

EFFECTIVE NATIONAL MODEL'

While visiting Bosnia before Christmas, President Clinton spoke of the lessons that the US has learnt and is still learning after the Civil War and the bondage of slavery. 'We always grow stronger as we let more of our fears and prejudices go,' he said. More than 180 racial and ethnic groups now call America home. 'We have embarked on a great national dialogue across the groups about how we can live and prosper together in a new millennium,' the President said. 'I urge you to do the same thing here.... History can be your ally, not your enemy.'

This year *Hope in the Cities* has the chance to make a significant contribution to the President's Initiative on Race, which he launched last June. Paige Chargois and Rob Corcoran have been invited to join a working group, with several other national organizations, charged with compiling a 'how-to' kit on community race dialogues. This will be published by the White House. *Hope in the Cities* was asked to contribute because it has 'conducted successful race dialogues and developed outstanding training and dialogue methods'.

Harvard professor Christopher Edley, who directed the White House review of Affirmative Action and is now a consultant to the President's Initiative, said recently that improved race relations are not likely to come via the political process, encounter groups or sermons, but through local institutions and individuals who mobilise people to work together on common problems. 'Racial healing must be an explicit part of policy design and implementation,' he said, 'not just a background concern.'

The Center for Living Democracy has just published a national survey of organizations devoted to racial dialogue, which shows that thousands of Americans are now involved. 'With nurturing and exposure,' the report concludes, 'these dialogues could become an important national movement.' It identifies *Hope in the Cities* as one of the most effective national models.

Hope in the Cities is also proving a model beyond American shores. In November an Israel-Palestinian delegation visiting the USA met with Richmond's *Hope in the Cities* Steering Committee. After a remarkable and enthusiastic dialogue between the two groups, Yeheskel Landau, Administrative Director of a peace center in the Israeli city of Ramle, urged the Richmonders to bring a team to Israel. 'We are in the same work,' he said.

Rob Corcoran

THANKSGIVING IN ROME

One hundred and seventy choristers, musicians and soloists from Québec, Switzerland and France have been in Rome for a 25th anniversary performance of the *Oratorio for our time*. Performed in the beautiful baroque church, San-Luigi-del-Francesi, before a full audience which included the French and Canadian ambassadors, it was a splendid thanksgiving occasion for an Oratorio which has been presented 50 times at the invitation of parishes or dioceses in Europe, Australia and Canada.

Mgr Jean Madelin, Rector of this French church, drew the audience's attention to the link with MRA of the Oratorio's authors, Felix Lisiecki and myself. In the middle of the performance, three choristers told of their own experience of God's calling. Father Muchery from Calais said that each time he sings the Oratorio, in his mind he kneels down and with the Child (a central character in the Oratorio) commits his life and mission anew. Cardinal Paul Poppard, head of the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Culture, commented: 'A great hope comes out of this oratorio. Those words of the Gospels, the Psalms, this modern music, are sung with conviction, bringing an extraordinary up-to-date strength.'

Françoise Caubel-Chauchat

BREAKING BEYOND BOUNDARIES

At the Beyond Boundaries conference in Minnesota in June, indigenous Americans discussed the idea of hosting a conference for spiritual leaders from the differing faith traditions in the Americas – a conference built on the increasing sense among indigenous spiritual leaders that their faith heritage has important messages for everyone living in the hemisphere. As a result, an exploratory visit to Guatemala and Peru has been made by Ed Burnstick from the First Nation peoples of Canada; Gordon Regguinti, who was the keeper of the sacred fire at the Beyond Boundaries conference; Luis Puig from Guatemala and Brazil; and Sofia Vargas from Peru and North Carolina. They were joined by others who had attended the Minnesota conference, among them Eliezer Cifuentes in Guatemala and Solon Espinosa in Peru. In both countries – whether from Mayan churches and communities or from Amazon villages – they found a warm response to such a meeting. Some indigenous leaders offered possible

locations and other support.

Encouraged by these encounters, they are thinking of holding an Americas-wide gathering in about 18 months' time. Gordon Regguinti is prepared to devote his time to this. As a former editor of Colors magazine, executive director of the Native America Journalists Association, and founder of the Native Arts and Entertainment TV Network, he brings many talents needed by this venture. At the 1988 Yatra, called by Rajmohan Gandhi in India, he gave the opening prayer on behalf of the American Indians.

from 'Breakthroughs'

WALKING ON WATER

During the Christmas break, over 50 young people gathered at week-long MRA camps in the South Island of New Zealand, and near Perth in Western Australia. Amidst rock-climbing, water skiing and many other summer activities, the camps gave the opportunity for searching discussion, and a chance to deepen spiritual roots. 'After a tough year, I found focus and hope for the coming one,' said a teenager. Some are already discussing next year's camps, and planning action with MRA during 1998.

GLOBAL CLUB REACHES EUROPE

Global Express now spans the world. It is edited in England and printed in Australia. The first issue created under this system is now available from the MRA addresses in Melbourne and Oxford.

In Melbourne, where *Global Express* began, its initiators hold regular gatherings of the Global Club, which aims to develop unity and trust between people between 17 and 30 years, of differing backgrounds and cultures. These gatherings sometimes bring together more than 100 people.

Now the Global Club has been launched in England, and will host a conference at Tirley Garth on the first weekend in April. Details from Laura Trevelyan in Oxford, or from globalclub@mraoxon.demon.co.uk

Howard Grace

HEIGHTENING FOR A CHANGE

In 1993 a number of us met to discuss the magazine *For a Change*. We sharpened its focus by choosing as our guiding themes: 'healing history, transforming relationships, building community'. We also decided to continue the magazine for five years, until December 1998.

That date is approaching, and at the beginning of March there will be three days of discussion in Britain to see where we go next. Those responsible for the

magazine feel we should continue. But we want to heighten the magazine and make it more effective. If you have suggestions, please do pass them on to one of the editors or to me.

Incidentally the issue due out this month is very fine with a lead story dealing with Australia's fraught racial scene, and the efforts to bring reconciliation.

Tom Jones

'READY FOR 2000' – JAMAICA CONSULTATION

A reminder! The next Global Consultation takes place in Jamaica, April 23-30. The letter of invitation was circulated with the December World Bulletin. It set out themes and questions to help us discover a vision for a new phase of MRA's service to the world. Thoughts for the agenda are welcome and should be sent to the Jamaica Secretariat at MRA, 1156 15th Street, NW, Suite 910, Washington DC 20005, USA (fax: +1 202 872-9137; e-mail: MRAWash@aol.com).

Participants – about 30 people – should reflect our international diversity. Special consideration should be given to those who feel called to help shape MRA's future and who have experience in initiatives that represent significant growth points in the work. The preparation committee will help assure balanced representation and would appreciate suggestions as soon as possible. Those who attend are invited to stay on until May 3 to take part in meetings arranged by our Jamaican hosts.

May we encourage you to convene local gatherings to talk about this theme, and to send us your best thinking? Reflections on fresh ways God is leading in our outreach initiatives would be especially valuable. Below is a contribution by Mike Brown which we hope will stimulate others!

The Jamaica preparation team

A CONSULTATION WITH RESOLUTION

I hope that out of the Jamaica Consultation will come a resolution rather than a report – a proposal to be considered by our world fellowship. It seems we are reaching for two things: a vision of 'a new phase of MRA's service to the world'; and a needed authority, a purification and enhancement of our MRA culture, our spiritual life and our ways of working. Buchman, I understand from Garth Lean's writings, did both. He addressed conflicts by aiming to deepen the spiritual life of all and, at the same time, by getting everybody to work on the next big inspired action.

If the Consultation can shape a resolution which addresses both the needed structures for our work, and the spiritual vision to make it go, then it could be worked over, prayed through and ultimately brought to the suggested World Assembly. It needs that

corporate ownership – born of repentance, embracing a challenge and vision, commissioning, celebration – which a world gathering could bring.

We speak of 'governing processes', which I suspect provokes in some people that underlying resistance, that fear of an executive group seeking to 'manage the Holy Spirit'. I think that many will respond more to 'leadership' – or 'servant leadership' in the style of Mahatma Gandhi or Henri Nouwen.

Can we encapsulate what we have learned through five years of *Hope in the Cities* and other such initiatives? I suspect we are too concerned with repackaging the tested fundamental truths that MRA has brought to light in this century. But Buchman expected each generation to add to 'the capital of ideas' – providing not just an addition but a transformation.

What we've been shown goes way beyond the group dynamics of sharing and understanding to the bracing life-changing contact between people who have not trusted each other. As the Dalai Lama put it: 'Your enemy is your best teacher.' This dynamic enables God's spirit to speak through the courageous, honest encounter with people whose race, whose attitudes, whose pain and politics, whose very presence most confront us. Perhaps in a post-modernist age, where universal values are often so obscured that they do not confront the conscience, it takes a confrontation with the uncomfortable difference of another's humanity to show us where we can make the first step.

Mike Brown

INTERNATIONAL COORDINATION GROUP NOMINATIONS – REMINDER

May we remind everyone of the February 15 deadline for nominations for new participants in the International Coordination Group. Three or four people, of considerable stamina and selflessness and with the ability to take a wide view, are needed to undertake this service from the middle of this year. Please send your suggestions as soon as possible, and not later than February 15, to:

Consultation Support Group, c/o Ailsa Hamilton, 5 Buccleuch Mews, Abbey Court, Melrose TD6 9LR, Scotland; fax +44 1896 823546, e-mail ailsahamilton@compuserve.com

With our greetings for the new year,

*Alice Cardel, Rob Corcoran, Ailsa Hamilton,
Mona Marzouk, John Mills, Edward Peters, Dick
Ruffin, Marianne Spreng, Robo Orogun*

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS FORUM

The International Communications Forum will meet at Caux this summer to discuss 'Media and the Community – building a creative relationship'. This

is one of the forums of the Caux Conference for Business and Industry, July 13-18, and will include a workshop on the influences which motivate the press and broadcasting.

May we ask all who know media professionals whom this topic might interest to consider inviting them? A printed invitation will be available, but we suggest you get the dates in their diaries now. If you write to us in Geneva or London, we will gladly send you Forum reports and our newly updated Position Paper.

The next Forum will take place in Pardubice, Czech Republic, May 8-12, at the invitation of Dr Jara David-Moserova. Invitations will be available this month.

Jean-Jacques Odier and Hugh Nowell

PREPARATION MEETING IN STRASBOURG

The preparation meeting for the Caux session, 'Agenda for reconciliation', will take place in Strasbourg on the weekend of 6-8 March 1998. During the following week there will be opportunities for participants to brief and consult Members of the European Parliament.

Michel Koechlin and Charles Danguy would be pleased to hear from World Bulletin readers about any MEPs whom you feel should be included.

Peter Riddell

FACTS ON FAXES, PHONES AND ADDRESSES

Switzerland: Daniel and Monique Mottu have moved to a new home near Geneva: 3A chemin du Pré-du-Couvent, CH - 1224 Chêne-Bougeries. Tel/fax: +41 22 349 6808

Germany: Thomas and Christa Bräckle and their family have moved to a new address (also the new MRA address for Berlin): Stierstr. 17, D - 12159 Berlin. Phone: +49 30 859 63769.

(Calendar of events next page)

Calendar of Events

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|---------|---------------------------------------|--|-----|-------------|
| JAN '98 | <u>Asia Plateau India</u> | Ethical values in health care - international conference | Jan | 2 - 4 |
| JAN '98 | <u>Asia Plateau India</u> | Asia/Pacific Regional Consultation | Jan | 12 - 17 |
| JAN '98 | <u>Hakataramea Valley New Zealand</u> | New Year camp for young people | Jan | 2 - 9 |
| JAN '98 | <u>Perth Australia</u> | 'Wave of hope' teenage camp | Jan | 8 - 15 |
| FEB '98 | <u>Finland</u> | FFF seminar in Finland for students from St Petersburg, Russia | Feb | 1 - 7 |
| FEB '98 | <u>Armagh Melbourne</u> | Effective Living training course | Feb | 1 - Apr 4 |
| FEB '98 | <u>Petropolis Brazil</u> | 'Encuentro de las Americas' | Feb | 4 - 8 |
| MAR '98 | <u>Strasbourg France</u> | Preparation meeting for 'Agenda for Reconciliation' session at Caux | Mar | 6 - 8 |
| APR '98 | <u>Jamaica West Indies</u> | Global Consultation | Apr | 23 - 30 |
| APR '98 | <u>Rzeszow Poland</u> | CCBI conference: 'The application of business values in the West and the new market economies' | Apr | 3 - 5 |
| MAY '98 | <u>Parubice Czech Republic</u> | International Communications Forum | May | 8 - 12 |
| MAY '98 | <u>France</u> | Planning meeting for Caux '98 | TBA | |
| JUL '98 | <u>Caux Switzerland</u> | Caux summer conference -- 'Changing the ways of the world' | Jul | 11 - Aug 23 |
| SEP '98 | <u>Tirley Garth UK</u> | FFF International Course (prospectus available) | Sep | 3 - 22 |

The deadline for the next Bulletin is Sunday, February 15, 1997

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