

Dear Mr. Teng,

Your name and your picture have been in all our newspapers and on all our TV screens. Please allow a humble spokesman of the West, who loves the Chinese people, to express certain thoughts at this crucial moment.

As we watch you reaching out towards the West for help in your modernisation programme, we are reminded of your people's previous encounters with the West. During your 'century of humiliation' we drugged you with opium and drained your wealth. We offered you a faith we rarely practised. Most of us choose to forget those years. You do not. We then launched on the world the ideas of Marx and Lenin, a violent protest against our materialism and hypocrisy. We can understand why it appealed to you. But in the light of the past 50 years in Asia and Europe, you may now regret you did not find an ideology more worthy of the depth and richness of Chinese thought and culture.

In the past few months you have seen the wonders of our robot assembly lines, the spin-offs of space technology, the marvels of our marketing. You have met men and women who think of China merely as a thousand million new customers for our electronic gadgetry, our soft drinks or our hard porn. They are ready to exploit your market for their own gain or to help our ailing economies. If that is all we give, we shall condemn you to the same spiral of demand that is rotting our societies. Mr Teng, you know what help your people need. Please don't accept our materialism again. We do have something else to offer.

Of course, as an experienced ideologist, you may have come to the West hoping to find some fresh ideological truth. I can assure you that although such items are not yet on the agenda in Paris, London or Washington, there is a growing number of people who have faced the serious flaws in our own society, who are working to renew it, and who have something better to offer you than superficial materialism—an ideology that works. An ideology that is concerned to feed, clothe and house people, and give them a full and free role in shaping the future. Its name is Moral Re-Armament.

May I commend to you the experience of two distinguished Chinese pioneers of this idea, who have recently died. They were Dr Thio Chan Bee of Singapore and Dr Foon-ye Catherine Woo of Hong Kong, two of the great educators of the Chinese people in this century. But more, they were ideological pioneers, committed to bringing a revolution of the human heart to men and women of all races. They taught leaders of nations and their children how to turn enemies into friends. They courageously fought for the modernisation of human behaviour. They won hearts and minds.

Like Marx and Mao, both Dr Thio and Dr Woo had experienced the humiliations of our European racial arrogance. But both underwent a profound liberation from bitterness, a key factor in the new ideological battle they took up. Their ideas and their wisdom have reached millions around the world.

They did not claim that wisdom as their own. It grew and developed as they took time every day—as they put it—to listen to God for His direction for themselves and their countries.

Not the unreal god of nineteenth-century Europe whom Marx rejected, but the God whose still, small voice can be heard in every human heart. Whose standards of absolute honesty, purity, unselfishness and love would transform every society. And whose power can change men's motives in Europe and Africa, America and Asia.

May I suggest, Sir, that as many of your young people come to the West to study modern techniques, they might also be asked to study this programme for the modernisation of man, which must surely be the concept of the future.

Yours sincerely,

Donald Simpson

# NEW WORLD NEWS

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## AN OPEN LETTER TO TENG HSIAO-PING, Vice-Premier of the People's Republic of China

Donald Simpson worked for several years in Hong Kong.



# Malaysian leaders on the work behind the headlines of a Singapore teacher

## FACE TO FACE WITH FRIEND AND FOE

'WHEN I LOOKED AT A MALAY I would think to myself, "I am a Chinese and he is a Malay". When I met a Catholic I would say in my heart, "I am a Protestant and he is a Catholic".'

'I decided that day that I would not allow such vertical lines to determine my attitude towards my fellow beings. Instead I would strive to build bridges of sincere goodwill and understanding.'

So wrote the Singapore educator Dr Thio Chan Bee in his book, *Extraordinary Adventures of an Ordinary Man*, referring to his visit to the MRA conference centre at Caux in 1946.

Thirty-three years later when he died in Singapore, some Malay leaders in neigh-

bouring Malaysia decided to honour him in a memorial service which took place in Kuala Lumpur on 11 February 1979. Among the speakers was the Catholic Archbishop, Tan Sri Vendargon.

Tunku Abdul Rahman, Malaysia's first Prime Minister and 'Father of the Nation', drove 200 miles to address the multi-racial audience of 400. He said, 'We are here to remember the man whose service to his country and his fellow men cannot be measured in terms of money or words.'

Thio Chan Bee was born in Northern Sumatra of a prosperous family. But when his parents broke up, he had to go and study in poverty with grudging relatives in Singapore. The first turning point came when he

stopped blaming his circumstances and gave his passion for personal success to God. In return he received the power to help others to live unselfishly. This gift he used as Headmaster of Singapore's leading boys' school, as a politician, and in face-to-face encounters with friend and foe from all races including the British.

At the memorial service Tun Tan Siew Sin, former Finance Minister of Malaysia, gave an instance of his statesmanship in the years following World War II. 'It appeared that there was likely to be a confrontation between my father, who was then the President of the Malayan Chinese Association,' he said, 'and Dato Onn bin Jaffar, the father of the present Prime Minister, who was then President of the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO). Dr Thio laboured hard to bring the two together. He was in a sound position because he was friendly with all the parties concerned, everybody trusted him and he was also on good terms with the then British Commissioner-General for South-East Asia, Malcolm MacDonald.'

'His main mission, as he saw it, was to make the Malays and Chinese learn to work together as friends and not confront one another. There is no doubt that as a result of his efforts there was a thaw, because Dato Onn and my father had a fruitful meeting. From then on things became easier because the two leaders began to understand each other better.'

After Singapore and Malaysia became independent countries, Thio Chan Bee persisted in his bold approach to controversial leaders—whether R K Samy, the militant Indian trade union leader, or Tan Sri Syed Ja'afar Albar, the outspoken Secretary-General of UMNO.

'At that time in 1964, Albar was regarded as Enemy Number One of the Chinese in Singapore,' Dr Thio later related. 'And yet, in my daily time of listening for God's direction, the thought came to me all of a

**THIO CHAN BEE contd p4**



Thio Chan Bee (left) with Tan Sri Syed Ja'afar Albar

## To our brothers on the mainland



by **Charles Ooi, Malaysia**

I HAD PLANNED to remain overseas after graduating in New Zealand. I was resentful of the racial injustice I felt prevailed in my country. Through meeting MRA, my life took a different path and I decided last year to work with Dr Thio and his friends.

He challenged me that if I was responsible, then I didn't need to blame others for the

things wrong around me, but could deal with the things wrong in me. I decided not to blame, but to learn to care for the other races.

By his hospital bed, I got to know him intimately; he shared deeply his experiences in life, his triumphs and failings, his hopes, his love for people of all ages, backgrounds, status, races and creeds.

I was challenged by the selfless way in which he gave his life as a Singaporean to serve in my country, Malaysia, in order to build bridges between the different races.

Dr Thio lived for the future. With his passing it is the responsibility of those of us who knew him to continue to live, and pass on, the truths he guided his life by.

The recent stirrings towards a liberalisation of human rights in mainland China are a hopeful sign for the Chinese people and for the world. If we overseas Chinese live our faith in its full dimension, we can give a bigger purpose to our brothers on the mainland than they have so far found.



**K HARIDAS, Malaysia**

DR THIO was neither bigoted nor self-righteous, and I as a Hindu respected immensely his profound Christian faith. He never let his feelings get the better of him. Always cool and collected, he would patiently share from his own experiences to help and provide direction for others in need.

Though about 50 years separated us in age, we shared a common commitment and vision, and many are the bridges he built for me which are mine to treasure and share.

# Educator who broke from tradition and her wheelchair

## 'SHE BROUGHT TO LIFE THE GREATNESS OF CHINA'

IT WAS UNHEARD of for a Chinese girl to travel alone to Europe to study as Woo Foon-ye did in 1912. Girls were not even allowed to cross Hong Kong harbour by themselves—and illiteracy was regarded as a womanly virtue. But Katie (as she became known) was never prepared to accept things just because that was how they had always been.

The girl who broke with tradition in 1912 became a pioneer of woman's education and an international figure. The first Chinese woman to be decorated by a British sovereign and one of the first to become a Justice of the Peace, she helped her people to win their rightful position in colonial Hong Kong. She was Principal of St Paul's, Hong Kong, for 36 years and built it up from a girls' school with 50 pupils to a co-educational college of 2,500. She was a founder of the Hong Kong YWCA and Girl Guides, and of Chung Chi College, later to become part of the Chinese University. 'She herself,' wrote the *South China Morning Post* on her death in February, 'attributed these achievements to the art of "listening to and obeying God".'

### Trans-Siberian railway

Her family had a history of putting conviction before convention. Her grandfather was imprisoned by his father for becoming a Christian. He escaped, carried his wife all the way to the wharf (her bound feet meant that she could only hobble) and caught the ferry to Hong Kong, where he became one of the first Chinese ministers.

Katie's father was a doctor. He went out of his way to help plague victims, and died of the disease himself when Katie was only seven. Her mother worked as a midwife to support the family. She allowed Katie to

study, rather than insisting on arranging a marriage for her.

When Katie left Europe in 1916, the sea routes were closed by war. So she travelled by way of Scandinavia and the Trans-Siberian Railway to Peking, a 19-day journey. There she hoped to stay with a sister and learn Mandarin, but a telegram called her back to Hong Kong to become Principal of St Paul's Girls' School. She was only 26. But she burned with a desire to make education available to more Chinese women.

### Arthritis

It was a year later that she met Frank Buchman for the first time. At a luncheon in Hong Kong last June, she described a conversation with him: 'I was very surprised when he told me I was barred from God by my sins. I could not understand because I was a school Principal.'

Buchman told her that when some Principals asked his advice about how to stop stealing in school, he had asked each of them when they had last stolen. Katie thought of the exercise books she had been printing for the girls. She had paid for the printing herself and kept the money that came back when the books were sold. When she tried out what Buchman taught her about listening to God, she realised she was making business out of the girls and decided to put the profits back into the school.

Speaking at Katie's funeral, the Anglican Bishop of Hong Kong and Macao, the Rt Rev Gilbert Baker, spoke of her 'tremendous energy and enthusiasm' and its source in the Church and Moral Re-Armament. 'She and her colleagues urged people in practical life to live the way of Christ; the way of ab-



solute honesty, purity, unselfishness and love; with willingness to confess faults and practise forgiveness as the only truthful way of life in the present world,' he said. He remembered his first meeting with her in 1934: 'She was introduced to me as the most outstanding woman educationalist in Hong Kong. I always remember her beaming smile and warmth of welcome.'

When the Communist Party swept to power in China in 1949, Katie heard of the liquidation of intellectuals. She was gripped by fear and stricken with arthritis. Doctors told her she would be a cripple all her life. Four men had to carry her in a wheelchair up and down the school stairways. This hastened her retirement in 1952.

At an MRA conference in the United States, she faced her deeper motives. She saw that her ambition as headmistress had been to compete with Europeans, and

**KATIE WOO contd p4**

## Blazing a trail through traditions



Rengreit

by Julie Tan Gaik Choo, Malaysia, studying in Hong Kong

'NI HAO MA? Hao, xie xie ni!' ('How are you? Fine, thank you.') I little realised when I was resenting being forced to learn Mandarin at an early age that I would one day choose to study it at university.

Although born a Malaysian Chinese, my knowledge and understanding of the Chinese language, culture and traditions were sketchy. I was proud to accept the achievements of the Chinese nation as my own, but remained ignorant of her faults and mistakes.

In the last four-and-a-half years I have begun to find a love for my country, a deeper respect for the Chinese race and a hope for the future of both Malaysia and China.

Thio Chan Bee and Katie Woo's lives have inspired me to believe that an individual's life can change and influence which path his country takes. From Dr Thio I learnt that God does speak to individuals who are willing to listen and obey, thus changing an ordinary life into an extraordinary one. Dr Woo brought to life for me a warm-hearted and lively care for people. Her sense of humour, even when she was very weak, was always present.

These two pioneers have blazed a trail through Chinese materialism and traditions. I am committed to follow it—to take issue with tradition when its goal is not to help a race or nation find its rightful destiny, but also to appreciate the richness and wealth of one's culture, and in sharing it enrich the lives of many.



Peters

**HSU FUN CHI, a teacher from Hong Kong who was abroad when Dr Woo died, sent this message to the funeral:**

DEAR KATIE, to me you are the first one to demonstrate God's love and care to the fullest. Through you I see God's image. Your young heart always thinks for others—a bridge over generations, races and creeds. Your spirit of being an instrument of God will be my life's commitment.



to achieve the highest enrolment and scholastic results in Hong Kong—which she did. But she took all the credit herself and in getting to the top pushed others down.

When friends at the conference asked her if there was any bitterness in her life, she was surprised. The one place she felt she was faultless was in her love for her staff and students—and they loved her. Some of the staff had said that they had never known a Principal who cared for their families too.

But she thought of the Chairman of the School Council who had hurt her deeply when he said that after retirement she was to have nothing more to do with the school, and of the people who gossiped about her despite her kindness to them. She remembered the revolutionary truth that even if you are 90% right and only 10% wrong, you still need to put right your 10%.

With great difficulty she wrote six letters of apology with her crippled hands. Next morning she found the pain gone and she was able to stretch out her fingers. A few days later she began to walk again.

At the risk of family criticism, she then decided to put her plans and possessions at God's disposal. During the next ten years she worked with Moral Re-Armament on four continents.

She spent the last years of her life in Hong Kong. Until her death she was Supervisor of

a primary school in Hong Kong's most densely populated refugee re-settlement area. She helped establish an MRA centre in Hong Kong. From there books, films and speakers have been provided for character training and religion lessons in over 50 secondary schools. In her Will she left her apartment and some capital to continue this work and to enable young Chinese from different countries to train with MRA around the world. A memorial fund has been established with the same aims.

Tributes from all over the world were sent to her funeral. A cable from Japan described her as 'one of the first women statesmen of Asia, initiating through her school a new vision for education'. British friends cabled, 'For thousands the world over, Katie Woo brought to life the charm, the greatness and the culture of her beloved China.'

DRB

## Beyond Hong Kong

by a Chinese businessman,  
Hong Kong

DR WOO was of the same generation as Mao Tse-tung and Chou En-lai. It is hard to think of a Chinese woman of that era who can compare with her. Educators are more worthy than millionaires because their students form the backbone of society. As an educator, her contribution to the Hong Kong Chinese was also a contribution to China. Her Christian faith, her love for people, led to all she was able to do. It is an example of what the Church can do for a nation.

I used to want to build Hong Kong into a better society. The last few months I've realised that's too small—we must build China into a better place. The question we all need to ask is, 'How are we Chinese people meant to live?'

Nationalism is the worst thing—that would be terrible for the world and the countries around China. So would class war and continuous purging. In China today they don't know which way to turn. Should it be capitalism, which is wrong in Marxist books? Or the Yugoslavian model of Communism?

We need freedom of ideology and freedom to pursue the truth—not whatever 'that' party, 'that' man or 'that' gang says is right. An ideology of peace will help us build the country. Moral Re-Armament can be a source of this new ideology.

## 9.30 till 9.00

by Geoffrey and Veronica Craig

DR WOO invited us to work with her in Hong Kong. She was 86 and troubled with arthritis. But she was available from 9.30am till 9.00pm, meeting people, writing letters, talking on the phone.

Sometimes before visitors arrived we would find her frail and tired. But when they walked through the door her whole spirit rose and she would blossom with infectious enthusiasm and love of life. She was able to find some common point of interest with everyone she met, whatever their background. She longed to pass on to others the satisfaction of living under God's direction. She was convinced it was this sense of purpose and God's leading that made her remain alert for so long.

We are deeply grateful for all we learned from her.

THIO CHAN BEE  
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D. Chanmer

sudden that I should call on him.

'I brushed it aside, thinking my mind had gone astray. But the thought persisted. Then I argued with myself: what would people in Singapore think of me?'

'But the thought came back clearly. "You have not met him," it seemed to say. "You do not know the real person. Go and call on him."

'So I phoned Albar and went. I told him that something had told me he was not the man he had been painted to be. In a frank talk we began to understand each other. That was the beginning of many meetings

between Albar and myself.'

They went together to the MRA centre at Panchgani in India. Speaking to Tun Tan Siew Sin on his return, Albar said, 'I have learned that you cannot heal the deep wounds and bitterness on both sides by economic means alone. We must find the cure to our selfishness. This we found at Panchgani.'

Malcolm MacDonald writes in the introduction to *Extraordinary Adventures of an Ordinary Man* of the 'very significant role' Thio Chan Bee played in the history of Malaya and West Malaysia from 1946 on. 'The book throws beams of light on several important events during the last few decades,' he writes, 'and is a distinct contribution to contemporary history.' **PJE** *'Extraordinary Adventures of an Ordinary Man', available from Grosvenor Books, 54 Lyford Road, London SW18 3JJ. Price £1.50 post free.*

## Rich in friendship

by Professor Eunice Thio

MY FATHER had friendships with young and old, with people of different religions and races. He was rich in this respect, although not in material goods. To him people were more important than things.

He believed that a man or woman, guided by God and obedient to His will, can be a bridgebuilder and peacemaker. It was also his firm conviction that moral standards—absolute honesty, purity, unselfishness and love—were indispensable for happiness in the home, and harmony and progress in the nation.