



MRA INFORMATION SERVICE

APOLOGY IN HIGH COURT TO MR. HOWARD

'SPACE' PLAY FLIES INTO BERLIN

'RELEVANT, REVOLUTIONARY AND EXCITING
THEATRE'

HAVE YOU BEEN TO 'THE WESTMINSTER'?

VOL. 12 NO. 298

FOUR HAYS MEWS, BERKELEY SQUARE, LONDON, W.1

SATURDAY, 20 JULY, 1963

WHAT CAN CHANGE CHINA'S COURSE?

by our Diplomatic Correspondent

RECENTLY I have been on the borders of China. I have seen the refugees coming out. I have heard first hand reports of the massive industrial and agricultural problems in that country.

The irony of the situation in Asia is this: China, with an ideology that has failed to solve her own problems, holds the initiative across South East Asia simply because no positive, dynamic alternative is offered in the other Asian countries. So month by month we have been watching country after country across a whole continent drifting into their orbit.

It is a very serious situation and very late in the day, with obvious repercussions for the world and for people in Britain.

The only answer in the time left is for Japan and India to move together with an ideological objective for the whole of Asia.

That is what men of leadership in Japan and India are preparing to do. I have been in Japan recently and met the top political and industrial leadership. I think of a meeting of 25 leaders from every walk of life in that country. Each of them gave his convictions about this

battle for the right ideology to rule Asia and Japan's responsibility for the moral re-arming of the continent. Mr. Kishi, a former Japanese Prime Minister, said he did not think anything like that had happened in Japan's history before.

In India men of leadership are similarly preparing a world ideological offensive to go forth from Delhi. Japan and India together, they believe, must stake an alternative claim to the Chinese bid for Asia.

It is unrealistic to build a policy based simply on the divisions between Russia and China. If they do come to a break, the immediate result will be a race for control of different undeveloped areas around the world. No sane person could take comfort from that.

The only realistic reaction for the free world in this situation is to offer an ideological alternative to Communism. It must be as far ahead of Marxism as the jet aeroplane is of a balloon.

Moral Re-Armament offers the ideology with the secret of unity to London, certainly, Washington, certainly, but also to Moscow and Peking. That is our task at the international Assembly in London in August.

August Assembly in London to shape 'new society'

THE BUILDING of a type of society never known before: that is the theme of an international Assembly to be held in London from 27 July to 2 September.

More than 800 people—among them delegations of 54 from France, 45 from Northern Ireland and 43 from Aberdeen—heard Mr. Roland Wilson announce the Assembly at a conference in London last weekend.

He said, 'We must make Britain a factory of new ideas for millions, a workshop of new character for the world. We must deal with the moral illiteracy of the youth, the dirt and degeneracy that is a feature of broadcasting, and the men with barnyard ideas who crow loudest in our churches.'

Mr. Peter Howard declared, 'The aim of Moral Re-Armament is far bigger than the French, American and Communist revolutions.' Freedom, though necessary, was not a big enough aim. 'We have seen nations become free, and corruption start up inside again. That inevitably leads to dictatorship.' Unity, though necessary, was also too small. 'We have seen France and Germany unite, but France and Britain are not united and Western Europe is divided.'

All needed the aim 'of creating the new type of man, sought for vainly in Moscow and Peking and even more essential in London and Washington, and of shaping the new type of human civilisation.'

M.P.'s apology in High Court to Mr. Howard

MILLIONS OF PEOPLE will begin to realise that truth can no longer be trifled with in Britain. That a halt is going to be called to lies—and, among the varied assortment of falsehoods which make us a mockery in the world—to lies about Moral Re-Armament.

In a recent stand for fairness and facts, some of the nation's watchdogs have been alert and recorded their bark. *The Times*, *The Daily Telegraph*, the *Daily Herald*, the *Evening Standard*, *The Evening News*, *The Scotsman*, *The Glasgow Herald*, the *Scottish Daily Express* were among the papers that carried headlines such as 'M.P. Apologises to Mr. Howard', 'M.P.'s Apology to Playwright', 'London High Court Action'.

The *Evening Standard* of 10 July had alerted the press with an article 'MRA Man Sues Tory M.P. for Slander'. Next day Court No. 6 of the Royal Courts of Justice was filled with newspapermen and members of the public as Mr. Justice Paull, with full dignity of wig and robes of office, heard an action for defamation, Howard versus Cooper.

'Wholly without foundation'

The Times next morning in its Law Report on the High Court of Justice, Queen's Bench Division, reported under the headline 'Apology for Mr. Howard':

'The settlement was announced of this action for defamation by the plaintiff, Mr. Peter Dunsmore Howard, of Hill Farm, Brent Eleigh, Suffolk, against the defendant, Mr. Albert Edward Cooper, M.P. for Ilford South, arising out of certain statements made by the defendant on 24 May, 1963.

'Mr. Peter Bristow appeared for the plaintiff; Mr. James Evans for the defendant.'

Under a further headline, 'Wholly Without Foundation', *The Times* Law Report continued: 'Mr. Bristow stated that the plaintiff held an important position in the Oxford Group in this country.

'The action arose out of statements made by the defendant (Mr. Cooper) to three of his constituents at the Conservative Party Offices in Ilford on 24 May, 1963. The constituents in question had gone to see the defendant to invite him to see the play, *Through the Garden Wall*, which was running in London.

'On hearing that the play was written by the plaintiff, the defendant either stated that the plaintiff was or had been a communist or that it was said by some Members of Parliament upon whose words the defendant relied, that the plaintiff was or had been a communist.

Defendant's undertaking

'The defendant now recognized that the plaintiff was well known for the Christian work in which he was engaged and he accepted the plaintiff's assurance that he (Mr. Howard) differed from communism on moral, political, and many other grounds and that any suggestion that the plaintiff was or had ever been a communist was wholly without foundation.

'The defendant apologised to the plaintiff and undertook not to make or repeat any statement implying that the plaintiff was or ever had been a communist.

'In the circumstances the plaintiff had agreed not to proceed with his claim for damages and the defendant had indemnified the plaintiff in respect of his costs.

'Mr. Evans said that, on behalf of the defendant, he adopted all that had been said. His Lordship gave leave for the record to be withdrawn.'

'Space' play flies into Berlin

ON the initiative and with the support of the German Federal Republic, the cast of *Space Is So Startling* flew last week into Berlin. The première took place at the Urania Theatre on 17 July.

The Socialist Mayor of Tempelhof, Herr Muerre, welcomed the cast on arrival at Berlin Airport on behalf of the Senate and Lord Mayor of Berlin. At an airport press conference Herr Muerre said, 'Just as in your ranks the nations are working together for a greater purpose, so humanity will one day stand united. That must be our aim.'

News of the arrival and première were carried widely in the Berlin press. Prior to Berlin, *Space Is So Startling* had been playing in Bonn and at special showings for the German Army arranged by the Ministry of Defence.

A tumultuous reception was given the cast when they addressed a rally of 2,000 East German refugees in

Spandau. 'Like many of you,' said Mr. Wing Wong from China, 'our homes are today behind the Iron Curtain. It was the selfishness in our own ranks that cost us our freedom. What we need is a revolution of the human heart that cures the causes of Communism.'

Space Is So Startling is a musical by Peter and Anthony Howard. The German Federal Economics Minister, Dr. Erhard, described it as 'lifting us out of non-essentials into the great questions of our times.' The Japanese national daily *Mainichi* said it 'shows the road humanity should choose.'

Mr. Howard's musical, *The Vanishing Island*, was presented in Berlin in 1956. His plays, *We Are Tomorrow* and *The Dictator's Slippers*, have also been performed there. In 1957 and 1960 the all-African MRA films *Freedom* and *Men of Brazil* drew special praise at the Berlin Film Festivals. *The Crowning Experience* was given its Berlin première last month.

'RELEVANT, REVOLUTIONARY AND EXCITING THEATRE'

BY PHYLLIS KONSTAM

Miss Konstam has a long and distinguished career on the London stage, starting in plays by Galsworthy and Shaw. She also played opposite Lawrence Olivier on Broadway and has appeared in a number of films, including the parts of Chloe in Galsworthy's The Skin Game and in Escape with Sir Gerald du Maurier. She is well remembered for her Tilly in the screen version of Ian Hay's Tilly of Bloomsbury and as Mrs. Spriggs in The Crowning Experience. She is married to H. W. 'Bunny' Austin and is at present starring in Through the Garden Wall at the Westminster Theatre.

THE ALARUMS at Westminster in recent weeks have left little space in our Press for the plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union,' said an article in *The Sunday Times* recently. 'But the main burden of the Plenum was the need to create a "new man"—indeed, as Mr. Ilyichev, the principal ideologist, somewhat rashly admitted, unless a new Soviet man can be created it will be impossible to achieve the promised Communism. There has been talk of the "new man" since Lenin's day, but human beings, even in the Soviet Union, seem to remain stubbornly the same as elsewhere—moderately selfish, very materialistic, not over-honest, and generally apathetic.'

It seems to me that the issue raised by the Central Committee of the Communist Party in Moscow is one which in the light of recent events we need to consider just as seriously in the West.

Powerful influence

Many powerful influences are at work which can rot away the strength of a nation and which, taken to the limits, can destroy the human race. These influences, however, could indeed create a 'new man' and if rightly directed begin to create a totally new society.

The entertainment world is one of these powerful influences. I am told thirty-five million people in the world go to the movies every day. Television can reach 88.4 per cent of the British population, according to BBC audience research. The ideas which pour out of that small box have a profound effect on the living and thinking of nations. Day after day, night after night people are conditioned by what they see and hear.

Pace-setter

The theatre, though it does not reach such a vast audience, is nevertheless a most powerful influence. It is a pace-setter. It starts a fashion. At the moment, to be in the swim you have to approve of plays which spit in the face of God, laugh and ridicule Him out of existence. Unless a play is about homosexuality, sadism, adultery, incest, fetichism, and various forms of perversion, it is called old fashioned. We are told we are not adult or mature if we do not approve of these things.

It is a clever piece of confidence trickery. The truth is that dirty-mindedness is not adult; it is puerile and adolescent. It takes men back thousands of years.

Large numbers of the public deplore the headlines

that we have read recently, but applaud and encourage the dirty-minded, blasphemous sewage which pours forth from the stage and screen and which makes the kind of news we have been reading possible.

What can be done to set a new trend in theatre and a new course for the nation? Years ago a woman's life was deeply affected by the work of Wesley. She wanted to clean up Britain. She wanted to get the masses off the streets, away from drunken brawls and prostitution. She loved God and her fellow men. Her name was Emma Cons, and with her niece, Lilian Baylis, she founded the Old Vic. It flourished and prospered and brought honour to our country and to our profession.

Some men and women in the modern age have started another theatre. It is in the highest tradition of the stage. It presents great drama. It is the true avant garde theatre of this generation.

Among other plays it presents those by Peter Howard. He is a dramatist of the greatest importance. In my opinion he goes further than great dramatists like Shaw, Ibsen, Chekhov, Pirandello and others. He brings men and women true renaissance, which means rebirth, the 'new man'. The audiences leave the theatre with faith and hope and a vision of a new society. Where many fine and great dramatists of the past have been great house-breakers, he is a great architect and builder.

Plan for millions

Certain men and women in the theatre and the movie industry, blinded by their own conceit and folly, have misled millions of this generation. Humble and with their great gifts in the hands of God, the greatest creative artist of all, they can and must find His plan which can reshape the lives of millions all over the world.

People pour backstage after the performances of *Through the Garden Wall*. They tell me they rarely have enjoyed an evening so much in the theatre. They speak of the brilliance of the play and rave over the performances of Oliver Johnston, Bryan Coleman, Richard Warner and indeed of the whole cast.

A leader of 250,000 unemployed told me, 'What we saw in that play is true. How are we going to break down these bloody walls between labour and management?' A poet came in and said, 'This is a most unusual and rare evening in the theatre.' On another occasion an American visitor said to me, 'This is what we need in America. This is what Kennedy is looking for.' An

Have you been to 'the Westminster'?

WIMBLEDON, Lords, Henley Royal Regatta, the Chelsea Flower Show, a Royal Garden Party—whichever is your cup of tea—the 'Westminster' is a rendezvous of an evening.

At least it might seem so from the Davis Cup stars, Test cricketers, crewcut oarsmen, organising women and Chairmen of County Councils who have been making their way to the Westminster Theatre within past weeks. Not to mention the public in their thousands who have attended the 140 performances since the opening night in March.

'A "must" for foreigners'

'They have passed the hundred performances without one losing week—in fact, they have all been profitable,' writes Georgie Wood in last week's *Stage and T.V. Today*. He adds, 'Following the news of a simultaneous translating system it looks like becoming a "must" for foreigners.'

'It is high time for such an initiative,' commented a West End hotel porter the other day. 'Not only a translating system for all our foreign guests but theatre you want to recommend to everyone.'

The British Travel and Holidays Association has already broadcast the news of this system—the first in British Theatre—to their agents on every continent. Five German radio networks requested the tape of a BBC interview which was made in German at the theatre and given to their forty language sections. Eight hundred travel agents throughout Italy got the news in Italian. 'Foreigners can now see plays in London in seven languages', was the headline in *De Telegraaf* in Amsterdam.

THEATRE . . . continued

Asian ambassador told me last week, 'I would like everybody in the world to see this play.' It is a rare privilege to have a part in this new, revolutionary, relevant and most exciting theatre of our age.

An actress was filming in Rome. She read the news in the British papers. It became the talk of her company. Bi-lingual herself, she found an invitation awaiting her on her return to London to be one of the foreign translators at the Westminster Theatre. 'I saw the "dolce vita" in Rome,' she said. 'At the end I thought there was nothing left to live for. I came to the Westminster. You don't know what it means to see a play that gives you hope.'

Already parties from France, Germany and Switzerland have come to the theatre. The director of a well-known Swiss theatre in Basle said, 'I will see that this play goes to the whole German-speaking world.'

Responsible men in Britain have seen the potential of the Westminster which, in the words of its charter, is presenting 'the plays of the new renaissance'. The Fashion Trade bought out one whole evening. This proved so successful that men in steel, banking and the airlines are ready to do the same. Men in the North West of England bought the house for a matinee and brought their parties in a convoy of coaches.

'Patriotic incentive'

Bentalls, one of Britain's largest department stores, took half the theatre. Their Managing Director wrote afterwards, 'The plays at the Westminster and particularly the present comedy, *Through the Garden Wall*, not only give excellent entertainment but a new patriotic incentive to ensure that Britain remains a great country. I hope this venture of ours will be repeated by many other firms.'

A bishop in his purple or a Nigerian cabinet minister in flowing robes, the blazered Glee Club of the University of California at Berkeley, or 140 Americans celebrating their Independence Day, royalty or Communists, tycoons or trade unionists—you don't know who you will meet at the Westminster. You do know that you will have the time of your life.

M. D. H.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Kerala, India—Commercial showings of *Freedom* and *Men of Brazil* started in Trivandrum this week. Previously, on sixteen consecutive days, audiences in towns and villages with no cinema had applauded these films at open-air showings. Despite monsoon rains, crowds turned out in one of the most Communist areas of the State crowding round the mobile film van to buy over 5,000 copies of MRA magazines.

Bonn, Germany—American Olympic gold medal oarsmen were received by Dr. Heinrich Lübke, President of the Federal Republic, at a ceremony honouring German world champion oarsmen. The Americans, John Sayre and Rusty Wailes, were in Bonn with *Space Is So Startling*. Their reception by the President was broadcast by German T.V. news that evening.

Johannesburg, South Africa — Students of Stellenbosch University, centre of Afrikanerdom, and Africans just released from political detention, featured in a performance of *The Dictator's Slippers* in Orlando, heart of the townships where 600,000 Africans live. The students said that they had come in response to the challenge of this African cast who brought their play to Stellenbosch. In return the Stellenbosch students had come during the university vacation to join the Africans in Johannesburg and Pretoria.

Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia—Mr. James Muigai, the brother of Mr. Jomo Kenyatta, Prime Minister of Kenya, said on television here last week, 'There is no need for a Congo situation in Southern Rhodesia.' Things could be settled by agreement when people have nothing to fear. Muigai conveyed to the leaders and people of Rhodesia the greetings of his brother. News of his arrival with his compatriot, Nahashon Ngare, had within 24 hours reached over one million people through radio, press and T.V.