

PRESS COMMENT ON 'THROUGH THE GARDEN WALL',
'STANDING ROOM ONLY' IN SICILY
GERMANY—WHERE NEXT?
SPORTSMEN IN RACE FOR MINDS OF MEN
FILM USED TO TRAIN TEACHERS

Are New Trends Coming in the Theatre?

A NEW TREND, like Springtime air, is making itself felt in the theatre. This Easter can mark a turning point towards renaissance.

A critic in the *Sunday Express* wrote as he looked ahead to 1963: 'During the past few years the kitchen sink has become the subject of so much attention in films, plays and novels that any further exploration of this necessarily limited area of contemporary life could take us only into the realms of plumbing.'

'It looks as though the exploitation of the working classes—not by wicked capitalists but by smart writers and shrewd producers—may at last be coming to an end.'

He pointed out that a number of 'low life' plays and films have recently failed.

Then he asked: 'What will come next? I hope we shall become interested again in extraordinary people. The world is divided by great issues, of which we hear nothing in our plays and films. Men are seeking to conquer space. Nobody has asked what makes them want to do it. There are enough really big themes to be tackled today. I think we can safely give the problems of unmarried motherhood a rest.'

Great issues on stage

Great issues that divide the world *are* being handled again on the stage.

Music at Midnight, now touring America after five and a half months in the West End, dealt with the theme: What can democracy offer to the totalitarian countries and the suppressed forces of freedom in them? And what challenge does the dedication of Communists offer to the so-called free world?

In Boston, Elliot Norton, who is considered the dean of U.S. critics, discussed *Music at Midnight* on his televised review programme with the stars of the play, Nora Swinburne and Walter Fitzgerald.

Norton described the central theme of the play as 'the basic belief that the world crisis can be solved if all men submit their wills to God's will.' 'The proposition is a

great proposition,' he continued. 'If you can change the world in this drastic way it would be something we all want.'

'It is offered with great dignity and simplicity. There is nothing mawkish, and this you respect. There is a curious kind of shock value in hearing the name of God invoked in the theatre seriously and honestly and fervently and not pietitiously. It is the extreme opposite to some of our plays. Religion brought into the theatre today comes with as much of a shock as profanity and obscenity used to.'

Change in public opinion

'You had a wonderfully attentive audience,' the critic continued. 'They were on your side. They did not move around in their chairs. . . . I have a feeling that in 1946 and 1947 when we were getting plays like *The Iceman Cometh*—terribly depressing and cynical—that nobody would have listened to this play, *Music at Midnight*. The mere fact that audiences will listen and listen with respect and sympathy as they did last night indicates a change in public opinion. It is a hopeful thing.'

Like *Music at Midnight*, another play, *Space is so Startling*, was also a box office success at the Westminster Theatre in London. This play tackles the race for space—the rivalry of America and Russia and how the two great power blocs can find a way to unity.

Through the Garden Wall, the play now running at the Westminster Theatre, deals with the Berlin Wall, the East-West wall and the millions of walls in suburbs, cities and countryside that spring from selfishness and hate and separate families and nations.

Also written by Peter Howard, it gives insight into our times, showing how all these walls can be broken down. *The Times* headlined its review, 'Hope for Divided World', while the *Evening Standard* called it 'striking and original'.

Miss Phyllis Konstam, whose performance as the dominating wife in *Through the Garden Wall* moves

people to tears and laughter, is known for her many years experience on the London stage. She first appeared at the Garrick Theatre with Gertrude Elliott; then from the plays of Shaw and Galsworthy she moved into films as well, starting with Alfred Hitchcock's *Murder*. Her portrayal of 'Tilly' in Ian Hay's *Tilly of Bloomsbury* is well remembered.

In London last week, Miss Konstam said, 'In the theatre world it is cheap and easy to take apart and destroy. It takes more intelligence and courage to point to a solution. That is why Peter Howard is the most constructive playwright of this generation. The age produces the man, they say. Peter Howard is that man for the theatre. There need to be many more like him.'

In America, Mrs. Anthony Quinn, wife of the actor and daughter of the late Cecil B. de Mille, underlined Miss Konstam's beliefs.

'The theatre's basic purpose should be to challenge every member of the audience,' she said in a recent newspaper interview. 'Movies, plays, television all have a

moral responsibility, since whether we like it or not they are definitely moulders of opinion.

'There is almost a revolt by audiences demanding bigger and better things from plays. The "average" theatre leans towards decadent realism. It has dramatised problems, desperate situations and "mud wading", until the playgoer wonders why he is alive!

'The theatre can help us walk proudly and give the answers to why we are here,' concluded Mrs. Quinn. 'Such a play is *Music at Midnight*, for its story is a pioneer in bringing answers to the audience—and the audience response has been tremendous wherever it has been presented.'

Over 75,000 have seen *Music at Midnight* during its three months tour of the U.S.A. through twenty-five cities in twelve states.

The critic of the New Bedford *Standard Times*, an influential Massachusetts daily, concluded his review, '... something new to today's theatre, but not so to the theatre of the ages.'

London papers comment on 'Through the Garden Wall'

IN ADDITION to daily papers, weekly newspapers reaching a million readers in and around London have reviewed *Through the Garden Wall*.

The *Middlesex County Times* described it as 'sparklingly witty, clever and true to life' as well as 'uproariously funny'.

The critic concluded, 'The meaty dialogue has so much in it and there is so much rich and thrilling symbolism in the characters and situations that after the close of the show, I looked in my diary to see when I could go and see this play a second time.'

The *Barnet Press* said, 'The crowded first-night audience at the Westminster greeted every point with enthusiasm as laughter and applause constantly interrupted the performance.'

The paper continued, 'And how refreshing it was to leave the theatre with no bad taste in the mouth or hang-over the next morning.'

'This play gives you hope. The well-chosen cast give a delightful performance in this entertaining and brilliantly produced play which has something to say—and says it well.'

The *Ilford Pictorial and Guardian* wrote: '... another testimony to the lively mind and calculating perception of author Peter Howard... a story which makes one think as well as entertains.'

The *Essex Chronicle* said, 'This is a play with humour, affection and much food for thought. See it please and ask yourself, "Am I one of these people? If so, ought I not to do something about it?"'

'Standing room only' in Sicily

AN AMERICAN industrialist flew down from Switzerland to investigate for himself the effect of Moral Re-Armament in South Italy. He found himself in the middle of a stamping, cheering audience of 1,800 youth who drowned the singing of the national anthem with applause. At the end they jumped as one man to their feet, roaring their approval.

The place was Catania, the Sicilian city of 400,000 known as 'the Milan of the South'. The occasion was a performance of *El Condor*, the play written and acted by revolutionary Latin American students, arranged by the provincial education authorities.

The Mayor of Catania had invited the play to his city. The municipality paid the rent of the theatre. The provincial government provided transport and the Curia

arranged hospitality in chosen Catholic institutions.

For the première, the Metropolitan Theatre was packed. The following night it was 'Standing Room Only'. Five hundred paid to stand in the 1,800-seat theatre. Twelve thousand saw the play during the three days run.

L'Ora, one of the three main Communist papers of Italy, described *El Condor* and Peter Howard's play, *The Ladder*, as plays 'whose theme is Moral Re-Armament, that is to say, art based on a moral ideology, which will give the world wisdom'.

Avvenire di Sicilia, the voice of nine Catholic dioceses, wrote: 'A wave of new life through the plays of MRA.'

Giornale di Sicilia headlined its review: '*The Ladder* takes us back to the true Italian theatre.'

Southwark Vicar says Moral Standards Essential to Nation

A spate of sermons, articles and books on 'The New Morality' and the redesigning of the 'Image of God' is flowing from a group of clergy and theologians centering in Cambridge and Southwark. The following sermon was preached last month in St. Jude's Church, Southwark, by the Vicar, the Rev. B. J. Kendall. He took as his text a sentence from the First Letter of St. Paul to the Christians at Thessalonica.

'The calling of God is not to impurity but to the most thorough purity, and anyone who makes light of the matter is not making light of man's ruling but of God's command.' (I Thess., 4, verses 7 and 8.)

I feel tremendously encouraged this evening. At the beginning of the week I thought we were finished. I thought the nation was finished, and the Church. Not because of any attack from without, but through rot from within. Now, because of what people in the parish have told me, I believe we have a fighting chance; and the will to fight, too.

I will explain what I mean. At the root of the decay of almost every civilization there is the breakdown of morality. Lenin put a good deal of thought into such matters. His conclusion was that the way to destroy a nation is to destroy its morals, and his followers pursue that way all over the world. This is why a Russian diplomat in Sweden, in reporting to Moscow on two years' work, wrote, 'Immorality in the schools is progressing satisfactorily'. And when the Church begins to debunk morals, surely it's the end.

Lessons of History

A sober look at history shows that if we want to preserve any kind of future for our children, we have got to defend the moral life of the nation and the moral standards of our society.

Don't think I am saying that this is an entirely new situation. Man has plumbed the depths of moral degradation long before our day and the Church has often had this battle to face. We thank God for the men who have fought it and have preserved for us the truths of the Gospel; men like St. Augustine, St. Francis, John Wesley (who was an Anglican priest to his dying day); men who stood against the tide of a morally distorted intellectualism and declared that right is right and wrong is wrong. This is the issue we have to fight today. I thank God that there are ordinary men and women everywhere who are clear on the issue. What I want to do is to mobilize them as fighters. And I'll tell you why.

I wish you could see our Sunday School. They are happy, eager, friendly, normal children. They look absolutely wonderful in their Sunday best. They are

brought up in homes where the ordinary standards of Christian behaviour are accepted. They expect to grow up into good, sound family life themselves. But the way things are going at present they will be talked into a way of thinking and living that will rob them of self-respect, soundness, stability, and destroy everything that makes for happiness and peace. For it is not only that affluence is giving people more opportunity for indulgence. Leading thinkers, and among them churchmen, are saying that indulgence is right and good and Christian, and that sex outside marriage can be allowed and excused.

The 'New Morality'

It really started with the Bishop of Woolwich and *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, when he said that the author had portrayed an adulterous relationship as a kind of holy communion. Then there was Professor Carstairs in the Reith Lectures on the BBC, who said that ideas of sexual morality are seldom taken seriously to day and that 'in their place a new concept is emerging of sexual relationships as a source of pleasure'. The Dean of Trinity College, Cambridge, the Rev. A. H. Williams, writes of a film in which a nervous man visits a prostitute and goes away with confidence and self-respect, and he says that the woman has done 'an act of charity which proclaims the glory of God'.

Then there were the eleven Quakers with their report. The *Daily Worker* had an article on the same lines, and now, coming much nearer home and on our own doorstep, Canon Rhymes of our own Diocese, preaching in our Cathedral, is reported, in papers reaching millions of readers, as saying that the traditional moral code is out of date and should be replaced by a morality based on charity and sympathy for the different needs of different individuals—whatever that means.

He is also reported as saying that Christ never suggested that marriage is the only possible occasion of any expression of physical relationship—and a whole lot more in the same vein: that, because we must not condemn anyone, we must never say that anything anyone does is wrong, for charity is more important

than chastity. And this on the very Sunday when the Epistle for the day said: 'God's plan is to make you holy, and that entails first of all a clean cut with sexual immorality. Every one of you should learn to control his body . . . never regarding it as an instrument for self-gratification.'

Now, is this the kind of teaching you would want from a Minister of Christ for your daughter's friends? Is it right? Do we want it? I have heard the views of a dozen or more perfectly ordinary people in the parish, some of them churchgoers, mostly not, mostly men. I have shown them the report of Canon Rhymes' sermon. Every one of them has said that they think it is ridiculous and absolutely wrong, and of course we have got to keep the moral standards. That's what I find so encouraging.

I thank God for the ordinary, decent people of our streets who will have nothing to do with this rotten bunk that is being churned out. They long to see a Church whose leaders, instead of finding excuses for the way people choose to live, challenge them to live the way Jesus taught and Himself lived.

Thank God, too, for the ministers of other denominations around here whom I have also seen, and everyone of them has condemned this teaching as false. I am convinced that it is not what the Church really thinks. It is only that these people are vocal and are determined to make their voice heard. No doubt that was why this was the one sermon, preached at an 11 a.m. service, that was reported on the one o'clock news. This is why we must fight.

Children endangered

Some people shudder at the possible danger to unborn children of atomic radiation, and rightly so. But there already exists an untold ocean of misery in the lives of millions through illegitimacy, abortion and broken homes. If this goes on, that ocean will grow wider and deeper and is bound to affect the lives of the next generation.

What is wrong with this teaching is not simply that it is morally twisted; it is theologically unsound. It leaves out God and the work of Jesus Christ altogether. It seems to assume that regular sexual expression is an essential part of life. For instance, they ask, 'If we preach chastity, what are we to say to a person in middle life whose marriage has broken down? Are we merely to give them a "Thou shalt not"?' As though the biggest tragedy of it was that

they would have no one to go to bed with. And they overlook the fact of the Christian Gospel that, through God's infinite love and almighty power, He can change the heart of any man or woman and remake that marriage.

They say the Church seems to condemn those who can't control themselves before marriage and we ought to treat them with charity rather than demand chastity. They are right that we must not condemn. But they are wrong to imply we must never say anything is wrong lest we make people feel uncomfortable.

Charity and chastity

This was not the way of Jesus. The Pharisees brutally exposed before Him a woman they had caught in adultery. He disposed of their condemnation by saying, 'Let him among you that is without sin cast the first stone'. But He did not then say to the woman, 'Neither do I condemn thee, go and sin some more'. He said, 'Go and sin no more'. In other words, 'What you have been doing is wrong; it is sin. But you never need do it again. You need not be like that any more'. He stressed the need for the Pharisees and the woman to have both charity *and* chastity. He loved her enough to face her with her sin and offer her the chance to change. That was His way of charity.

Human love often comes down to saying to a person, 'I like you as you are and I want a special private relationship between me and you so that I can have what you've got'. Christian love means laying down your life for another person to find God's purpose and power. That's why we can talk about Christians loving each other. That's why St. Paul wrote about the love by which we build each other up into Christ or, as this morning, 'Live your lives in love—the same sort of love which Christ gave us'.

This kind of love is the only basis of Christian marriage. It is not the mushy, cosy sentiment oozing up from within a person, creating a me-and-you relationship which dares not risk the slightest offence, or an indulgent, soft, sexy relationship that confuses one's moral compass points and prevents one curing defeat or delinquency in others. Real love is a fire sent down from Heaven which burns to rid your neighbour of sin and of everything that prevents him from seeing and serving God. That's what we need in the Church, in Industry, in Parliament, and in our homes, right now.

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GERMANY—WHERE NEXT?

from our correspondent in Germany.

KRUSHCHEV—like Stalin before him—never makes a political speech of significance without referring to Germany.

For Kennedy, as once for Eisenhower, the future of Germany—and more specifically of Berlin—has top priority in every matter of foreign policy.

In the NATO alliance the enemy of yesterday is today the key partner.

In Moscow's strategy Germany must be wooed or bullied from that alliance. For did not Lenin himself say 'He who has Germany has Europe'?

African and Asian nations send their emissaries to Bonn, eager for financial aid and capital investment. Thousands of young men and women from Africa, Asia and the Middle East are studying in German universities.

The nation is pulsating and prosperous. A newspaper cartoon the other day showed a Labour Exchange manager saying sadly to a colleague, 'We have only one more unemployed man on our books. If he gets a job we shall be out of work.' Despite the presence of hundreds of thousands of foreign labour, there are still 500,000 vacant jobs in the Federal Republic.

In a restaurant in Mannheim two waiters I spoke to came from Italy, another from Spain. In Stuttgart my host explained to me that all the workmen repairing the road outside his house were Yugoslavian.

From Chancellor Adenauer down, warning voices have been raised about the end of the prosperous era of the 'economic miracle'. Yet on the surface that end is not in sight. The 'spiral of inflation' is a threat but not a reality.

'Burned fingers' hesitate

Germany's crisis lies in another direction. As a nation, she cannot stand still. She is too dynamic, thrustful and hard-working for that, and underneath, too restless. Post-war recovery was by any standard superb. Now the question in everybody's mind—and on most people's lips—is 'Wohin?' (Where to?).

Among the older generation the 'burned fingers' of the past still hesitate to take up a responsibility for the future which would be commensurate with Germany's capacities and stature. Youth, offered Marxist ideology by the East and jazz and sex by the West, is hungry for what they call a 'Zielsetzung'—a purpose to live for—which will answer both camps. Industry is critical of Bonn and all politics, but has no adequate alternative to class war in its own ranks. The whole nation ruminates, 'After Adenauer, what?'

In the 'cellar-clubs' of Mannheim, where 300 of the town's youth meet in their fiercely independent 'Pro Contra' club, Germany's younger generation have their

say. This week their 'anti-everything' changed to an enthusiastic 'pro'—symbol of what could happen to the whole nation's youth—when they saw *Space is so Startling*.

With hundreds of other youth from the schools, technical colleges and factories, they crowded every performance of Peter Howard's play in the National-Theatre. The editor of their magazine *Outsider* summed up: 'To give Moscow and Washington a bigger idea than Communism or anti-Communism—that is a goal we can understand. It will even unite us with the older generation, whom we blame bitterly for what our country has been through.'

'This play makes sense'

One school girl said: 'I have always envied my parents. They lived for a false idea, but they had an idea. We have none and people try to tell us patriotism is wrong. What this play says makes sense. It's an idea against no country and for change in every country.'

The manager of a department store with 1,000 employees rang up to say, 'So many of our staff have seen the play and want to know what they can do to carry this spirit to the country. Please come and talk it over with them.'

Industry sensed a task dwarfing the significance of the pros and cons of export of steel pipes to Russia. The director of a Mannheim motor works employing 3,000 men called his heads of department together to meet members of the cast because, he said, industry must learn to answer the Cold War. 'In East Germany they are apathetic because they are against the regime. Here, we are apathetic because we "have it so good". Marx is out of date, but so is our Western materialism. Here is a new alternative we must offer humanity.'

Labour agreed. A shop steward chairman responsible for 50,000 workers put it this way: 'Let's be frank—we do not want what Moscow offers. We try to answer it militarily, politically, economically. On these levels alone we shall never succeed. It will take a bigger and a more revolutionary idea than Communism. You have that idea.'

The Socialist *Allgemeine Zeitung* declared: 'This play presents a challenge to Moscow and Washington, to every country and every family thinking of the future of their children.'

Germany could take this road. From 1919 to 1939 Britain, France and the rest of Europe had no dynamic idea to offer a Germany economically and politically in chaos. Today, our own defence and existence are bound up with the future of Germany. The future of humanity depends on whether our two nations, with the rest of Europe, offer the world a new road to unity and peace.

Sportsmen enter race for minds of men

NEWS IN BRIEF

WITHIN HOURS of signing a contract to defend his title against Walter McGowan in Paisley, British and Empire flyweight champion, Jackie Brown, was offered another contract, to sing,' reported the *Scottish Daily Express* recently.

'The champ rushed home from his work at an Edinburgh pub yesterday to pack his bags for a flight to Frankfurt where he is due to perform tonight.

'He will do seven shows in the musical *Space is so Startling*, the show in which he made his stage debut in Edinburgh last month.'

Brown was to take part in a sporting scene with the U.S. Olympic oarsman, Rusty Wailes, and English Rugby international, Brian Boobyer. The *Daily Mirror* commented, 'Next time Brown tops the bill will be in Glasgow on 2 May—when he defends his title against Walter McGowan. Another knockout performance?'

As Brown and his fellow sportsmen were travelling with *Space is so Startling* in West Germany, East German athletes were preparing for the 1964 Olympic Games in Tokyo. Their text book (quoted in a recent House of Lords debate on cultural exchanges) instructed them: 'Every

sportsman must be an active propagandist for our state.'

Wailes, who raced against the Russians in the 1960 Olympics, saw this doctrine in action. In an American magazine he wrote, 'Thirteen months ago we went to Rome to row in the Olympic Games. We were struck by the fact that there were two races being staged. The first was to pick the fastest crew. We won a gold medal.

'The second and far more important race was to determine which ideology the world would choose. The Soviet contestants were fully trained in their ideology. We were non-starters. We were there to show the world how fast we could row. The Communists were there to win the world.'

Men like Wailes and Conrad Hunte, Vice Captain of the West Indies cricket team now in England, believe that sportsmen are meant to enter this race for the minds of men.

'We need men,' says Wailes, 'who will live their faith with such force that it will change cities and nations. Anything less is too small. We cannot go on living as we are if freedom is to survive. We dedicate our lives to the task of building men who are absolutely straight.'

Film used for training teachers

TEACHERS are a social and political force in Iran. Two years ago their riots against low pay pulled down the government. The Shah, in his book, 'Mission for my Country', devotes a long chapter to the steps taken for improved teacher training and stresses its importance for economic and cultural progress.

The Ministry of Education has just opened in Teheran the first of a series of community centres for teachers' recreation.

For the inaugural ceremony, they chose the Moral Re-Armament colour film, *The Crowning Experience*, to set the standard of art and entertainment that should be followed

throughout the teaching profession. The heads of schools and of the Ministry departments were invited. One thousand teachers a night have come to subsequent performances.

The Deputy Minister of Education, Mr. Birashk, said at the ceremony that 'training for life is by far the most important task of education'. The new centres were built for this purpose. The Ministry was particularly grateful to be able to open 'this "Cinema Number One" with a film that so exactly represents the aims we are pursuing. It is a great masterpiece of art.'

The Director-General of the Ministry's Audio-Visual Department, Dr.

Montreal—The *Montreal Gazette* and *Montreal Star* announced the Canadian première of *Music at Midnight* on 22 April at Her Majesty's Theatre, after which the play will go to Ottawa, Brockville, Toronto and London, Ontario.

Palermo, Sicily—General Bethlem of Brazil and the force with *El Condor* were received on board by the Captain of the 'U.S.S. Enterprise,' largest atomic warship and aircraft carrier in the world. The reception was televised to the ship's company of 4,600 and to other ships of the fleet.

Philadelphia—Cuban exile leaders, including Dr. Antonio Varona, former Prime Minister, and Jose Morell, former Supreme Court Justice and Minister of Labour, flew from Miami for the final performance of *Music at Midnight* in this birthplace of American independence. They went backstage afterwards to thank the cast.

Koblenz, Germany—Convoys of army lorries brought soldiers of the German Army to a special performance of *Space is so Startling*, attended by 1,200 officers and men. It was the first of a series scheduled for the military in this largest NATO garrison town of 18,000 troops.

Recife, Brazil—With newsreel cameras whirling, the newly-elected left wing Governor of Pernambuco received Muriel Smith, the star of *The Crowning Experience*, at his palace. Pernambuco is the centre of poverty-stricken North East Brazil where 25 millions live, and a hotbed of revolutionary ferment.

Riahi, said: 'Our great hope is that cinema owners and leaders of the film industry will understand, from our Ministry's choosing *The Crowning Experience* to open our new programme for the advancement of our whole profession, what kind of films we will strive to put on in our schools and cinemas.'