

Ceylon: Asia's pilot nation

by John Williams

TIMES OF CEYLON readers opened their papers on 5 November to find a full-page feature entitled 'Ceylon—Asia's Pilot Nation'.

The occasion was the opening in Colombo of the Moral Re-Armament Asia Arise Assembly, an event that *The Times of Ceylon* says 'will prove of great importance to the whole Asian continent.'

Two other daily papers, *The Sun* and *The Mirror*, gave nearly a full page each to reports of the opening speeches by Senate President A Ratnayake and Rajmohan Gandhi, and the Sinhala and Tamil papers and the Ceylon Broadcasting Corporation also gave prominent coverage.

'There is nothing that cannot be achieved', said Senator Ratnayake, 'by those who are dedicated to the principles of Moral Re-Armament. Time is running out. We need big ideas and great men and women. I see some of them here. Ceylon can be a pattern of unity to all Asia. The forgotten factor in our national life is that human nature can be changed.'

Outlining the aims of the Asia Arise conference, which has brought delegates from 16 nations, Gandhi said, 'If we in Asia can solve our problems, we may be able to help Europe, Africa, America and the Red world. The whole world is sick today.'

'Our job is not to reproduce the American way of life nor any variant of the Red way of life but to reproduce in our lives the standards of absolute honesty, purity, unselfishness and love.'

'For centuries we have uttered words of wisdom. The time has come for wisdom to progress from the mouths of orators and the shelves of great libraries into the living of millions of ordinary people. I believe Ceylon and India are going to demonstrate a part-

nership and friendship that will be copied by all of Asia.'

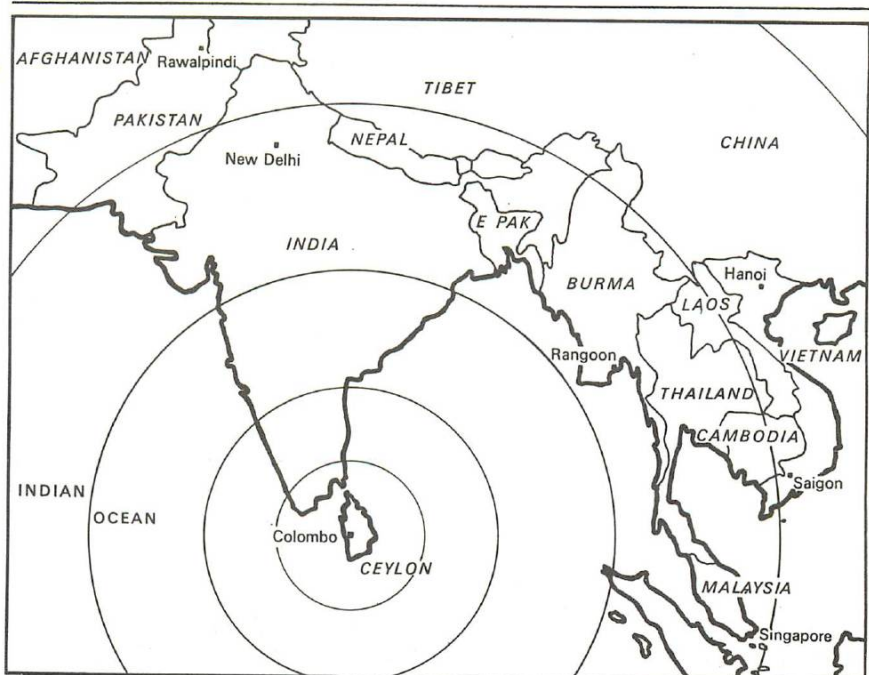
The opening session at the Samudra Banquet Hall, overlooking Colombo's famous Galle Face beach, brought together a distinguished gathering. The invitation committee of 27 leaders includes prominent Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim and Christian figures and is headed by the Senate President, the Speaker of the House, Hon S C Corea and the Chief Justice, Hon H N G Fernando. Speaking on behalf of the committee, D B Ellepola, Chairman of the Rubber Research Institute, said, 'Give us this message of Moral Re-Armament in the widest possible way you can. We know our shortcomings and our problems, which is why we have invited you here.'

Part of the Assembly has been the



The Prime Minister of Ceylon, Hon Dudley Senanayake, arrives for 'The Forgotten Factor'. With him (left) is D B Ellepola, Chairman of the Rubber Research Institute
photo de Mel

presentation of a new Indo-Ceylon version of *The Forgotten Factor*, the industrial drama by Alan Thornhill. The audience on the opening night was headed by the Prime Minister, Hon Dudley Senanayake. 'A very fine play,' said the Prime Minister as the curtain fell. He went forward and shook hands with every member of the cast and told them, 'It has been a great pleasure to see you perform.'



Radio Ceylon, one of the most powerful radio stations in the world, broadcast news of the opening of the Asia Arise Assembly on its world news service
map Smith

Flood of Solutions

CEYLON TODAY is facing many of the crucial challenges of the developing world—economic stability and progress, national unity, and the relationship with the great powers.

One of the main achievements of the present government has been a dramatic increase in rice production. Three years ago, 500,000 tons had to be imported. This year that figure has been greatly decreased and within a few years Ceylon aims to be an exporter of rice, thus saving a considerable amount of foreign exchange.

Another pressing problem is the division between different sectors of the community. As with many other countries, the unity provided by the drive for independence is now a thing of the past, and members of the Sinhala, Tamil, Buddhist, Muslim, Hindu and Christian communities are watchful of the rights of their own members.

Many Ceylonese feel wary of domination by their large neighbour, India; and this causes antagonism against the 800,000 Indian Tamils who were brought across by the British for work on the tea estates. There are also Tamils who are long standing citizens of Ceylon.

The Tamils themselves are divided into two political parties and a break-away youth group. A section of them live in the North of Ceylon, and the Sinhalese fear that they might form a breakaway state with the Tamils of South India, who are but a few miles across the water. The mistrust which has grown up between the Tamils and Sinhalese has led, since 1958, to sporadic outbreaks of violence and rioting. This communal division is one of the main issues on the government's mind.

Divisions

Divisions proliferate through Asia today. The Malaysia-Sabah dispute, and the rioting in Indonesia over Singapore's hanging of Indonesian saboteurs, are indications of the uncertainty in the region about the future. The planned British pull-out from Singapore in 1971 is causing much thought among those who plan for defence, and whatever Richard Nixon does about Vietnam, it is unlikely that stability will any longer be bolstered by strong military forces from outside.

It is becoming increasingly obvious that this essential stability will only be produced from within these nations themselves, by a partnership of men who will stand firmly for what is right and unitedly find a programme of social change. Otherwise there will be explosions of violence between the conservatives who want things to remain as they are and the Peking-line leftists who shout that the system must be smashed.

'What we need,' said Gandhi at the opening of the Asia Arise conference, 'is a flood of solutions.' At the Assembly sessions the lightning speed and



Senate President A Ratnayake opens the MRA Assembly photo de Mel

effectiveness of a programme of social change based on change in men is being demonstrated. All the delegates came with concrete evidence of how situations can be transformed when people start with themselves.

Alex Cleough, for 30 years a miners' union official from North East England, quoted Prime Minister Wilson as saying, 'Give me an increase in production of 3½ per cent and we will solve all our economic difficulties.' 'Through applying MRA,' said Cleough, 'we miners in the North-East have increased production by as high as 27 per cent.'

From India have come three Harijans from Delhi, the story of whose meeting with President Zakir Husain of India was told to this country by *The Times of Ceylon*. The day after they arrived, they were received in the Port of Colombo by the Secre-

tary of a 3,000-member dockers' union. The port until that day had been hit by a strike. The Harijans have spoken also with high officials of the government agencies responsible for economic development and at Colombo University, where student discontent is about to boil over in strike action.

Senate President Ratnayake gave a colourful reception in the Senate reception rooms for the delegates where Senators from different groups in the nation heard how MRA was bringing reconciliation between divided linguistic and political elements in North-East India and the German- and Italian-speaking South Tyrol.

The Commissioner of Labour held a symposium at which the evidence of MRA in industry was presented to the leaders of management and labour. Gandhi, in a statement that was broadcast on Radio Ceylon, called for 'a revolutionary partnership between employer and employee to end the continuing rivalry between them.'

And already the issue of communal division is being affected. Tamil journalist Guy de Fontgalland reported on the front page of the *Colombo Daily News* from the northern town of Jaffna that a conference was being arranged between the three divided Tamil parties. This development has come about largely through the change of attitude in Fontgalland himself, who attended the Panchgani conference in September. Leaders of the Tamil community are also among those who are arranging the forthcoming visit of an MRA force to Jaffna.

And already the practical news of change in people is being heard around Colombo. At an Assembly in St Thomas' College, the city's leading school which has produced five Prime Ministers, a sensation was caused when a former President of the Students Union who is now in the cast of *The Forgotten Factor* announced that he was returning 650 rupees that he had stolen from college funds. The Principal gave it back to him and told him to use the money towards the advance of MRA.

As several members of the invitation committee have stressed, Ceylon is in a unique position to demonstrate a social revolution valid for the whole of Asia because of her size and the diversity of her population. What is happening here will echo through many Asian lands in the months to come.

JOHN WILLIAMS

SWISS WOMAN MOVES MOUNTAINS FOR PEOPLE

WHILE ILO DELEGATES watch an MRA film in one room of her Geneva home, Mme Daniel Oltramare joins a team who tackle the mighty dishwasher behind the scenes—not only in the kitchen, but in the bedroom and bathroom as well! At the end of the film trays of fruit juice appear and she joins her guests as a gracious hostess who makes them feel welcome and at home in a foreign land.

Mme Oltramare has been using her spacious home in the old residential section of Geneva to receive and entertain members of the international delegations since 1946, when Caux first opened. At that time Frank Buchman gave her and her late husband, Dr Oltramare, a vision of what they as a family, living in an international centre like Geneva, could do for the world.

In increasing numbers since that time people from many countries, particularly those of Africa, Asia and Latin America, have been pouring through that home. Often it is the first time they have been received in a Swiss home. They are welcomed by Mme Oltramare, her daughter Claire-Lise, her son-in-law, Paul-Emile Dentan, and their three year old child.

For a woman who says she always chose her friends in the past and took great care with her possessions, it was not easy to open her home to many people she had never met. Through the years it has meant that practically every piece of furniture in the house has been moved several times to accommodate the guests. Even doors have been taken off their hinges—to

make room for more people. Valuable and valued china and glass ware must be entrusted to many people, often young ones, in the course of preparing and serving such large meals. At times as many as 70 have been seated for supper.

'I made the decision to use my home this way,' Mme Oltramare told me, 'and it has required opening my heart fully and without any limitations.' But she went on, 'Women who don't dare to do it don't know what they are missing, because you receive much more than you give.'

A year ago a lady from an East European country came to dinner. At the end of the evening, the lady, who clearly came from a poor background, said, 'It is absolutely revolutionary what you are doing.' Referring to the way Mme Oltramare welcomed people like herself, she said, 'I never thought a thing like this was possible in the West.' As she was leaving, this lady took both of Mme Oltramare's hands in her own and said, 'If you ever come to my city, you must stay with us.'

On another evening some friends met a group of Africans strolling along the shore of Lake Geneva and invited them home for supper. (Mme Oltramare often has surprise guests!) Moved by the evening in which people talked of the things they longed to see happening in the world, and what could happen when men decided to live by God's guidance, the guests opened their hearts and talked about their own country. One man said to Mme Oltramare that the way she had re-



Mme Daniel Oltramare

ceived them that evening was 'exactly the same thing as when our tribe meets and the oldest woman serves the whole tribe with her own hands. We will never forget it.'

Many people have helped Mme Oltramare because they want to have a part in what she is doing for the foreign delegations in Geneva. Friends often bring chairs, silver, china and glass for occasions; students and young girls help with the cooking and serving; men move furniture and ladies bring flowers; friends in the country give food, ranging from potatoes and salad to baskets of strawberries; and many, including guests, contribute toward the expenses.

One management representative from the ILO, who had nearly resigned in frustration from that body because he felt the conferences were getting nowhere, gave to help meet expenses in the home in recognition of the new hope he had found there. The young girls who come to help often give five to ten francs to cover the cost of their meal.

'You can't live Moral Re-Armament if you don't care for the whole world,' said Mme Oltramare before I left her. At a recent luncheon for distinguished overseas delegates given by the Swiss Ambassador to the International Organisations in Geneva, the Ambassador paid recognition to Mme Oltramare for the way in which she used her home to give that care to the foreign delegations in the city.

EVELYN THOMSEN

New MRA office in Geneva's International Centre

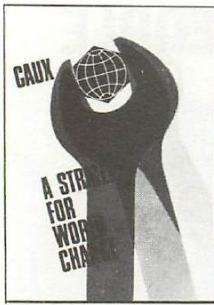
NEW MORAL RE-ARMAMENT offices were opened in the International Centre in Geneva, just opposite the ILO and UNO buildings, last week.

Paul-Emile Dentan welcomed the guests, who included Jean Humbert, Swiss Ambassador to the International Organisations, Mr Hoffman, delegate of the Foundation of the International Centre, and Mgr Aemilianos, of the Ecumenical Council of Churches. Other representatives of international organisations were also present.

Speaking on behalf of Moral Re-

Armament, Dentan expressed his gratitude to the Genevese authorities who facilitated the installation of these offices on the 9th floor of the International Centre. He also expressed his wish that better understanding might bring traditional and international Geneva ever closer together.

Henrik Schaefer, of the Caux Foundation for Moral Re-Armament, said that the international delegates in Geneva 'with their personal pre-occupations and convictions', would find a special welcome in these offices.



CAUX: STRATEGY FOR WORLD CHANGE

NOW ON SALE in English, French or German is a report of three months strategic action developed through the MRA world centre at Caux, Switzerland.

Unlike most reports it makes no recommendations. It states factually what has been done towards resolving some of the major issues facing mankind. In 48 illustrated pages its articles cover subjects such as 'A Strategy for World Change', 'Alto Adige', 'Race', 'Africa', 'Education', 'France',

'Medicine', 'Industry', and 'Finance'.

It gives extracts from some of the significant speeches made at the conference sessions during the period from early June to the end of September and the evaluation of Caux by the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* and others of the world's newspapers.

The chief editor is Philippe Mottu and among the contributors are John Caulfeild, Pierre Spoerri, Conrad Hunte, Isaac Amata, Peter Kormann, Michel Sentis, Gordon Wise and Daniel Mottu.

Five shillings (Postage Extra) MRA, 4 Hays Mews, London W1X 7RS.

'Available: A New Type of Man.' This is the title of the Christmas Conference at Caux, the MRA centre in Switzerland, from 21 December 1968 to 5 January 1969.

Mass said for the Caulfeilds

FATHER PAUL BOSSARD said Holy Mass in memory of John and Elisabeth Caulfeild at Saint Anne's Church, Abbey Orchard Street, London, on Sunday night, November 10.

Father Bossard said to a packed congregation, 'John and Elisabeth lived under the guidance of God. Everybody who met them realised that every word they said was true, it was their conviction. They didn't want anything but simply to serve the truth, to serve God.'

Six hundred people attended a memorial to the Caulfeilds in the Westminster on the morning of Remembrance Sunday. Thirty-three of the former Allied Servicemen whom John Caulfeild had led on to the stage at the Westminster Theatre's dedication in 1946, pledged themselves to continue the Caulfeilds' battle.

In my view

GOD RUNS THINGS BEST

A LIFE GIVEN FOR GOD to direct it can be very exciting and unexpected. One day you may work in Paris with the musical show *Anything to Declare?* two weeks later you may find yourself sitting in a train with busy Marathi-speaking ladies on your way to the hill-station of Panchgani in Western India.

When I left India in March this year after a six-months' stay, I was determined to go back there. India is a country with many problems, but when people see how an answer to some of them can be worked out, and the part they can play, they are very eager to assist. There is a need for people from other countries who have a vision for the people of India.

I am a nurse by training. I was invited back much sooner than I expected. Rajmohan Gandhi was taking a force of *Asia Arise* on a tour of Ceylon. I had little time to prepare myself and to raise the money I needed for my journey and stay. But where God guides, He provides—through people. I spent one day sending out 66 letters and the response I got was

overwhelming. People are so generous and proud to have a compatriot from Holland working with the many other Europeans and Asians in this part of the world that before I left five days later, I had the money for my journey and for nine months' stay in India and the other countries. This includes the 1286 francs with which my French friends sent me off before I left Paris.

I once decided that my life is not my own, but that God would run it. And every time I let Him do that, my faith builds up that He may be able to run affairs far better than we humans do. So why not let Him?

MARIA DRIESSEN

Pamphlet Service

WHAT ARE the men of Moral Re-Armament saying about Faith, Race, the Commonwealth, Industry, Drugs, Europe, Human Nature, and Moral Re-Armament itself?

These are some of the subjects that have been dealt with in recent pamphlets published by MRA.

So that you can receive these pamphlets regularly we have decided to provide an *MRA Pamphlet Service*.

This is how it works: you send us £1. We send you the pamphlets within 24 hours of publication. Your £1 lasts until we have spent the money on the pamphlets and their postage.

Then, as a bonus, we will send you

the next two pamphlets free of charge.

For overseas subscribers who would like to receive the pamphlets by air we recommend that you send £2 for the service.

Due next week is *Patriots and Traitors* by Mrs Patrick Wolrige Gordon. To get this pamphlet quickly and future pamphlets send your money to:

Michael Smith, 4 Hays Mews, London, W1X 7RS; or Rob Pattison, Tirley Garth, Tarporey, Cheshire. (Please make cheques payable to Moral Re-Armament).

MICHAEL SMITH

ROB PATTISON

P S This is an ideal Christmas gift for your friends.