



Andrew Ward (Report, London)

# NEW WORLD NEWS

Vol31 No10 28 May 1983 18p



## TIME TO CHOOSE

THE GREAT ILLUSION of our day is that a sound economy, an adequate defence, a just social order or a united nation can be fashioned out of individuals who have been encouraged to live selfishly.

Our political representatives perhaps deserve sympathy in their task of producing policies out of the appetites and frustrations of our corporate human nature.

United Kingdom citizens have an important political choice to make on 9 June. Yet if we believe that in a democracy a government's job is to carry out the best intentions of the people, there is another vital choice that we must make every day.

Whether our world will be saved from catastrophe, Alexander Solzhenitsyn said recently, 'will depend on our conscience, on our spiritual lucidity, on our individual and combined efforts'. The choice is whether we develop our consciences to the point of a responsible concern for all people, starting with *those nearest to us*, or whether we develop our instincts to the point where they destroy our families and nations.

And if we British think the world is too big to think of in this way, our children will one day have to fight another war with Argentina or some other country for want of the inspired peacemaking that we could now learn to be part of.

There is a daily choice too to be made in our financial affairs. Personal straightness, and a willingness to take a stand in the organisations we are part of, could make money available for others' jobs or for other nations in distress.

We can choose too what to do with our hates. Amid the dangers of Beirut there is a group of courageous people from one community visiting the representatives of other communities to ask forgiveness for the hatred and arrogance of their side. A colleague recently returned from Lebanon reports that the effect on the other communities is astounding. It gives him hope not just for the Middle East but for Britain's relations with Ireland.

Moral Re-Armament stands for the great reality that when man or woman heeds the Creator and chooses to live by the promptings of conscience, however uncomfortable, healthy developments follow in the nation.

**Peter Everington**

CONTENTS	PAGE
Argentine conference	2
Brazilian marriages	3
Canadian sun	4
Dutch weekend	5
British jobs	6
European fish	7
American stewardship	8



River Plate meeting...page 2

# RIVER PLATE CONFERENCE 'RESTORING THE HUMAN FAMILY TO ITS DIGNITY'

WHEN JORGE AND BLANCA MOLINA from Buenos Aires arrived at the Moral Re-Armament world assembly in Caux, Switzerland, last summer, they were 'critical and on our guard', Dr Molina told an MRA conference in Argentina last month. They were won over by the friendships they made and by the evidence they saw of reconciliation in national and international conflicts. 'If it can happen in Morocco, Zimbabwe and post-war Europe, why not in Argentina?' Dr Molina thought. That was how the idea of a 'River Plate meeting for moral and spiritual re-armament' was born.

Dr Molina, an agricultural research scientist, was speaking at the inaugural meeting of the conference, which drew people from 17 countries to an island in the Tigre Delta just outside Buenos Aires. At times he had to raise his voice as high-powered launches passed by the river hotel Galeon de Oro where it was held.

Caux had helped Blanca Molina to face selfish attitudes. 'I am a Catholic Christian, but my faith had often just been words,' she said. 'I have now found a practical way to live it.' In Caux, an Englishwoman had become a close friend. And back at home her children had seen a change in her.

Before the conference, MRA groups visited different parts of the continent in preparation for a session of the Caux conference this August for the Americas and Europe. A group of young people from Europe, America and Africa came to the conference from a tour of Brazil and Uruguay, while other participants had visited Central America and Colombia.

A national of one of the Central American republics told the conference that the roots of strife and guerrilla warfare in the region lay in 'the hypocrisy, double life and corruption which have characterised our countries for generations'. This was a reason why some children of affluent families joined the guerrillas and why injustice and inequality continued.

'You are the first group who have not tried to impose ready-made solutions on us,' the group visiting Central



Oscar Alaniz (Uruguay) and Jorge Molina (Argentina)



Argentine participants at a meeting

America had been told, when they said that MRA aimed to inspire creative self-help.

Walter Toro spoke on behalf of ten Chilean workers from the steel industry, mining and banking, who attended the conference. Chile was passing through a crisis, he said. There had been many business failures, plants were being under-utilised and one-tenth of the workforce was unemployed. He gave examples of how dismissals had been averted through consultation and a retraining programme had been set up.

Other Chileans told how MRA had affected their personal lives. A worker who had neglected his wife and children had had a frank talk with them and apologised to them for his behaviour. 'Now I am proud of my kids and want to spend time with them,' he said. A man whose drinking had been damaging his work had given this up and found a new working relationship with his colleagues. 'Pray for me that God gives me the courage,' said a worker who was returning to tell his wife the truth about himself.

From Brazil, veteran socialist José Lopez Veras and former dockers' leader Nelson Marcellino de Carvalho described the part played by people inspired by MRA in rehousing their shanty communities and ending gang-warfare in the port of Rio de Janeiro. Elza de Araújo, a businesswoman from Sao Paulo, apologised to the Argentines for the rivalry between the two countries, which she said she had had a part in. 'We should start building bridges from heart to heart and country to country,' she concluded.

An amateur cast from Uruguay presented a new play written by Suzanna Alaniz, a Uruguayan doctor. The play, *Porque no me escuchas?* (why don't you listen to me?), is set in a family where selfish pursuits clash with bitter social involvement. The turning point comes through an unobtrusive character who represents Christ and offers a new source of authority.

'In this continent some have plenty and very many have nothing,' Dr Alaniz told the conference. 'Structures must change and a better distribution is urgent. This is a conviction I am not going to give up. But through MRA I have become ready to listen to people with other views.'

A municipal officer who acted in the play said the next day that he and his wife had decided to embark on a new road in life for the sake of their children.

The delegation of 15 from Uruguay included a Montevideo crane driver, Atilio Debon. He described how he had criticised corrupt leadership in his country, but had only decided to do something about corruption himself when a Scottish colleague had asked him, 'Are you part of the cure or the disease?' This had opened his eyes to his own stealing and pilfering and he was now fighting for honesty in the port where he worked.

'In a continent where so much degradation of man is in evidence, the change MRA stands for means restoring the human family to its intended dignity,' said Blanca Molina. Jorge Molina, who is a world expert on soil conservation and rehabilitation, fascinated delegates with an illustrated lecture on food and soil. 'Not a single child needs to go hungry on this continent,' he said. 'The absolute standards of MRA are key to food production and the right use of available resources.'

Peter Hintzen



Uruguayans who took part in the play 'Porque no me escuchas?'

## BRAZIL HOPE FOR THE ABANDONED CHILDREN

by Laurie Vogel, Brazil

EUROPEANS LIKE ME are trained to believe in what they see happening under their noses and to cast a sceptical eye on 'miracles'. But the experience of eight young Europeans who visited Brazil recently would have convinced the most sceptical.

The Europeans were invited by Brazilians to 'help forward a move for moral and spiritual re-armament' in the country. Over a weekend in one of Latin America's multimillion population cities, they were invited into three homes.

The first was the home of a lady whose ancestors, an Indian princess and a Portuguese coloniser, are named on the monument to the city's foundation over 400 years ago. While the guests were there, her daughter-in-law arrived, bursting with excitement. 'We had a miracle last night, my

husband and I,' she said. 'Things that had been festering between us for a year were put right. There were apologies and tears. We are going to church together tomorrow for the first time in ten years.' It was a miracle too for her children who, watching their parents hurt each other, had said that 'it would be better for them to break up'.

Then the young Europeans visited the home of a national trade union leader. Not for the first time in Brazil—or elsewhere—people had been trying to undermine the husband's passionate, but non-violent, defence of his members' rights by malicious gossip attacking the unity of his home.

### Second honeymoon

Suspicion and bitterness had resulted, putting the future of the home and the happiness of three children in jeopardy. But the family was even more concerned about neighbours, whose marriage breakup had already been decided. Two days beforehand mother and daughter had arranged to show an MRA film to the neighbours and their children. To their surprise, on 'breakup day' the neighbours set out on a second honeymoon to see if their marriage could have a second chance.

The visit to the trade union leader's home ended with a time of quiet reflection, listening for God's direction. During the evening the union leader's wife said that she had decided to travel to the nation's capital—an 18-hour bus journey each way—to be at her husband's side a few days later when he was up for re-election to his union position.

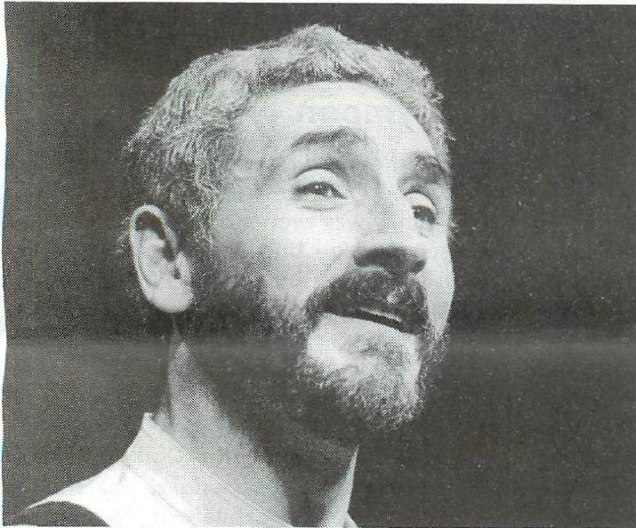
The third home was that of a successful businessman who in his first years as an immigrant to Brazil had often not had enough to feed his family properly. One daughter had rebelled against the affluence which followed and had left home to join a hippie community, severing relations with her family totally. Now she, her husband and daughter were there to receive the Europeans. What had happened? The businessman's wife had started to set time aside to listen to God. She began to see things she should put right with her daughter and how she could make contact with her. A reconciliation took place and the small granddaughter is now the delight of their home.

### One more try

The businessman's son and daughter-in-law, with two small children, were also there. Their presence was also something of a miracle. A few months earlier the businessman's wife had felt prompted by God to invite her daughter-in-law to a working session of women convinced about Brazil's need for moral re-armament. As she left that meeting, the girl had said, 'Mother, how did you know to invite me today? It was today that your son and I were to have told you our decision to end our marriage. During this time I felt we must have one more try.'

Brazil is estimated to have 22 million 'abandoned children'. Some belong to parents who have to work from before dawn until after dark, leaving the children to fend for themselves in the streets. Poverty leaves its cruel scars on hundreds of thousands of children. But, reflected the young Europeans as they visited a State institution for abandoned and delinquent girls, hundreds of thousands more are wounded by the bitter divisions in their families. Those three homes had shown them that there is a miracle-working Power which can deal with these and save their innocent young victims. ■

# CANADA FRANCIS CHALLENGES THE SETTLED LIFE



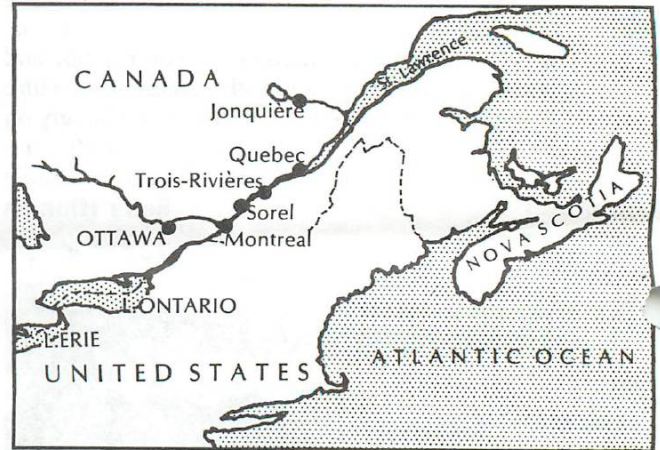
Michel Orphelin as St Francis

MONTREAL'S LARGEST DAILY, *La Presse*, heralded the Quebec tour of *Un soleil en pleine nuit* with the headline 'St Francis lives again on stage as a model for the man of tomorrow'. Last month the play toured five cities in the French-speaking province of Quebec and was also presented in the Canadian capital, Ottawa.

In an interview with Michel Orphelin, who portrays St Francis, on a weekly religious programme, the French language network of CBC television attributed the tour to 'the collaboration between the Franciscan family and Moral Re-Armament'. *La Revue Franciscaine*, official organ of the Franciscan Order, said that the one-man show presented 'the dynamism and radical thinking of the gospel'. The article continued, 'It offers an alternative to materialism, doubt and injustice. It puts forward St Francis not as a superstar but as a model.' In a personal message, the provincial head of the Order wrote, 'I rejoice in this initiative of Moral Re-Armament. I encourage our readers to profit from this show, to know St Francis better and

especially to understand the way he tried to live out the gospel.'

The show spoke to people's hearts. 'I was deeply moved,' commented a Catholic bishop after the premiere in Montreal. Deputy Mayor of Montreal Carmen Millette spoke of the 'outstanding talent' of Michel Orphelin. A lay leader of the Third Order of St Francis commented, 'I have known St Francis for 27 years, but this show has helped me see his relevance for 1983.' A journalist said, 'When you are settled in a life of mediocrity, justified by a thousand excuses, this makes you want to make a new start. It opens up avenues that can take you out beyond yourself.'



From the St Lawrence port of Montreal, the show moved to Québec City, which since its foundation in 1608 has served successively as capital of New France, of Canada after the British conquest, and now of the province of Quebec. Mme Coté, wife of the Lieutenant Governor of the province, and Cardinal Maurice Roy, former Archbishop of Quebec and Primate of Canada, were among the first night audience.

The performance in Jonquière, northernmost point of the tour, was arranged by a Capucin father and members of the 52 local groups of the Third Order. Two performances were given in the Cultural Centre in Trois Rivières. In the shipbuilding city of Sorel, which has been hard hit by the recession, the company were looked after by a group which is presenting Peter Howard's play *Through the Garden Wall* around the province. An industrialist who had recently invested in the area so as to keep people at work came to the performance with many of his employees.

Originally written in English by a British playwright, Hugh Steadman Williams, and a British composer, Kathleen



Carmen Millette (left), Deputy Mayor of Montreal, receives members of the company of 'Un soleil en pleine nuit' in the Montreal City Hall.

Johnson, for the French mime artist, Michel Orphelin, *Un soleil en pleine nuit* includes people from both language groups in its technical and musical team. This aspect had a particular significance during its Canadian tour. The Ottawa performance had an English projected translation and brought both language groups together in an audience which gave the company a standing ovation.

Richard Weeks

*FRANCINE GAGNON is one of those who made the arrangements for the campaign described opposite. She is the youngest of 14 brothers and sisters of a Quebec family. She was a laboratory technician before launching into unsalaried work with Moral Re-Armament. This has taken her to several European countries and to Lebanon.*

## THE DARKNESS LIFTED

MY FIRST STEP towards faith came a few years ago. There was no more light in the future and I saw how I had failed to live a constructive life. It was in this darkness that I first gave my life to God without knowing fully what it meant. I experienced His generosity and forgiveness then, and the strength of His direction increasingly in the years that followed.

But there came a point last summer when the darkness returned. One day I met some people whose suffering was beyond any words of hope or consolation from my experience. All I had learned and built seemed inadequate. I felt I was no longer a witness to God's power but only a worker without pride or joy. Soon I became resentful towards those who did not help me, include me or teach me. Fear came also, the fear of facing those who trusted me.

### Money

At last proof came that God had not abandoned me totally and that those months were not wasted, nor were they by chance. Some friends helped me to express everything in my heart: the fear, the doubts, the questions never asked. Then we were quiet together. I wrote down the thoughts that came to me—that the time had come for me to trust God totally, that He would take care of everything, that it wasn't necessary to fight in my own strength.

In that time of silence I knew that if I trusted God with my life I could also entrust my security to Him. Remembering the money I had set aside for retirement during the years when I had a salaried job, I felt God urging me to give it to the work of Moral Re-Armament in three countries where I knew there were great needs.

When I did this, fear, doubts and bitterness disappeared. I needed that experience to understand that the most precious gift I can offer others is my trust in God, the certainty that He can guide each of us step by step. What I say can be important. But the decisive moment for each person is when they are alone in the silence. That was where I was given exactly what I needed, something which no one else could have told me. ■

## NETHERLANDS TO FIND A NEW WORLD CLIMATE

WILBUR WRIGHT, Labour Attaché at the US Embassy in Brussels, called on participants in a recent MRA weekend conference in Zeist in the Netherlands to 'find the legal, psychological and political climate in which a world free from war and the threat of war can be created'.

While institutions like the United Nations made great achievements, the modern world presented new challenges to mankind, he went on. 'It seems to me that to create a world free from the threat of war a massive yielding of national resources—material and psychological—is required. Can officials charged with maintaining national control of these resources lead us into a world where they are shared on an equitable basis?

'Institutions such as Moral Re-Armament with people who are capable of freeing themselves from the narrow confines of nationalistic thinking may have to produce the men and women who can point the way to the social, psychological and political framework in which a world free of war and the threat of war can be created,' he concluded.

The conference, at the Woudschoten centre, drew 150 from all walks of life to consider 'Change of heart—the answer to denouncing your opponents, to the gap between East and West, America and Europe, North and South, and to the alienation caused by unemployment and bankruptcy'. Dr K F Gunning, recently decorated by the Pope for his work in medicine and for the protection of human life, spoke on the theme at the opening meeting.

Each day the conference split into groups to discuss different aspects of 'responsibility'. Dr D Schaap, an economist from Heerde, led a group on 'Stewardship and accountability—at home, in business, in politics'. Another group on the individual and the family was led by a captain in the merchant navy and his wife, who is a nurse. Another discussed the subject of peace. A fourth group discussed the relationships between Dutch and the cultural minorities living in the Netherlands. 'Is tolerance adequate for building a multiracial society?' was one of the questions raised.



Woudschoten conference enjoys an evening of entertainment

Braeckle

Ds J Windig from Den Helder preached the sermon at a packed Sunday morning service in the conference centre chapel. 'If the nation listens to God, it will be blessed,' he said. 'If not, it will necessarily bring curses on itself. You cannot make free with all that God has entrusted to you—your family, your job, your country, your culture, your society.'

Looking back on the conference Digna Hintzen, one of its organisers, writes, 'These two days gave us a glimpse of a new society coming almost silently to birth, in which people put the direction of their lives into God's hands...As we drove home, the trees and bushes which had been bare on our way out were decked in tender green—perhaps signifying what had happened in the hearts of many participants.'

## BRITAIN RESPONSES TO UNEMPLOYMENT

TACKLING UNEMPLOYMENT was the subject of a recent industrial conference at Tirley Garth, the MRA centre in the North of England, entitled 'It can be done'. 90 trade unionists, managers, employers and their families looked at ways to create jobs and to multiply them into a national trend.

Len Grice, Personnel Director of GEC Telecommunications, described the company's job-sharing scheme, which has provided part-time work for 700 people, many of them school-leavers, over the last two years. Despite initial trade union misgivings, Mr Grice said, the scheme 'worked remarkably well, because we have had a team of dedicated people with enthusiasm to make it work'.

Mr Grice explained that the company had decided to offer every vacancy to two young people, who would share hours of work and pay for 18 months. There was no guarantee of full-time work for those completing the 18 months, but so far all participants had been placed in full-time jobs in the company. The advantages of the scheme were that it took people off the dole; offered them a better rate of pay than supplementary benefit; and placed them at the top of the list of people available for full-time work. In theory, similar schemes applied on a national scale, for teenagers and those approaching retirement, could reduce unemployment by up to two million.

### Above target

Mr Grice said that he had pioneered the scheme after studying unemployment trends in Coventry where the company, a branch of the giant electronics group, is based. The statistics showed that six months after leaving school 76 per cent were still unemployed, or on Youth Opportunities Programmes, with no guarantee of employment. There were now only 5.7 million employed in manufacturing in Britain, compared with 8.4 million in 1965. Because of the technological revolution of the last decade, GEC Telecommunications now employed 6000 semi-skilled workers compared to 18,000 ten years ago, and yet their sales had increased in real terms. Job-sharing was one way of tackling such structural change, he said.

Britain could offer the world a new industrial culture, said



Len Grice

Dick Cosens, former engineering shop steward at British Aerospace, chairing one of the sessions. If the old industrial culture was characterised by a spirit of confrontation, the new 'needed to be orientated towards a spirit of co-operation,' he said. Confrontation only multiplied unemployment.

Albert Benbow, Convenor of Shop Stewards at SL Carburettors in Birmingham, described the turnaround in the fortunes of the BL subsidiary, once one of the most notorious for confrontation. The company had been the first in the British Leyland group to be awarded the maximum bonus for productivity in an audited plant. This year's turnover was already £300,000 above target. Employment, drastically reduced in recent years, was now increasing. 'Next week we are starting to interview people for permanent new jobs,' he said.

### Unusual

At one time the company had been scheduled for closure. Mr Benbow had pleaded with one of BL's senior directors to visit the plant and 'see for yourself'. 'He came and saw a complete change in the attitude of the workforce,' said Mr Benbow. The director had commented, 'There is only one thing wrong—you haven't got enough work. We will do our best to see that you get it.' The company is now supplying carburettors for BL's Metro Maestro and a new car, codenamed LM11, which will be launched next year.

Rudi Gayle, a shop steward in the transport workers' union at BL's Longbridge plant in Birmingham, spoke about industrial relations in the company. 'At one time the boot was on the foot of the union,' he said. 'Now it is on the foot of the management. Both have misused it.' The recent so-called 'washing-up' dispute at BL's Cowley plant in Oxford was the result of an accumulation of grievances.

What was needed now, Mr Gayle went on, was 'the spirit of co-operation in people'. 'People matter,' he concluded. 'They are not commodities to be bought at any price. The moment we think of people in terms of groups we begin to make mistakes.'

Margaret Bayley, engineering workers' convenor at the ICL computer plant at Kidsgrove, was returning after the weekend to sort out a dispute over the dismissal of a local manager who had worked for the company for 22 years. All four unions had walked out in support of the manager—a 'very unusual' state of affairs, she said. 'There are factories where there are good shop floor managers.'

The Director of a Nottingham colour printing firm, Richard Hawthorne, said that his company had designated 1983-4 as 'the year of the team'. Directors should not wait for shop floor attitudes to change on issues like reducing overtime, employing extra staff and working as a team, he said. Such changes had to start from the boardroom. But it was also important that managements did not manipulate people so as to achieve their objectives, but really cared for them. 'We need to start again with a new simplicity of purpose.'

## Craft skills

Jim Sharp, who employs 30 people in a graphic arts company in Liverpool said that they had created three new jobs in the last three months instead of working overtime.

John Vickers, Chairman of a lubricant oils company in Leeds, said that the company had kept its promise of two years ago to the workforce that 'there will be no more redundancies' even though 'the omens were against us'. In the last ten years the volume of trade had fallen by 50 per cent, but now they were winning back customers. This had confirmed his conviction that 'if what you do is morally right, it is also economically viable'.

Bill Franklin, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Sheffield Chamber of Trade, expressed his concern over the disappearance of labour-intensive skills. 'Over the last 20 years we have allowed to disappear a whole range of craft jobs on which depends the fabric of our homes,' he said. Today the cost of services such as plumbing and decorating was 'quite appalling'. It was a crying shame that disabled and elderly people were living in property going to rack and ruin because they could not afford such services or were unwilling to accept moonlighting. The Sheffield Chamber of Trade was looking into a scheme to regenerate these craft skills in the small firm sector.

## Homeless

'We are trying to prepare today's kids for tomorrow's world,' said George Walker, training adviser to a Youth Training Scheme in Hertfordshire. But it was hard to predict what this world would be like. There was 'pure gold' among the young people 'who do get up and go if given half chance'. Many he met wanted to learn not one skill but several. But there were also moral issues involved. Would they go on to work within the tax system? Would they learn to relate to the customer? There was a need to train youngsters in 'life and social skills' and to generate new attitudes.

Rita Ingles from Stafford had recently returned from an MRA industrial conference in Jamshedpur, India. Productivity in the steel industry there was high, but she had been shaken when someone asked her, 'How long before we catch up with you?' 'I had a horrible feeling that all that we in Britain had come to stand for was material possessions,' she said. 'God can give us twentieth century solutions right now, if only we would stop moulding others into the people we want them to be.'

'Moral Re-Armament didn't draw my teeth or stop me fighting,' said Les Dennison, a lifelong plumber and former Marxist. He still hated the injustices, poverty and indignities that people had to suffer across the world. But it was wrong to hate the people whom he had blamed for them.

If present trends continued, there would be 'one person

in work for every two in retirement' throughout Europe in the year 2000, said Monty Hughes, Secretary of the 3000-strong branch of unemployed steelworkers at Shotton, North Wales. He had been out of work himself for three-and-a-half years. At the same time there were housing needs across the world. Britain alone would be short of 860,000 houses by next year.

He and his colleagues had drawn up a scheme for the construction of steel prefabricated houses in conjunction with the British Steel Corporation's Product Development Centre at Shotton and with a private company. They were preparing a submission to the Departments of Industry and Employment as well as to Bill Sirs, General Secretary of the steelworkers' union, who had shown a keen interest in the idea. The scheme would provide reasonably priced housing for the unemployed and low-paid, as well as overseas 'commodity aid' to developing countries. One Latin American country had already made enquiries. If the scheme was taken up, 'we could do something for the millions of homeless across the world,' he said.

Michael Smith

## Fisheries bridge

IN JANUARY 1983, after seven years of unsuccessful negotiations, the EEC fisheries agreement surprised Europe. The Annual Report of the Oxford Group (Moral Re-Armament's official name in Britain) for 1982, which has just been published, gives an insight into how this took place.

Ten months before the agreement, the report relates, the President of the Scottish Fishermen's Federation, Gilbert Buchan, addressed an MRA meeting in the Westminster Theatre, London. He spoke alongside French and English farmers on the theme, 'How to feed the human family'.

The report continues: 'One of the French speakers, Count Gérard d'Hauteville, spoke of the legacy of the past which had hampered agreement on an overall fishing policy for Europe. "For centuries seamen have been to the fore in the wars between European maritime powers, especially France and Britain," he said. "These wars have left layers of bitterness, habits of mistrust and rancour over old incidents...I am a sailor and have shared in that attitude and am sorry for it."

'Later Frenchman and Scot told each other how these divisions had affected them personally. One incident during the war had continued to colour Buchan's feelings about the French.

'With a new openness of heart and mind Buchan later met representatives of the French fishermen in Luxembourg. They told him not to worry about their minister's speeches and gave him to understand what terms would satisfy them. He related this conversation to his own minister.' Meetings between fishermen and ministers followed and a basis for agreement was found—an important step towards the final settlement for the whole Community in January 1983.

This story is one of several included in the report of 'bridges of understanding' built in 1982. The report also contains the accounts of the Oxford Group for the year.

*The Annual Report can be obtained by writing to Moral Re-Armament, 12 Palace Street, London SW1E 5JF.* ■

DAVID FORBES is a graduate in law and German from Florida, USA.

# WHY I BELIEVE THE WORLD CAN SURVIVE

TWO MONTHS AGO a revolutionary force of change gripped me and now propels me along an unknown path. But I am not afraid. I have discovered that God, through my conscience, can disclose my role in a master-plan.

While on vacation in Europe after eight years of university study I was introduced, a complete stranger, to Moral Re-Armament. This occurred at a training centre in England where my cousin was taking part in an MRA programme. To me the centre was like a small community of nations.

I had arrived in a spirit of pessimism about the world's chances of survival beyond the year 2000, given the present power structures. This gave me the right, I felt, to live an egocentric life of complete hedonism.

These people gave me evidence of changes in society based on changes in individuals. They had established a set of fundamental universal principles—honesty, unselfishness, purity and love—as a code of conduct to guide their daily lives. The revolutionary aspect was that they lived what they talked about. Each started the day listening quietly to his or her conscience—comparing yesterday's conduct with these absolute standards and seeking 'guidance' on how to approach daily problems.

## Stewardship

What did I personally experience? First, I am no longer pessimistic because I see a programme of renewal in the world in which I can participate. I applied the standard of absolute honesty to myself and began a process of reconciliation with those I had harmed through my selfish conduct. Since I left home I had felt little obligation to be involved in family affairs. My non-commitment resulted in a passion for collecting possessions which, in some cases, were valued more highly than the quality of my personal relationships. My search for happiness and self-worth became equated with the quest for material wealth and self-gratification.

From England I wrote a letter of apology to my family disclosing my motives for my past conduct and asking forgiveness. I wrote likewise to former and current friends. To be clinically honest and apologise was painfully humbling. Yet it was also a healing and liberating experience of renewal and creativity.

Secondly, I am undergoing a spiritual evolution which is bringing me from agnosticism ever closer to faith. I discover that the more I try to lead a moral life based on these standards, the more I believe in the existence and power of a loving and merciful God who fills my life with new meaning



David Forbes

and purpose in a very practical fashion.

Thirdly, I am learning to surrender self-will daily through seeking guidance from God. Consequently, my perspectives have broadened, and I feel a responsibility and care for the needs of others. People, not things, are becoming important. Yes, human nature can change.

The extension of this is that human society can change as well. In recent weeks I have travelled to six English cities and met employers, trade unionists, civic leaders, artists and students who are making an impact on their communities by applying these four absolute standards, starting in their own homes.

And what comes next? First, I have decided to commit myself and my talents to God and to be led by Him. I know that the dimensions of this process will keep me a learner for life.

Second, I have become conscious of the burden of world responsibility my generation will carry in the next 25 years. This it cannot do, however, without a moral and spiritual commitment from all generations. As an American, a businessman and a future attorney, I feel the need to exercise stewardship as opposed to leadership. Today in many parts of the world there live disillusioned people of my age who looked to my country as an economic role model to produce happiness and bring meaning to life. But materialism is an insufficient end in itself. A material, dialectic alone can never provide the proper motivational basis for the just distribution of benefits and resources in society.

I have become committed to spreading an ideology of change in the human heart. This is a revolutionary ideology of individual freedom: the freedom to follow one's conscience and choose good over evil, love over hatred, others over self, truth over falsehood. Such freedom is the basis of human dignity, that most fundamental human right, and is as valid for West and East as it is for North and South. This is what I mean by stewardship and it is a responsibility my generation must successfully face for our world to survive.

**NEW  
WORLD  
NEWS**

Published fortnightly for Moral Re-Armament by The Good Road Ltd, 12 Palace Street, London SW1E 5JF, England. Printed by T W Pegg and Sons Ltd. Registered as a periodical at the Post Office. Articles may be reproduced without reference to the editor, acknowledgement welcomed. Price 18p. 10 copies £1.50 plus postage.

**Annual subscriptions:** British Isles £8.50 (2 copies of each issue £12.00); all other countries airmail £10.00. Regional offices and rates: **Australia** New World News, PO Box 1078J, GPO Melbourne, Vic 3001 \$19.00; **Canada** Moral Re-Armament, 387 Chemin de la Cote Ste Catherine, Montreal, Quebec H2V 2B5 \$24.00; **New Zealand** New World News, PO Box 31009, Christchurch \$25.00; **South Africa** Moral Re-Armament, PO Box 10144, Johannesburg, 2000 R20.00; **USA** Moral Re-Armament Inc, 1030 Fifteenth Street NW, Suite 908, Washington DC 20005 \$20.00. **Editorial and business address:** 12 Palace Street, London SW1E 5JF. Tel: 01-828 6591.