

# MRA

## INFORMATION SERVICE



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### PRESIDENTIAL RECEPTIONS

Three South American Presidents have received Mr. Peter Howard in the past two weeks. President Castelo Branco of Brazil, receiving Howard at the Larangeiras Palace, Rio de Janeiro, urged Moral Re-Armament to concentrate on industrialists, workers and youth.

President Luis Giannattosio of Uruguay received Howard, Dame Flora MacLeod of MacLeod and Rajmohan Gandhi of India in Montevideo. They were among the last people he received before his death. He told them, 'I trust that your work will envelop all humanity.' The Uruguayan Foreign Minister, after Howard addressed a Rotary lunch, rose to speak in support of MRA. Howard and his party are now in Argentina, where they were received on 10 February by the President, Dr. Arturo Illia.

### AFRICAN SOLUTION

*Voice of the Hurricane*, film of Africa today, opened in Capetown last week. *Die Bürger*, government daily, wrote, under the heading 'Dealing with the Political Problem in Africa', 'The film suggests that a good spirit and sound human relations are essential for any solution.' The Mayor, the Minister for Bantu Education and M.P.s were at the première.

### BRAVE ENTRY

*Time and Tide* reports, 'Rajmohan Gandhi, who is leading and inspiring an anti-corruption drive in India, has started a news magazine called *Himmat*.' *Himmat* is on sale in 40 countries as well as in every Indian State. In London it is available on the day of publication.

*South Pacific Post*, New Guinea, writes, 'Asia's new newspaper voice has made a brave entry.' *The Pioneer*, Lucknow, comments, '*Himmat* promises to be a popular weekly, judging from the high quality of the material included in it. It has indeed started in brilliant fashion.'

## WILBERFORCE AND WESTMINSTER TODAY

SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL once said, 'A nation without a conscience is a nation without a soul. A nation without a soul is a nation that cannot live.'

Two nights ago, at the Westminster Theatre, a Parliamentarian who fought for Britain's conscience was recalled in *Mr. Wilberforce, M.P.* Members of Parliament—on stage and in the audience; Wilberforce on stage and his descendants in the stalls, and leaders of the Anti-Slavery Society were present at the première of Alan Thornhill's new play about the great Abolitionist.

'The way to honour past greatness is to end present smallness,' says Thornhill. 'The role of the Westminster Theatre is to show a nation that honours greatness how to achieve it again.'

In the preface to his play the author writes, 'Every Member of Parliament, every citizen of the realm, could, if he chose, display something of the courage, the un-resting energy, the love of country, the humanity and the readiness to stand alone for great causes which we justly admire in others.'

#### Vividly clear

The new play, says Dr. Benson Perkins, former Moderator of the Free Church Federal Council, is particularly important because Wilberforce's 'work for social righteousness is of striking significance for the present day and this the plot makes vividly clear.'

The plays at the Westminster, he adds, 'are a valuable contribution to right thinking and Christian living, as well as providing genuine enjoyment. . . . This medium is being used for entertainment of the highest order which is also something very much more.'

The Westminster, Dr. Perkins says, as a professional West End theatre, is devoted 'to the highest standards of dramatic art'.

'I hope that everyone in the Churches will take an early opportunity of seeing this play.'

# AN IMMENSE FIELD TO WORK IN

by His Eminence Cardinal-Elect Angelo Rossi, Archbishop of Sao Paulo, Brazil\*

**M**ORAL RE-ARMAMENT aims to play its part in solving the tremendous crisis in which humanity in our times is involved. This it seeks to do by the elimination of the basic causes of present-day ills, especially the materialism and immorality in man who, far from God and slave to his passions, loses his dignity and moral value.

Only men of worth can build a better world. That is why MRA emphasises that each person must return to the effective practice of human, and Christian, virtues such as honesty, purity, unselfishness and love. As men change, homes, industries and even nations are made new. For men who are morally reinforced will never accept inadequate or unjust social structures.

The man now in charge of Moral Re-Armament, Mr. Peter Howard, has described the movement in these correct and precise terms: 'Moral Re-Armament is not, never was and never will be a church, sect, organization, alternative to the Catholic Church, indifferent to the

claims of the Catholic Church, or regarding one faith or another as incidental. It regards the whole of humanity as in need of moral change and of deeper knowledge of God. It is not a destination but a path; not an end but a gateway.'

There is no doubt that MRA has sought out a language in which to talk to the people and implant in them the need for moral change. The success of its plays and films is proof of this. Here is an immense field—radio, cinema, theatre and T.V.—for MRA to work in, and inculcate human dignity and the love of God and of other men.

I salute with sympathy and applause this task of renewal which MRA has undertaken to which many Catholics in Brazil and elsewhere have lent valiant support without thereby compromising their loyalty and love for the Church.

\*From the foreword to 'An Ideology for Today', by Peter Orgelmeister, published in Brazil last month.

## SALUTE FROM BRAZIL'S FISHERMEN

by our Latin American Correspondent

**G**IANT Brazil and her neighbour Uruguay welcome the giant job Peter Howard and his colleagues have taken on.

A crane operator on Rio's docks, Damasio Cardoso, a portworkers' leader, addressed Howard at a dinner for 350 given by the dockers: 'You have taken up a bigger responsibility than any Chief of State—the continuation of the work of the unforgettable Frank Buchman.'

Cardoso said, 'I am a man without education but I understand what you say and know that what you live is the right thing.' MRA taught men to hate hate and to love love more than hatred. 'This is what Christ taught. It is the basis of our Christian democracy.'

The visiting delegation was flown by the government 1,500 miles to Brazil's North-East, a region of desperate poverty.

It is a region of contrasts—beautiful homes with swimming pools alongside hovels. Many have lost enthusiasm for last spring's revolution that put President Branco in and exiled Goulart to forestall a Communist coup.

Rich and poor were early at the airport gates of Fortaleza, a city of half a million, to greet Howard and his party, with the President of the State Assembly, the Governor's representative, the Mayor and officials.

'Jangadeiros', the fishermen who earn their living on balsa-log rafts propelled by a single sail, had set up a flag-decked 'jangada' in honour of MRA's work.

The bare-footed fishermen, scorched by sun to a dark mahogany, showed the dockers' film *Men of Brazil* under the palm trees to crowds on the beach that evening.

In pulsating Sao Paulo, southern city of five million, a new skyscraper is completed every week. The State Governor told the MRA delegation at his palace: 'You can count on us for everything we can do to help the thrust of Moral Re-Armament. Our transportation system is at your disposal.'

He told Howard that the State had 15 million of Brazil's 80 million people and supplied three-quarters of the national budget. Howard told him, 'One Governor governed by God could change the destiny of Brazil. The world will go the way Latin America goes. Brazil will go the way Sao Paulo goes. Sao Paulo will go the way the Governor goes.'

In Uruguay, Brazil's neighbour of three million people to the south, the Defence Minister arranged a meeting for ideological training. It was attended at his order by 100 officers of the Armed Forces and addressed by Peter Howard. The Papal Nuncio received Gandhi and members of the visiting group for an hour.

Dame Flora MacLeod opened a T.V. programme in honour of her 87th birthday by speaking in Spanish. Howard, Gandhi and Masahide Shibusawa, a member of the Japanese industrial and political family, gave an hour-and-a-half T.V. interview to press and political representatives.



# Parliament was his Battleground

By ALAN THORNHILL, from his Preface to 'Mr. Wilberforce, M.P.'

**W**ILBERFORCE was a man of Westminster, and his greatest battles were fought on the floor of the House of Commons.

Sir Winston Churchill summed up the central conflict dramatized in this play in a passage in his *History of the English Speaking Peoples*. He describes the Prime Minister, William Pitt, 'incorruptible and hard-working', set between two powerful influences: on one side Henry Dundas, 'a good-humoured, easy-going materialist, embodying the spirit of eighteenth century politics, with its buying up of seats, its full-blooded enjoyment of office, its secret influences and its polished scepticism'; on the other, William Wilberforce, Pitt's closest friend, 'the keeper of the young Minister's conscience, who belonged to the new generation which questioned this cheerful complacency. . . . Between these contrary characters stood Chatham's son.'

## At home today

William Wilberforce was born in 1759. When he was ten, James Watt took out a patent for something he called a steam-engine. When he was twenty, the first iron bridge in Britain was built across the Severn. Before he was sixty he could travel by steam-ship to France at twelve miles an hour. The wonders and horrors of the Industrial Revolution were in full flood. By that time, also, Wilberforce, as a Member of Parliament, had had to face financial crisis at home, revolution in France, a major war, the imminent threat of invasion by Napoleon, and a shattering rise in the cost of living. People were worried over automation and the population explosion. Perhaps Wilberforce would feel more at home today than we think.

He would also understand today's fierce drive to destroy God. In France in his day a prostitute was enthroned on the altar of Notre Dame as 'The Goddess of Reason'. In England, in a more suave and polite manner, it was the fashion to worship the mind of man and sneer at faith in God. Samuel Butler wrote, 'It had come to be taken for granted that Christianity is not so much a subject for inquiry, but that it is now discovered to be fictitious.'

It was an age also of extreme callousness and cruelty. A pleasant Sunday afternoon jaunt at that time was to go to the asylum at Bedlam and poke sticks at the wretched inmates on display behind bars. Certain films and *avant garde* plays today probably provide somewhat

the same sensations. There was a flood of pornographic literature—some publishers are diligently digging selections of it up again today. The horrors of the slave traffic appal us. Yet we are coming to accept savagery and organized crime as part of our own way of life.

And at the same time hope and a new current of change were setting in. It was an age of young men in the ascendant. Pitt and Wilberforce were both Members of Parliament at twenty-one. At twenty-five Pitt was Prime Minister and Wilberforce, Member for Yorkshire, one of the most influential men in Parliament. John Wesley and his followers were giving back to thousands of Englishmen a sense of calling and of their dignity and

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All through the autumn, under the surface of depression and the cross-currents of defeatism, the tide of popular resolve had been rising. . . . The long years of apathy and retreat were over: rising from the last ditch of disaster and peril, the country prepared to wrestle with destiny.

That November (1797), under the shadow of defeat and invasion, a curious electric current ran through the land. Wilberforce's *Practical View*, with its scorching contempt for moral complacency and unprofitable respectability, enjoyed for a religious book an almost sensational sale: forced by the all-pervading threat to existence to examine their consciences and the roots of belief, men found a new quickening of faith.

ARTHUR BRYANT, in *The Years of Endurance*

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destiny under God, with far-reaching social consequences.

The time was ripe for a new conception of statesmanship and the young Wilberforce was ready.

All the parliamentary speeches in the play, except one, come from the official records. The Journal and the letters in the play are authentic, including the letter from John Wesley. It was the last letter Wesley wrote.

The characters of Pitt, Dundas, Newton, Thornton and Trotter represent the real men at the heart of the struggle. Even Mrs. Wilberforce (since the publication of the charming memoirs of Thornton's daughter Marianne) may be recognized as nearer to the fluttery yet formidable creature of the play than to the self-effacing paragon of the official biographies. The Speaker and the Admiral are composite characters. Sinclair is an invention. But if sea captains become parsons, as Newton, the famous hymn-writer, did, why should their chief mates not become their vergers?

More important than these details is the challenge of Wilberforce himself. He so lived and fought as to put England in the forefront of the moral leadership of the world.

—Continued over

**FRONT PAGE PICTURE.** Who is the real one? Colin Farrell in the title role in Alan Thornhill's play, with the wax effigy of Wilberforce at Madame Tussaud's.



## Homemaker's Recipe

MRS. PRABHA MATHUR is a merry Delhi housewife with a twinkle in her eye and a son of two years whose greatest joy is 'talking' on the telephone.

'My son was born a few months after the Chinese invasion of Indian territory,' she says. 'His uncle is a soldier on the border. I myself was a refugee, coming from Lahore to Simla at partition time.

'Most parents have the attitude, "I will do what I want but my child must not do what he wants." For example, many parents try and stop their children seeing the movies they want to. But I know there are some movies I shouldn't see myself. If children realise that parents have definite standards on these things that they do and do not do, the children will have the same.'

Mrs. Mathur gives a recipe for a happy home: 'My husband and I have decided on no secrets, no fights and no bluffing. Ours was an arranged marriage and the day after our wedding my husband said, "Now

we are married, let's start getting to know each other.'" He told me all about his life, the pleasant and the unpleasant things.

'It was not the picture I had, and yet it was not unexpected. I had wanted to live in a dream world. But I was grateful that he had the courage to say these things.

'It gave me courage to be honest with him myself. I thought he was a man who would understand—not high and mighty. They were painful things, but once we got them out it was such a freedom, we had nothing to hide and could enjoy life.'

It is clear on her face that she does enjoy life. 'And I have decided to live openly with no pretending. Then I don't affect people around me with moods, which is cruelty to them for no fault of theirs.

'My husband and I have decided we are going to give our lives for what God wants us to do and for our country, and to make a new sort of world for our son to live in.'

*From the Indian weekly paper 'Himmat'*

### PARLIAMENT WAS HIS BATTLEGROUND—continued

But admiration for past greatness does not justify the acceptance of present smallness. Today we face the unpalatable truth that our nation, linked for generations with certain standards of character and excellence that led the world, is now increasingly recognized as a prime exponent of laxness, godlessness and the second rate.

And yet, even in these very recent days, we have again shown our deep longing for something more. We sense, though dimly, that we are still meant to walk with destiny and to be indomitable for the right. Every Member of Parliament, every citizen of the realm, could, if he chose, display something of the courage, the unrelenting energy, the love of country, the humanity, and the readiness to stand alone for great causes which we justly admire in others.

Wilberforce may help to show the way. His record, especially in the later part of his life, was not perfect. There were important things he did not comprehend. But he had the grace and the courage to tackle frontally the two thorniest issues of his day: the reformation of manners—or as we might say, the moral rearmament—of Britain, and the abolition of the Slave Trade.

In doing so he risked his reputation, he sacrificed his career, he brought on himself the dislike of the King, the wrath of the Establishment and the fierce opposition of politicians, church leaders and businessmen. He endangered his life, impaired his health and spent his fortune. And he lived to see his work accomplished, whereby humanity has taken one of its boldest and best steps forward in the whole of our history.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

**Helsinki**—*Voice of the Hurricane* was shown in a Finnish town forty miles from Leningrad. Five school boards have recommended the film as 'educationally valuable.'

**Paris**—£8,000 has been raised towards bringing Peter Howard's plays to France in the next twelve months.

**Lausanne**—*The Ladder* has been performed in French in 27 villages in the canton of Vaud.

**Bonn**—100 performances of *Through the Garden Wall* in German have been given in Austria, Switzerland and the Federal Republic.

**Milan**—400 members of the Catholic Mothers' Club saw *A Nation is Marching*, the film of Rajmohan Gandhi's revolution of character.

**London**—Half a million seats have been sold for Westminster Theatre productions since the present series began three and a quarter years ago. 15,000 children saw *Give a Dog a Bone*. Attendance at this pantomime for the eight weeks' run was 97 per cent.

## Perspectives

The spirit of service is sleeping capital. Put it into circulation, and you will save the energy now wasted in class warfare. You will double the standard of living without cost. You can set the pace for a new economy.

PHILLIPPE SCHWEISGUTH

No one is ever the last great man. God constantly raises up new ones. But if men of good will do not respond to his challenge, leadership will be taken by those who want power for themselves.

MARY WILSON

Great innovations never come from above; they invariably come from below . . . (from) the much derided silent folk of the land—those who are less infected with academic prejudices than great celebrities are wont to be.

C. G. JUNG