

NIGERIANS SEE 'BLESSINGS IN DIVERSITY'



The Emir of Kano

L Rengfelt

lecturer at the College of Education, Abraka, described the elections held to elect the new government. In a country of 350 different languages and dialects, with five political parties competing, the elections were won by the party 'that got the majority of ethnic groups to work together'.

'We are beginning to see,' he continued, 'that the diversity of ethnic groups in Nigeria is a source of strength and advantage rather than conflict. And my conviction is that this can also be true of Africa. In Africa racial and cultural diversity can be a source of blessing rather than a source of conflict, and to this end we have committed ourselves.'

Mr Amata's point was illustrated by the presence of three of the country's leading figures, who were able to sit together and discuss the future. One was Muslim, another Protestant and another Catholic; one was from the east, another from the west and another from the north; one was a businessman and another in the administration. They were His Highness the Emir of Kano, attending Caux for the third time, Otunba J Ade Tuyo, former President of the Nigerian Employers' Consultative Association, and Chief Adolphus Mba, Secretary of the Catholic Laity Council.

These men, with the students who ac-

BLACK AFRICA'S richest, most populous nation returned to democratic government this week after 13 years of military administration. On 1 October Nigeria's new Federal Government, under President Alhaji Shehu Shagari, took office.

This summer 17 Nigerians—senior men from business and government, students and academics—came to the world assembly for Moral Re-Armament at Caux, Switzerland. They came to make their contribution to the conferences, and in search of the training and inspiration they felt they would need as their country implemented its new constitution.

Speaking at Caux, John Ifoghale Amata,

NEW WORLD NEWS

Vol 27 No 46 6 October 1979 9p



J Ifoghale Amata

D Channer

panied them, return to shoulder difficult but essential moral and political leadership in a country of increasing international significance.

Russell Carpenter

WILL MAIGRET'S DREAM COME TRUE?

Situations vacant: repairers of destinies
New World News looks at the qualifications—and experience—required.

THE FAMOUS DETECTIVE, Maigret, in one of Simenon's stories, says that he became a policeman almost by accident. He had been forced to drop his medical studies when his father died, but even medicine had not been the profession he had always wanted to practise. In fact, that profession did not really exist.

He had noticed, even in his village in childhood, that many people were not fulfilling themselves. He used to imagine an intelligent man, 'above all a very understanding man, doctor and priest at once as it were, a man who would at first glance understand the destinies of others'. People would consult him as they consult a doctor. 'In a manner of speaking he would have been a repairer of destinies. Not only because he was intelligent. Maybe he wouldn't need to be exceptionally intelligent? But because he was able to live the lives of every sort of man, to put himself inside everyone's mind.'

And he ruminates: 'Was it really an accident? Are not policemen repairers of destinies sometimes?'

'At first glance to understand the destiny of others.' When I read these words, I inevitably thought of Jesus. He took one look at Nathaniel: 'Behold an Israelite without guile.' To Peter and Andrew, as he passed them and their boats: 'I will make you fishers of men.' To Peter later on: 'Upon this rock will I build....' and still later, 'Feed my sheep.'

Maigret's dreamed-of profession is never more needed than today, just when the doctor is often too busy and the priest less central to many lives. Yet a policeman—or anyone else—can do it, on one condition: that he is alert to God's will for himself and aims to help other people to find their destinies from God rather than imposing some idea on them. It will take the sensitiveness of which



Maigret speaks—'to put himself in the minds of others'. It has happened all through history.

Barnabas, for example, 'a man full of the Holy Spirit', alone seemed to recognise the potential of Paul. He brought him to the fearful apostles in Jerusalem, he sought him out in Tarsus and brought him to Antioch, he took him on their first missionary journey—and then stepped back into second place when the right time came.

Wilberforce, after his 'great change', told John Newton and Pitt that he would retire from public life. Pitt wisely said he hoped that 'meditation might later result in action' and Newton told him he 'had been raised up for the good of this nation'. Wilberforce took these insights to God, and the conviction came: 'God Almighty has set before me two great objects: the suppression of the slave trade and the reformation of manners.' Both were achieved, in large measure, in his lifetime.

Frank Buchman, initiator of MRA, was another such man. He spoke little. But it was often a word from him which sent people to God in hope and longing for new life.

The world needs today the faith that God gave him for institutions and nations. 'The answer to burning churches is a Church aflame,' he said during the Spanish civil war. 'Industry—where management and labour work together like the fingers of a hand.' And there were the words which inspired national leaders—and still do, although, or because, they are still not quite fulfilled: 'Japan the lighthouse of Asia'; 'Cyprus the golden bridge'; 'Africa—a sounding board of an answer'.

Most of us have humbler destinies to fulfil. But sometimes it may be that we underestimate what God wants to do through us for others. Who, with God, will take up Maigret's dream profession?

Garth Lean



Planet News

Twenty-two years on

Students riot in Tokyo in 1960. Had the four-million-strong Seinendan (Federation of Japanese Youth) joined in, it could have meant an end of democratic government in Japan. The Seinendan President of the day attributed his organisation's stand to the visit of 103 Seinendan leaders to an MRA conference in the USA three years before. 'They returned to Japan,' he said, 'convinced that they and their country must go not left nor right, but straight. When we were attacked our strategy was not to answer violence with violence, but to answer violence with truth.' On a recent visit to Japan, JENS J WILHELMSSEN met some of them again:

TODAY, many of the young Japanese who went to the USA in 1957 are in positions of responsibility in their communities. One is Speaker of his prefecture's Legislative Assembly, several are city councillors, one was candidate for mayor of a major city, one is a well-known business woman, another the secretary of a village co-operative.

Some have not done so well, in the eyes of society. But they have discovered that other values in life are equally important. This is the case with Tomi, a farmer's daughter, who was Vice-President of Seinendan for her prefecture. After the visit to the USA she worked full time with MRA for five years, and played the main role in an MRA play written and staged by Seinendan leaders.

She then returned to her parents' little farm, where she was still living when I met her. Her father has died, and she is looking after her 88-year-old mother, who is partly deaf. The two of them don't have much income. Tomi works on the farm, does a little sewing, and sometimes helps to build roads in her village. 'There is nothing left of my pride,' she says with a smile.

In Japan it is considered a serious handicap for a woman to be unmarried. She finds it difficult. There have been suitors, but she did not feel that any of them was the right one. 'That does not mean that I am unhappy,' she says, and the harmony in her expressive face proves that it is true. 'I think it is God's will that I have not married, but I would still like to,' she adds.

Many would consider Tomi one of the less fortunate in Japanese society. But she is carried by and carries values which Japan needs. Her greatest wish is to do more to pass them on.

Another of the group, Masakazu, now owns a small electrical business, and is a city councillor. One evening two years ago when he was out driving, he hit and killed a man who was walking in the dark by the road. The man was married and had two children. His family was very bitter and would not

accept Masakazu's apology or allow him to attend the funeral.

Masakazu and his wife were desperate. His car had not been properly insured, and they feared that financial claims from the man's family would ruin them. Nor could they see any way to overcome the hostility and bitterness.

Finally, Masakazu told me, he turned to what he had learned in America about listening to the voice of God within him. 'I had a clear thought: "Go to the family again, ask forgiveness from your heart and offer to do anything in your power to compensate for their loss."'

This time the family listened, and responded by saying that they would not demand an indemnity which would break Masakazu financially. Since then Masakazu has visited the family once a month and they have become friends.

Network

Many others told me how they had put to work what they had learnt through MRA. The Speaker of the Legislative Assembly in Aichi Prefecture had been able to prevent a harmful split in the Conservative Party in his area. The Secretary of the Socialist Party in Kagoshima prefecture was organising activities for children in order to overcome the alienation created by excessive competition at school. 'The children study and compete so hard that they forget the art of doing things together,' he said. A former Seinendan Vice-President for Ibsaragi prefecture had helped to send five young people abroad for MRA training in recent years.

Fifteen of these Seinendan leaders met this summer. Fifty more wrote that they would like to get together in the future. From Hokkaido in the north to Kiyushi in the south, they are a network of people held together by their Seinendan background. In a country hungry for spiritual values they may play an important role.

Grandma come home

Mrs de Carvallio Netto
Brazil

MY HUSBAND AND I had two sons. They married and gave us five grandchildren and we were very happy. Then my younger son suddenly died at the age of 34. It was a great shock. Two years later my husband also died.

I asked God, 'Why am I still living?' I had a great bitterness against my son's widow, who had treated me badly. I decided not to speak to her any more. But I kept seeing my grandsons, because they were the continuation of my son. I used to telephone them or wait for them after school, so that I could see them without seeing their mother. They always asked, 'Why don't you come home with us?' But I always refused.

One day, when my grandsons were 12 and 13, they had a fight. They would not speak to each other, just as I would not speak to their mother. Six months went by. I said to them,

Crazy invitation

Marie-Claude Borel
Switzerland

I ONCE LOOKED AFTER some children for a year. I was living in a city flat, in a building where people did not know each other. Upstairs there lived a doctor and his wife with two young children. I was very jealous of this woman, because she had children of her own, a husband with a career, and I had none of these.

I had learnt to take time in the morning to find direction from God. One morning, when I was doing this, I had the thought that I must invite that woman for tea, and find out if she was happy. This seemed crazy, because



Renua Emokpare (left) and Ajibike Adegbile were two of the Nigerian students who came to Caux this summer. Several of the students spoke of the light which life at Caux had thrown on their personal lives.

Ajibike Adegbile said that she was returning home to repair relationships with her mother,

'Please reconcile yourselves. You are brothers. Hate doesn't build anything worthwhile.' Then the youngest said, in a very bitter tone, 'Why should we speak to each other, when you don't speak to our mother?'

I couldn't get these words out of my mind. I had always tried to give a good example to my family. I prayed for courage to make this step towards reconciliation. And God gave it to me. I was able to say to my grandsons, 'Please speak to each other, because I have decided to talk to your mother again.'

They apologised to each other and embraced as we do in Brazil. They almost carried me home. They didn't even tell me their mother was out, because they didn't want to lose the opportunity of getting me into their house at last. It made me cry, because I realised how much they had missed me. Because of my pride I had deprived them and myself for four years.

Next day my daughter-in-law invited me to lunch, and she apologised to me. When I arrived, she kissed me. The boys applauded because they were so happy. Now we see each other often.

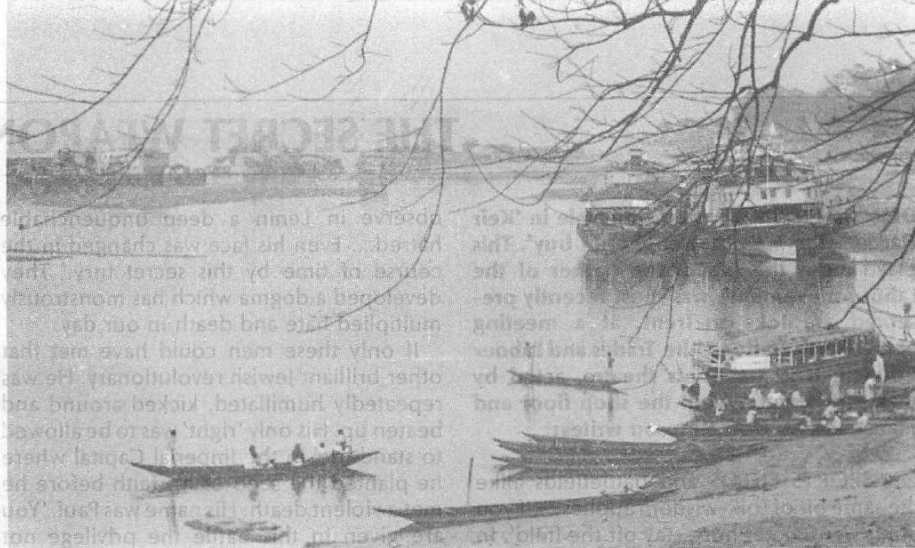
she looked so happy, and had everything I did not have. But I did so and during tea, I asked her, 'Are you happy?' She broke down completely and told me that, two days before, her husband had left her and gone off with another woman. I had no idea of this.

That woman began to find a faith. Eventually her husband came back to her, and they built up a new home life. We are still friends.

We single women—and not only single—can lose so much energy in frustration, comparison, bitterness and jealousy. Home-making, to me, means creating the atmosphere in which people can blossom into their full destiny, and use their energy in a constructive way. This can be done anywhere—in a hospital, a factory, as well as in a home—and anyone can do it, married or single.

as a result of her experiences working with other delegates in the Caux kitchen. 'Before I left for Switzerland, things had almost reached the stage where my mother and I could not work in the kitchen at the same time. Friends told me that this was natural. My few weeks here have shown me that a multitude of people can work together in a kitchen in harmony.'

A third student had come to Caux seeking a way to reconcile her father's two wives, and to end another family quarrel which had lasted nine years. She had begun to want to do this when she looked at her life from the angle of absolute moral standards: 'I saw a lot of life, I got money from my father on false pretences and I was unfaithful to my many boyfriends. I hated some of my brothers and sisters. I discovered that I cared most about myself. I decided to stop my relationship with men, apologise for the lies I'd told to those I hated and to begin to care as much as possible for other people.'



The Brahmaputra river which flows through the plains of Assam.

Coffee break

Utpal Bordoloi
Assam, North-East India

MY FAMILY is rather unusual. My father comes from a line of orthodox Hindus. My mother is a Christian, from a mountain tribe, the Garos.

In our region, the Assamese feel they are superior to the tribal peoples. At my first school almost all the pupils came from the plains of Assam. I have the prominent features of the mountain tribes—my school mates called me the 'mountain monkey'.

Later we moved to Shillong, which is in the region where the mountain tribes live. 'There I shall find friends of my own tribe, at last,' I said to myself. But they took me for an Assamese. Once more I did not belong. Wherever I went, I was the outsider.

In 1976 I went to St Stephen's College in New Delhi to start my studies. I was totally isolated. No one knew where I came from or who I was. No one bothered about me. I no longer knew myself who I was.

I was a slave to drink. I smoked three packets of cigarettes a day and I spent my time fighting verbally and physically. I had become the most aggressive, the most pugnacious student on the whole campus. Twice I was sent for by the director and reprimanded. A third summons would have meant expulsion.

I had been given a Christian education. My mother had sent me to church and to catechism class, but I had never been a real believer. You only think of God, it seemed to me, when you go through the cemetery gates.

In March last year, I discovered Christ and I asked Him to run my life. However, even after doing that, I realised that I was not entirely satisfied. I was ashamed of certain things in the past. I tried to give up drinking and smoking, but with lamentable results. I asked God to show me how to free myself of these fetters.

Two days later, I saw a poster in the university corridor: 'Three people from Moral Re-Armament will address the students after dinner this evening'. One phrase on the poster particularly caught my attention: 'Coffee will be served'. At our university, any debate where free refreshment is provided is sure to be well attended.

At 8.30 that evening I was in the hall impatiently waiting for the coffee to be served so as to slip away after it. The three visitors came in. The first thing one of them did was to come to me: 'Good evening,' he said, 'my name's Richard.' Gradually during the evening Richard and I found numerous points in common. Racially, we were both of mixed blood. It was also the first time in my life that I heard of absolute moral standards and of obeying God's guidance.

In the days that followed I kept thinking about them. I decided to listen to my inner voice and to compare my life to moral standards of honesty, purity, love and unselfishness. The first idea I obeyed was to write to my parents to tell them that I had got drunk on their money and that I had told them lies. I asked their forgiveness. I could only tell them a minimum because I trembled to think what their reaction would be. A week later they replied in an extraordinary letter, in which they forgave me all my past faults. That freed me from a burden that had weighed heavily on me for a long time.

Rumours true

Then I wrote to the director of my college and to the dean of the university, admitting all my infringements of the rules. There again their reaction was positive and I was not punished in any way.

Next I tried to put things right wherever I could. My student friends had heard that I had stopped smoking and drinking and that I had undergone some sort of change. In view of my previous reputation no one believed these rumours. Nobody expected it to last beyond the end of the academic year. My former drinking companions were always pressing me to have another glass with them. Others tried to make me fly off the handle. Fortunately or unfortunately for me, the term ended a month after my decision.

I don't know what the future has in store for me, but I am certain that Jesus Christ is preparing me for a life that will surpass anything I can imagine. I am studying political economy and I am determined to contribute towards creating unity between the various peoples of North-East India and bringing solutions to the economic and social problems of my region.

THE SECRET WEAPON

DON SIMPSON plays the title role in 'Keir Hardie—the man they could not buy'. This play, about the life of the 'father of the Labour movement', was most recently presented at Stoke-on-Trent, at a meeting of the North Staffordshire Trades and Labour Council. It is grassroots theatre, acted by men and women from the shop floor and management. Don Simpson writes:

ON SPORTS FIELDS and battlefields alike the same bit of folk-wisdom applies—'If you don't want to get hurt, stay off the field'. In any kind of conflict or revolution, whether physical or spiritual, hurt is inevitable.

But we don't like it a bit. Some people seem to spend their lives trying to avoid being hurt. So they don't get involved. Others get involved, but soon 'retire hurt', join the spectators and nurse their wounds.

It's been happening for a long time. But it seems that the more we are reminded, in modern times, of our individual significance, our human dignity, our rights, the more we are offended by being roughly treated by our fellow men. And our hurt quickly turns to hate and becomes the fuel of the class war and race war.

Marx was hurt. He was discriminated against as a Jew and kicked out of his country as a rebel. Lenin was hurt. His brother had been killed by the Czarist forces. There seemed to be no one to help these men. Their hurt turned to hate. A close friend said later, 'As soon as you met him you could

observe in Lenin a deep unquenchable hatred.... Even his face was changed in the course of time by this secret fury.' They developed a dogma which has monstrously multiplied hate and death in our day.

If only these men could have met that other brilliant Jewish revolutionary. He was repeatedly humiliated, kicked around and beaten up. His only 'right' was to be allowed to stand trial in the Imperial Capital where he planted the seed of his faith before he met a violent death. His name was Paul. 'You are given in this battle the privilege not merely of believing in Christ but of suffering for His sake,' he told his friends.



Don Simpson

I have often been hurt—sometimes by pin-pricks and slights; at other times by deep injustices.

When I was young my mother had a serious operation. One day when I was visiting her in hospital with my father, the Matron came into the ward and looked

round. Soon, a large sister came and 'frog-marched' me outside. There was an age limit for visitors—'Nobody under 14'. I never saw my mother again.

I hated that woman with all my heart. For years I closed my heart to hospitals, petty regulations and bossy women.

I think I have learned three things about handling hurt.

1. To be honest about which part of me has suffered. It is seldom my humility! It is usually my inflated opinion of myself—vanity. Sometimes when I have been knocked off some ridiculous pedestal I recall the words of John Bunyan, that triumphant prisoner of conscience: 'He that is down need fear no fall'.

2. To see the hurt in perspective. What about the people living under tyranny? The boat-people and the thousands left in South-East Asia? And what would have happened to Christianity, if Paul had been as thin-skinned as I am?

3. To use hurt as Jesus did, as a means of showing God's way. The Cross was hurtful. But it was not just one incident in history. It was the opening of a window to show us what the heart of God suffers all the time.

If God can change hurt into compassion, doesn't it follow that those who allow Him to do this will heal the hurts and hates of mankind? Could this be the decisive secret weapon in our present war of ideas?

From school to the copper mines hospital

PEOPLE THROUGHOUT the province were startled when students from Luwingu Secondary School, Zambia, began to help old and disabled people in the villages to rebuild their homes. The school had been the flash-point for riots in the district, which had lasted a week, led to arrests and to considerable ill feeling. No one expected its students to show any interest in community work.

The change of atmosphere began when some of the students decided to try a new way of life based on clear cut moral principles and obedience to God. They formed a group to discuss how to do it and organise practical activities. One of them was Joseph Mubanga, who wrote to *New World News* about his experiences since then.

Statistics clerk

Mubanga left school in 1972. 'I felt very alone without the fellowship of like-minded friends,' he remembers. But he kept to the decision he had made at school to spend

time in quiet seeking direction from God every day. 'It was this that kept me steady during many days of unemployment,' he writes. He made new friends, and many of them began to live differently.

Then, in 1973, he was accepted for a course in agricultural management. During the course, he writes, he lost the values he had found at school. 'It wasn't till the end of the first term that I realised what was happening to me. I returned to church. At the first service, the priest spoke about love, and the need to build a hate-free world.'

Joseph Mubanga left college and found work as a statistics clerk in a big hospital at Mufulira, which catered for workers from the coppermines. What did absolute standards mean in his daily work? 'I saw accurate time-keeping—about when I reported for and knocked-off work—as a way to demonstrate honesty. Practical love entailed a humble and polite relationship towards my colleagues. And unselfishness, as well as

meaning respect for company property, meant to be ready to tell others what I had learnt about building a better world.'

Went to patients

Here too, his friends began to be interested. Mubanga organised a showing of *Freedom* in the hospital—a film which, he writes, 'tells how people separated by hate and selflessness can change, unite and create a new world, guided by God'.

'After watching the film,' Mubanga writes, 'some of the people began to see what they were doing to the patients by their bad attitudes. They went and apologised, and a very good atmosphere was achieved in the hospital. People began to care for others.'

The story of Luwingu School is told in 'Modern Stories for the School Assembly', edited by D M Prescott and V B Frampton, Blandford Press, available from Grosvenor Books, 54 Lyford Road, London SW18 3JJ, price £4.10, postage paid.