

**CHINESE IN BRITAIN ....**

'I began to realise that no matter what kind of country one may live in, morality and ethical building is an issue shared by all mankind. I am touched to know that in such a materialised society, there is still a group of people trying to emphasise the importance of moral values and ethics', wrote a young woman from China who is studying in Birmingham and who had come to help look after six of her countrymen and women at Tirley Garth. They were the fifth group to come from Beijing and Shanghai as part of our exchange programme with the Chinese Association for International Understanding (CAFIU).

The theme of their visit was 'enhancing moral values in our respective societies and ourselves'. They had asked to learn about the frameworks that operate in a democracy to preserve honesty and create trust. During the week they discussed these topics in Parliament and the Cabinet Office; and with business leaders, pressmen, academics, sports personalities and community leaders in London, Newcastle, Liverpool and Manchester. They also had a chance to compare the Great Wall of China with Hadrian's Wall – which one of them later called 'the baby wall'!

The weather, the beauty and the atmosphere of Tirley Garth, where they spent the bank holiday weekend, made for a relaxed but serious spirit between hosts and guests, allowing discussion on all sorts of topics including quite deep personal issues. Thirty had come from all over Britain to meet them. A seminar was held each morning. First the leader of the Chinese party and Archie Mackenzie spoke on the moral/philosophical bases of our respective societies, their strengths and weaknesses and present problems. Next was a discussion on values for commerce and industry and the future of employment. On the Monday an Anglo-Chinese panel spoke about creating the right balance between individual freedom and collective responsibility. Each occasion was followed by group discussions.

Mrs Cao Xiaobing, who led the party, said, 'There are many good things to carry forward from the past, but we will only build a modern civilisation if we admit and reject the out-dated and negative things and close the gaps between, for instance, ministers and people, fathers and sons, wives and husbands. Confucius (*whom the party quoted frequently*) respected highly the spiritual side of people rather than the material.' Someone who spent years as a missionary in China 'marvelled at the strange outside spirit which encourages us to be unselfish – and sets us free'. Before they left, Mrs Cao confirmed that CAFIU wishes to continue the exchange.

**James Hore-Ruthven**

**.... AND NORWAY**

The CAFIU delegation won our hearts by their humour and their interest in Norwegian society and in the aims and outreach of MRA. Their four-day visit, paid for by our Foreign Ministry, followed their stay in England. Mrs Cao Xiaobing, said: 'Norway has shown us that any country, whatever its size, can play an important role in the international arena. Small and big nations can learn from each other.'

Another member of the delegation said: 'So many we have met here in MRA have spent years serving in developing countries. That represents devotion, bravery and sacrifice. By joining hands together we can make this planet a better place.'

Through Johanne Gaup, Vice Minister responsible for Sami affairs in the Ministry for Local Government, the delegation learnt of efforts to put an end to discrimination against our ethnic minorities.

There was a fruitful exchange with representatives of the Norwegian political leadership. Former Foreign Minister, Björn Godal, told about Norway's role in the peace process in the Middle East. The Chairman and two Members of the Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee also spent an hour with the Chinese.

The visitors were shown around Parliament by the Parliamentary leader of the Socialist Election Alliance. They remarked on the seating of members, which is according to the districts which elected them and not according to party. This contributes to a less polarized dialogue between the political parties. Mrs Cao said that the Chinese welcome a dialogue on human rights. Norway and China have different views, but that should not be a hindrance, she explained.

Dr Anton Skulberg, head of the committee inviting the Chinese delegation, and his wife Randi, welcomed them to their home and their local community, Spydeberg, east of Oslo.

Dr Henrik Syse, Secretary of the Government-appointed Values Commission, told about the Commission's work to promote a national debate on values to bind a pluralistic democracy together, and commented on the parallel to the theme of the Chinese visit: 'Community moral building'.

**Anders Eskeland**

**WAR ON CORRUPTION IN TANZANIA**

At a meeting in Dar es Salaam attended by a hundred people, Moral Re-Armament was officially inaugurated in Tanzania on March 28. The press was full of news about the event, mostly in Swahili. *The African*, an English language newspaper, wrote: 'The Minister for



Works, Anna Abdallah, has said the war on corruption would not succeed if it is left to the government alone. The Minister said during the launching of a recently-registered non governmental organisation, Moral Re-armament, in Dar es Salaam at the weekend, that corruption was still rife in the public and private sectors. She said every citizen had a role to play to eradicate the social evil, adding that it was every citizen's capacity to either avoid corrupt practices or renounce them vehemently.'

Ambassador Hassan Diria, who was also present at the ceremony, took a swipe at public officers who clung to power although they were implicated in corrupt practices. He also criticised the clique of rich Tanzanians who looked down upon the poor, even though they had acquired wealth through questionable means.

The organisation has branches in Dar es Salaam, Moshi, Morogoro, Zanzibar, Dodoma and Arusha. Anna Abdallah is patron.

The meeting was representative of the country's diverse society – in terms of religion, politics and gender. It was opened by Ambassador J E F Mhina. Then Ambassador Dora Mbezi, a member of the Board of Trustees of MRA, expressed her delight at witnessing MRA being inaugurated in Tanzania. She said that there is a big task ahead to make MRA objectives well known, and bring about a clean and peaceful society in Tanzania. She promised to work hand in hand with other MRA members to see that goal achieved.

In a message Bishop Elinaza Sendoro, who is also a trustee, said he supports MRA because its objective is to raise the four moral standards of people, which confer with Christian teachings. He urged Christians to take part in the activities of MRA.

The participants unanimously agreed that this year's theme should be 'war against corruption'.

**Keld Jorgensen Eileen Mavura**

#### **GLOBAL CLUB UK, OK!**

'If five people come, we'll give them our best.' That was our attitude leading up to Global Club from April 3-6. Forty-five came, representing 20 national backgrounds including Ghana, Italy, Malaysia, South Africa and Taiwan. Half had never been to the Tirley Garth MRA Centre before.

We began by waving to Australia where the first Global Club event took place three years ago. The weekend was structured around four main speakers who expounded eloquently on the theme of 'Moving out of your comfort zone' – management consultant Lawrence Fearon, Egyptian paediatrician Mona Marzouk, Texan minister Angela Gafford (26) and British film producer David Channer. Amidst the challenges they threw out, there was also time for workshops, discussion groups, sport, drama, fun, games, music and croquet! Another highlight was a panel of four young people who spoke about what

'The heart of the matter' means to them. No need to say more.... 'Global Club – The Movie' is available on video from Howard Grace at 15 Lewis Walk, Newbury, Berks, RG14 6TB Tel/Fax: +44 1635 47196. And by popular request, the organisers look forward to organising Global Club 2.

**Laura Trevelyan, UK**

#### **MOSCOW IN SPRING (MARCH 27-APRIL 7)**

It was nine years since the two of us visited Moscow on our first joint visit. How much Russia has changed since then! It is very encouraging to look back and see the many people we and others have been led to. Russia is now an expanding area of our world work.

One purpose of this visit was to invite a small group of parliamentarians to Caux for the Politicians' Round Table in August. We met with a positive response. Deputy Mikhail Men and his advisor, Anatoli Krasikov, both of whom were in Caux last year, plan to come with their wives: another deputy, Vladimir Averchev, who is on the International Affairs committee, also plans to attend. We met Viacheslav Igrunov, deputy chairman of Yabloko, the main democratic party, who would like to send a number of younger people from the party to Caux.

We also discussed with friends ideas for seminars in Moscow on MRA-related topics. Mikhail Men suggested a high-level seminar on business ethics. His proposal reflected a wider mood of the moment – the desire for practical evidence of how faith and moral values impinge on life.

These are some elements of a fruitful and joyful visit. We were welcomed by many people and had deep conversations. One friend, philosopher Grigory Pomerants (who will also be in Caux again this year), told us that, prior to a recent TV appearance, he had visited the Tretyakov Art Gallery and spent time contemplating one of Andrei Rublev's icons. He felt cleansed by the experience, and talked profoundly and spontaneously in the interview that followed. We too felt the Holy Spirit's presence on this visit.

**Philip Boobbyer Leif Hovelsen**

#### **ARTICLE ON MRA FOR RUSSIAN JOURNAL**

In January when Philip Boobbyer and I were in Moscow, a friend who is head of the School of Religious Studies at the University of Humanities asked for a substantial article on MRA for *Dia-Logos*, an annual scholarly journal concerned with the influence of religious factors in society and the promotion of ecumenical understanding.

With the comments and help of colleagues I have now prepared and sent a 16-page article, discussing MRA's approach to these vital questions which are very topical in Russia at the moment, and giving an account of its current activities. The article will be translated into Russian. If anyone wishes to see the English I am happy to send it by e-mail (prthwaites@compuserve.com). **Peter Thwaites**



## BILL PORTER IN THE UNITED STATES

Bill Porter has been on a whirlwind tour of North America. In six weeks he met more than 200 media people in 13 cities, of whom 24 were directors and professors of schools of journalism, and 20 were editors and senior broadcasters. He began with a speech to the Nieman Fellows and Faculty and at Harvard University. He spoke to the Society of Professional Journalists in Cincinnati, and to a seminar at the Union Institute there on 'the President and the Press'. Summing up his visit, Bill said: 'Americans read and watch in large numbers, but do not have confidence in media professionals. This is a growing concern among those I met, and I am confident that we shall see a constructive change in media attitudes in the closing years of this century.'

## A HUGE CAMPAIGN TO CHANGE THINKING

Couples spend more money on servicing their cars than on servicing their marriages, according to Peter and Barbie Reynolds, the founders of the British charity Rapport which aims to strengthen marriages before they get into crisis. They were speaking at a *For A Change* Forum on 'The challenge of marriage' in the Westminster Theatre last month. 'We need a huge campaign to change people's thinking so that it becomes acceptable to go on courses to strengthen your marriage,' Peter Reynolds said. He believed there could be a sea-change in attitudes toward this, just as there has been against drink-driving.

Rapport, which is now amalgamating with Care For The Family, is a nationwide initiative which has held day-long workshops for 6,000 couples in its first six years. They now plan evening workshops called 'Now we're talking'. The Reynolds emphasised that communications are paramount in strengthening marriages. Conflicts are bound to arise but with the right skills these can lead to deeper love and understanding.

There has been a vast change in the roles and expectations between husband and wife over the last 50 years, with women now often equal breadwinners. Couples nowadays go into marriage with a far greater expectation that it will be a partnership for companionship.

Bob and Lyria Normington also spoke with touching honesty about their own marriage. Lyria emphasised two factors which had strengthened their marriage: a belief that 'there are no degrees in blame' even when things might appear to be the other person's fault, and 'two-way prayer' with God. After 17 years of marriage, 'We are still crazy about each other', she concluded.

*Michael Smith*

## WHEELS FROM HOLLAND TO UKRAINE

On April 17 a convoy of 11 large trucks left Haarlem in The Netherlands for a three-day journey via Poland to

Ukraine. On board was humanitarian aid for Poland and Western Ukraine: clothes, wheelchairs, beds and other furniture for hospitals, clinics and schools.

This was the sixth time in recent years that such a convoy has been organized by the Dutch foundation Polen/Oekraïne in close cooperation with MRA friends in Poland, Ukraine and The Netherlands.

Several other initiatives are also springing up: one is a plan to set up a wheelchair workshop in the city of Lviv, partly run by handicapped people. The workshop will be integrated in the new Dzherelelo Centre for handicapped children, which is now being built.

Two Ukrainians came back with the empty trucks and are in Holland for two months for training as wheelchair mechanics.

*Jaroslav Grybalskiy, Tony Roodvoets,  
Kees Scheijgrond, Wanda Tarnawska*

## ...URGENT - LAST MINUTE....URGENT- LAST MINUTE... URGENT - LAST MINUTE...

Caux Planning time (Haguenau May 20-25) moved to Warm-up Week in Caux July 3 to 10.

Due to a whole series of precious events all falling into the months of April and May the number of people able to come to the scheduled Haguenau Caux Planning time is considerably lower than other years. After consultation we therefore suggest that we concentrate on the warm-up week at the beginning of the Caux summer July 3 to 10 as a time to finalise planning, to exchange information about the various sessions and to create the Caux community to undergird the whole summer.

Informing friends at the Maison St Gérard in Haguenau of this change, fully expecting to pay a considerable cancellation fee, we were very touched indeed when Frère Michel said, 'Oh but our house is a bit your home too. We will have to keep your deposit but otherwise you do not have to pay anything.' Between the French, Swiss and Dutch team we will make a contribution to their house all the same and feel that the next time we meet in November or the Spring we should probably consider Haguenau as a pre-destined location!

The main point of this message is to ask all those who have information on specific sessions, on the Caux Scholars' Program and other events to send them to Charles Danguy, Marianne Spreng, Andrew Stallybrass and Lotty Wolvekamp in a combined e-mail message, or – if you are not on the internet – to one of us by mail within the coming week.

The same request goes to all those who are looking after one of the parts of life in the house, be it kitchen, evening-programmes, service, night-watch or any other subject you have information on, including anything you know about urgent needs or any new ideas you wish to pass on.

We will then compile and concentrate it all – working



by e-mail – and will send out a 'state of the preparation-report' similar to what you usually received other years after the Haguenau and Yutz spring-time planning meetings.

With warm summer-greetings,

**Charles Danguy, Michel & Catherine Koechlin,  
Christoph & Marianne Spreng, Lotty Wolvekamp**

PS: Lotty Wolvekamp has offered to be reference person for the warm-up week, so do send any suggestions and information to her.

### 'LIFE, FAITH, FELLOWSHIP' SESSION

Rediscovering the joy of our original calling. This will be the main purpose of this session which will take place at Caux from July 23 to 30. At a time when important decisions concerning the work of MRA are in the process of being taken following the Jamaican consultation, it will be equally important to strengthen our faith and commitment for the next phase of our specific mission. Father Frank Ramsperger, a Canadian Jesuit based in Lebanon, has accepted to give spiritual input on the theme 'Rediscovering the joy of our first calling', and the Venerable Ajahn Sumedho, from the Amaravati Buddhist Monastery in

England, will help us to discover 'how to be responsible and let go'. Further details will be given in the June issue of the World Bulletin. But please do not delay in sending your application for the week.

**Annejet Campbell, Anne-Marie Tate, Jean Piguët,  
Mona Marzouk, Ramez Salamé, Lotty Wolvekamp**

### NEXT ISSUE OF FOR A CHANGE

Under the headline 'To sell or not to sell – how MRA answered the question', the June/July issue of *For A Change* magazine carries a gripping cover feature on the Westminster Theatre, written by Mary Lean. The article takes the reader behind the scenes: to the theatre's historic role and impact, the difficulties surrounding its sale and how a body of voluntary workers retains trust, honesty and unity of purpose through the upheavals. There are also articles in the issue on Hope in the Cities in the USA and Britain.

### FACTS ON FAXES, PHONES AND ADDRESSES

**United Kingdom:** Brian and Juliet Boobbyer have a new fax number: +44 1544 267 926

## Calendar of Events

MAY '98	<u>Novosibirsk Russia</u>	14th FFF Visiting Course	May	2 - 12
MAY '98	<u>Parubice Czech Republic</u>	International Communications Forum	May	8 - 12
MAY '98	<u>Kenya</u>	'New men, new nations, a new world' - All-Africa conference	May	20 - 25
JUN '98	<u>Odawara Japan</u>	National MRA conference: 'Seeking a really meaningful life - how should we live and what role should we play?'	Jun	6 - 7
JUN '98	<u>Moldova</u>	15th FFF Visiting Course	Jun	25 - July 5
JUL '98	<u>Caux Switzerland</u>	Caux summer conference preparation and warm-up week	Jul	3 - 10
JUL '98	<u>Melbourne Australia</u>	'Life Matters' course for young adults	Jul	3 - 12
JUL '98	<u>Caux Switzerland</u>	Caux summer conference – 'Changing the ways of the world'	Jul	11 - Aug 23
SEP '98	<u>Tirley Garth UK</u>	FFF International Course (prospectus available)	Sep	3 - 22

*The deadline for the next Bulletin is Monday, June 15, 1998*

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