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EVERYONE'S FIGHT FOR A JUST AND UNSELFISH WORLD

At Caux, Switzerland, 5-19 August, a session of the Moral Re-Armament World Assembly was hosted by the peoples of the British Isles. GEOFFREY CRAIG writes:

DURING this fortnight the main language in Caux has been English, but the variety of accents has indicated that the length and breadth of the British Isles was represented. Some were from families who have lived in Britain for over a thousand years. For others Britain had become home less than ten years ago. There were trade unionists and managers, teachers, whole families. They met with 300 other delegates from 35 nations.

Opening the session, James Hore-Ruthven from London said, 'We are united in a love of our country, a deep concern for the way things are going, and a heart-felt desire to help her find what she is meant to do in the world

now. We have come with experiences which we believe are valid for every situation, which we want to share. But we also want to learn from all here, many of whom have been through much deeper poverty and suffering than we have.'

Jack Carroll, former Branch Chairman of the Transport and General Workers' Union in Bristol Docks, came to Caux with a group of 40 British trade unionists. 'We British are here in strength now,' he said, 'because we are concerned about our country; but we are also concerned about our European friends, and how we can work together to solve the problems of Europe and the world.'

The people from Britain met the world at Caux. Africa, the Middle East, several Asian countries, America and Canada, the EEC, Brazil, Chile, Australia—all were represented. Informal contacts gave new perspective

on world issues and British problems.

Many people think that Britain has too much trouble of her own to be able to offer much to the world. This was not the view of a lawyer from Beirut who came to the Caux conference: 'In Lebanon, when we speak of democracy, we speak of the Magna Carta; when we speak of freedom, we speak of Hyde Park Corner; when we speak of justice, we speak of the British progressive income tax; when we speak of spiritual and moral strength, we speak of John Wesley. It is my dearest wish for my children, for your children, for the children of the world, that Britain remains the bastion of democracy, freedom and justice, and more than this, that Britain becomes an exporter of spiritual and moral strength.'

Below we print individual contributions on the four themes of the conference.

Can an affluent society be an unselfish one?

Keith Standing

an Executive Secretary of APEX—Association of Professional, Executive, Clerical and Computer Staff—speaking in his personal capacity

THE ZEAL OF THE PIONEERS of the British trade union movement arose from their faith and their belief in the brotherhood of men under the fatherhood of God.

Like most industrialised nations, Britain has now developed a level of affluence which exceeds the wildest dreams of those labour pioneers. Yet something is missing. Mother Teresa of Calcutta said recently, after a visit to Britain, that alongside the material affluence that she saw, she discovered a 'poverty of the spirit'. If the affluent nations, including Britain, are to become unselfish nations, and share what they have, our first priority must be to provide the needed spiritual food.

The whole face of the industrialised world

will be transformed within the next decade by the introduction of new technology based on the use of micro-electronics. Should the resulting surpluses be retained, or should they be given to the remainder of the world which is in such desperate need?

In the introduction and development of the new technology, management is going to have to share its decision-making responsibilities with the workers. Workers, through their trade unions, will have to accept new responsibilities for the decisions they jointly reach with management. I cannot see this sort of unity being built through anything short of the standards of Moral Re-Armament.

Trade unions can be organs of corporate selfishness, or they can be initiators of the new world order. Employers can be exploiters of labour, or they can join with labour in helping to build the new society. So the second priority in the affluent world must be to create a unity based on the electronics of the spirit.

The task before us is mammoth. We are faced with frustration, not personal frustration but the frustration of our aims and objectives. In the midst of apathy the tendency is often to opt out, to settle for an easier life, to keep out of public affairs. One of our greatest

British statesmen, St Thomas More, wrote, 'If you cannot root out wrong ideas or cure long-standing evils as completely as you would like to, that is no reason for refusing to take part in public affairs. You must not desert the ship because you cannot control the winds.'

In this fight for a better world I don't intend to desert the ship.

Tom Hill
Surrey

I BECAME AN EMPLOYER ten years ago when my father died, leaving me with a small house furnishing business. At that time there were only two employees outside the family. Now we have a staff of 26, including my wife and myself.

One aim we set ourselves was to sell for our customers' needs. It sometimes happens that a customer wants to spend more on purchases than he needs to, and in such cases we feel we should advise him to spend less, even though it means we lose profits.

We did not want to be the kind of employers who furnish their homes luxuriously and expect their staff to work in poor conditions. We decided that our home and

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Creating a society where all colours and cultures contribute to the whole

FROM NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE, in the North-East of England, came Hari Shukla, Community Relations Officer for Tyne and Wear, and his family, and Rex Gray, Chairman of the city's Committee for Racial Harmony, and his family. With others from the city and from Britain's different racial communities, they presented the play *Flashpoint*, which dramatises the pressures and potential of a multi-racial society.

Mr Shukla told the conference of the progress that had been made in community relations in Newcastle, particularly in relations with the police. 'We meet our police officers regularly now, not only when there is a problem. They are invited to community functions, so they can meet citizens as human beings and friends.' In working to create a new society, Mr Shukla said, the people of Newcastle must work more closely with people throughout the United Kingdom, and with other nations.

Another play highlighted the part of the Celtic peoples in bringing Christianity to Europe after the fall of the Roman Empire. *Columba* was presented by a company with members from Ireland, Scotland, Wales, England and the United States.

Neil Powell
police cadet,
South Wales



FOR MANY YEARS I felt bitter against the English for what they have done to my country. I would not work with an Englishman, or talk to one, if we were in the same room. There is the same thing between North and South Wales—I felt that people from North Wales were inferior to me.

Pride stopped me from asking the English what was wrong with the Welsh—I always thought it was a one-sided matter. My hatred grew and grew until I went to the Westminster Theatre, the MRA centre in London, where for the first time I met English people who cared and had no pride and did not discriminate against countries the way I did.

If we are going to build a new world, we must march forward together, and not break apart as I have tried to break Wales away from England.

Ranju Shukla
housewife, Newcastle-upon-Tyne,
who grew up in Kenya

I CAME TO BRITAIN six years ago. When my husband became the Community Relations Officer, we had to organise Asian evenings—we used to talk about our culture, our customs, the extended family system, arranged marriages. I met English, African, Chinese, Pakistani, Bangladeshi people—so many of them. In the beginning I had many problems, because I sometimes had to cook for 150 people.

In Africa I was always in my own family, my own little circle. I had no chance to meet Europeans, or Africans, because we all moved in our own circles. I have learnt a lot through being with people from different communities. Now my heart is open to everybody and I see everybody on a common level.

Subbiah Kistasamy
head of department in
a London comprehensive school

I WAS BORN and grew up in South Africa and my wife and I came to Britain in 1949. I was seeking freedom from political domination. But when I came to Britain I continued to be the prisoner of my own weaknesses. What a mess we made of our lives! Only when we developed our faith did I become free of domination and personal weaknesses.

Through a deeper faith I have learnt to give my total loyalty to my country, the United Kingdom, and I will do all I can to see that it continues to be a bastion of human freedom in the world.

I see approximately 1200 children during the course of my day's work. My principal concern is what happens to these children because the type of people they grow up to be is of paramount importance for Britain.



GENERAL HO YING-CHIN, Commander-in-Chief of the Chinese Armies in the Second World War, presented two brass plaques to the Caux centre. 'I have the firmest conviction,' he said, 'that moral strength can be incomparably powerful against all forms of evil, and that only through full application of this force can we solve those global issues that even the top military and economic powers cannot decisively settle.'

Most Rev Dominic Athaide
Archbishop of Agra, India



ONE OF THE THINGS which divides human beings is prejudice—religious, linguistic, social. I have been very much encouraged by this constant thought of MRA—to break down the walls of prejudice and build the bridges of union and understanding.

We have made a small start towards this in Agra and Aligarh, where there have been riots between Muslims and Hindus. Nobody knows how they start, but it seems that it is political. We have started an inter-faith group for dialogue, about 40 people who meet every month.

The idea is not to discuss our beliefs, but to help each other understand exactly what each faith believes. There is no need to agree about what we believe, but friendship and understanding is growing among us—Muslim Muftis, a Parsi priest, many from the Christian faith, and Buddhists and Sikhs.

Our basic conviction is that we are all part and parcel of the same human race and the All-wise, All-loving and All-powerful Architect has a plan and purpose for mankind. He expects us to discover it and to shoulder our responsibilities in realising it.

David Bowerman
businessman and farmer
from Kent

I BELIEVE THAT BRITAIN'S initial decision not to join the European Economic Community came from pride and an unjustifiable sense of self-sufficiency.

Certain factions in Britain have done all they can to prevent full participation and continue to criticise the treaty which was formulated when we were deliberately ignoring it. Housewives are encouraged to blame all the rises in food costs on the EEC when in fact many of the commodities such as tea and coffee are in no way affected by the Community. Everyone agrees that there is much that needs to be brought up to date, and I trust that now we shall play a sincere part in that reconstruction.

Britain needs to make restitution for past failures. I believe we as a nation have an obligation to help Europe to care for and extend trade with the Third World and Lomé countries. I am dedicated to help recreate the spiritual content that is essential for this.

What future and what price for freedom?

Shahnaz Anklesaria
journalist, India

I COME FROM INDIA at a time when the country is in turmoil. Is dictatorship and authoritarianism the only way for the countries of the Third World? Is democracy impossible where there is poverty? Does illiteracy mean that a man cannot choose for himself and must be led? These are questions many of us are asking.

Democracy is the product of certain institutions. We know that just courts of law are necessary, but why? Because they are one place where the poor man is not trampled down. Why do you need a free press in a poor country? Because it is through a free press that the most ordinary person can make himself heard. A poor man, more than any other, needs such institutions and they are often his only defence against wealth and power.

Illiteracy has nothing to do with stupidity. An illiterate man cannot read or write, but he can see, he can hear and observe, he can evaluate. In the most remote villages of my country we have men who could hold their own with the best of us here. The sound common sense of such people means that their judgement is often clearer than that of the educated and urbanised.

Democracy is the birthright and heritage of such people. One reason I am here is to ask you in the Western world to find within yourselves the conviction and will to raise your voices against governments who argue that their people are unprepared for freedom, and that authoritarianism is the only way a poor country can tackle its problems. It is up to you to pressure your governments not to look the other way if the cloak of dictatorship falls on another

country. Freedom and democracy are as much moral and spiritual concepts as they are political ones.

We were lucky in India to live for 19 months under dictatorship because we now have first-hand experience of what that means. The favoured few could do what they liked, every gesture had its price and fear had so weakened men's hearts that they wrote, said or did anything that would keep them out of trouble. The ordinary man had no protection, nowhere to go for justice, because no one dared to go against the wishes of the rulers.

It was at this time that I read an issue of the news magazine *Himmat*, and through it was introduced to the ideas of MRA. I wanted to know why its writers were so fearless, at a time when so many were being bought. Quite accidentally I met some of them. I saw that we shared common beliefs and commitment, one of which was to make India no longer an object of people's pity, but a place where there is enough for a man's need, although not for his greed.

I also learnt from these people that clear direction can come from within us, if we stop to listen. If you do listen to these directions, no power on earth can buy you and you know which road to walk on. But before we can hear, we must clean up our lives. I realised that one reason why otherwise good, honest people get corrupted once they are in authority is that they have not recognised and admitted their innermost desires and nature. So I started to do what I expected my leaders to do.

By then new elections were announced, a new government came to power and I realised that I could best work for these ideas by working with *Himmat*. It is a daily challenge for us at the paper to see how to apply absolute honesty, purity, unselfishness and love in our work. Yet we have found that, because people working on the paper have come to terms with their own ambitions and greeds and fears, they can make *Himmat* a fearless voice for those who cannot otherwise speak up.

Richard Ruffin
United States

THE OTHER DAY President Carter, speaking to the nation, said that the gravest threat to American freedom came from within. He spoke of a loss of confidence. I think he might more accurately have spoken of a loss of conviction.

There are plenty of Americans with convictions on a small scale. We have never had so many pressure groups. People are out for one little cause, often with passionate intensity. But where are those today, who like our founding fathers, have a great purpose, to which they pledge their lives and fortunes?

In Virginia, we are fond of reciting the speech of Patrick Henry, who asked, 'Is life so dear or peace so sweet to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery?' Today he might well ask, 'Is career so dear and success so sweet as to be purchased at the price of spiritual bondage?'

Only when I harnessed my whole life to the eternal task of releasing the full potential in every person—and in every nation—for great living, did I experience freedom.

An Eritrean refugee

MY UNCLE and all his family except one were killed. My aunt and all her five children were killed. Her husband hanged himself from despair. Almost all our beloved neighbours were shot down while escaping. The army locked a friend and his whole family and his three guests into a wooden hut and burned them all to death.

This was the shocking news my sister told me, some years ago, when I returned home from the MRA centre in Panchgani, India.

My heart started burning, my knees shaking and my eyes glowing with anger. I was in clouds of confusion and bitterness. Six hundred and thirty people of my village had been brutally tortured and killed. In another village 170 people had been gathered into a small mosque and machine-gunned.

I felt I had no choice but to join the liberation front and fight to the death, which I was very much inclined to do. The next morning friends came to my house and together we prayed for the souls of the dead. A clear thought came into me: 'Do you want to die fighting in order to revenge and satisfy your bitterness, or to forgive and live on to fight against the evils of men?'

This thought echoed infinitely in my mind. I felt I would be a coward if I were to forgive. But I remembered Christ's words on the Cross: 'Father forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.' He went through that unimaginable agony, with all His power to destroy, and yet asked forgiveness for His torturers, so why not I?

Under a great pain of bitterness I decided that from then on I would heal and build instead of hate and destroy. I have decided to live by the Cross, not by the gun, although I am still tempted, and have to lay my bitterness before God daily as the news of the war against my people continues.

NO EXTERNAL ORGANISATION of society saves man. Nor does it liberate him. The following of the inner voice frees man, even at the gates of death.

It is doubtful that there is anything more hope-giving in this world than the realisation that it is possible to influence world events in a concrete way, by heeding only the liberating voice of the soul. And no outside forces can take away this freedom. Only man himself can stop it.

Mihailo Mihailov, 'Underground notes'

Nine Lebanese came to the conference. One of them said:

WESTERN CIVILISATION is very fragile. What has happened in Lebanon could happen sooner than one might expect in any western country. One main reason for events in our country was that leaders in every sector of

life were only caring for their own ambitious aims, not for the country.

When the war started in Lebanon, we discovered in ourselves something we had never imagined was there—an extraordinary potential for self-sacrifice and heroism. If we had used even five per cent of that potential before the war, maybe we could have avoided it.

Rich world, poor world

BILL TAYLOR, recently retired from the shop floor of British Leyland, told the conference of his decision to take a group of industrial people from Britain to India before long, to see how problems in industry and society can be effectively tackled in partnership, on the basis of Moral Re-Armament.

A group of handicapped people from Malta heard Taylor speak, and gave all the proceeds from a sale of their handicrafts towards the project. Paul Lacey, a retired tea-planter, also offered to help. He has a sum of money that until recently was frozen in Sri Lanka, and which he had been planning to blow completely on a holiday. 'Now I want the money to be used constructively,' he said.

Anton Skulberg of Norway, Director of the Food Research Institute and a former Minister of Education, spoke about the stewardship of fish resources. He pointed

Peter Rundell
statistician, London



I HAVE ACCEPTED a job in world development, because I feel that is the field in which

James Gardiner
senior lecturer in
orthodontics

IN THE WEST, we are very privileged to have been able, almost without interruption, to develop our educational system over a hundred years and more. Recently I was invited to be the external examiner at a university in a developing country. I was very impressed with what I saw.

The Dean told me that one of their needs was dental nurses but that advertisements in the British press had produced no interest. My thought was to suggest that they invite a senior nursing tutor to come from Britain.



Maltese delegation from Society for Handicapped Youth presents gifts to Swiss hosts at Caux.

out the need for international co-operation, but even more essential, he said, was the attitude of man to the fish and to the poisonous products of industry. 'We can't continue to exploit these resources in an irresponsible way,' he said. 'It all comes

I should work out my convictions. It means that I will be paid about half of what I would expect to get in private computing. I feel this is a very small price for me to pay in my commitment to a remade world.

Another price, and a rather higher one, is my pride. I am by nature self-sufficient, and I very much resent needing anyone or anything. But in the task of shifting the attitudes of an entire culture, or simply trying to live by absolute moral standards, I'm beginning to learn that I do need God's help. When I accepted that I needed God, I realised how ridiculous it was to think that I was going to solve all the world's problems without Him. Also, for the first time I was given a love for people, something that I had always wanted and lacked.

So, back in my hospital, my committee agreed to send our own senior tutor.

She returned very convinced of their needs and in no time she had enlisted the help of eight of her best nurses.

I also felt that God was prodding me to approach three of my colleagues. I didn't know what their reaction would be, but they are going to go and give their services at the university one after the other. As a result, in the autumn term the dental students will have some of the top dental teachers from Britain giving them a continuous course over three months.

This is a very frail bridge which we have started to build and I am most grateful to the people here who have helped to brief me for my work in a developing country.

down to the moral aspect, to the attitudes of the individual and of nations. It is our responsibility to see that there is enough for everyone's need, also in the future. Everything is there if we have the wisdom to use things according to God's plan.'

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business premises would be similar in style. Another principle we have tried to follow is to be aware of the needs of the staff and offer fair salary/wage increases before the need becomes desperate. If an employee has to ask for a wage rise he needs, we feel we have failed in our responsibility as employers and need to apologise.

Over the last month, in spite of uncertain times, we have decided to take on staff to cope with our turnover and not put the long-serving members of our team under extra pressure. A good team takes time to build and in any business the human asset is the greatest asset and should be treated as such.

As an employer I have found it only too easy to be arrogant and self-righteous. I often have to apologise to my staff for my ways and they accept it, and in turn they will also apologise when necessary.

To the trade unionist, here and back in Britain, I would like to say how deeply sorry I am for the hurts and bitterness which have been created by employers over decades. Many people in Britain today feel trade unions are a big problem, but I feel management is as great a problem, and it is up to management to learn a new flexibility of approach and outlook. Management must take the ultimate responsibility for breakdown in industrial relations, because initiative is firstly management's responsibility.

Can the trade unions help management to live up to its responsibility? We are only human and need your help.

**PHOTOS: DAVID CHANNER,
MICHAEL RUNDELL**