

AUSTRALIA 'Asia's Anchor'

says Rajmohan Gandhi

THE LEADERS of the Commonwealth meet in London next week in a greater number than ever before. Yet it is said that the future of the whole association may be under discussion. At this time the words of Rajmohan Gandhi to Australia may hold the key not only for Australia but for all the Commonwealth.

Speaking at the opening session of the Moral Re-Armament conference in Melbourne he said that Australian participation in Asia will be 'a factor of incalculable value to Asians and will satisfy the desire of Australians for great and risky challenges.'

'We cannot expect Australia to be Asia's policeman or Asia's Santa Claus. But Asia would like to think that in Australia a great-hearted, strong, resilient and resourceful brother exists. This brother cannot only help dealing with crises when they take place, but in building Asian societies in a way that they do not take place with the same frequency.'

'In the storm in and around this part of the world Australia could be Asia's anchor because of the spirit of her people. You could help the races of Asia by the character, honesty and unselfishness of your society here and by sending such men guided by God to our countries.'

Gandhi said that now was the time for 'statesmen, politicians and all responsible men of South East Asia, Australia and New Zealand to give the crucial countries of this region the preventative medicine we failed to give in Vietnam—a way of life that can remove rivalry and hate between people who do not want Communism, provide honest, incorruptible leaders and win over those who are potential Viet Cong in the region.'

President Suharto of Indonesia had told Gandhi, 'I want to be guided by God. When leaders disobey God the people suffer.'

Philip Lynch, the Minister for the Army, proposed the vote of thanks to Gandhi. He spoke of having observed his work in India and said, 'Gandhi has done important and challenging things this morning in highlighting the continuing and vital need for this country's involvement in South East Asia.' Lynch pointed to the need for all to 'approach everyday situations against a backdrop of a common set of objective standards'.

Journalists from all the Melbourne and national dailies and from the Australian Broadcasting Commission clustered round Madame Irène Laure,

the former head of three million Socialist woman of France. She had told the assembly how she had been cured of her hatred of the Germans and of the international repercussions of her apology to them.

'She is the most fantastic person I have ever met,' said one young journalist. 'What she said is most important journalistically, but also very important to me personally.'

Australia's national daily *The Australian* reported her as saying: 'I know we go into space. Now we are giants. But we are dwarfs in our way of thinking. The world must rid itself of its hatreds and stride into the future with a Christian attitude. It is absolutely essential we let this force of

Continued on page 4

The Dutch Police give a warm welcome to the cast of 'Anything to Declare?' at the Arnhem Police School. The European musical revue comes to the Westminster Theatre this month.

photo Franzon



Ideas that heal and help and unite

Roland Wilson

speaking in the Westminster Theatre
on Sunday 29 December said:

I HAD SENT TO ME yesterday the first copies of the invitation for the conference at our MRA centre in Panchgani, India, which begins on 15 February. In it are given various instances of modern miracles that have affected nations. What struck me was that most of those miracles had not happened one year ago when we were meeting in this theatre. They are fresh miracles of the living God.

What has happened in the North-East of India is an unfinished task, but I was in Delhi for some time this year and I know just what has been begun.

I had in my hand yesterday the invitation from Mr Chaliha, the Chief Minister of Assam, and Mr Stanley Nichols-Roy, one of his principal and embittered and long-standing opponents in that North-Eastern area. They corporately and jointly with many others invited Rajmohan Gandhi and his international force to hold an assembly in three weeks' time in Assam in order to consolidate the work that has been done and enable it to spread out to the whole of India.

My Indian friends will agree with me that it is a new thing that the people of Assam, those tragically divided groups, with their effect on Burma, East Pakistan and Thailand and China, should begin now to think for the whole of India and beyond their own concerns.

Through films

These are tremendous events. I can see in my mind's eye now when two or three of those men who had been at that time bitterly divided, sat on a sofa in a house in Delhi and watched the films that came from this theatre. And the second night, the Chief Min-

ister said to me, 'What is the secret of the serenity which I find here?'

When you march out from your television set leaving the warmth of that armchair and the television behind you and go and wear out shoe-leather bringing the people to this theatre, you may think, 'Well, what am I achieving?'

I tell you this, you are setting the pattern for the ordinary human being of the future who carries his own nation and the nations of the world on his heart.

I honour the men and women throughout London who have done this. For seven long years, eight times a week, the message of God's truth and man's hope has gone out from this stage. Then it has been put into films and has gone out to the millions. The people come in from the world to this theatre and the people go out from this theatre to the world.

You have to go round the world before you fully evaluate it. Every place you go you find the people who have found something fresh and have taken it and interpreted it in their own way on their own initiative with their own energy and passion and enthusiasm for their countries.

Through plays

If you bring the people of Britain and the people who are being entertained and work in Britain from other lands, to this theatre—and I tell you they are coming—the ideas that are born in them and the fresh spirit that emerges from this theatre and goes out to the nation will bring fresh hope for the world.

I believe many of us need to make new decisions. Tell me this, does a strategy come first, or does a decision come first? Of course, decision comes first. You may have to make decisions before you see how you are going to fulfil them. Has any great enterprise in the world been achieved except by people making the decisions first and working them out afterwards?

I would like to make very simple decisions for myself about this theatre. I want to see it regularly packed to overflowing. I feel that is God's intention. I believe we are only at the beginning of its fate and future and destiny. Somebody has got to re-light the spark of destiny in people. It has been snuffed out and at a moment when people are imposing on Britain and pushing out from Britain ideas which

poison and damage and harm, this theatre is bringing to Britain and sending out from Britain the ideas which heal and help and unite and answer the tragic fragmentation of this age.

Nationalism is out of date and impurity is out of date and blaming other people is out of date and, I may say, revenge is out of date. But from this theatre now can go those ideas which the whole world is most, most anxiously waiting for and the whole world is more than ever ready to accept.

If this New Year we could, from our seats here in this theatre and from our sometimes a little too comfortable seats in our homes, take on and take out this answer I believe we could have something written at the end of 1969 which would be a very, very genuine and profound and hope-bringing part of world history.

'India hungry for the best from the West'

Mrs Bhattacharjee, grand-daughter of Mahatma Gandhi, told the Moral Re-Armament Conference at Caux, Switzerland, last Saturday, 'My brother Rajmohan and I have taken on the battle for India and we want the help of the British again and of the whole world.'

Mrs Bhattacharjee, whose husband is working with the FAO in Rome, said, 'When I tell my Italian friends that in India our souls are hungry for something superior they are a little surprised because they think India is a land of spiritualism and yogism and our souls should not hunger for anything more. But we are looking for something more. We are hungry for the best from the West. We don't want a Western image in the form of sex or a bottle or hate. We have enough of that and we are trying to get rid of it.'

'The West without Moral Re-Armament cannot give much to India. We want the West to fight with us in this battle of Moral Re-Armament for truth. We want our lives to be God-led. And we will win.'

ALTO ADIGE: NO LONGER A SCAR IN THE HEART OF EUROPE

by Fred Ledanius

250,000 German-speaking people live in South Tyrol, a part of the Austrian Empire ceded to Italy after the first world war. The problem of this minority within Italy has flared up repeatedly in the last 50 years. Recently it has been getting worldwide attention with the emergence of a liberation front, sabotage and many arrests.

RIVEDO BOLZANO, twenty months ago—my first visit: empty streets, glittering with hoar frost, street crossings deserted, and walls grey in the misty light of dawn.

I had been sent up here by the Dutch Television to record a programme about the Alto Adige problem, as part of a series of reports on European minorities. That is my job. Every day we journalists are faced with the problems that most trouble the world. But too often our pens, instead of clarifying the situation, become cold vivisectional instruments which aggravate rather than cure the disease. For this reason Moral Re-Armament is like a thorn in our flesh to remind us of our primary duty: to be heralds of the truth and at the same time harbingers of freedom. For the truth—and only the truth—will make us free.

From Rivedo Bolzano station that early morning I could see the old hotel opposite with its shuttered windows,

which had been made into Police Headquarters. There were some police parading the street, numbed with cold from their night watch, with scarves round their necks and machine guns under their arms.

I spent three days in the Alto Adige, three days in the course of which I interviewed, one by one, the men who were at the very heart of the problem and who could become the architects of the answer.

Once again it was not a question of deciding 'who was right, but what was right'. Perhaps I had never before felt, as I did up there in the Alto Adige, the depth and the relevance of these words of Frank Buchman's. During those three days I thought to myself that it might be the destiny of this disputed piece of land to become the proving ground, and at the same time the tangible evidence, of the kind of miracle that happens when men accept a new kind of responsibility and decide to fulfil the task assigned to them by God.

Twenty months have gone by. Three delegations from the Alto Adige have gone, one after the other, to Caux. A bridge has been built from Bolzano to Caux, linking the Alto Adige with the world. And in Caux the representatives of the two ethnic groups have listened and have spoken.

Mitterdorfer, member of the Rome Parliament representing the South Tyrol Popular Party, said: 'We came here because we were in need of help, and we have been given help. Now we must think how to help others.'

Magnago, head of the Provincial Government of Bolzano and President of the South Tyrol Popular Party, declared: 'Next time we meet together to continue our negotiations, the bitter words of the past will have been cancelled by the experiences we have lived through together in Caux and by the friendship we have found with each other.'

Bertorelle, Vice-President of the

Regional Council, represented the Italian-speaking community. He said: 'For twenty years we have been seeking a solution to our problem, but each of us defended our own and our group's interests, without attempting to understand the feelings of the others and without sufficient consideration of the problems we have in common. There was goodwill, but that is not enough. Here in Caux our goodwill has become practical.'

I was in Bolzano again quite recently. The same streets glittered with hoar frost, there were police at the street crossings and the grey walls were gay with many-coloured election posters. But something had changed.



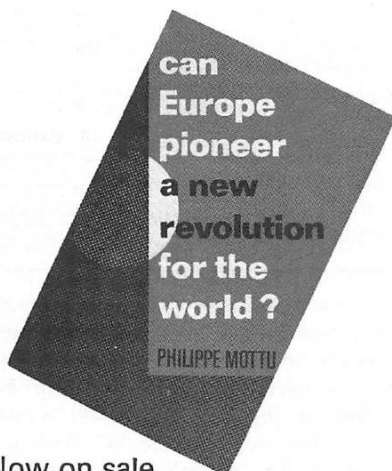
Bertorelle, Magnago and Mitterdorfer speak to the International Assembly at Caux.
photo Franzone

My colleagues of the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* described it in these words, 'One feels that a new climate has come in South Tyrol. No more bombs, no more violence; no blood has flowed since the summer. It seems that a troubled period which has lasted for ten years has come to an end.'

Bolognini, the new Mayor of Bolzano, agrees. He says: 'A new spirit is beginning to take hold. At last we can speak about tomorrow, about the tomorrow we must build together.'

The Bishop, Msgr Gargitter, confirms this in the course of a long speech in which he addresses us with words of congratulations and hope.

The Alto Adige: No longer a scar in the heart of Europe, but a source of new life for the world. I said this on television. I should like to repeat it on the threshold of the new tomorrow called 1969.



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FACT and FAITH

THE FIRST MESSAGE that came back from the other side of the moon was, 'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.' It was a clear proclamation to the world that men of science and knowledge need not be men of little faith.

And down on earth some journalists were including faith along with fact. 'The road from Bedlam to Bethlehem,' says the leader writer in *The Sunday Telegraph*, 'is open to those who wish to take it. We wish all our readers a very happy journey.' And the following day Cecil King in the turn-over article in *The Times* wrote, 'One of our Nobel prize-winners told me that the great scientific advances are not made by a process of pure reasoning . . . The great scientist knows instinctively which will be the significant experiment, and it is thus that the great scientific advances come about. And "intuition" is a neutral word for knowledge or wisdom from some source outside oneself, and if not from the source of all wisdom then from whence?'

The call and challenge of Moral Re-Armament for 1969 is, as it has been all along, that 'the only sane people in an insane world are those guided by God.' It is a call to men of every faith and no faith, to East and West alike. 1969 looks ahead to the achievement of the impossible in the realm of the human heart.

A sane, sane world

There are as yet no wars in space, but watch out for what will happen when we start fighting over it. Reasonableness would have ended the fighting in Biafra and everywhere else long ago. There are reasonable solutions on paper to racial conflict, the trade gap, broken homes, teachers' salaries and maladjusted children. But instead we hurtle to Bedlam. 'It's a mad, mad world' quotes our leader writer.

So in 1969 we set as our target a sane, sane world—starting with the Commonwealth Conference, and going on to all the other deliberations that will take place this year.

The possibility of moving together along the road to sanity lies before every delegate to any conference. It

Continued from page 1

MRA grow around us if we want to avoid catastrophe in our countries. We must all fight to our deaths for a better world. If we do not do this it will be treason to our past. If its ideas are lived out there will be food and work for everybody. I believe it is the new kind of socialism.'

Tianethone Chantharasy, the Chargé d'Affaires for Laos in Australia, told the conference that he had

In my view

Vietnam: after the war—what?

FOR THE LAST THREE YEARS I have been in France, in Switzerland and in Britain learning how to bring an answer to the hatred, the corruption and the division which make Vietnam as she is now.

The Vietnamese Ambassador to Berne told me last year: 'What worries me most is not so much the war but the time after the war.' He said that he really wanted peace but confessed that he did not know how to deal with the bitterness and despair of the people.

He felt, as I do, that more than technical or military aid, we shall need people who are able to teach us a way of living to rebuild our country. I think how much the French and American people have given us of their money and technical training and yet we are not only ungrateful to them but we also hate them.

We speak a lot about the war, and blame the Americans or the Vietcong, but we often do not see that in many Vietnamese homes there is division and war. My family counts among these.

I hated my father and my step-

is no more impossible for the statesmen of the nations to reach that destination than it was once thought to be to reach the moon.

The discoveries of such a journey, on which any one man or woman can lead the way, will transform the history of mankind, and make the work and wealth of the world available to all and for the exploitation of none.

seen hope for peace in South East Asia. With MRA Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam could become 'the cornerstone of peace. Without MRA you can put millions of dollars into this area and cannot restore peace. But with the vision of changing your enemies and making them into friends peace can be restored in the area.'

The Melbourne conference was attended by 400 delegates who came from 13 nations.



mother to the extent I wanted to leave home. I did leave home taking with me a strong desire for revenge. Then I met people who helped me to see beyond myself to the needs of my country and of the world, and who taught me how to listen to God.

I have tried that and have obeyed that 'interior push' to apologise to my parents. As a result, my hatred slowly melted and my family have found a new relationship with each other.

This simple experience has given me hope and perspective that the bitterness, which is very real in my people whatever its cause, can be completely cured by God. I am ready to pay the price for it.

I need people from Europe to help me give the secret of listening to God and obeying Him to the Vietnamese who are by thousands studying and working here.

Only then shall we have real peace, the peace which will be not only in treaties, but also in the hearts of our people.

DANG THI HAI

Those who honestly want to end bloodshed and hunger can risk pride and prestige in the service of humanity. The answers we need will not be found in juggling with rival power blocs, but in courageous decisions taken in the hearts of possibly only one or two men.

The question is, who are they going to be?

MFV