

# Putting your back into it or wanting a hand-out —the issue for Britain

## Scottish shipyard worker tells student conference

'THE TRUE BATTLE LINE in Britain is not between boss and worker, government and opposition, but between those who are out for themselves at the country's expense and those who want to live and work to build a country and world worth living in,' said shop steward John Mackenzie, plater at Scott Lithgow's shipyard on Scotland's Clyde.

He was speaking at a session of the Moral Re-Armament conference for students and young workers which was held at Edinburgh University last week.

He continued, 'Everyone has become obsessed by money. "If only we had it and more of it we would be all right." Everyone seems to be jumping into the "more-for-me" queue. "Wages, subsidies, grants, hand-outs, must be given now" is the cry from all sides.

'Cowardice is catching. So is courage. Speaking your mind may raise catcalls and criticism but it can also raise up others to fight for what they know in their hearts to be right. We excuse and cover up our silences by quickly blaming the boss for being always wrong, greedy and stubborn.

'To change from wanting a hand-out to putting your back into it is not easy, but it is simple. It has meant for me putting myself right. The democracy-destroyers have also been helped along by the apathy and indifference of trade union members who have too often allowed the intimidators and shouters to take control of events.'

## Oil: the question no-one asks

THE POLLOCK HALLS of the university echoed to the sound of the pipes as the MRA conference for students and young workers opened. Delegates from Germany, South Africa, India, Malaysia, Taiwan, Egypt and Portugal were among the 120 from 23 nations who attended the week-long session.

In welcoming the delegates, the Marquis of Graham said, 'It is significant that after your Paris and Berlin conferences this conference takes place in Edinburgh, Scotland. Paris has been a focus of the student workers' struggle in recent years and Berlin has been a major ideological battleground since the second world war. Your selection of Edinburgh

as your next meeting place highlights the increasing significance of what is going on in Scotland in world ideological terms.'

Referring to Scotland's oil development, he said, 'There are many of us who would like to feel that this oil boom will not be conducted solely by the same motives and economic criteria that have engineered the downfall of previous booms. The question nobody seems to be asking is what difference does there need to be in our motives as a country and as a continent?'

He continued, 'Of course we could turn Scotland into a second South Africa where the mineral wealth of the gold-mines in the Rand has enabled successive governments in the last 27 years to close their minds to the views and representations of the rest of the world. But I think one can draw very little moral distinction between letting one section of the community enjoy great riches when another is very poor and letting one section of the world enjoy great riches while another is being ground into the dust.

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**'We are a growing force of young Vietnamese who have decided to live by absolute moral standards and God's guidance to rebuild Vietnam and the world. Best wishes for the conference.'**

**CABLE FROM SAIGON**

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'At the present moment it is very popular up here to put all this development forward in a light which makes it look as if we are all going to get richer and going to have to work less hard in order to enjoy our comforts. But in a world where the gap between the rich and poor nations grows yearly bigger how can we consider this as a serious proposition?'

'The prime factor which we must now pursue and commit ourselves to is that men learn to distinguish the purposes of God in their lives. That will be the key to a just and lasting society. This conference could be a starting point for that development that is taking place in the world around us.'

Among those welcoming delegates was Chris Green, Secretary of Edinburgh University Students' Association, and Dr Donald Robertson, for 25 years a senior lecturer in Anatomy.

# NEW WORLD NEWS

**FOR MORAL RE-ARMAMENT**

## Take it seriously

AN INDIAN trade union leader appealed at the conference for ideological aid.

Bimal Banerjee, General Secretary of the Socialist Trade Unions (*Hind Mazdoor Sabha*) of West Bengal, said, 'Europe gave us technology, modern education and much philosophy including Marxism. There is now a need for a greater philosophy of life—a modern ideology by which we can live. This is the ideology of Moral Re-Armament.

'We have devoted, committed friends in India doing their best. But the task is immense. I appeal to all those in Europe to take this seriously and try to help us. We have the finest building material—people—and it needs building up.'

## Practical step

Students from Aberdeen presented Peter Howard's play *The Ladder* for the conference. 300 people attended the performance which was in the George Square Theatre.

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### FORTHCOMING WORLD CONFERENCES

**'Creating the new society  
— Africa, the answer continent'  
University of Rhodesia — Salisbury  
June 2-8**

**'Canada and the United States  
— partners in a world task'  
The Banff Centre, Banff, Alberta  
June 13-15**

**'A meeting of continents  
for Moral Re-Armament'  
Caux, Switzerland  
12 July-14 September**

# at a glance

## THEY'RE THE NEW ASIA

The former President of Bangladesh, now appointed Ambassador in Geneva; the German Ambassador in Berne and the Laotian Ambassador to Britain were among those giving an enthusiastic reception to the first two performances of *Song of Asia* in Europe. The performances were given in Caux, Switzerland.

The audiences included a group of Laotian students, parties of Italian and Spanish workers, a German businessman who came all the way from Germany and returned the same night and 94 year old Mrs van Beuningen from Holland who had come specially to see the show, as well as international trade unionists, who had been meeting there during the week.

They followed the unfolding of a new, united Asia in the show with its rich variety of nations, music, dance and costume, through moments of uproarious laughter and others of deeply moving silence.

'I was overwhelmed,' commented the wife of an MP who had brought her friends. 'I am not easily moved but this evening I was shattered,' said a Salvation Army officer, to which his colleague added, 'I see that people who believe in different revelations of God can be led by the same spirit.' A playwright commented: 'It takes us right outside ourselves to the real needs of the world. It is what Europe and America desperately need at this point in history.'

Describing the origin and outreach of the show *L'Est-Vaudois* writes: 'This whole venture is built on the spirit of sacrifice, each of the 40 young people in *Song of Asia* has made costly decisions to take part. They are themselves the new Asia. They are trying to be today what they expect the world to be tomorrow. They work hard without remuneration to realise this vision. It is a matchless work, with the world as it is today, which deserves to be followed and supported.'



Future performances of *Song of Asia* in France

16-17 April: Théâtre Francine Vasse, Nantes  
23-24 April: Salle des Fêtes, Neuilly-sur-Seine  
29 April: Théâtre municipal, Thionville  
3 May: Foyer de Farebersviller (Moselle)

## SWISS RADIO TALKS

Father Scheuber, a Catholic priest in Uri, the Canton of William Tell, recently gave two talks on *The Black and White Book* on Basle Radio.

Referring to the second theme of the Holy Year, 'the reconciliation of man with God and of all men with one another', Father Scheuber said: 'You will have heard of Caux, the world centre of Moral Re-Armament. There a handbook has appeared called *The Black and White Book*. It has already had a world circulation of 460,000 copies in 18 languages, from German to Chinese.'

'This astonishingly simple little book, written in striking phrases, is a call to peace, and points to the possibility of a reconciliation between a patient God and stubborn humanity. . . . The gripping stories in the handbook could be summed up "Let us leave the past and fight for the future together".'

## NINETEEN LANGUAGES

*The Black and White Book* has just been translated and published in its 19th language edition - Urdu. This was done in Pakistan on the initiative of the Bishop of Lahore, Rt Rev Inayat Masih. He writes, 'It has been a pleasure for me to have the book translated and arranged for its publication. I hope it will serve our people well.'

## FREEDOM IN PRISON

The Chairman of Nigeria's Mid-West Board of Education, M O Elebesunu, invited all the school principals of the Benin Area to a performance of the film *Freedom* at Kelly College, Benin, recently. Mr Elebesunu, who plays the role of the King in the film, introduced it and underlined the relevance of what the film says to Nigeria and the world today. More than forty principals attended in addition to teachers and more than 400 pupils of Kelly College.

In the same week *Freedom* was shown in Onitsha Prison to all the prisoners, the prison staff and their families at the request of the Prison Governor, Mr Ogunbor. In Agbor the Resident and the District Police Officer arranged for *The Smile of the Apsara* and *Happy Deathday* to be shown in the house of the Resident for senior government officials of the area. *Happy Deathday* was also shown at the Prison Officer's Club, Enugu, and Igbobi College in Lagos.

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# CAUX 1975

THERE WILL BE 'a Meeting of Continents for Moral Re-Armament' at Caux this summer from 12 July to 14 September.

Within this two month period there will be special sessions for people from parliament and civic life (15-24 Aug) and from industrial life (30 Aug-7 Sept). There will also be two ten-day sessions for students and young workers starting on 13 July.

The cast of the revue *Song of Asia* will arrive in Caux for the beginning of the conference.

The invitation to the conference states, 'A new society is in the making. We may welcome it or reject it. We may have certain ideas on what it will be like and take tentative steps towards it on a personal or public level. Equally we may, from fear of the unknown, unconsciously resist anything new. But the process goes on regardless.'

'To feed humanity, preserve the environment, provide adequate education for all and assure the just distribution of wealth and raw materials - these are tasks that will require the most gifted brains in every walk of life and the best efforts of governments and scientists. But success will never be achieved so long as the world continues to be torn by conflicts, suspicion, fear, hate and prejudice.'

'We must find a road that will take us to an age of reconciliation for mankind. It is the road of voluntary but dynamic change, when all of us decide to live in our families, at our place of work, in our political parties and between parties as we want those to live who have the fate of millions in their hands. Then together we can begin to create a society of freedom and justice. The end of our divisions may lie in the reconciliation with God and His ways, without which the growth in character needed for man's survival is not possible.'

'In seminars, meetings and informal discussions, through films, plays and other means an attempt will be made to get closer to answering these questions.'

THESE LAST MONTHS in Ethiopia have crystallised for me the kind of contribution we in Britain and Europe could make to the developing countries.

The new military government here has declared a policy of socialism – but there are many forms of socialism. Some nations are bidding hard to persuade Ethiopia that their form, 'scientific socialism', is best. They sell their wares and fill the papers with news of their successes under a materialist philosophy.

Whichever way the British referendum goes, I am a European. I care for Europe. I long that our continent and Community find our true role in the world – one that will shake the complacent out of their lethargy, win the militants to a constructive purpose, and unite everyone in an attempt to arrest the slide into barbarism across the world.

### Faced ridicule

But Western Europe is almost absent from the more fundamental debate. The British contribution, for instance, has been articles on Chippendale furniture and Welsh gold. It is ironic, when one realises that nation after nation of Europe has pulled itself from the depths of poverty, injustice and callousness, to prosperity – and to a degree of social justice – perhaps greater than any in the world.

We have little cause for self-congratulation. The small minority of men in our nations who fought for social reform faced ridicule and persecution from most of the ruling classes of their time. But the truth that must be made known is the extent to which these reformers were inspired to undertake and stick at their battle through finding a militant faith.

This is the key to the things we are most proud of in our history. As Leslie Paul says in *The Age of Terror*: 'All the dazzling material and political advances of Europe, all the forces bursting periodically into social and economic revolutions, have their genesis in a Christian dissatisfaction and unrest.' Seeking nothing for themselves, these men were able to stir the consciences of the powerful, and the ensuing change of motive in these men brought social change without violence. 'We shall only realise what this Christian vitality has meant to Europe should the time ever come when it is finally lost to us,' concludes Paul.

### Vicious circle

The consequence is apparent in the nations which have lost or stifled it. They have chosen instead the philosophy which says that men are slaves of their economic environment, that injustice is the fault of the wealthier man, or class, or nation. But since they are equally slaves the wealthy cannot change their ways; therefore since exploitation breeds

A look at  
Britain  
from Ethiopia  
by John Bond

## Bury the fallacy

hate, to use hate to liquidate the exploiters is to cooperate in the inevitable march of history.

It is a philosophy which entangles a man in the vicious circles of hate and blame. It blinds him to seeing how he can play a freely constructive part in society. Dictators see in it a perfect tool. They want a population who believe they cannot affect their nations – so don't try.

### Bankruptcy

A virile fighting faith is a mighty obstacle to dictatorship and a compelling force for social progress. It is the answer the world needs. And the answer Ethiopia wants.

An editorial in *The Ethiopian Herald* of 19 January reads: 'In a country like Ethiopia, saddled with the problems of poverty, disease and ignorance, it is well-nigh impossible to improve the quality of life in an atmosphere of utter spiritual bankruptcy... We are living in an age where man is getting more and more bankrupt spiritually. The materialist world in which we are living tends to demoralise man and reduce him to the status of a beast... That is why there

is an imperative need for spiritual self-regeneration.'

Why do we not attempt to answer such a plea? What is it that makes us bystanders at a time when the materialist philosophies are so compellingly propounding their ideas? It may be worth thinking honestly why it is, because if we do, God may show us His true purpose for us in the world. Could it be to break the world out of hopelessness and cynicism?

The great ideas that have come from Europe – freedom before the law, democratic rule, co-operatives, the trades union movement and many others – came through men of vision who fought to make that vision a reality. But they left plenty for us to do too! There is still much wrong in our society. Each instance of it can be another subject for a mournful conversation across the dinner table. Or it can be a spur to action – not only to right the wrong, but to inspire and change those who believe the individual can do little, and so abdicate responsibility.

### Exuberant

Could we now have a flood of people, with a vision of a transformed Europe, daring to strike to the heart of the rot in our continent, daring to be catalysts and trend-setters in our homes, our work, our communities, and continually creating new evidence of the power of God to transform men and situations? Our national newspapers could take these stories to the world.

In a host of ways we could demonstrate that each person has a special part, chosen by God, in building the world we long for – if he decides to take it on. The frustrating, or comfortable, fallacy that we are bound by the system would be buried under an avalanche of evidence of the limitless power of God released when men listen and obey. We could be the wave-centre for an exuberant surge of hope and faith that will cross and recross our globe until it has stirred to action men and women in every nation.

## Asian film shown to ECA staff

THROUGH the conviction of an Ethiopian secretary working in the Economic Commission for Africa, the film *The Smile of the Apsara* has been shown in the cinema of the ECA in Addis Ababa.

This showing for the staff there, including Ethiopians, Nigerians and others from many parts of the continent, was sponsored by the Head of Information, a black Rhodesian. The audience saw first the film of Maurice Strong and others speaking in *Only One Earth* on the environment and the urgent need for a world-wide change of attitudes. *The Smile of the Apsara*, reports our correspondent, 'perfectly complemented it and showed, through the visit of the *Song of Asia* force to Laos, how "to break the chain of fear and hate". The audience was stirred and moved.'

# Who do you think you are?

by Matt Manson

THERE IS A SONG that has a lot to say about identity. The refrain goes: 'Be yourself, be yourself, how simple life could be. If I was meant to be somebody else, then why in the heck am I me?'

There is increasing evidence to show that the urge in people to be themselves has become much more widespread. It could be a reaction against the materialistic, monolithic, mass-produced, mass-media moulded society of today. Deep down in the human spirit there is a resistance to becoming sheep, everyone the same, looking the same, behaving the same, thinking the same. Deep-down we want to be ourselves.

You have heard, no doubt, of the docker who sat relaxed on a packing-case, under a crane, in dock-land. Along came the bowler-hatted manager on his rounds and caught him unawares and asked him what he was doing. Calmly the docker informed him he was having a smoke and carried on. Much irritated the boss said sternly, 'Do you know who I am?' Whereupon the docker shouted up to his crane-driver mate, high in his cabin, 'Oi, 'arry, 'ere's a bloke wot doesn't know 'oo 'e is!'

## Reaction

It is one thing to know who we are, personally. But there is the other larger question of national identity. Have you ever seen the reaction on the face of a New Zealander when he was introduced to you as an Australian? Or of a Norwegian when someone called him a Swede? Or of a Scot when he was announced as an Englishman? Or of a Canadian when it was said he came from the United States? These reactions are natural. But one can get too much of a good thing. When we stress our identity to excess through fear of losing it, or through envy of our neighbour, or through a greedy urge not to share what we have, then we have sown the seeds of violence and destruction.

When we have the courage to be ourselves, openly and honestly, then we can be real about the things we can best do separately, and find the grace and humility to admit that there are areas in which we need help from others.

As a Scot, for example, I am convinced that we need to be open to England in this way, and shun, like the plague, the temptation to isolate ourselves behind the Cheviot hills. That would be the clear sign that we were sure of our identity.

But I am convinced, above all, that a nation's identity is closely bound up with its vision of what it is meant to be and do in world.

So often the trouble is that our vision gets warped, because we are looking into the wrong mirror. We are like people at a funfair who go into the gallery of mirrors and see ourselves inflated or dwarfed or contorted in the warped, concave or convex glass in front of us. The warped mirrors of limited thinking, self-obsession and cynicism create a warped identity.

How then can we get hold of the right mirror? It is the clean straight flawless mirror of Christ's standards which shows us not only what we are, but what we are meant to be. That is our real identity.

As we adjust our sights to His image of us, as men and nations, our vision will be brought in to focus and we will see our way ahead.

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## RHONDDA SHOWING

An old Rhondda engine house, that used to provide the power for hauling coal from a 'level' in the mountainside, was the scene for a recent showing in Wales of the dockers' film *Men of Brazil*.

Now renovated as the Llwynpia Pensioners' Hall, the former engine house was chosen for the showing by the Mayor of the Rhondda, Councillor F S Tudball, himself from Llwynpia.

The Mayor and Mayoress, as well as the audience from both Rhondda valleys, were welcomed by Gwilym Jones, Secretary of the Hall and also Rhondda Secretary of the COSA (Clerical, Overmen and Supervisors Association) division of the NUM.

The film follows a visit to South Wales last year by two Brazilian dockers who were received by the Mayor of the Rhondda and at the South Wales headquarters of the NUM in Pontypridd.

## SCHWYZERDÜTSCH

Four Schwyzerdütsch performances of Peter Howard's play *The Ladder* have been given in the Canton of Berne. The performances were staged by pupils in a high school and marked the end of their secondary schooling. 'There is no point in taking part if one does not live the spirit of the play,' said one of the cast.

# Horace

MY BUSINESS ACQUAINTANCE Harry was in a raging temper that morning. Horace, a youth from school he had employed, had taken one of the firm's vans without permission the previous evening, and during a spree with some of his pals had wrecked it.

Of course he had been dismissed and his employer of such a short association was surprised when I asked if I could have Horace's address.

I found him in a very sorry, bruised and dejected state. He told me all about it and was obviously truly repentant, probably wondering what would happen to him now. We talked, and finally I said that saying sorry to his boss was one thing, but did he realise that he was also responsible to his heavenly Father for the way he lived? We prayed. When I asked if he would like me to try to get him reinstated, he said mournfully 'If only you could, but it's impossible.'

You can imagine how Harry reacted to this idea! When the swearing had ceased, I said, 'You are wrong, you will probably have to pay for this episode, and some one else will have the benefit of a lad who has learned a lesson he will never forget. Take him back on my recommendation.' He did.

Some months ago, I revisited the town and called to see friends in the old firm. Harry had died and the business had been acquired by a London concern. I met the middle-aged manager. He is Horace.

WALTER FARMER

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'My father has decided he will no longer sell his barley for the making whisky while so many of the world's population go to bed hungry even though this means loss in profit for him. He heard so much about the hunger and poverty that he decided to take this practical step towards alleviating the suffering,' said Sandy Cook, farmer's son and student at North Scotland's School of Agriculture in Aberdeen.

He was speaking after the performance and was reported on Radio Forth.

Speaking alongside others of the cast he continued: 'We present this play because we feel we cannot leave the responsibility for the way things go to others. The time has come for each of us to decide to be responsible and make the sacrifices where necessary, if we are to see the start of a new world in our time.'