

NEW WORLD NEWS

FOR MORAL RE-ARMAMENT



Shopping crowds watch a presentation by 'Song of Asia' in Aarhus, Denmark. The cast were in Denmark before visiting Norway.
Photo: Rengfelt

'Song of Asia' visits Norway

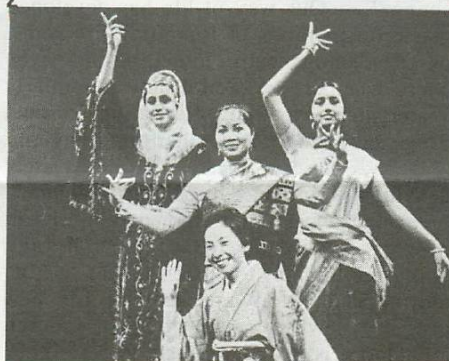
THE NORWEGIAN PREMIERE of *Song of Asia* took place in Oslo at the Samfunnsalen, a hall which has a central place in the life of the Norwegian labour movement.

Among the 750 spectators were people from all parts of Norway including Laplanders from the north, 125 Swedes who came hundreds of kilometres across the border, and Pakistanis, Indians, Africans,

Vietnamese, Iraqis, and British.

During their visit to Norway the Asian force met political leaders, men from the TV, radio, and the press, and hundreds of young people in different schools and universities. They held meetings and assemblies in 15 schools at the request of the teachers or students. One of them was arranged by a 15-year-old boy who said, 'We can't learn much in class because there is no discipline. I want to bring that discipline and you Asians can help us.' His fellow pupils were given a free choice of going home early or staying to meet the young Asians. 350 of them crowded out the school auditorium. One student from Nissen Gymnas, a well known music school in the city, said, 'We young people in Norway always think that we are the best. But our life becomes meaningless. We are only interested in having a new TV set or swimming pool. We ought to have a purpose for living.'

The national TV news carried a three minute report on *Song of Asia* and the main Labour and Conservative papers and other national and local dailies ran articles and photos on their visit.



'Song of Asia' arrived in Britain from Norway as we were going to press. Next week we will carry a full report on the British premiere and the visit of the cast to Edinburgh. Norwegian artist, Victor Sparre, speaking in London about the Asian cast, said, 'The answer for this troubled world is coming from those who have suffered most.'

'Song of Asia' — 1) Ramu and Mama 2) Four dancers 3) Market scene 4) Maori canoe 5) Full cast. Colour prints (5" x 5") of the photographs (left) are available at 50p each inclusive of VAT and postage and packing (overseas postage extra). The full set costs £2.40. Orders to David Channer, 12 Palace Street, London SW1E 5JF. Cheques/postal orders to be made payable to David Channer.
Photo: Robinson

Behind the Sudan Agreement

by Margaret Collard

speaking at the World Assembly in Caux, Switzerland

I OWE MORE to Africa than I can ever repay. The children of Africa have taught me far more than I can ever have taught them during forty years service.

There was civil war for 17 years in the Southern Sudan. In the North were Arab Muslims, in the South black tribes pagan and Christian.

Hatred between the Northern slave dealers and the Southern slaves has been bitter through the ages. It had begun to fade when in 1955 a crisis came. A false rumour that slavery was starting again, brought the killing of some two hundred Northern merchants and administrators in the South.

A punitive force was sent to subdue the Southerners. Homes, churches, schools and hospitals were burned and bombed. Thousands ran as refugees to neighbouring countries. Others were put in concentration camps, while the majority took to the forests and mountains and moved from place to place avoiding the Arab troops.

A resistance movement of freedom fighters was formed to oppose the Northern Army. In 1968 they were trying to raise more guns. One of them, Mandiri, came to me in Uganda where I was teaching. We spoke of the days when as a teacher in training we had listened to God together, but now he said that violence was the only way. When he left he took a magazine called *Better Than Violence*. The war continued.

Lives risked

At one point a plane-load of Arab personnel made a forced landing in the middle of guerrilla country. To their amazement they were helped out of their plane, given beds and medical treatment and cars. Later two leaders of the guerrilla fighters, Lagu and Mandiri, who have both had some contact with MRA, risked their lives to take these prisoners back to the Arab Army Headquarters. 'These are your men,' they said, 'fit to travel now,' and drove off again without further words.

The Northerners could not understand this friendly treatment and reported back to President Numeiri.

In the meantime two other men, both of whom had been to Caux, Dr Mohamed el Murtada, an Arab Northerner, and Buth Diu, a Christian Southerner who died last week, were, under God's guidance, drawing up a list of points on which they felt North

and South could agree. They presented it to President Numeiri.

Again about the same time Lagu and Mandiri, the guerrilla leaders, suggested to the President that the time had come for conciliatory talks.

In 1972 in Addis Ababa, under the chairmanship of the late Emperor, agreement was reached on those very points originally conceived when seeking God's guidance, and peace was signed.

Mandiri came immediately to see me, this time clean-shaven and immaculately dressed, with brief case in hand, accompanied by his wife who had been a little girl in my school, with their small son. 'I had to come,' he said, 'to tell you we have found a way better than violence.'

He had been a signatory to the agreement, whereby the South has its own Regional Government in which he was until recently Minister of Communications.

Whoever heard of the Commander of a National Army allowing its guerrilla enemy to retain their guns, and inviting them to join the National troops on an equal basis? This is what President Numeiri did, and Lagu the guerrilla leader was appointed General in the National Army.

In 1974, two years later, a rumour reached the South that the President was plotting to eliminate these ex-guerrilla leaders. A new rising could have taken place. General Lagu and his friends felt it right to go straight to the President, who in fact knew nothing about it. After some thought with them he asked the General to return to the South and put down this rumour. This he did and the situation was saved. He is now Commander-in-Chief in the Southern Region.

Designed for export

The growing trust between these Northern and Southern leaders is a miracle.

Northerners going South on central government assignments feared reprisals. They found friendship. They ask, 'Why do you not hate us?' They are told, 'We ran from your gunfire and bombs to God and He saved us. We cannot hate you. We want you to find His direction too.'

Of course there were other major factors contributing to the agreement, but the part played by these men of faith and vision deserves to be recognised. There are strife-torn neighbour nations at present seething with hate and civil war for want of an answer like this. Surely God designed it for export.

The new American revolution

WHAT WILL SHOCK America into change? — Our way of life has developed masterful methods of forgetting problems, of deadening pain and soothing the conscience. Yet we cannot blot out entirely Watergate, Viet-Nam, inflation, crime, drugs, corruption, assassination attempts...

Our American society is increasingly denying its impotence by calling it tolerance, preaching resignation and naming it all progress. Yet listening to the familiar lies and doing the familiar things no longer has the old appeal. Many are groping for new insights, new elements of truth; church attendance is up. Our streets in New York are full with people peddling a veritable smorgasbord of pseudo-spiritual answers.

There is a genuine desire to seek answers from within. But what will give us the inner strength to see ourselves as we really are?

Some who seek earnestly break through to a new, meaningful inner experience. An experience of rebirth and fundamental change which reaches into the very depth of life itself from the computerbanks of the subconscious to the outer reaches of the mind, encompassing the whole personality. This experience is a gift, given freely at the

point of deepest need.

Therein lies our hope — it is the birth of a new type of man, God-centred in his motivation, instead of being self-centred. Human nature can change, drastically and permanently, that is the good news. But how can we lift this truth out of the realm of the personal, into the dimension of national world events? This is the question on which the survival of mankind may depend.

Important link

I believe that Frank Buchman has provided us with that all important link. It is the ideology of MRA. It is the resolve to inject this rebirth into every facet of our national life and thus affect the mainstream of events.

The keystone of democracy is the moral man — but the structure of beliefs of this incorruptible man needs to be so strongly rooted in personal experience, that it has the power of revolutionising his order of priorities. And that is the birth of a spiritual revolution. That is the new American revolution we must proclaim in our Bicentennial year. PT

FEAR. What do you think of it? Is it normal and natural? Is it right or wrong? Is it a sin?

It is an important question. On our answer hang issues of personal conscience and national attitudes.

I come from Northern Ireland. In the streets of Belfast today you see clearly the results of a national policy founded on fear. Our slogan 'Not An Inch' summed up our fear and determination to preserve our Protestant settler position from 'them', the native, Catholic Irish. One need not elaborate on the cost.

There is a natural instinct inbred in every man, the instinct that warns of danger. It comes into play every time we drive a car, cross a street, walk near a cliff. It is an instinct which, used constructively, can foster prudence, foresight and responsibility.

Self-preservation

Then we read in the New Testament, 'Perfect love casts out fear'. That implies that fear is wrong. Does it mean we should cast out prudence and responsibility?

What does Christ ask of us Christians? He is specific that His ways are not our ways; that His requirements are at war with much that we regard as natural.

For example the values of survival are not Christ's values. 'He who shall save his life will lose it.' Nor are the values of enlightened self-interest His values. 'Don't keep saying what shall we eat, what shall we drink, what shall we wear... Seek ye first the Kingdom of God.'

This is the exact opposite of fear which is the instinct of self-preservation.

'Perfect love casts out fear.' The corollary is necessarily true — fear casts out love. No one can love someone of whom they are afraid.

At the heart of fear lies the issue of control. In Gethsemane Christ 'being in agony', yet broke the control of His fear. 'Nevertheless not my will but Thine be done.' It was a deliberate, costly choice. If fear had ruled, the glory of our faith would never have been. And He says clearly to us, 'Take up the Cross.'

Law of the jungle

St John, in his Letter, follows his words about perfect love by saying (Phillips translation), 'For fear always contains some of the torture of feeling guilty.' This points to another key aspect of fear — that it springs in part from a lack of honesty, a lack of repentance. If God, truly, has been allowed to cleanse me from all sin, then I no longer fear exposure.

For generations we Irish have had the fear of 'them', the other lot, bred into us. An old Scots friend who lived in Northern Ireland, said to me one day, 'Peter, if you really want to do anything about Ireland you must first accept that everything you Irish feel about each other is true.' I laughed. But it is an important truth. What others felt about me was a more accurate guide to where I needed to change than was my self-justification. And as my constant self-justification ended, so did my fear of 'them'.

A situation like Ireland focusses a

Fear and the Christian

by
Peter Hannon

personal and national choice — to live by fear or to live by faith. As long as I insist on my control God is cut out and I am set on the inevitable road of bitter confrontation with whoever refuses my control.

The alternative is often presented as my control or your control. For a Christian it is a false choice. It denies our faith and takes us back to the law of the jungle. There is a third alternative — God-control.

Is it practical? Only if we choose the cost of making it so. It means a deliberate declaration of war on the pulls in our own nature. St Paul wrote to the Romans (chapter 8, 13) about 'cutting the nerve of your instinctive reaction by obeying the Spirit'. We Christians so often reject the reality of the gift of the Holy Spirit.

God clearly promised to us an adequate directing Power that would make His Mind and Will available to us. But what do we do? We say, 'I'm afraid that God may not, perhaps, take all factors into account. When it comes to myself, my plans, my family, my politics I really think I know best. I will ask God to direct my plans, but they will remain my plans. It's safer that way.'

So we deny God the chance for His wisdom to operate, preferring the 'security' of our own. This despite the fact that our human wisdom is proving woefully inadequate to answer the human problems

created by rampant hate, fear and greed.

It is a decision of the will that God may know more of politics than the politician, of business than the businessman, of parenthood than the parent. For a Christian should it not be a natural habit when I do not know what to do — and perhaps more important when I am certain that I do know what to do — to turn to God with a listening will to ask Him to make the promptings of His will clear? And suppose we did this together with those with whom we are in disagreement?

No substitute

From childhood days we are taught to say our prayers, to talk to God. But is He given the time, in silence, to talk to me and to prompt my mind with the unexpectedness of His ideas and concepts? Fear pressurises us to keep to our own ways, which we think we can handle. But my good works are no substitute for His way and power.

Experiment is the only bridge from fear to faith. The experience of one step that works feeds the certainty that another will work. A friend once asked me, 'What would you do if you were not afraid?' Faith means you go and do it.

A friend wrote recently, 'We might consider whether our aim is to enlist God's help in building the world we hope and long for, or to yield mind and heart and will so completely that we discover the kind of world God wants.'

The latter aim answers one of the dilemmas of our time — the sense of profound rightness with which men of completely opposing points of view are both gripped. If none knew and all listened to God then all would be shown to be both wrong and also possessed of some truth.

The world is hungry for some certainty about the future. Perhaps it is from situations which the world tends to regard as impossible that the light of fear-free, faith-directed men and women could shine all the brighter.

Canberra conference announced

TO MANY in Australia the revolutionary events of 1975 are just articles in newspapers. To some they represent a threat to a familiar world order. Others see them as the start of a new era.

However the new pattern of living, millions of people really want, will only come as a cure is found to the divisive passions and motives of men and a force of people is built to provide that cure.

1976 could be a time when people from Australia, the Pacific nations and Asia plan together how to do this. With more and more division in Australia it is time to draw together men and women from the heart of government, industry and education as well as the many families and students who want to have a part.

As many across Australia and in neighbouring lands feel this should happen, an international conference is being planned

to take place at John XXIII College of the Australian National University in Canberra from 2 to 10 January, 1976. The themes of the conference will be 'From Crisis to Cure' and 'From Callousness to Care'.

Issues the conference will be concerned with will include:

INDUSTRY with the answer to wasteful conflict

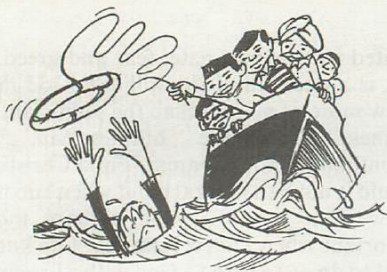
EDUCATION with the primary aim of developing the unselfish man

RESOURCES rightly used to meet the needs of all

HOME LIFE that is uniting and truly satisfying

A PARTNERSHIP with the nations and races of the Pacific and Asia.

The invitations will be out shortly and will be available from the Conference Secretary, PO Box 71, Canberra, ACT 2600.



Operation rescue

IN THE PAST, in my most thoughtful moments, life has often seemed a particularly unpleasant sea in which I was struggling. I had no idea where I was and could do no more than swim about in circles. The sea was often very rough and it was all I could do to keep myself from drowning. Things were worst when it was dark because then I no longer had the company of others who were floating with me. I was quite alone.

From time to time ships passed. Most of them never saw me or if they did they ignored me. I did manage to get on board one or two, but very quickly I had either been pushed overboard or had jumped back into the sea of my own accord, because I was so disillusioned with what I saw.

It was then that *Song of Asia* saw me, and their invitation to work with them represented the first time I had ever been pulled out of the water by anyone.

The crew of *Song of Asia* took a bit of getting used to. They seemed to have too few faults, and, comparing myself with them, left me feeling very uncomfortable. It was only when I got to work with the stage crew below decks that I saw what was really going on. I saw freedom, companionship and concern for others such as I had never seen before. But I also saw everyone having to struggle each day with themselves, for the life they had chosen was not easy.

There were other problems. The often rough sea meant that many of us were seasick or in danger of falling overboard. But there always seemed to be someone to comfort you or pull you to safety. In time I found I had gained the strength to help other people onto the ship, something that had previously been impossible.

I feel there are three things that make this ship quite different from any other I have seen.

First, *Song of Asia* has direction, for its bearings come from the inner voice which I have discovered is the best source there is. Those other ships were going nowhere in particular.

Second, it is a ship that will never sink because it is kept afloat by the Holy Spirit, which is unsinkable. And, lastly, this ship has no first class and no second class, no distinction between passengers and crew, no colour bar. It is a ship for everyone.

Laurence Gruer
medical student, Edinburgh

Finances of 'Song of Asia'

THE VISIT of *Song of Asia* to Europe is being financed by the gifts of hundreds of people in many countries.

The cost of the cast's three month stay at the World Assembly, Caux, Switzerland, was completely covered by contributions from *Song of Asia* funds in eight European countries.

The budget for the British campaign, including travelling to and from this country, has been set at £50,000. More than a quarter of that figure had already come in when the cast arrived here from Norway last Sunday.

Contributions and cheques (payable to 'Song of Asia Travel Fund') should be sent to 'Song of Asia Travel Fund', 12 Palace Street, London SW1E 5JF.



The orchestra of 'Song of Asia'.

Photo: Robinson

AARHUS STIFTSTIDENDE, Denmark

'To meet the *Song of Asia*'s cast from Asian countries as different as Japan, Papua New Guinea, Indonesia and Turkey was gripping, deeply serious and unusually beautiful.'

FOLKETS FRAMTID, Norway

'These are not students who come with a message of social morality which they have adopted, but people who in their lives have experienced what it means to grow up in poverty and conflict in developing countries.'

AFTENPOSTEN, Norway

'These young people believe in a future for Asia. They believe that man must change and at the same time the exploiting structure will be changed into a just structure.'

NATIONEN, Norway

'With *Song of Asia* one is confronted with a battle against social injustices and moral decay in both East and West. Also with a gripping contribution to the creation of unity and reconciliation with forgiveness and trust.'

Overheard in pub

by Paul Lacey

AFTER 35 YEARS in Sri Lanka as a tea planter I branched out into a new field as Geography and Religious Education teacher in a girls' public school. In the course of my time there we have brought a number of parties of senior girls to 'The Day of London Theatre' and to the plays at the Westminster Theatre.

One of these girls lives in Eire and just before the present term started she sent me a letter telling me what she had been doing in the summer holidays. I thought that part of this letter might interest your readers. She says:

'It was the ideas behind *The Black and White Book* and the course you did with us in the sixth form, "Creating the New Society", which really sparked me off.

'My brother and I are Protestants but two of our friends are Catholics and we had the idea that we should go north together on a cycling holiday — camping at night. In a small town in Sligo we came upon a real Irish division into Catholics and Protestants and so we decided to see what we could do about it. We went into the Catholic and Protestant pubs; some of them were not particularly responsive, but in one of them we met a leading citizen and had a good talk with him.

Terrible mistake

'We asked him what he thought God must be thinking about the division between the two religious groups and I spoke as if God were a real person. He said that the barriers were mostly those of tradition and, after more talk, that he knew it was all wrong and a terrible mistake.

'We went back to our camp for the night.

'The next morning two men arrived and without any explanation handed us a basket of fresh eggs, butter, a home-baked loaf of bread and some fruit. I said, "Thank you", and asked the reason for this kind gift. They told us that they were neighbours, one a Protestant and one a Catholic, and that about ten years ago they had had a quarrel. Using religious division as an excuse they had not spoken to each other all that time.

'One of them had overheard every word we had said to our new friend in the pub and had decided to do something about it. The quarrel had been promptly made up and so they had come together to thank us.

'This was a wonderful experience but, talking about faults, I know that if I want to help people with theirs I must first put mine right and I am making a start. We hope to go back there later on to see how they are getting on.'