

# NEW WORLD NEWS

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More than 600 people listen to Cardinal König's address



## 600 HEAR CARDINAL KÖNIG SPEAK ON EASTERN EUROPE

Cardinal Franz König, Archbishop of Vienna, spent nine days in Britain this month. He came to London at the invitation of Moral Re-Armament to address a public meeting in the Westminster Theatre, and to meet personalities in British life. During his stay, Cardinal König met Cardinal Basil Hume, Archbishop of Westminster, and Archbishop Bruno Heim, the Papal Nuncio. Dr Robert Runcie, the Archbishop of Canterbury, introduced Cardinal König to the General Synod of the Church of England as 'one of the great-hearted ecumenical churchmen of our time', and invited him to speak to the Assembly.

Cardinal König's other engagements included a lunch with a Member of the Government, another with a senior trade unionist, meetings with MPs from the main parties, and a dinner given by the Austrian Ambassador. In Oxford, the Cardinal spoke at a reception in the Oxford Union. He also visited Tirley Garth, the MRA conference centre in Cheshire, where he met senior Catholic churchmen of the area as well as having conversations with men and women in the mining industry, the shipyards of Merseyside and Liverpool's City Government. He took part in discussions on the Middle East and Ireland, and also talked with young people.

After his days with Moral Re-Armament, the Cardinal was the guest of the Dean of Windsor at a weekend conference.

In 1964 Cardinal König was invited to lecture at the University of Al-Azhar, Cairo, the acknowledged intellectual centre of the Muslim world. He has made many visits to Eastern Europe and was recently in China. From 1965 to 1980, he was President of the Secretariat for Non-Believers, a Vatican responsibility.

On 13 November an overflow meeting of more than 600 people packed the Westminster Theatre to hear Cardinal König speak on 'Insights into Eastern Europe'. We print the speech on pages 3-6. ■

## CARDINAL KÖNIG'S WORD TO SYNOD

IT IS A GREAT HONOUR and a special privilege to be introduced by His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury to the General Synod of the Church of England. Your Synod is certainly an important event to discuss actual questions, giving a lead and new inspirations to the Church of England. My coming to England is due to talks and conferences of Moral Re-Armament.

At this special hour, I am conscious that we share common ground and in this common ground I read the name of Jesus Christ, whose message went out to the whole world, both historically and geographically speaking. We stand on common ground where we read the names of the Apostles and the fathers of the early church. This spiritual heritage is our common burden or perhaps it is more correct to say our common hope for the future.

English was my first foreign language and thus began my first love for your country, for your history and for your way of life.

As far as I can, I follow the great events in your country. It was a great hour for me too when the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Head of the Catholic Church stepped into Canterbury Cathedral together. When I watched this meeting on television I felt again that our common ground should play a greater role than the differences. The common ground leads to or underlines still more the ecumenical task for the future. The more we come together the more we can help those who are sincerely searching for God. In my daily Mass I will include a special prayer for the Synod of the Church of England. ■

# NORWAY A HOPE THAT SHINES THROUGH THE 80s

ON 27 OCTOBER, 1934, Frank Buchman and 30 others from abroad held a meeting of the Oxford Group at Høsbjør Hotel, north of Oslo. They had come at the invitation of the President of the Norwegian Parliament. The people from all walks of Norwegian life who met them brought about 'a change in the whole climate of the country,' according to Bishop Berggrav, the Primate of the church in Norway.

On 27 October, 1984, in Oslo 'well over half a thousand people', according to the newspaper *Aftenposten*, celebrated the Høsbjør occasion and 50 years of the Oxford Group and then Moral Re-Armament in Norway.

Author Carl Fredrik Engelstad, a former head of Oslo's National Theatre, called for another Christian renewal of the same basic nature to meet today's needs. He spoke of the problems of pollution, overpopulation, drugs, violence and crime—'we meet them wherever we turn. But on the whole, we see only the surface. Underneath, we sense an increasing degree of frightening emptiness and lack of meaning. We live in a spiritual, cultural and moral vacuum, like an empty well that resounds with hollow echoes.'

He went on, 'Is there an answer to all this? Something that can give us hope and faith, create love, fellowship, honesty and confidence? Such were the impulses from the Oxford Group to countless people at that time.'

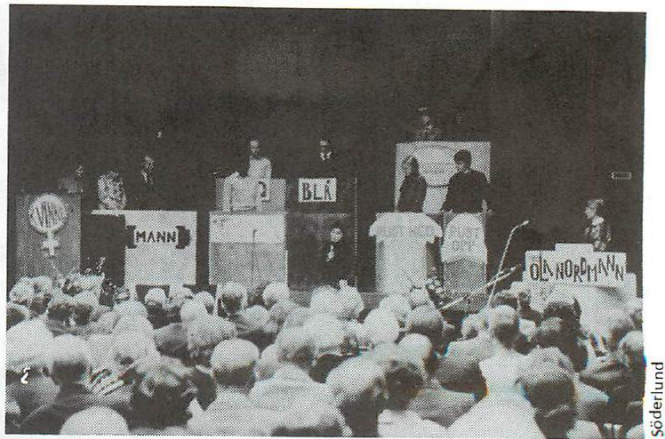
## Stir-up

Mr Engelstad outlined the effects of the Oxford Group on the cultural life of Norway in a period after 'economic collapse in the Twenties had turned pessimism into desperation in many quarters'. The individual had been thrown back on himself and his own resources, big or small. 'Enraptured by psychoanalysis, he turned forever around his own unsolved problems or let himself drift into a restless hunt for sexual sensations and/or material gain, with eyes and ears closed to what went on around him, more or less immune to the challenges of his day.'

'It was straight into this situation that the Oxford Group came,' Mr Engelstad continued. 'With a wind of revival, a strong and direct challenge, absolute moral standards and, at the same time, vision, hope, and a Christian confidence of faith.'

'There was a stir-up at the university,' Mr Engelstad recalled. 'Christianity had been practically written off in intellectual circles.' But then a handful of scientists in several faculties had 'quite sensationally' given their open support to the Oxford Group. 'I experienced the climate in the student world changing radically,' he went on. 'It became possible to discuss religious issues seriously and on a broad basis. Christian academics went on the attack in the Student Society and other student bodies.'

Speaker after speaker then described how the message of the Oxford Group and Moral Re-Armament had made an age-old Christian heritage come alive for them. The popular radio and TV editor Lauritz Johnson and his wife had been



A scene from the Nordic musical review

'caught' while still irresponsible newlywed 'butterflies' 49 years ago. They had found a sense of responsibility for a suffering world. They stressed the value of obedience to seemingly unimportant thoughts which came when they prayed for God's direction.

Inge Mannsåker said that his eight years working full time with MRA before becoming a Minister in the Norwegian Lutheran church were the best practical training he could have had. He said that MRA was a basis for co-operation for people of different religions. 'I remember Frank Buchman's words, that MRA is not a church but a gateway to the Church,' he said. MRA did not encourage a syncretistic 'mixing of religions' but was a basis for co-operation for people of different religions.

Bjørn Ole Austad had first met the ideas of MRA in the late Sixties. MRA had given him and others of his generation 'a will to fight for change, a will that survived when the political dreams collapsed in the Seventies. We also found a world responsibility and a realism about ourselves that helped us through the ego-trip period that followed. And we found a faith and hope that shines through the shadows of the nuclear threat in the Eighties.'

Mr Austad introduced a 30-minute extract from a Nordic musical review which is being prepared by young Scandinavians. Its aim was to give a new consciousness about the world of faith, he said. 'Our experience is that God and Christ are relevant to our daily life. The more we are able to portray this, the greater the chance of getting a generation who are willing to take responsibility for the future.'

Amongst the overseas speakers were a Lebanese lawyer and a German student of Russian and East European history, Friedeman Kohler. He brought a 'German thank you' for the Norwegian contribution through MRA in 'enemy Germany' after World War II. He pledged himself to play his part in repairing the broken bridges with the East, and to restore for the suffering and long term loss of freedom brought on Eastern Europe by Germany.

Four of Oslo's main dailies, and papers around the country, carried articles about the celebration. A 25-minute national radio programme carried interviews of Mr Engelstad and others. Ninety-year-old lawyer and former Foreign Minister Erling Wikborg spoke of the 'new freedom and power' he had found 'as the truth about myself was revealed and I found true relationships with people, including those closest to me. I can only say that my life was totally changed in 1934 and has been different ever since. It became richer, better and happier than I ever dreamt possible.'

# INSIGHTS INTO EASTERN EUROPE

INSIGHTS INTO EASTERN EUROPE can be but personal and fragmentary, so I should like to confine myself to the fields of human rights and religious freedom.

On 18 October this year the official Russian party newspaper *Pravda* published a front-page article based on a sociological survey according to which a substantial part of the Soviet population is reportedly still religious. The paper draws the conclusion that this phenomenon is due to indifference and a lack of vigilance on the part of some schools and trade unions. In other words, schools and trade unions have not devoted enough attention to the fight against religion in their educational work. The church is said to have taken advantage of that in order to 'draw young people into its net'. The article also points out the necessity of intensifying the propaganda for scientific materialism and atheism. Another statement in the same article is also worth mentioning. The imperialist West—that is, the non-communist world—is said to be using religion as a weapon against communism.

I take this statement by *Pravda* as an indication that the continuous references by the West to the non-existence of religious freedom and to the religious intolerance in the Marxist and especially in the Soviet sphere of influence are felt to be particularly irritating. This amounts to an indirect admission of a sore point: an atheist state, a 'communist world movement' as it is officially called, is admitting that religion does not simply die out, which it ought to do according to Marxist-Leninist theory; in fact, quite the opposite is true. This leads to the following questions,



Olgierd Stepan, the President of the Polish Institute of Catholic Action and a member of the Bishops' Committee for Europe, introduced Cardinal König. He said, 'All of us who are here share in the longing for a united Europe.'

'We are deeply and painfully aware of the tragedy which the division of Europe signifies for our peoples and for the world as a whole. I for one became even more aware of it in the last few weeks when I watched the starving people in Africa—we know in our hearts that in our divided world answering these tragedies is the true task for all of us.' He then spoke of becoming aware of painful events in Eastern Europe: 'We learnt about, prayed for, and finally commemorated the life and death of Father Jerzy Popieluszko, a priest murdered in Poland because he preached the truth.'

Mr Stepan told the Cardinal, 'You are always regarded in Eastern Europe as a faithful and trusted friend and in the darkness which so often descends upon, even submerges, these countries, a friend is a bearer of consolation and a sign of hope.'



Cardinal König

which I want to discuss briefly—first, is a spiritual revival taking place in Russia as well as in other East European countries? Secondly, can we assume that the hostile attitude towards religion is being reconsidered in Marxist states? And thirdly, is religious intolerance in Marxist states a national or an international problem?

Let me begin with a few preliminary remarks. As a Catholic Christian I do not intend to use the theme of religious freedom in connection with human rights as a 'weapon against communism' as *Pravda* puts it. I sincerely value the common people of Russia, whose language I speak reasonably well. I admire the great literary works in Russian history up to the present, which are to a great extent rooted in orthodox Christianity. However I deeply regret the hostility of communist ideology towards religion. Today, ideological hostility towards religion can be found above all in the USSR and in Czechoslovakia. Here we are not concerned with the Marxist thesis, which says that in the future there will no longer be any religion. Rather we are concerned with an aggressive policy, sanctioned by the State and by the police, which is trying to bring about this state of affairs by violent means.

The Yugoslav statesman Kardelj, Tito's late friend, told me several years ago, 'We are atheists, but atheism is not our religion. Therefore we are tolerant in religious matters.'

However, there is an unfortunate contradiction between this personal opinion and the official rules and laws of Marxist states. In the USSR for example, religious citizens are granted a limited freedom to practise their religion, that is they may go to religious services. But they are not allowed to talk about their faith outside. What is protected by article 124 of the Soviet constitution, however, is not just any religion, but atheism alone. The interpretation of the constitution in the realities of Soviet life makes the point even clearer. While all religious education in schools is prohibited, an introduction to the principles of 'scientific atheism' is a compulsory subject in every school.

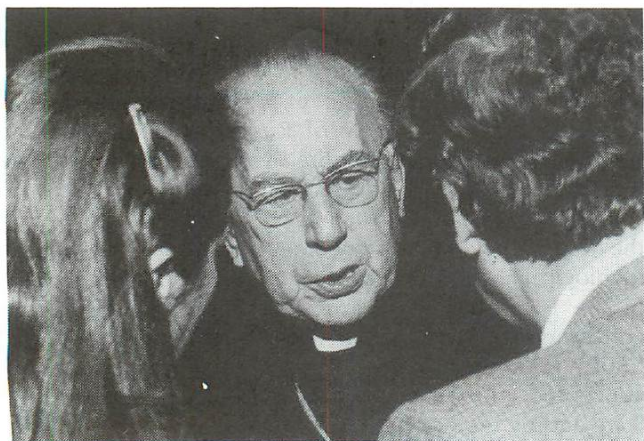
The mass media, in fact the entire structure of the State, serve to spread atheist propaganda. Not only the Party statutes but also those of trades unions and other organisations commit their members to the cause of anti-religious propaganda.

Atheism has always and will always exist. The German poet Goethe wrote in his memoirs at the end of a long and full life, 'The true and real theme of world history is the conflict between belief and non-belief.' But that is not our problem. Atheism as practised in the western world may be more dangerous in the end to the survival of Christianity than the militant atheism of the communist sphere. But I am

deeply shocked by the violent methods used in the name of Marxist-Leninist ideology to cause religion to die out. That is against the freedom and the dignity of man. For that reason I speak on behalf of the many people in communist countries who are oppressed and persecuted because of their faith.

And with that I return to the first question: **are there not signs today of a religious strengthening and revival in Russia and in other Marxist states?**

According to the official theory, religion in the Soviet Union has been doomed to die for about 70 years now. But in the Soviet Union of all places, the historical cradle of the communist *movement*, a spiritual renaissance, which is based on a genuine religious reorientation of leading personalities in small groups, is currently under way. This is what the above-mentioned *Pravda* article seems to be referring to. There are some clues linking this spiritual renaissance (which has found its concise expression in the literature of *Samizdat*) with Russia's cultural renaissance around the turn of the century, when Solovyev, Berdyayev, Bulgakov and others laid the foundations of a new philosophy of life based on belief in Jesus Christ.



Cardinal König meeting people after his address

Channer

Moreover, the fact that religion continues to exist after 70 years of atheist propaganda and discrimination poses a serious question to Marxist-Leninist theory. A case in point are the doubts voiced by some Eastern European sociologists from Poland, Yugoslavia and Hungary as to whether Marxist socialism really brings about man's liberation from all forms of alienation. Even within socialist-Marxist society there are people who point out that several forms of alienation persist in communist society, that religious needs continue to exist, demanding to be satisfied. Professor Adam Schaff, former chief ideologist of the Polish Communist Party, who was expelled from the Party this summer, emphasises in recent publications that new forms of alienation have developed and are still developing in communist society. In Yugoslavia certain university professors have gone a step further and called into question the validity of Engels' definition of religion. They say that religion cannot be reduced to an erroneous view of the world and it is not a simple reflection of the social and economic situation. It has, they say, a relative measure of autonomy. Others venture to ask how pain, suffering and death, as fundamental and inescapable forms of estrangement, are to be understood in a socialist society.

I will now give several examples of spiritual revival which have come to light in eastern countries. First of all, an increasing number of school pupils and university students

are rediscovering the transcendental qualities of the Jewish and Christian religions. As far as Christians are concerned the following points are characteristic. There is a personal belief in Jesus as the Lord and a realisation that there is a sharp contrast between being a Christian and being a Communist. So-called scientific materialism fails to stand up to the realities of life. There is a longing for the strong community experience found in Christian communities with its expression of personal loyalty amongst their members. There is a craving to know the Bible, but it is difficult to obtain or read one. This is why the university students, for example, try to get at English translations of the Bible via the English departments. The number of Christian study groups and seminars is going up. Their existence *is illegal* and they belong to what are called 'underground church communities'.

The Communist Party's fear of a proliferation of religious groups can be seen from the following: people who have become Christians are losing their jobs; groups supporting Christian peace movements instead of those sponsored by the State are imprisoned; translators of *Samizdat* literature are being sent to prison; people who are found teaching their children the Christian faith are arrested, as are women looking after families of religious dissidents; members of the Communist Party who have been converted to Christianity are also persecuted. The practice of assigning believers to the psychiatric wards of prisons is spreading. These are a few brief indications that the increase of interest in religion and the formation of religious communities are being watched with concern, and that violence is being used to prevent any further developments.

And now to the second question: **is the policy taken towards religion in communist countries being revised?**

Such a revision seems to be at hand for the following reasons—the article from *Pravda* which was mentioned at the beginning shows that even in Russia religion not only continues to exist, but is taking hold in numerous young people who have all taken the courses in so-called 'scientific atheism' at school. *Pravda* comments on the fact that young people are taking more and more notice of the church and that increasing numbers are being gripped by the Catholic and Islamic faiths. This is a reality which in the end cannot be ignored by the State. The public opinion of the world—in the communist countries they say the imperialistic world—sees this personal decision for faith and for the public testimony of faith as an elementary right. A state which continually violates such a right and which confesses to having sanctioned intolerance, not in theory but certainly in practice, loses international prestige. Is this not a war of attrition in every communist state? It leads nowhere and the policy calls for revision.

Is it not the younger generation in the communist states who have become conscious of the fact that Marxist-Leninist ideology with its atheistic attitude is based on an obsolete conception of the Church in the nineteenth century and on an out-of-date philosophy and sociology of the nineteenth century, because Karl Marx, with his philosophical, economic and political ideas, is seen as infallible? (An official text of last year says that Marx is 'uniquely true'.) I ask you: is there an infallible philosopher, economist or politician anywhere in the world? Voices can be heard in the communist states which hint that it is backward and not at all scientific to maintain such a thing. That is, it is not scientific to say that 'religious faith is in irreconcilable

contradiction to scientific thinking' (I quote from an East German dictionary published last year).

I ask, is faith not scientific? Because there are a number of Nobel prize winners, (eg Max Planck, Heisenberg and Einstein) who publicly confess to being religiously minded people. According to Soviet practice, religiously minded people are to be viewed with distrust and they have no access to public jobs. They are looked upon as potential dissidents and enemies of the State. I repeat once more the official text, 'religious faith is irreconcilably contradictory to scientific thinking'. Is such an assertion still possible in this day and age in the face of the statement made by a well known Nobel prize winner\*, and I quote, 'Although I am convinced of the invulnerability of scientific truth in its own sphere, it has never been possible for me to do away with the contents of religious thinking as something we could simply renounce as a level of consciousness which has been overcome and which we can do without in the future'?

These are sufficient reasons to make us expect a revision of communist religious policy—even in a Marxist-socialist state's own interests.

Other reasons suggest that such a revision is not to be expected in the near future although the difficulties within Marxist ideology are increasing. The Russian dissident and philosopher Zinovyev indicates correctly in his last book, *Lichte Zukunft*, that a communist regime cannot simply cast off the political system without landing its own country in chaos.

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## 'Others venture to ask how pain, suffering and death... are to be understood in a socialist society.'

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An essential part of communist ideology is the denial of religion and the assurance that there is no room for religion in society in the future. The whole system is so bound up within itself that a change in religious policy would only be possible if the entire system were to be changed from within. In China there are indications that such a process is taking place.

Furthermore we have to take into account that the State is gradually taking more and more control (and more efficiently) over the whole mechanism of laws, not only in regard to religious and Christian communities, but also in regard to each and every single person in daily life, particularly concerning religious attitudes. The religious education of one's own children is prohibited until they are 18 years old. The Soviet model, and thus an example for other Marxist states, has tended towards repression in the last 70 years, apart from a period of slight relief after the Second World War. The repression has sometimes been carried out with brutal force and at all times with a constant degree of both coercion and persuasion. A council of religious affairs in connection with the council of ministers controls religious activity in the country with the help of regional departments. The connection with the secret police can be taken for granted. Tactics in the different Marxist states differ according to the historical background. For example, in Russia it is often risky to have children baptised, or to be married in church, to take children along to Mass, to go to a funeral, or to welcome a priest as a visitor in one's home. There is more freedom in other socialistic

\*W Heisenberg, 'Schritte über Grenzen', 1977.



Howard

**Dr Robert Runcie, the Archbishop of Canterbury, welcomes Cardinal König at Church House, Westminster, where the Cardinal spoke to the Church of England General Synod (See page 1).**

states such as Poland, Yugoslavia and, in a way, even East Germany.

Let me repeat, it is not the laws which are decisive, but the attitude of those who carry out the law. They may, for example, arrest a person by referring to a law of which the details are not explained.

The anti-religious propaganda is so much linked up with the general structure of public and social order that no change can be expected in the near future. So far there have been no indications of this at all.

So to the third question: **is banning of religion, religious intolerance, a problem which is limited to a particular state, or does it affect the international level, and affect us all?** I can only say that it is not limited to a specific state. What the meaning and aim of life is, is something which each individual can only answer for himself. That is part of the dignity and freedom of the human being. It is an elementary right of each single person. This right exists over and above the demands of the State and is valid across all frontiers. To encroach upon the individual's sphere of autonomy is a violation of human existence and this affects everyone when we are talking of a European community which is more than just Western Europe. In the Helsinki Agreement Russia and other Marxist states counted themselves as part of the larger European community; but such a community cannot be realised if the above-mentioned human rights are not settled.

We are told that in communist states and in their constitutions there is space for freedom of conscience. That is true. The Marxist states agreed to this in the final Helsinki Agreement. But what matters is not the text but its interpretation and use. What can be said when all religious discussion outside the church and any religious testimony in public is immediately considered as an impediment to the official atheistic propaganda and is punished as a transgression of the law? Many people, though certainly not all, have been taken into one of the many labour camps or, more recently, into psychiatric clinics as enemies of the State—not because they are religious but because they have broken the law. How can a European community be built up in the face of such practices? To point out such contradictions—without hatred or the use of political

propaganda—is not only the duty of Christians in the western world, but should involve all governments, and men and women in all states. It affects everyone who looks towards the future.

Unfortunately there is another problem. The term 'religious freedom and human rights' has a different meaning in communist states, for here it is the State itself which determines what rights its subjects have. They do not exist autonomously. In the Marxist state, religious freedom means that the freedom of anti-religious education through atheistic propaganda may not be hindered. The state alone can decide if this is happening. Human rights are acknowledged *only in so far as* they do not contradict the social order of dialectical materialism and its secularised messianic vision of the future as a quasi-paradise. So the phrase 'human rights' has a completely different meaning. This problem of language based on different ideologies is therefore a point of contradiction in the Europe of the future.

This leads us to a further problem in the conception of an extended Europe. According to the official texts, socialistic ideology tends towards leading the desires and actions of social classes in a certain direction. In the same text we find that there 'can never be peaceful coexistence in ideological matters'. Therefore, if atheism is part of the socialistic ideology—and no one can have doubts about that—there can never be peace with states which tolerate religion as an official policy. So, if we make efforts today towards bringing about better understanding in an extended Europe, we will run up against a major obstacle. If I continue to read this text to the point where it says, and I repeat, that 'socialist ideology' means fighting against any non-Marxist ideology, it becomes difficult to talk with each other about understanding and peace amongst the people in an extended and common Europe.

## Work for peace

I shall try to deduce practical consequences to see if there is reason to hope for some practical advance in the future. I see for example a challenge for the friends of Caux, the international conference centre of Moral Re-Armament, who are present here. In evaluating your work for peace, which proceeds from Caux, I shall venture to put forward some realistic thoughts.

For Christians there can be no 'irreconcilable battle' between the two great camps of Eastern and Western Europe. I am convinced that with the final Helsinki Agreement important preparations have been made in this respect for a larger, peaceful Europe; where hatred is not possible and where encouragement to value and to love even one's ideological enemy is a constructive power.

Christians in the East desire to unite with those in the West. That could become a great conciliatory power which can not only 'move mountains' but arrive at a high appreciation and even love for one's ideological opponent. We are not allowed to disappoint the Christians in the East. They expect contacts with us. At present we in Western Europe are a disappointment to them. We are nations that have become egoistic and self-indulgent, condoning violence and all sorts of moral evil. The permissiveness of our nations has made for easy sex, easy abortion and the rest. Many realise in their hearts that these are not norms in the Christian sense.

It is not at all surprising that Stalin's daughter has turned

her back on such a life, overlaid by materialism. The Christian people in the East are better Christians. By their example they are capable of converting the 'tired' and permissive West. I call on the young generation—social structures should be reformed; above all the needs of the human heart call for attention. I refer to the book, *To Have or to Be*, by Erich Fromm. There he voices the following dramatic appeal: 'For the first time in history the survival of mankind depends on a radical change of hearts.' Imploringly he adds: 'It is an almost unbelievable fact that until now no serious efforts have been undertaken to change the fate announced to us.'

We must bear in mind that what we know of atheistic religious policy with its awful toll of oppressed and persecuted people is far too little. Here I am thinking of Keston College and its splendid research into the religious situation in Marxist states. I value most highly its founder Michael Bourdeaux. We must create a climate of common spiritual relationship through far greater and more widespread knowledge—without hatred, but rather with love and appreciation for those people and their cultures. In such a way we can strengthen the self-confidence and the ability to resist for reasons of faith of many people in the East.

## Confidence

We must make clear that this is something to be taken very seriously—the faithful have an international duty to those without faith in the non-socialist countries. The process of changing Marxist religious policy must begin within the system itself. Our greatest hope and our confidence lie with the new generation, which has its eyes wide open to reality. The religious forces of reconciliation and peace are stronger than their negative counterparts.

We are meeting here in the Westminster Theatre, the British headquarters of Moral Re-Armament. I have known about this worldwide work for many years. Moral Re-Armament is a great hope in finding a new approach. It helps all who are responsible for the future of international affairs to understand that the basic ideological struggle is between belief and atheism. In this struggle, many non-believers are in reality searching. The dividing line is not primarily between systems or political parties or nations—and certainly not between classes. The dividing line is between those who are for God and those who are against God. This line runs through every human heart, every day. It is in fact a choice, daily, even hourly, between God and Mammon, between things of Heaven's way and Earth's way—doing what we know in our hearts to be right and resisting what we know to be wrong. There is no neutrality in this struggle. Whether we know it or not, we are either working with God or working against Him. And, in His mercy, He needs us all to be His willing instruments to fashion the new world society, God's Kingdom on earth.

I invite you to pray with me. If we believe in God we can ask Him to guide us. If we do not believe we can still pray, even if we add 'forgive our unbelief'. God hears us when we say, 'Speak Lord, Thy servant heareth.'

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### 'INSIGHTS INTO EASTERN EUROPE'

A 70-minute cassette of Cardinal König's address is available.

Order from Grosvenor Books, 54 Lyford Road, London SW18 3JJ, price £3.50 including postage in UK, or £4.00 airmail overseas.

# SOUTH AFRICAN CHOICES

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SIXTY SOUTH AFRICANS of all races spent a recent weekend together at Mariannhill, Natal. They were joined by others from the surrounding area which is predominantly Indian. With groups from Swaziland and Bloemfontein they met to explore 'the dynamics of creative change' in family, industry, education and national life.

Cornelius Marivate, a professor at the University of South Africa, said that for him creative change had meant 'accepting absolute moral standards as my guidelines and deciding to live by them'. He recalled a conflict he had had with a local leader in his area, which had split the community. One morning, in a time of listening for God's direction, he had a clear thought to apologise for his bitter attitude. 'It was not easy,' he said. 'I drove around the block several times before plucking up courage to go in.' His opponent was so surprised by his apology that he said, 'This is the most wonderful news I have ever heard. I need to apologise for my attitude to you.' Some months later, the man became fatally ill. When Dr Marivate visited him, the man told his friends, 'This is the man you must work with. I am dying but you must work together for the community.'



Dr Cornelius Marivate

*Das Bundhoo*, President of the South African Federation of Leather Trades Unions and Chairman of the Industrial Council of the leather industry, described how MRA had helped him resolve some bitter disputes in his industry.

'Ten years ago I was a near alcoholic,' said Kris Kistasamy, speaking alongside his wife and daughter. 'I had "imprisoned" my wife, expecting her to be my slave while I spent my time at bars and race meetings.' But MRA's four standards of absolute honesty, purity, unselfishness and love had challenged him to change his ways. 'It transformed our home. I went back to night classes to complete my education which brought promotion in my work. My family is united.' He was now chairman of his local school committee where he had planned new classrooms which doubled the facilities. 'Dynamic change affects the whole community,' he said.

Mrs Kistasamy, who was wearing a gold chain, said that she had originally told her husband that it was a gift from a relative, whereas she had bought it from the house-keeping money. But with her husband's new attitude she

found they could now be open and honest about everything. Their daughter, Pamela, said that she had learnt to care for people of all races at an MRA youth camp. She had given up her ambition to pursue a career in music and now hoped to study occupational therapy so that 'I can dedicate myself to the care of people'.

Samuel Pono referred to the current unrest in African townships. 'Children no longer listen to their parents,' he said. 'They refuse to go to school. They burn down buildings. Some wonder why we are in this situation. The Afrikaner people who yesterday were in a similar position of powerlessness know what it means. I am not condoning what is happening but we need to realise the significance of the issues God is calling us to wrestle with.'

An Afrikaner, Pieter Horn, said, 'When we look at the confusion around us, only the blind will say we don't need something very new.' He said that meeting the ideas of MRA had challenged him to take his faith seriously. 'It had meant getting honest with his father because building a new South Africa of justice and peace had to begin in his own home. Meeting William Nkomo, a militant African nationalist who had found an answer to hatred, had made Mr Horn decide 'to treat people as people, as equals before God, no matter what their background or status'. He concluded, 'The issue of change for our country does not run between black and white, rich and poor. It runs through each of us in the choices we are going to make between right and wrong, good and evil.'

## ON THE BEAM IN LIVERPOOL

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LIVERPOOL CITIZENS organised a conference on 3 November on the subject, 'From crisis to cure—everyone's chance to bring change'. A wide range of Liverpool people took part—well-known figures in political life and local government, trade unionists, people in education and the media. Leaders of minority communities, including the Chairman of the Hindu Centre and the leader of the Pakistani community were also present. The day started with a silence in memory of Mrs Gandhi, whose funeral was taking place at the same time.

The joint chairmen were Jim Sharp, a Toxteth-born businessman, and Ken Goodwin, an electrical engineer who writes for an industrial journal.

Mr Sharp, who owns a specialist graphics design company, reported that he had been able to employ more people even during the worst of the recession. He used to be critical of the workers but this had stopped when he decided to look at his own worksheet and found that he was working the shortest hours. He spoke of a customer whose needs he had met with a routine process when the customer was ready to pay for a far more expensive new process. When Mr Sharp billed him, it brought 'no pats on the back' but it did create credibility. 'Our workers came to trust us. So did our clients,' said Mr Sharp.

Mr Sharp's business had grown from three people in 1976 to 40 this year, with branches in London and elsewhere. The expansion of one previously unprofitable section had required delicate negotiations with the union. By frank dealing, and the step-by-step adding of part-time workers

who were later taken on full time, trust had been established. The disruptions often associated with the introduction of new technology had been avoided.

A well-known Merseyside broadcaster spoke of the renewal taking place through the Garden Festival and other events. He also gave instances of the way industrial disputes had been avoided because people wanted to see Liverpool thrive.

'Behind every economic question lies a moral issue,' was a point made by Leeds company chairman John Vickers. There was a beam, he said, that marked the right course for individuals and for society in the same way that an aircraft had a given beam to follow. The characteristics of this were, first, to make judgements on the basis of what was right, scaled against absolute moral standards—not only in personal matters but in policy decisions in industry and politics. Secondly, to take responsibility and initiative, and thirdly to yield one's own self-will. 'The evidence,' he concluded, 'is that on this basis a new kind of society is already emerging.'

## NEWSBRIEF

**A ONE DAY SEMINAR** for MRA on the theme, 'A caring, sharing society—An individual's role', was held on 28 October at Petaling Jaya, the bustling suburb of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. In inaugurating the seminar, Puan Hajjah Saleha, a well-known social worker, spoke of the need to sustain efforts to maintain the unity between the different racial and religious groups in the country. 'The individual's role is crucial in bringing out the qualities of caring and sharing,' she said.

**THE PEACEFUL SURROUNDINGS** of Marcellin Hall Catholic centre in Auckland, New Zealand were the setting for an MRA weekend conference in September.

The Treaty of Waitangi was a subject much on the hearts of several participants. This Treaty, signed in 1840, ceded the sovereignty of the land to the British whilst guaranteeing undisputed possession to the Maoris. However the Treaty's wording in Maori differs in places from the English, and the Maoris believe that the terms of the Treaty, as they understood it, have not been honoured. Canon Wi Huata, a Maori Anglican priest, told the gathering that the Treaty had been broken. But he went on, 'We must base our actions now on the Prince of Peace. MRA is the best way to handle it, under the direction of God.' Another Maori, Verne Kukutai, a post office technician, commented, 'The Waitangi Treaty is about Mother Earth and what flows in us about the land, rivers and mountains.'

A further one-day seminar was arranged. Part of its aim will be to look further at the question of the Treaty, and at 'possibilities of understanding and healing'. As a Maori elder said, 'Nowadays everyone is interested in what the Maori feel about the Treaty. We would like to know what the pakeha (white people) feel about it.'

'**ONE WORLD WEEK**' is celebrated in many British cities in October with the aim of bringing communities together and helping the Third World. A feature of the week this year in Croydon, South London, was a showing of the MRA film *The Crowning Experience*. It is inspired by the life of the black educator Mary McLeod Bethune who started her first school on a Florida rubbish dump and eventually became Education Advisor to two US Presidents.

The Chairman of Croydon's Council for Community Relations and the Chairman of the South London Indian Council with other representatives of minority ethnic communities, as well as police representatives, were present. Calcutta born deputy Mayor, MD Wunn, spoke before the film.

**THE PLAYSRIPT** of *Keir Hardie—the man they could not buy* by Henry Macnicol has recently been published by Westminster Productions in association with Grosvenor Books. The play tells the story of the founder of the British Labour Party. It has been performed widely in Britain—in all the main coalfields, many industrial cities and on the 'fringe' of the Trades Union Congress. It has also been presented in Australia and Canada.

'There never was a period in the history of the British Labour Movement when the message of the play was so necessary,' writes Sir John Boyd, former General Secretary of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers, in his foreword to the playscript. He explains that 'the only hope for a revived inspirational Labour Movement, capable of giving the appropriate leadership and one which can lead to co-operation between employers and employees, which the country so desperately needs, is indeed the message of this play'.

Work has now started on a video recording of the play which will be ready in the spring.

*'Keir Hardie—the man they could not buy', playscript by Henry Macnicol, order from Grosvenor Books, 54 Lyford Road, London SW18 3JJ, price £1.75, with postage £2.00.*

**PEOPLE FROM SEVERAL** provinces of Austria met earlier this month for a three-day MRA conference of 'deepening, renewal and commitment' at Zwettl. The venue was a great twelfth century Cistercian abbey in this high, forested area near the Czech border north of Vienna. Afterwards, some of the participants spent a week in Vienna meeting Members of Parliament, officials of international agencies and students.

'**PARTNERSHIP BEYOND FRONTIERS**' is the theme of Dialogue on Development V, the fifth annual international conference on development at Asia Plateau, Panchgani, the MRA centre in India. It will take place from 4-11 January. 'We live in an interdependent world,' states the invitation. 'North and South are both confronted with challenges that call for new attitudes and emboldened leadership. This will involve a partnership beyond trade or regional groupings.'

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