

Affluence hits the Arab world

by Air Vice-Marshal P E Maitland, CB, CBE, MVO, AFC, Director of Operational Training for the Royal Air Force, 1943-45

SOME ARAB COUNTRIES FACE the same difficulty as Britain. When your society gets wealthier, how do you stop the quality and character of your citizens getting poorer?

With a delegation of Moral Re-Armament I recently visited seven Middle East nations—Libya, United Arab Republic, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon, Cyprus. The tour has shown me that if we in Britain get mastery over our materialism, Arab leaders will gladly work with us. They feel that the West teaches technology but neglects character.

All the Arab countries have made rapid material advance. In Libya and Saudi Arabia the newly found oil wealth is producing dramatic results, but both fear the effects of sudden affluence. It appears to them to have produced in the West a lowering of standards of conduct, aimless, rebellion against authority and increase of crime.

School of poverty

In Libya the Minister of Education said to us: 'We do believe that the first goal is to give moral rearmament to our young people, to put conviction in their life. Character is the most precious thing in life. Anything that does not fortify character is valueless.

'In the first days of independence we learned much in the school of poverty. It was a hard school and we conquered many difficulties. Now we must learn to live with wealth, and that presents even more problems.'

At Riyadh in the centre of the Saudi Arabian desert His Majesty King Faisal of Saudi Arabia received us in his palace. The reception was an impressive occasion. The King arrived surrounded by his tall 'White Guards' in tribal white robes with long gold-scabbarded swords. They were followed by jeeps mounting machine guns.

His Majesty received us as honoured guests of the day. He strikes one as a wise statesman, austere, a very religious man. He spoke with ringing conviction: 'I want to extend to you our gratitude for what Moral Re-Armament is doing in the world. If man turns to material things and



King Faisal receives Air Vice-Marshal Maitland (centre) and William Conner in Riyadh

forsakes the things of God, the whole world is doomed to disaster.' He added that 'with God's help my country will play its part in your work.'

All the Arab countries are concerned about the effect of Western ways on their youth who are picked to go abroad for training. When one considers that fifty-one per cent of the population of the United Arab Republic are teenagers, it is clear that young men and women who return after their technical training abroad have an outstanding influence on at least half the population.

Egypt has received valuable aid from the Soviet Union and from the West. President Nasser has given dynamic leadership and used the aid to raise the standard of the fellahin, the peasant farmers about whom he cares passionately.

But there seems to be a weariness with prestige projects alone—dams, steel mills, etc—essential as these are for bettering material conditions.

The Arab Socialist Union provides a framework for progress in Egypt right down to village level. Its Executive Committee, whose Secretary-General is the able Ali Sabri, is equal in influence, many feel, to the cabinet. What they are urgently searching for is how to infuse Arab Socialism with a dynamic spirit that will sweep away difficulties.

Arab countries are considering how to find an answer to the side-effects of

affluence, how to achieve Arab unity, and how to find new social dynamic. Many Arab leaders look with hope to Moral Re-Armament to achieve this.

Jordan has probably more trained administrators and professional men than the other Arab countries. In fact, I was told that one of their principal exports to Arab countries was medical doctors. But here too there was some anxiety over the moral well-being of their overseas students.

Youth in West

In Iraq, where we were guests of the government as we were in Saudi Arabia, we had discussions with the Prime Minister, Dr Bazzaz, and an audience with President Aref. The Prime Minister is deeply concerned with the way in which some of their youth get demoralised in the universities of the West and are unable to fit into the life of their own country on their return.

In Iraq, as in the other Arab countries, information about Moral Re-Armament was eagerly asked for. The Minister of National Guidance, for instance, heard we had a film on Peter Howard, *Man to Match the Hour*. He at once wanted it shown on television.

In Cyprus we had consultations with Archbishop Makarios in his palace and also with Vice-President Kutchuk, about ways to bring unity within the island and the Middle East.

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Where is the middle of the world?

by Mary Wilson

THE ROMANS called the Mediterranean the Sea in the Middle of the Earth. So it was in their day. In terms of sea-power it still controls the trade routes of a large part of the world.

It was in a country at one end of the Mediterranean that Jesus said to the men with whom he had lived and worked, 'Go to the ends of the earth'. And it was no figure of speech. The overland trade routes of what are now Europe, Africa and Asia, met in Palestine. It was possible to reach any part of the known world from there.

God, more than anyone, is a strategist, and the earliest recorded explosion of His Spirit were set off around the Mediterranean.

We think of the Child laid in a Manger at Christmas—a Middle Eastern Manger—and so we should. We get so complicated nowadays that we miss the simplicity and availability of God's answers for mankind. But it is also possible to miss the passion and the power of God, in concentrating on what we sentimentally select about Christmas, which may be anything from the Crib and the tree to the dinner and the presents.

Torn by passions

Like Dicken's *Christmas Carol*, we take down the story of the kings and the shepherds once a year, blow the dust off it, read it to the children, and put it back on the shelf. Meanwhile the birthplace of the Child, and the lands around it are torn by passions which certainly do not come from God.

My husband, daughter and I were in the Mediterranean in September. Greece was seething with unrest beneath a sea of happily heedless tourists. Greek and Turk faced each other in bitterness across barricades in Cyprus. Jew and Arab have divided what was once the Holy Land with

walls and barbed wire. The Iron Curtain hangs heavily across the northern borders of all these countries.

The rulers behind the Curtain say, 'The way you all live proves that God does not exist.'

Yet everywhere people, divided on almost every other issue, turned to us for news of Moral Re-Armament. The report on its work by *Time and Tide* was lying prominently on the desk of the manager of a shipping line in Cyprus. A Greek journalist who met us in Athens pleaded for books he could translate for his people. 'MRA is the only hope I see', he said.

In Israel we were driven round the country by a Jewish businessman and we talked with him of how the Jews could once again become God's people, knowing how to listen and obey—showing the world how to turn the profit-motive into the prophet-voice.

Standing on the shores of the Lake of Galilee from which Jesus had sent His men to the ends of the earth, we thought of all these things.

Some years ago we spent Christmas with Frank Buchman. No one loved the associations of Christmas—the carols, the tree and the cradle—more than he did, but his question to a thousand people from many nations was, 'Have you a Christmas experience adequate to answer the Kremlin?' Christmas in the modern world is meaningless unless those who honour it decide, perhaps on their knees, alone or together, to change the motives and policies of their nation in the coming year. It was for this that Christ came and nothing less is adequate.

The ends of the earth are much more numerous and further apart than they were nineteen hundred years ago, but they are also much more closely linked materially. In spirit they have never been more divided.

Every nation or power bloc thinks of itself as the heart and centre of world affairs or if they are not, that they ought to be. That way lies madness. Mental institutions are full of men who think they are Napoleon or Alexander the Great. It is the inevitable end of the road for all who concentrate either on their own power or their own comfort and security.

Webs of power

We must in Britain cure the colossal wave of selfishness that is sweeping over our nation, the hole-in-the-corner living that makes life smaller and smaller, and safer and safer (as they think), for so many. The heart of revolution for 1966 will be for men and women to come out of holes where they spin their webs of power or influence into the unprotected uplands where they are at the mercy of the winds of God.

It may be a large hole like the Kremlin, or a small hole like one's own family, office or trade union. But whatever centre we start from our destination is still the ends of the earth.

There is only one World Authority, and only His absolute standards are valid. It is for us to base practical policies upon them, for ourselves, our communities, our nation.

The middle of the world is no longer in any one place. Every decision in the heart of man is central in God's plan for the world. Those decisions will have to be made, not purely as self-improvement, but in the light of what needs to be done, if the Kingdoms and Republics of this world are to become the Commonwealth of God. This is the only basis on which decisive steps towards these practical objectives can be taken, first by us who read this article and then by governments in 1966.

Arab world (cont)

To sum up: In every one of these countries we had confidential talks with responsible leaders, in particular those concerned with Education and National Guidance. I believe that far-reaching results will develop from this.

Panto fights thuggery

Bill Boorne last week reviewed London's Christmas shows in *The Evening News*. He said, 'Children who see *Give a Dog a Bone* enter into the struggle between good and evil with great gusto.'

'"Please", "Thank you" and "Sorry" have become part of their lives. They leave the theatre knowing that there is a war to be won against evil. Not a bad lesson for children to learn in these days of thuggery.'

Europe—a trail blazer

'EUROPE WILL FIND HER OWN unity and destiny by blazing a new trail for humanity.' This is the theme of the conference at Caux, where a thousand Europeans will meet from 27 December to 10 January. Hundreds of youth—from France, Germany, Italy, Austria, Britain, Scandinavia, Holland and Switzerland—will participate with political and economic leaders including the Foreign Minister of Austria, Bruno Kreisky; Prince Richard of Hesse; Robert Carmichael, Chairman, European Jute Industry; and John S Craig, Secretary of Colvilles Ltd, steel manufacturers, Glasgow.

The conference also aims to help clarify the concrete aims of Europe in her relations with Africa and Asia. African leaders are expected, among them members of the African diplo-

matic corps in Europe and a delegation of Congolese Army officers.

Industrial weekend sessions dealing particularly with steel and shipbuilding are scheduled.

From Britain a delegation of 93 will leave on Boxing Day for the conference. They include students from the universities of Oxford, Cambridge, Glasgow, Durham and Edinburgh.

Students from the German universities of Munich, Heidelberg, Göttingen, Hamburg and Stuttgart, as well as young Ruhr miners and six actors from Hamburg, are expected.

French youth will attend from Paris, the Pas de Calais, Nantes and St Nazaire. Italian university students will come from Milan, Venice, Naples, Padua and Turin. A delegation of seventy will be at the conference from Scandinavia and Finland.

Today's Africa watches Kenya (continued)

skin, can get on with his work and bring up his family in peace. The European and the Asian were united with the African in building a new country.

Similarly President Kenyatta told a diplomat in Nairobi that 'hatred solves nothing' following a question about his working with those who once hated him.

Peppetta urged conference members to be proof against corruption by money, position, drink or sex.

Delegates took this challenge seriously. The school captain of a Lagos school said, 'Being Head Prefect of my school I was in the habit of embezzling school properties. I wrote to my school principal, told him how sorry I was and returned the things I could. I was also in the habit of allowing myself to be bribed with little gifts of liquor by students who wanted to break school regulations. I apologised to them for my irresponsibility and began to fight for them to do greater things. It was the most exciting moment of my life when I made the experiment of applying absolute moral standards.'

The daily physical training programme began with physical education

at 6.15 am on the former British Army parade ground. It was conducted by Conrad Hunte, West Indies Test cricketer.

A cricket match was played between Hunte's XI and the Indian High Commissioner Prem Bhatia's XI. Victory went to Hunte's XI with the last ball of the last over. Bhatia's side scored 216 for 8; Hunte's 217 for 7. Many players in the match represented Kenya or had done so.

Training was given in the marketing of the idea of MRA. As one African said, 'We must start thinking how to reach the rest of the continent with an answer to fear and racialism.' Prospective journalists published a daily conference newspaper. In the drama workshop plays were written and produced. One by a Tanzanian called *Journey of a Thousand Miles* dealt with bribery and corruption in the Civil Service. Peter Howard's plays *The Dictator's Slippers*, *We Are Tomorrow* and *The Ladder* were produced.

In the agricultural course, sixty-six students learned about farming, forestry and other techniques. They visited a farm training centre and Kenya's Director of Settlement addressed them.

pace

TWO FACES OF WATTS

GARY PLAYER'S PROBLEM

Freedom Isn't Free

35 cents • December, 1965



THE NEW EDITION OF 'PACE' is now on sale. 'The world looks at America: is it still the land of the free and the home of the brave?' the magazine asks. It assesses the American situation and also gives an arresting panorama of *Sing-Out '65's* tour through the Far East and the US.

MODERN SATIRE FAILING

Ivan Menzies, internationally-known D'Oyly Carte comedian, said that satire while attacking the bad should uphold the good. Unlike Gilbert and Sullivan operas, present-day satire was not doing this.

He was speaking after being made an Honorary Member of the Friends of the Westminster Theatre. Peter Howard was the first Honorary Member. Ivan Menzies is the second.

'DECISION AT MIDNIGHT'

Last week 3,400 people attended showings of Peter Howard's *Decision at Midnight* in the Hague. Among the audiences were the Mayor, civic officials, ambassadors and diplomats from twenty-seven countries, members of parliament, hundreds of youth and parties from the personnel association of the Ministries of Defence and Finance.

The Christian daily, *Nieuwe Haagsche Courant*, made the film the main story of its weekly review of films in the Hague. Its headline: '*Decision at Midnight* brings Hungary back to our memory.'