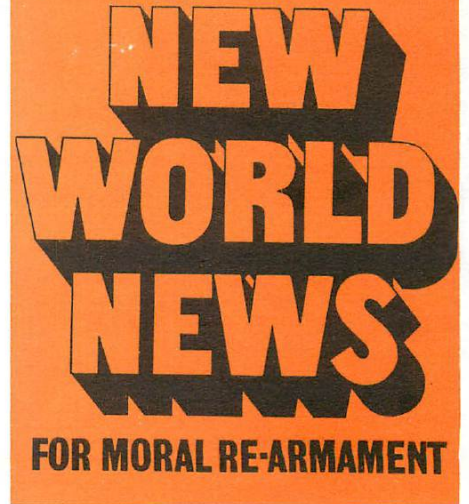


●SONG OF ASIA will be continuing its New Delhi run in March. The *Times of India* calls the Asian musical 'an unpretentious, philosophical experience. In a pageant of song, dance and drama, 48 men and women from 14 countries bravely attempt to break the chain of hate within us. Through episodic snapshots that span several countries and thousands of miles *Song of Asia* looks at the past and the present and also into the future.' The reviewer says that the cast perform well and maintain a steady pace. 'But what impressed most is the utter sincerity of the company.'

The *National Herald* describes the show as 'clean, entertaining and exhilarating.'

●THE FILM *Freedom* was introduced to the leading secondary school of his home town by M O Elebesunu, who plays the part of the King in the film, and has recently been appointed Chairman of Nigeria's Mid-Western State Board of Education. The whole school, Annunciation College, and many of the staff watched with intense interest throughout the performance.

●'SO what's the alternative?' is a new pamphlet containing a talk given to the Scottish 'Women of the Hour' by Dr Frances McAll. Its price is 10p, postage 4p, or 10 copies 80p, postage 10p from MRA Books, 54 Lyford Road, London SW18 3JJ.



●MOST SCHOOLS and government and church leaders in Hong Kong now have copies of the Chinese edition (above) of *The Black and White Book*.

The Bishop of Hong Kong, Rt Rev Gilbert Baker, recommending the book, writes, '*The Black and White Book* is a worth-while compilation of courageous experiments in reconciliation in different areas of social and personal life. A greater willingness to recognize our own failures, and to tell others we are sorry is a first step to better relations. Honesty in facing realities both good and bad, and a readiness to change—these too are necessary for better understanding between man and his neighbour. For the Christian reconciliation and changed lives come from the initiative of God.'

'This book may help many to open their hearts and minds to the changes which God is already making; and so to help us in our task as Christians which is to listen to what the Spirit is saying to the Churches and to act upon what we have.'

●'NEW ZEALAND could have cure for situation in world today,' was a headline last week in the *Wellington Evening Post*. It carried an interview with Gordon Wise, Secretary of MRA in Britain, who has been touring the country with an international force. After visiting Auckland and Hamilton they were guests in Wairoa and other Maori centres including the home of the Maori Queen. They met with leaders of the church, industry, education and agriculture as well as with people from Samoa, Tonga and Fiji.

●'WHO is to govern Britain?', the statement which has been reproduced in many British newspapers, has also been commented on widely abroad and been translated into different languages. The *Malta News* carried it under the headline 'The ideal government—the view of the average voter.'



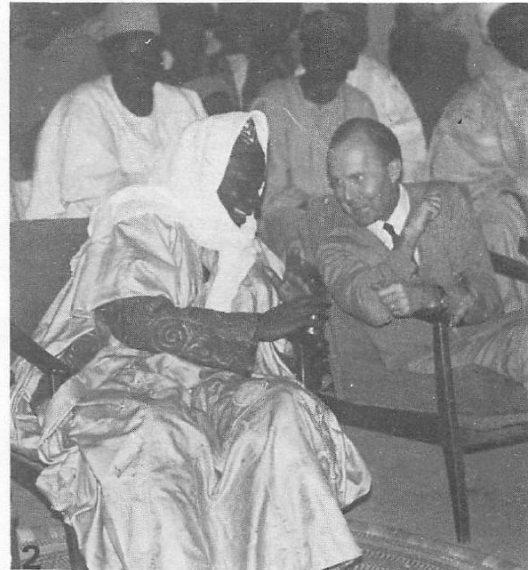
●IN THE WAKE of interest following the speech of Conrad Hunte to the Oxford University Africa Society two weeks ago, their President, Stephen Haisaid from Rhodesia, last week presented the film *A Man for all People*.

Afterwards he chaired a lively discussion among the members from 12 countries, relating his own personal and political experiences which compare with those of the late Dr William Nkomo whose life

is featured in the film.

'I was blind with hate,' he recollected, 'and thought I could never be happy unless every white man were driven out of my country. Maybe this spirit was humanly justified after some deeply wounding experiences sustained in those early days. Recently, however, I have come in touch with certain white men who were totally different and gave me hope. I learned to listen to the Almighty. Whoever seizes by the sword will surely face dispossession by the sword; it is not a long-term solution. I have begun to feel a positive direction and purpose again, more effective than violence. In terms of change I am convinced that there is room in my country for all the races, black, white and Asian.'

●ON INVITATION of portworkers in Brazil and Uruguay, Jack Carroll, a Bristol trade-unionist and Geoffrey Sanders, who was managing director of a building firm in the city, flew last week to South America. The *Bristol Evening Post* reports that they will be meeting with portworkers and union officials in Brazil and attending an international MRA conference in Uruguay. The paper quotes Mr Sanders: 'The aim of the conference is to create a new spirit in the country between management and labour, and to bring about changes for a more unselfish society.'



We have just returned from carrying out a three-week programme, covering 4,500 miles, arranged by His Highness Alhaji Ado Bayero, Emir of Kano, who is also Chancellor of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. He sent us to meet H H the Sultan of Sokoto, spiritual head of all the Muslims in Nigeria, six other Emirs, the Shehu of Bornu, and other leaders in the North of Nigeria.

Furthering the ideals of the New Nigeria

A report from Robin Evans

OUR TEAM consisted of Sheikh Mohamed Ahmed Surur, Secretary of the Islamic Community in Asmara, capital of Eritrea, Ethiopia, who had been specially invited by the Emir of Kano; Isaac Amata of Nigeria; Michel Hénault, technician working with the French Electricity Board; and Robin Evans from Cambridge.

At Sokoto, a welcoming party, led by The Maikama (Minister for Palace Affairs), was waiting five miles outside city to escort us to the Palace. On val we were immediately taken to the Sultan's personal guest house, where a whole roast lamb and a superb dish of rice and chicken were prepared for us.

Next morning the Sultan, Alhaji Sir Abubakar, surrounded by his councillors, received us. After hearing Sheikh Surur explain the aims and principles of MRA in Arabic, translated into Hausa by one of the councillors, he said: 'I am in full

agreement with all that you are doing. We support what is moral because our religion obliges us to do so but we also need to apply in our own lives and in the life of society the four moral standards (absolute honesty, purity, love and unselfishness), that you have talked about. These standards are the strongest pillars on which to build lasting unity and peace. I pray God to show us the clear way to walk in the light of Moral Re-Armament.'

After having *Yanci* (the film *Freedom* in the Hausa language) shown first to himself and invited guests in the Palace courtyard, and the following night to a larger audience in the Ikeja quarter of Sokoto, the Sultan sent us off, escorted by his Maikama, to the Emir of Gwandu, whose Palace today is located at Birnin Kebbi, some twenty miles from the frontier of Niger Republic. In the early nineteenth century the western part of the Fulani Empire, founded by Usman Dan Fodio, was administered from Gwandu (Gando) and the eastern part from Sokoto.

The Emir listened with intense interest to M Henault's account of how on arriving in Nigeria he had decided permanently to give up smoking and drinking alcohol because he realised they were incompatible with the aims of his mission, and also because they were a wrong use of the money that had been collected by his fellow workers and other friends to help pay the expenses of his journey.

Demonstration of unity

'That was nature's way of bringing change,' the Emir said. 'No, that was God's way.' He then pointed out how the composition of our party - Ethiopian Muslim and Nigerian Christian, French and British - was in itself a demonstration of unity. At the end of the film that evening, he took the microphone to thank us for coming and to underline for his people the essential lessons of *Yanci*.

From Birnin Kebbi the Maikama led the party to neighbouring Argungu, famous for its annual fishing festival and national motor rally. There the Emir told me during the film interval, 'The world is in confusion. People have lost their grip on religion; the world needs this MRA more than ever. Now is the time to take it to the world. What I like is that it says each man must be true to himself first. I must not wait for others, but do what I have to do first to make peace and unity.'

Next morning the Maikama took us to say goodbye to the Sultan of Sokoto. The Emirs of Gwandu and Argungu were with him.

'If you wish to extend your stay here', said the Sultan, 'you are welcome to do so. The way you have made friends with so many people in such a short time and the co-operation you are getting from everyone shows how much the people

have appreciated your visit.'

The Emirs remarked on the good omen that had brought them and the visitors together like one family at the Sultan's Palace, and expressed the hope that they should meet again soon.

Introduction to Niger

The Emir of Zaria then received us as his guests for two days. As we were leaving, the Emir said, 'I want to thank you very much for coming. When you come next time bring more people like Sheikh Surur - all the Mallams (Islamic teachers) who came yesterday were very delighted to meet you and discuss with you.'

We returned to Kano, where the Emir had arranged for us to be his guests whenever our programme demanded it. We proceeded from there to visit the Emirs of Katsina, Daura and Gumel, all of whose Emirates lie on the border of the Niger Republic, and who had already received an MRA mission in February 1973 (*New World News* Vol 21 No 38). The first two of these rulers insisted on seeing *Yanci*, although they had already seen it during the earlier visit. They also offered to introduce us to their fellow Emirs in the Niger Republic.

We then set out to Maiduguri, capital of the North Eastern State, some 370 miles east of Kano, where the Shehu of Bornu received us. His ancestors had controlled the Empire of Bornu, south and west of Lake Chad, since the sixteenth century. The Shehu talked with Sheikh Surur and arranged a showing of *Yanci* in front of his Palace.

At Kaduna, capital of the North Central State, Alhaji Ibrahim Dasuki, Chairman of the Nigerian Railway Corporation and National General Secretary of the Jama'atu Nasril Islam (JNI), the influential organisation co-ordinating the activities of the majority of Muslims in Nigeria, invited 500 people to see *Yanci* in the JNI's conference centre.

Introducing the film, Sheikh Surur told the distinguished audience of his attendance at MRA conferences in various parts of the world, including India. 'I saw how many people committed themselves to change the world radically by applying absolute moral standards. In fact, to listen to these standards is very easy, but the important thing is to apply them. If you yourself change, you start to change others. The nation cannot change unless the individual changes. And the individual cannot change unless he starts with himself.'

'I came to Nigeria in response to the kind invitation of Alhaji Ado Bayero, Emir of Kano, who attended a world conference for Moral Re-Armament at Caux, Switzerland, and is convinced that this idea, that calls for unity and co-operation in place of violence and disunity, is the ideal to be followed by the new Nigeria.'

1. The Emir of Kano receives the party. Seated on the ground is the Waziri, the Emir's prime minister

2. The Emir of Argungu with Robin Evans during interval at showing of *Yanci*

3. The Grand Kadi (left) welcomes Sheikh Surur, watching is the Assistant Secretary General of the Jama'atu Nasril Islam, Alhaji Bello

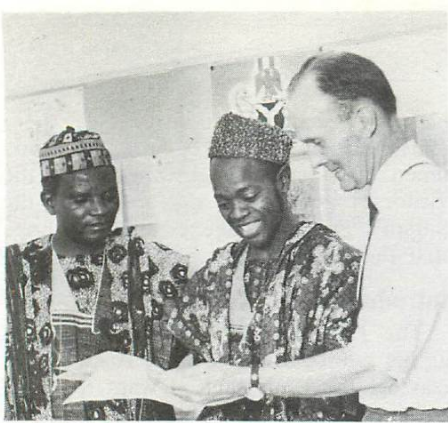
4. Received outside an Islamic school in Sokoto by the school's directors

5. Alhaji Ibrahim Dasuki

6. The Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Sir Abubakar, presents books to Sheikh Surur

7. The Emir of Katsina, Alhaji Sir Usman Nagogo

Photographs by Isaac Amata and Michel Hénault



Dr Etim Udoh, lecturer in sociology at Ahmadu Bello University, with Isaac Amata and Robin Evans

Task before Africa

AT THE INVITATION of the South-East State Community of Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria, *A Man for all People and Freedom* were shown in the Wolfson Lecture Theatre. In spite of student unrest resulting in the closure that week of this and three other Nigerian universities, the students held fast to their invitation.

Professors and lecturers from the United States, Britain, Scandinavia and Poland with their families and with their Nigerian colleagues and students listened intently as Isaac Amata introduced *Freedom*.

'The previous generation,' Amata said, 'fought to free Africa from colonial rule. The present generation is now challenged to build new nation-states that are free from corruption, greed, intimidation, and anarchy. The men and women who can build the new viable and stable states that Africa can proudly offer as examples to the world, must be those who have fought drastically within themselves against greed, selfishness, immorality, and divisive ambition.'

'The urgent task before us in Africa,' he concluded, 'is to raise a new breed of leadership that will demonstrate true freedom and progress; where citizens both young and old develop the inner discipline they need to serve the nation and at the same time have the liberty to give their best to society. The universities of our promising nation can be the workshops to turn out such new leaders, and ABU can set the pace.'

Bidding farewell to the visitors next day, Dr Udoh, lecturer in sociology, said: 'How timely this film is, and especially for us Nigerians the message is loud and clear. If those who are now beginning to suggest ideas for the future government of the country and the factors necessary for its success had been with us last night, they would have had the chance of considering other more important factors essential for the government of any country, namely honest and incorruptible leadership.'

More precious than oil

From Matthew Manson in Marrakech

MY FRIEND, a Moroccan trade union leader, had just returned from the pilgrimage to Mecca. He was now a 'hadji' and hereafter that honoured title would precede his name. His home was festooned. His neighbours thronged in large numbers round his front door clapping and cheering. Friends and family sang inside the house to instrumental accompaniment with great fervour.

With the trade unionist's employer, I was the honoured guest, and he welcomed us enthusiastically amid the hubbub proudly wearing his white woollen 'chemrir', or cap. He was beaming and radiant. We partook of a generous feast during which he shared his experiences of the 'haj'.

No doubt, about this season of the year, around a million similar scenes were being repeated throughout the Moslem World, for this year Mecca drew one million pilgrims to its holy places.

Among the 500 million Moslems in the world, representing about 14 per cent of the world's population, 125 million belong to the 'Arab' World. These latter live in 19 independent countries, throughout North Africa and the Middle East.

The term 'Arab' meant originally the nomadic Bedouin population of the Arabian peninsula, the first tribal followers of the prophet Mohammed. But today the Arabs are as diverse as are

French and Germans, Greek and British, Italians and Dutch.

Cutting across these diversities, however, there are certain unifying factors: the Arabic language, the Moslem faith, the loyalty to family and clan, and certain customs such as the legendary Arab hospitality. This latter has its origins in the early life of the Bedouin of Arabia, where the stranger you offer a cup of coffee to today may feed you tomorrow if you lose your way in the burning, dangerous desert.

One of the joys of living in an Arab land is to savour this generous hospitality and capacity for good fellowship so freely shared. Another trait which often brings a superior smile to the face of a European is the Arab's capacity for rhetoric. The Arab loves to quote proverbs even if he does not always personify their wisdom. One such favourite is: 'The camel never sees its own hump. But it's neighbour's hump is ever before its eyes'. Another is: 'He who drags his feet behind the desert car becomes the victim of the jackal'.

If the Western world had sought to know, understand and care unselfishly for this great sector of humanity during this past decade instead of being wholly preoccupied with its prosperity, affluence and gross national product, the history of these past months would have been very different.

Is it too late for the West and the Arabs alike to apply that wise but forgotten philosophy, 'People matter more than things'? A new change of heart and attitude in the West from one of superiority and indifference to a genuine interest and care for the well-being of this vast Arab human family, not for what they can get out of such a posture, but because it is right, could produce a climate of trust which would be more precious than all the oil under the Arabian desert.

●THE LORD MAYOR of Birmingham, Councillor Mrs Marjorie Brown, last week received in the Town Hall 18 women from France, Germany, Holland, Austria and Switzerland.

This group of European women, who had met and worked in the Conference Centre for MRA in Caux, Switzerland, told the civic head that they had come to Britain in order to strengthen the links between the women within the European community and to find out together their common task in answering the needs in the countries all over the world.

After the Lord Mayor had greeted each one personally Mme Irène Laure, former Secretary General of the Socialist Women of France, expressed her gratitude for the help Britain had given

during the war. 'Your martyrdom made possible our freedom in Europe.'

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