FORUM ON FORGIVING DEBT

Jubilee 2000 – the campaign to write off the debt of the world's poorest countries – is gaining momentum. Zambia's First Lady, Verah Chiluba, was among 100 people who heard the campaign's initiators speak in London on 'A fresh start for a billion people'. Former diplomat Bill Peters pointed out that the debt was largely due to an oversupply of credit in the 1970s, for which both creditors and debtors were to blame; but 'so far the sacrifice has been carried entirely by the debtors'. Debt forgiveness, said British academic Martin Dent, was today's equivalent of the 1834 decision to end slavery in British possessions; the need was to rouse public opinion today as it had been roused then. The event was sponsored by For a Change, Christian Aid, the World Development Movement, Concern Universal and Christians Aware.

The 1998 Lambeth Conference of the Anglican Church will discuss a motion of support for the campaign. Jubilee 2000 can be found on the

website: <<http://www.oneworld.org/jubilee2000/>>

Michael Smith

BALTIC REGION SEMINAR IN TALLINN

Representatives from all ten Baltic Sea nations met in Tallinn last month at the invitation of Dr Andres Ellamaa, Vice President of the Estonian Medical Association. The three-day seminar was the fifth in a series held since 1993 in capitals of the region. The 24 participants included seven professors, and editors, economists and industrialists. Three of the Estonian hosts had held Cabinet posts.

The Baltic countries are working towards integration among themselves and with the European Union. There are tensions between their ethnic majorities and minorities, and between the region and Russia.

One Estonian professor said how deeply ingrained in his people is the fear of 'who will beat us next?'. 'We have always lived with a big neighbour and we have identified Russians with Communists. Today my vision is that Estonia will become a country for both Estonians and Russians.' A Russian politician added, 'We must create a common future, together.'

A professor from Moscow said that these seminars were creating an ecumenical spirit. His vision was that Christian values would become the values of the Baltic Sea region. There was warm appreciation of experiences shared by Peter Hannon from Northern Ireland. 'We can learn much from Ireland', said a Russian. The final meeting was jointly led by two doctors, an Estonian and a Russian.

An Estonian sociologist summed up the days, 'We have found common ground. The important thing has been the sense of belonging together.' After the seminar Peter Hannon addressed students at Tartu University and at the Russian Commercial College, where the main lecture hall was so packed that people had to stand in the corridor.

Keld Jörgensen Paul Gundersen.

FIJIANS MEET IN NEW ZEALAND

Looking at the roomful of people in our home last month one could have thought we were in Fiji! The Fijian Ambassador, two former Fijian Ambassadors, a former Attorney-General and other Fijians now living in New Zealand were among those who heard Keleru Tukituku from Suva describe the trust-building initiative, 'Fiji – I Care!'. Trust between the two main races was severely damaged by the 1987 coup and the subsequent adoption of a racially-weighted legislature. Since then MRA programmes have given moral training to thousands of Fijian students, and 'Fiji – I Care!' is carrying this spirit to the country at large. 'It's not enough to have the right words,' said Mrs Tukituku. 'You have to have

the actions. Go and visit people, invite them home for a meal.'

The Fijian Government now proposes to remove the racial weighting. 'Now we can move ahead together,' said the Ambassador. During the evening in the MRA centre in Wellington people spoke from the heart about how to do this. They included race relations conciliator Dr Rajen Prasad and Judge Anand Satyanand, a New Zealand Ombudsman, who summed up the evening by expressing his gratitude for 'such a large group with hope for Fiji's future'.

Peter Wood

PREACH WHAT WE PRACTICE

It was inspiring to be part of the acknowledgement and inclusion of multi-faith expressions of MRA through the days of the Melbourne Consultation. Could we now 'preach what we practice' and move for definite action on the way MRA legal bodies are established, to ensure that their charter does not conflict with this multi-faith commitment? Could the year 2000 be a target date when this recognition, together with a new name, could see MRA launched into the new millenium? I would appreciate feedback (20 Jalan 5/10, Petaling Jaya 46000, Malaysia; Fax +60 3 777 6739; e-mail khd@pc.jaring.my)

K Haridas

COUNTDOWN TO MINNESOTA CONFERENCE

Five weeks before the Beyond Boundaries conference in Minnesota, the number of those announced is one-third of our goal of 350. Excellent delegations are coming from Latin America, Mexico and Canada, and there's a fine variety of overseas registrants. The quality of the content of plenaries, workshops and evenings is high; the days will bring an experience of Caux to the Americas. The 40 members of the cast and crew of Peter Howard's play Give a Dog a Bone – updated to the 1990s by William Storey and directed by his wife, Lee – are eagerly looking forward to the conference. Over 600 people attended their opening night in Phoenix, Arizona, last week, and there was enthusiastic interaction between cast and audience.

We ask for your prayers, and your help in getting the people who should come. Please encourage those you know. And come if you can; it will be a great chance to see MRA at work in this part of the world.

Steve Dickinson

1997 CAUX SCHOLARS PROGRAM

The Caux Scholars Program is happy to announce that Dr Barry Hart will succeed Larry Hoover as the program's Academic Director. He will assume his responsibilities in the fall. Larry will continue his

involvement with the program on a reduced scale.

We expect about 20 students in Caux this summer. They are an outstanding group, including two from Serbia – a teacher and a student; a Costa Rican doing graduate studies in the US; an Ethiopian at the Institute of International Affairs at Harvard; a Methodist minister working in conflict resolution and trauma-healing among Liberian refugees in Ivory Coast, and another Methodist pastor doing similar work in Mozambique; a young woman from India who was inspired by the 93-94 communal riots in Bombay to do peace studies in UK. The US students are diverse and come from Harvard, Grinnell, Tufts, St Olaf, Eastern Mennonite University and the University of North Carolina.

Some are hard at work raising their fees – enlisting the help of local MRA teams where possible. We need to help those from Liberia, Nigeria, Costa Rica, Mozambique, Serbia and India, who are unable to pay. And we must cover the costs of our faculty and interns. Contributions are welcome!

Randy Ruffin

YOUNG PEOPLE TO MEET IN GERMANY

Eight young Germans are planning a meeting for young people in Leipzig October 3-5, on the theme 'Without you into 2000'. Discussions will focus on: work, new individual ways, politics, manipulation and solving personal problems.

Information is available from Heinrich Pick, Mülbergstr 87, 73728 Esslingen; Tel: +49 711 357278

THE MORAL BASIS OF A FREE SOCIETY

A video of the Caux Jubilee lecture by Dr Jonathan Sacks, Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth, is now available. The lecture is one of a series of talks by the Chief Rabbi which forms the basis of his recent book *The Politics of Hope* (Random House).

The video is available from Grosvenor Productions, 12 Palace Street, London SW1E 5JF – £19.50 + p&p. Grosvenor Books 3735 Cherry Ave NE, Salem, OR 97303 – US\$25. + p&p.

PUBLISHING FOR THE FUTURE

A working session on MRA publishing will take place at Caux, July 21 and 22. We feel the need to explore our role at a time of vast change in the way books and periodicals are produced and distributed. Among our questions are: What is the particular purpose of MRA publishing? Who feel called to undertake it? How can we better support each other? How can we take advantage of the electronic

media? We welcome applications, and your feedback will help us shape the programme.

Charles Piguet Andrew Stallybrass

MRA BOARDS AND FINANCES

Some of us who hold responsibility in our MRA legal bodies, especially for finances, feel the need to exchange ideas and experiences during the Caux summer. We suggest that we hold meetings on August 11 and 12 from 17.00 to 21.00, including dinner. If you have questions, or suggestions for the agenda, please contact Philippe Lasserre in Paris: 100745.1622@compuserve.com (with name in Subject box).

CONNECTING CAUX TO THE WORLD

The Caux telephone operators offer an urgent welcome to new team-mates! All that is needed is a mastery of French, English and German, a love for computer work, quick reactions. Operators are part of the Caux welcome, service and care. A touch with the outside world is guaranteed. For information or applications, please contact Evelyne Seydoux in France: Tel +33 1 41 10 4059; Fax +33 1 41 10 8067

CAUX 1997

We have decided to extend for this summer at Caux the financial contribution guidelines devised for last

year. (These rates are for our own internal budgeting – not for publication):

For volunteers who come to help – CHF40./day reducing to CHF30./day for stay of over 14 days.

For MRA full time workers – CHF30./day reducing to CHF20./day for stay of over 14 days (although in this case we appreciate circumstances will vary).

For students who come to work for their keep under a contractual arrangement agreed with the Foundation – CHF30./day.

Marcel Grandy Eliane Stallybrass Jean Fiaux

'FOUNDATIONS FOR FAITH'

This book was compiled by Harry Almond and published by MRA in 1975. An Ohio publishing house, Barbour and Company, Inc, have purchased reprint rights and are issuing a paperback edition of 10,000 in their Christian Classic Series. It is due to be released in June at a retail price of \$0.99. Orders may be placed directly with Barbour and Company, PO Box 719, Urichsville, OH 44683, USA.

FACTS ON FAXES, PHONES AND ADDRESSES

Australia: the area code for Perth, Western Australia, has changed from 09 to 08 (8 for overseas callers) and an extra 9 has been placed before every current number. For example, the number for the MRA centre is now +61 8 9332 6463.

Calendar of Events

MAY '97	<u>Moldova</u>	'The Search for Freedom', FFF Seminar	May	23 - 25
JUN '97	<u>Minneapolis USA</u>	International Conference at University of Minnesota	Jun	24 - 29
JUL '97	<u>Armagh Melbourne Australia</u>	'Life Matters', nine-day course for young adults	Jul	4 - 13
	<u>Caux Switzerland</u>	The World of Tomorrow – A Dynamic Learning Community	Jul	12 - Aug 24
	<u>Odawara Japan</u>	Asia Pacific Youth Conference (APYC)	Jul	20 - 29
SEP '97	<u>Tirley Garth Britain</u>	FFF International Course	Sep	4 - 23
OCT '97	<u>Kobe Japan</u>	Asia: Dialogue with neighbours	Oct	4 - 5

The deadline for the next Bulletin is Sunday, 15 June 1997

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Those named below have been asked to distribute this in their area: Asia: South - C Iralu; Malaysia - Santa Maria; Philippines - Calma; Japan, Rest - Nagano; Australia - A Lancaster; Pacific - Annette Porteous; Africa: East - Patel; South - Euvard; Zimbabwe - Sibare; Nigeria, Rest - Agbi; N. America: Canada - Weeks; USA - Ruffin; Latin America: Brazil, Rest - Puig/Vogel; Caribbean - Fiona Edwards; Europe: France - Lasserre; Germany - Bräckle; Denmark - Jørgensen; Finland - Koponen; Norway - Eskeland; Sweden - Söderlund; Switzerland - Mottu; UK - C Evans; Austria - Vock; Netherlands, Rest - J de Pous; Middle East - Christodoulides