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SOUTH AFRICAN WORKSHOP

In Johannesburg 80 people attended a workshop on reconciliation, hosted jointly by the King-Luthuli Transformation Centre and MRA. This was the first of three workshops leading to the Bloemfontein conference. One discussion group included police officers, victims of crime and representatives of prisoners' rights. One lady so hated the police that she would not even give them water when they patrolled her township; she found herself sitting next to a police officer. The victim of an armed robbery talked to an ex-convict. 'All the emotions of the robbery came flooding back,' she said later. 'Yet meeting him started a process of healing. Since then my fear of going out in public has gone.' Alice Cardel, Sam Pono and Rev Tshawane from KLTC were interviewed by Professor Gerald Pillay for the SAFM radio programme 'A question of faith'.

Edward Howard

A WEEK IN PARAGUAY

We have just returned from a week in Paraguay, a country emerging into unstable democracy after years of harsh rightist dictatorship.

We were invited by the Business Women's Association and the Soroptimists in Ciudad del Este, a town in jungle country on the border with Brazil and Argentina. Founded only 38 years ago, today it is the third busiest commercial region in the world, just behind Hong Kong and Miami. Everyone is there - the Arabs, the Koreans, the Chinese, the Russian Mafia. 'A town without faith and law', one person called it.

There are also people who care for the community. Dr Nimia Monzon and Dr Mafalda Cabrera were our hosts. With them we were interviewed on regional TV and then on radio, both live. As a result, 70 people came to a public meeting later that day.

The business women are a fine group, who eagerly accepted the Caux Round Table 'Principles for Business'. The Mayor received us, and studied the Caux 1996 folder with interest.

In the capital Asuncion we were on national TV, and the afternoon paper *Ultima hora* published half a page with photograph under the headline 'Moral Re-Armament comes to Paraguay'.

Celia Piretti Hanni Blundell

BOUGAINVILLE TRUST BUILDING

Amidst the uneasy truce on the war-torn island of Bougainville, 2,000 people have attended MRA 'spiritual and practical training' workshops in the past seven months. Communities in areas controlled by both protagonists have asked for this training. The Bougainville Revolutionary Army asked for a four-day workshop; their men attended carrying their weapons. At another, the 150 participants witnessed reconciliation between Chiefs and PNG Security Forces.

Each of the 19 workshops has combined teaching of moral and spiritual values, peace-making and trust building, with practical skills such as preparing balanced diets and making drum ovens. They have been led by a team of five people from Milne Bay Province. Everywhere the team has been pressed to return.

This 'Strategic Trust Building Project' is being implemented by MRA and the KB Youth Training Centre in Milne Bay, with financial support from AusAID, the Australian overseas aid agency. Its aim is to rebuild trust within war-torn Bougainville and with the rest of Papua New Guinea.

Jobson Misang, Director of the Provincial Social Development Authority, Bougainville, writes that during a recent meeting of NGOs, the Trust Building Project was cited several times as an example of what Bougainville needed. As a result of the workshops, he says, 'Many have changed their way of life. One man previously had never walked or worked with his wife; he had his own house and garden apart from the family. Today he is a changed man, committed to a new Bougainville.'

Alan Weeks

A VILLAGE LISTENS

In Shillong, a weekly meeting brings together students from every part of North-East India. It was initiated by a Catholic priest who has never forgotten his experience, in Madras 25 years ago, of helping answer the suffering in a local industry as a result of meeting the cast of the MRA musical 'Anything to Declare?'.

The students' anger and despair show how inadequately our people are prepared for the changes that are swamping us. What is the point of living high moral standards, they ask, when the

most powerful in the nation flout them? Why not use violence? Some come from States where warfare is widespread.

But many have taken to heart Solzhenitsyn's words: 'The lie may come into the world and even dominate it, but not through me.' Two of them helped with a camp for 62 students at Pfutsero, Nagaland, last October. At that camp was born the 'Pfutsero Charter', a challenge to personal conduct which has made a mark on a number of participants. Some have raised money for a needy village, and established a library there.

The work to rehabilitate drug addicts and alcoholics goes on. We, the 'sober' ones, are slow to recognise that we have helped to create the problem, and need recovery as much as the addicts. The humbling, liberating truths we are learning may bring the breakthrough we need.

In my village, the 46 elders recently met together for two days, though it was the height of the harvest season. The first two three-hour sessions were so awkwardly silent that some said they were getting nowhere. An elder replied, 'We talk, but avoid the ugly facts of our failures. Here, we are finding it hard to sound off because our consciences are rebuking us.' At the next meeting another elder stood up and named difficult issues that had been avoided. To ignore them, he said, would insult God and betray the village. Others started to talk. By the end of the day they had reached consensus that, as conscience dictated, they would restore for specific misdeeds. Clan prestige would no longer be used to keep old resentments alive.

A lot needs to happen for some of the blood-smearred issues to be fully cleansed. But the village pastor said, 'My hope for our people's future has been renewed.'

I have been stirred to see a village attempting to listen to 'the still, small voice' - reminding me of the vision at the heart of 'Song of Asia'.

Niketū Iralu

BRAZIL'S FAVELA LEADERS MEET

Recently, a national meeting of favela leaders brought many new people to the MRA conference centre in Petropolis. Some caught the ideas with lightning speed. One woman, from Bahia in the poor North-East, interrupted the speech of the Vice-President of the Federation of Favela Communities of Rio de Janeiro. 'Brother, I feel a certain bitterness in the way you speak,' she told him. 'You should examine your heart and see what it comes from.' The Vice-President's next speech had quite a different tone! The Bahia woman summed up her visit: 'I have waited all my life to find an idea like MRA.'

Laurie Vogel

VISITING COURSE IN ESTONIA

The eighth Visiting Course took place in Estonia last month. Twelve people took part, a wonderful bunch, all from the Social Sciences Department at Tartu University. Remarks such as 'You destroy yourself by being honest,' or 'Unselfishness would result in social chaos,' gave us an idea of their moral concepts. There was a sturdy resistance to anything religious, but confidence and openness grew through the days together. At the end one said, 'I have regarded religious people as unstable, wanting an escape route from reality. On this course I saw religious people who can handle their lives, and non-religious people who are enslaved by their surroundings because they don't understand themselves. The religious ones had found order and purpose for their lives.'

*Anna Christine Christensen Erik Andren
Keith Wells*

PRAYER IN THE PACIFIC

In Western Samoa all the Parliamentary leaders including the Prime Minister and his wife meet every Friday at 5.00am for prayer. This gathering was initiated by a senior Cabinet Minister. It was a result of his experience at an MRA conference in Western Samoa in 1992, he told Fetu Paulo, the conference organiser. Since the conference he had also made personal apologies to some of his colleagues, he said, and had mended relationships within his family.

1996 EFFECTIVE LIVING COURSE UNDER WAY

The twelve participants in this year's Course come from Japan, Canada (three First Nation people), New Zealand, Cambodia, Burma, Korea, Malaysia and Fiji. As always, they bring the riches of their heritage: Colleen Crawler, great grand-daughter of Chief Walking Buffalo of the Nakoda Sioux First Nations people, spoke of the concept of *pow-wow*: 'A joyful expression of thankfulness to the Creator'. Yukinori Kashiwabara told us how he had walked eight hours to Kobe to help those suffering from the earthquake. He was shocked to find everything destroyed, and yet already community was being built where people helped and cared for each other beyond their differences. Eh Ywa from Burma shared a traditional Karen saying: 'Give honour to the oldest. Help the weakest. Respect each other.'

Thus the sense of 'family' has begun to emerge, and for all of us the learning process continues.

One distinctive feature of the Course this year is the number of former participants - four from Australia and eight from abroad - who are helping with it.

The Course Faculty

BUILDING A TEAM FOR CAUX '96

Forty-three of us from 14 European countries - East, Central and West - met in Haguenau near Strasbourg 8-13 February to begin building the team to carry the first three weeks of Caux. We also spent time on the main events during that period. A report is included for European readers; for others it is available on request.

F. Chavanne, Tom Jones, Marianne Spreng

CYPRUS STORY

The French historical review *Histoire, Economie et Société* has published an account by Daniel Dommel of MRA's role during the years, weeks and hours before the signing of the London agreement, in February 1959, which led to the independence of

Cyprus. Reprints (in French) are available from Service des Publications, Réarmement moral, 22 avenue Robert Schuman, F 92100 BOULOGNE-BILLANCOURT.

HOUSE AVAILABLE

The MRA house in Oxford occupied by the Edward Peters family may be available for 3-4 weeks from late July. If anyone would like to house-sit, please be in touch with Edward.

FACTS ON FAXES, PHONES AND ADDRESSES

New Zealand: Nigel and Jane Cooper are now at 33 Manse Road, Kurow, North Otago. Tel: +64 3 436 0910.

Calendar of Events

FEB '96	<u>Haguenau France</u>	European planning meeting for Caux	8 - 13
	<u>Asia Plateau</u>	Creative Leadership	14 - 18
APR '96	<u>Bloemfontein South Africa</u>	Healing the past - Building the future	Apr 4 - 8
	<u>Washington and New York</u>	Caux Round Table interim meeting	9 - 13
	<u>Asia Plateau</u>	Creative Leadership	16 - 20
	<u>Paris (Boulogne)</u>	Caux '96 Council and preparation meeting	20 - 24
MAY '96	<u>West Ukraine</u>	Seminar - Creation of a new ethical basis for political life in Ukraine	May 1 - 5
	<u>Asia Plateau</u>	Families conference	15 - 18
	<u>Asia Plateau</u>	Youth camp	21 - 30
JUN '96	<u>Asia Plateau</u>	Creative Leadership	Jun 4 - 8
	<u>Caux</u>	50th Anniversary celebration	29 - Jul 3
JUL '96	<u>Caux</u>	Europe at the crossroads	Jul 3 - 6
	<u>Caux</u>	Forging the future - preparing for the 21st century	12 - 16
	<u>Caux</u>	Business focus	23 - 28
AUG '96	<u>Caux</u>	Faith, moral values and our future	Aug 3 - 7
	<u>Caux</u>	An agenda for reconciliation	10 - 15
	<u>Caux</u>	Farmers' Dialogue	18
	<u>Caux</u>	The creators of peace - a women's initiative	19 - 21
	<u>Caux</u>	Final weekend event	24 - 25
NOV '96	<u>Minnesota USA</u>	Farmers' Dialogue	Nov 14 - 17

The deadline for the next Bulletin is Friday, 15 March 1996

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Those named below have been asked to distribute this in their area: **Asia:** South - C Iralu; Malaysia - Santa Maria; Philippines - Cardel; Japan, Rest - Fujita; **Australia** - A Lancaster; **Pacific** - Annette Porteous; **Africa:** East - Patel; South - Horn; Zimbabwe - Sibare; **Nigeria, Rest** - Agbi; **N. America:** Canada - Weeks; **USA** - Ruffin; **Latin America:** Brazil, Rest - Puig/Vogel; **Caribbean** - Fiona Edwards; **Europe:** France - Lasserre; **Germany** - Bräckle; **Denmark** - Jørgensen; **Finland** - Koponen; **Norway** - Eskeland; **Sweden** - Söderlund; **Switzerland** - Mottu; **UK** - C Evans; **Austria** - Vock; **Netherlands, Rest** - J de Pous; **Middle East** - Christodoulides