

## An idea accessible to all

— featured on French TV

THE THIRD CHANNEL of French television gave fifteen minutes to Moral Re-Armament last month. This was part of a series entitled 'Free Forum' (Tribune Libre), where freedom of expression is given to different trends of thought that exist in France. It has an audience of three to five hundred thousand people.

Michel Orphelin, a mime artist from Paris, introduced the programme: 'Society is worth what men are worth. We talk of aignant society; well, what makes it like that? Is it not our selfishness, our dishonesty, our resentments, yours and mine? Whatever its economic or political form, tomorrow's society can only be just and fraternal if we firmly tackle these problems. We want to tell you about an idea which is accessible to all, all who feel deeply for the future of France and of humanity, accessible to those of the establishment as well as those who oppose it.'

'Industry must serve the whole of humanity,' said a metalworker from Nantes on the Atlantic coast, the first of a group of ordinary men and women who gave their convictions and experiences. He underlined the application of Moral Re-Armament on the shop-floor, and continued, 'It is not a question of knowing *who* is right or wrong, but *what* is right. It is with this aim that we must change society and improve the conditions of the workers of the world. I am convinced that we can do it. It is just a question of beginning.'

He was followed by a haulage contractor who told how MRA had revived and reinforced his faith in Christ, and had transformed the social climate in his company.

'Lots of young people like me wish to see a world that is different and just,' said Veronique Barbet. 'We are often cynical. One day, I faced without bluffing the sort of person I was, and asked my parents to forgive me for the feelings which were dividing us. From then on, I was no longer cynical; through honesty I had found an inner freedom.' She told how she had worked with MRA in India and the Pacific, and affirmed a faith in the future strengthened by the example of people she had seen who had accepted a change of heart, and with God's strength had shifted the most difficult of situations.

An electrical engineer spoke of the discipline he and his wife have accepted of getting up early enough every morning to

search for God's inspiration. Philippe Lobstein, an inspector of education, described from his own experiences in Morocco how the way to independence without bloodshed was paved by simple steps of honest apology for colonialist attitudes.

Other examples from across the world were given — the new relations between France and Germany after the last war, the re-housing of slum dwellers in Brazil — where in the past and today changed lives were providing the raw material of a new society.

A retired worker on the Paris Underground explained the financing of MRA by saying that he and his wife gave ten per cent of their pension, and thousands make similar sacrifices.

Concluding the programme, Michel Orphelin said, 'MRA is at work in the whole world, wherever men and women are committed to creating the conditions of a free, just and progressive society. Thousands of people, where they are, where they work, in their families, must become the agents of change. This is our task; this is your task. Together, we can help each other, putting ourselves at the service of a force that can work through us. Some have mentioned it tonight. Believers may call it God, but you don't have to be a believer to feel this force within you. It can talk to you in the silence of your heart, if you listen. It can guide us step by step, and help us to do what we find humanly impossible.'

Two weeks later, a public meeting brought together some of those who had telephoned or written to ask for more information about MRA. A retired lady wrote, 'The need for a new quality of life is being thrust upon us all day long (the present French Government includes a Minister for the 'Quality of Life'). But to accomplish this and to understand its price, human beings must first re-find their mental qualities with a sound spirit through the observance of universal moral laws. It

FRENCH TV contd p4

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# NEW WORLD NEWS

FOR MORAL RE-ARMAMENT

## A prototype of the new society

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Donald Coggan, last week launched a programme for Christian regeneration. Under the headline 'Archbishop urges nation to renew sense of purpose', 'The Times' described him as trying 'to turn the nation's attentions away from purely materialistic solutions to its difficulties and towards an effort to renew in people a sense of moral purpose'. Rejecting a common belief that individuals are powerless, he said, 'Each man and woman is needed if the drift towards chaos is to stop.' The Archbishop posed two questions: What sort of society do we want? And what sort of people do we need to be in order to create it?

In wrestling with the answers to Dr Coggan's questions it is a stimulus to examine the prototype of the new society represented by the development of Moral Re-Armament so far. SEE PAGE 2

## Song of Asia:

Memo to British TV producers — see p3



A scene from 'Song of Asia'

Photo: Robinson

# A prototype of the new society

by Gordon Wise

WHEN SEEKING to refine and modernise our democratic practices, 'consultation' in industry is one recommended course. The young, in reaction to unbridled individualism, are experimenting with 'community living'. Then economists tell us that three ways of tackling inflation would be to live within our means, to maximise productivity and to eliminate waste.

Moral Re-Armament provides a prototype of the new society, as a study of its operation over the last fifty years bears out. MRA has been a pioneer of 'consultation', not only in industry but in the way in which the work itself is carried forward. There is a partnership of equals with no hierarchy. Teamwork is not an easy compromise among like-minded men and women but the fruit of honest convictions freely expressed, out of which comes change and resulting synthesis.

There is a full participatory democracy, where each, young and old whether new to the ideas or long-versed in them, can help shape policy and decision. Everyone can have a say. Each is fully responsible before God for the conduct and strategy of this work of God. The chairman of the morning meeting may do the evening chores — and probably does. A cook will doff her apron to take the platform.

'Collective leadership' is normal practice with MRA, not only within a nation but in the way in which a team or group from many nations meets to seek the Holy Spirit's leading on plans, strategy and decisions. Members of such a group are interchangeable. No one man or woman's word decides for all. No one person regards himself or herself as indispensable.

## Thrift

'Community living' has been the normal practice over many years, ever since MRA acquired property, where married couples include a number of others in the household and extend the sense of family beyond that of the blood connection. There is trusteeship and stewardship of money and possessions. Individuals regard their assets as being at God's disposal and each cares for the other's needs as in a family.

In an age where ostentation and waste are now deplored it is a fact that MRA has always practised thrift. Men of good will at various levels of commitment are enlisted in God's enterprises.

Ends shape the means, not the means the

ends. By this I mean that what needs to be done as God guides is the measure of money-raising and spending. Activity is not decided only by the means available, as it is believed and practised that where God guides, He provides. The last Annual Report and Accounts of the Oxford Group/Moral Re-Armament gives detailed information about its 1974 operations. (Copies of the accounts are obtainable from MRA Books, 12 Palace Street, London SW1E 5JF.)

This is not to suggest perfection. Far from it. Performance can and should be heightened in all these fields as well as others. Nor is it presumed that only among Moral Re-Armament people do you find these manifestations of Christian living. MRA is God's property, but only part of it.

## Stewardship

But there is here a pattern of corporate life, a dedication, a productivity and stewardship which goes way beyond any humanly required minimum. The extra mile is the normal and is all in a day's work. All the hours in a day which God gives are available. There is no overtime as all work is voluntary and unpaid. Individuals who give their whole time are supported by the giving of those who can and want to help, entirely as a free choice.

Here is a potential for change on a national and international level which transcends the divides of ideology or system. Every system needs unselfish men and women to make it work — or more accurately, those who aim to be unselfish.

Today those committed to, associated with, or interested in MRA, need to rethink the full implications of the founder, Frank Buchman's, concept of social, economic, national and international change, all of which flow from personal change. In today's world national change in a Western country must surely involve halting our expectation of an automatic yearly rise in the standard of living, and in contrast, an enlivening of our concern that our Asian, African and Latin American brothers and sisters have a chance to catch up. Our proletariat live like capitalists in their eyes. International change must begin with a deeper realisation that the disparity between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots' is as explosive a mixture as that which existed between the classes before the Russian and French revolutions. More nations can make A and H bombs now, and would not rely on the sticks and stones of the

Peasants' Revolt.

MRA has pioneered a God-arched foreign policy in exporting trained men and women from countries which have a solid work to countries where MRA workers are required and requested. This has often been done sacrificially, without undue regard for maintaining the work at home. At the national level, a country's influence for good need not be governed by her lack of material resources.

## Further forward

Expanding the application of these Christian principles to industry today would mean management and labour going a great deal further forward than what used to be called 'teamwork in industry'. Power-sharing should be genuine, profit-sharing should be normal. Decision-making should be contributed by all through their elected representatives. These ideas likewise are for export.

The men and women of MRA need to be as far-seeing and as far ahead of our time as was Frank Buchman when he formulated through Divine guidance the concepts of work in the 'twenties and 'thirties. 'The world is anxiously waiting to see what Jesus Christ can do in, by, for and through one nation wholly given to Him — a nation God-led. It can be your nation.'



## Swahili handbook

YET ANOTHER LANGUAGE edition of *The Black and White Book* — Swahili.

The Kenya Church Association Bulletin, reviewing the new book, says, 'Being pocket size it is extremely convenient to carry with one. Its contents are of dynamic quality. With the greatest economy of words it sets out in very practical and arresting fashion a way of life for individuals and nations, entirely in harmony with the deepest convictions both of those who have a religious faith and those who are seeking what to live for. It may well be found of great use in the upper classes of schools as a basis for discussion on fundamental social and moral questions.'

It is published by the East African Literature Bureau, an organisation set up by the East African Community to serve Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. Benjamin S Wegesa, headmaster of a secondary school near Kitale, did the translation, with help from Godfrey Benson, a retired Education Officer who worked in Kenya for many years.

485,000 copies of *The Black and White Book* by Sydney Cook and Garth Lean have now been printed in 21 languages.

# MEMO

To:  
EDITORS,  
RADIO  
AND TV  
PRODUCERS

From:  
HSW

Subject:  
'SONG  
OF ASIA'

TRAVELLING through Britain just now are a cast as unusual as the content of their show:

- a cast who come from 14 nations of Asia and the Pacific
- whose average age is 22
- who work without salary
- who have given up other careers to take part
- who have themselves invested what savings and possessions they had to make their world tour possible.

They include:

- a young woman from Papua New Guinea, who was orphaned as a child, brought herself up in the jungle and yet became a teacher and the first young woman from her country to win the Duke of Edinburgh's Award.
- a Maoist from India who spent time in jail before he was sixteen and who now says he has found 'a greater revolution'.
- a young man from the Philippines whose parents were on opposite sides of the civil war in his country, who went to a refugee camp to learn guerrilla tactics and who returned home just in time to prevent his mother from shooting his father.

Some of the cast have become refugees since the start of their tour. Many have known the misery of hunger, of poverty, of war. Yet all believe they have something to offer to us in the West. They offer it through the show they wrote and created themselves — *Song of Asia*.

## SCENE: A PEASANT'S COTTAGE IN RURAL CHINA.

A Japanese doctor is billeted on the farmer and his wife by the local village committee. The son of the family was killed by Japanese soldiers in World War II. The son of the Japanese doctor suffers from leukemia as a result of his mother's involvement in the Hiroshima holocaust. The Japanese is full of hatred towards America for this. The Chinese farmer strangely enough is without hatred. The Japanese says, 'If you as a Chinese can forgive Japan, then I as a Japanese can forgive America.'

*A different angle on East Asia?*

## SCENE: DAWN IN CAMBODIA.

A Buddhist monk sits in silent meditation upon the tragic history of his country. He thinks not only of civil wars, but also of past wars of hatred between the countries of Indo-China, and between these countries and Thailand. 'Contempt, malice, lack of understanding, pour their putrefying waters into the chalice of our hearts. What progress have we made? When will hatred cease to engender hate? That our people may go back to the land of love and joy. That this may happen we swear that we will sacrifice our hate and suspicions at the altar of our pride.'

*A different angle on Indo-China?*

## SCENE: AN INDIAN VILLAGE WELL.

The last with any water left in it. Heavily guarded, of course. If everyone was to help themselves there would soon be no water left. But there are favourites of the landlord. The Brahmin, the rich, the powerful. The Harijans (formerly 'Untouchables') are rejected. Then the old man of the village

relates a remarkable story of reconciliation between two brothers. All listen in silence to their 'inner voice'. The landlord relents. The water shall be rationed fairly — to all, including the Harijans. 'Only when our hearts dry up with selfishness will the waters of this well run dry,' says the Harijan mother.

*A different angle on India?*

*A different angle on world resources?*

## SCENE:

### THE HUT OF A MINORITY FAMILY INVOLVED IN GUERRILLA WARFARE.

An uneasy truce has been declared. The youngest, most impetuous son thinks it is safe to venture out. But he is cruelly murdered by another faction. The second brother seeks revenge, but fails — and then kills himself. The third son's turn — but will it be revenge or reconciliation? 'If I can have the courage to kill a man, why can't I also have the courage to love him enough to make him a different man?'

*A different angle on violence?*

*A different angle on the rightness of guerrilla warfare?*

*A different angle on Northern Ireland?*

These are all stories related by 'Mama', the village 'uncle', around whom the children gather to hear his tales.

*They would be remarkable enough as fiction, but they happen also to be true.*

Mama's friend is the servant, Ramu, who works (if that is not stretching the truth) for a middle class Indian family. Ramu has all the humour and bathos of the Shakespearean clown. By his cheerful blunders he demolishes hypocrisy, uncovers dishonesty, exposes corruption — and yet by so doing he releases the warmth at the heart of the family — and the human family.

Four dancers, from Turkey, India, Laos and Japan, paint a rainbow of Asia — its richness and poverty, its faith and folly, its mountains and rivers, deserts and distances, its infinite kaleidoscopic variety of colour and of sound — and its deep silences. Perhaps never before have the strikingly unique traditions of dance from the four corners of Asia been blended together on a single stage.

For two hours a feast for eye and ear. Dances from Papua-New Guinea, Turkey, the Philippines and Sri Lanka. Folk songs from China and Australia. The Maoris, under a starlit sky cross thousands of miles of watery wilderness in their open canoes. Short of food, short of water, suffering from exhaustion and exposure, from heat by day and cold by night, they are about to give up and die. Suddenly one of them sees, on the horizon, what looks like a long white cloud....

From the noisy confusion of the Asian Bazaar to the clarity and simplicity of the Prayer of St Francis, sung by an ex-guerrilla, the audience is carried along by *Song of Asia*. It is a song with the capacity to move the heart, stir the conscience and quicken the resolve to act unselfishly.

*A new angle on audience participation?*  
*A new angle on Britain?*



Papua New Guineans in the cast of 'Song of Asia' meet fellow countrymen at a performance in Edinburgh.

Photo: Rengfelt

## How envy 'faded'

by Sophie Awan



I AM A MUSLIM GIRL and have been studying in Kenya all my life. Having completed school last year, I am now going to join the university in order to study medicine. While waiting to join university, I started teaching temporarily at a private school in Nakuru.

It was at this school that I met Mr P V Abraham who had just come from Ethiopia and had joined the school. During a talk with him I learned of Moral Re-Armament and its significance.

That particular talk moved me to such an extent that I really thought hard about it. I started listening to the inner voice and asking for God's guidance.

It was a great joy for me to realise that anyone could think twice before committing an action, then there would be no regrets later on. This was because I used to regret a lot after doing anything. Also, I always wanted beautiful, dainty things and used to envy other girls who seemed to have all the things a girl would desire (in the way of clothes, cosmetics, etc).

However that particular envy started fading away once the moral re-armament talk penetrated.

I started thinking of others for a change and even started buying things for others, and helping at home. As soon as I started doing this, I found that my parents' attitude towards me changed. There seemed to be some sort of peace when we spoke together — and we started sharing our problems and trying to solve them together.

Anyhow, I find that, now, my life is more peaceful and happy. Also, I can face the future with hope.

I am now trying to change others. I hope that God will continue guiding me and fill my life with the purpose of changing people and nations.

### FRENCH TV contd from p1

means not cheating others, not cheating one's tax inspector.'

'I am myself a Christian,' said another, 'and I agree with your saying that society will change in the measure that every individual will change. Everyone can have a considerable influence in his surroundings, in the family, at work — and little by little the world can be changed.' A third person, from Alsace in the East of France, added, 'Moral Re-Armament is the only hope to prevent catastrophe. Yes, it is time to act. How can I help?'

## Song of Asia — 30 minutes on Radio Forth

COUNCILLOR DEREK MACLENNAN, speaking to the cast of *Song of Asia* on behalf of the Lord Provost of Edinburgh, on the eve of their departure for Aberdeen, said, 'Thank you very much for providing us this evening with such an authentic spectacle.'

At a reception for the cast held in Adams House, Edinburgh, Conrad Hunte, former Vice-Captain of the West Indies cricket team and a member of the company of *Song of Asia*, said, 'You in Scotland have suffered, you understand what it is to suffer. More than ever we in the countries you have served need you again as equal partners, so that we can create the new society.'

'By 2,000 we could have a society that is multi-racial, multi-lingual and multi-cultural; where marriage is based on absolute standards; where there is new manhood and new womanhood; where education teaches students to live on the shop-floor as well as in the board room; where industry serves the needs of human society world wide; where there is no want and no waste.'

'Britain, who was the first to start the industrial revolution, can be the first to create the new society. And as always the Scots will be in the forefront.'

The congregation applauded as members of the cast of *Song of Asia* spoke and sang in Sunday morning services at St Andrews Church, Musselburgh, and at the Highland Tolbooth Church, which had been the cast's meeting place during the week.

Charles Ooi, from Malaysia, Miss Somere Jogo, from Papua-New Guinea, Miss Neerja Chowdhury, from India, and Miss Devi Kanapathipillai, from Malaysia, were interviewed for half an hour on Radio Forth's Sunday Sound programme last Sunday evening.

Laurence Gruer, a medical student, describes his encounter with *Song of Asia* in the Edinburgh University magazine *Student*. He writes, 'The experience shared by the bulk of humanity is beyond the comprehension of most post-war Westerners. This became clear to me during the months I spent this summer working as a stage-hand for a show called *Song of Asia* — currently on in Edinburgh. *Song of Asia* is a blend of music, dance and drama written and performed by some sixty young people drawn from thirteen Asian and Oceanic countries, from four religions and an immense variety of backgrounds.'

'One of the cast with whom I spent many hours was Truong Van Binh, a Vietnamese philosophy student. Until recently he and his family lived in Danang — throughout his life he has lived with the daily fear of death. He has run from both B-52 bombs and Viet-Cong rockets. He has seen one of his best friends shot dead by a sniper as they sat talking. As a Buddhist monk he worked in a refugee camp, comforting the homeless and crushed. He then left to study in India. The South fell and he found himself in exile, unable to contact family or friends, not even knowing if they were still alive. The unknown awaits his return to Vietnam. He has asylum in the Netherlands. But Holland is not home.'

'It is the experience of many like Binh that led to the creation of *Song of Asia*,' he writes. From such beginnings has emerged 'a piece of committed theatre notable for its beauty and power'.

'*Song of Asia* invites everyone who has an interest in other human beings and in the fate of the world not only to see the show but also to meet and talk later.'