

VISIT TO PALESTINE AND ISRAEL

Israelis and Palestinians who have participated in Caux conferences have often said, 'If only we could bring 'Caux' to our area'. For a week in mid-April, a start was made in realising this dream.

Ten people with experience of working for change in their home situations were invited to Palestine and Israel. They included Cornelius Marivate MP and Professor Piet Meiring from South Africa; Dr Yusuf Al-Azhari from Somalia; Sushobha Barve from India; Spyros and Maroulla Stephou from Cyprus; and Jean Fayet from France.

The main focus for the visit was a seminar in Gaza, requested by eminent politicians, public servants and community workers, under the title 'Achieving national objectives by re-arming ourselves morally'.

The programme included a day in the Gaza Strip, meeting people involved in medical, humanitarian and mediation work; and discussions with a Member of the Knesset, an architect of the 'Oslo' process, the mayor and other citizens of an Israeli town on the border with the West Bank, staff and students at Beit Berl College near Tel Aviv, and some of those living at Neve Shalom, a Jewish-Arab village in Israel created to foster co-existence and power-sharing between the communities. Meetings were also held on the West Bank – in Bethlehem University and in two refugee camps. At Tantur Ecumenical Institute we met with senior rabbis, academics, teachers and peace activists.

The quality and commitment of those we met and talked with was very striking. The visiting group encompassed a remarkable diversity of colour, class and creed, held together by an experience of costly change applied in practical situations. This gave their contributions great power and effectiveness.

A report is available on request.

Jeroen Gunning, Peter Riddell, Campbell Leggat

CARING FOR REFUGEES IN TIRANA, ALBANIA

Last month an email reached me from Shefqet Meko, radio journalist. He had found himself passing the cheese factory where the Kaloshis work, he told me. He had stopped, and recorded an interview with the Kaloshis, who are housing refugees. 'When I asked, "Any difficulties with the refugees?" Vaselika said, "God told us to help these people."'

Astrit Kaloshi, who was at Caux in 1996, said, 'We were told to do this. It was guidance from God. We are giving them cheese, milk and butter. I have won 35 new friends and I love them all. I just thank God, who saved my life in the 1997 chaos, when a bullet entered my car door.' Shefqet had received good comments after the broadcast.

Dick Channer

BUILDING TRUST BETWEEN EAST AND WEST

In the course of 17 days in Moscow and St Petersburg in April we had many conversations about the Balkans. The events there have stirred up a lot of anti-Western emotions. We felt ourselves privileged to be in Russia at this time and to be able to live into the thinking of our friends. It is clearly a moment to build trust and communication between East and West. It was a wonderful visit, and we had a sense of God's presence with us throughout.

About 12 Russians will come to the 'Agenda for Reconciliation' session in Caux. This may include one or two Duma Deputies.

Leif Hovelsen and Philip Boobbyer

PROMISE OF THE VELD IN KHERSON, UKRAINE

Early this year a Russian-language showing of *Promise of the Veld* was organised by one of the Caux interpreters, Vlad Devakov, a young English teacher at Kherson's Christian College, for his Baptist Church, a community of 600 people. Many appreciated the ideas of the film, one student taking it as his theme for a sermon.

Bill and Rosemary Carey

'DAY OF ACKNOWLEDGMENT' IN OREGON

Nearly 800 Oregonians converged on the State House of Representatives on April 22 for a Day of Acknowledgment. 150 years ago this year legislation was passed excluding blacks from Oregon. The legislation was later repealed but an attitude of exclusion was nurtured whose ramifications persist.

The Day of Acknowledgment recognized the history and those who over the years had worked to build different relationships. The Governor, the Speaker of the House, the President of the Senate, the Chief Justice and other state leaders participated. *The Oregonian*, in one of three front page articles on the subject in the last weeks, wrote, 'The ceremony rung with cheers and standing ovations as leader after leader talked about a past of injustice and a future of hope.' AP, in a story which was published widely, reported, 'There were no words of anger or blame at the ceremony, when Oregonians of all colours and religions packed a House Chamber.'

The Day was put on by a new coalition, Oregon Uniting, which is working in partnership with Hope in the Cities. It was the occasion for launching a series of multiracial dialogues in the state. The Oregon Secretary of State said afterwards that the event 'may be the best thing that happens in the legislature this year' and a native American spiritual leader called it

'an answer to our prayers'. Several from Oregon Uniting, including legislators, will be at Caux this summer. Read more about the Day on <http://dwp.bigplanet.com/oregonuniting>.

Michael Henderson

'I HOPE YOU WILL RETURN'

The final week of last term's UK Sixth Form Venture finished with teams simultaneously in London and Brighton. In the previous three weeks we had very good visits to Nottingham, Worcester, (with another team in Oxford) and Wiltshire. We have given programmes in 100 sixth forms this school year.

The core of the team has been Allison Kenny, Danielly Assis, Goretti Nguyen and Bhavesh Patel but altogether six people have facilitated, and 11 have shared their stories at different times. It has not always been easy with such a diverse group. Life on the road has its challenges, but we shall all look back on it as a rich experience. And how valuable it has been to work with our hosts in different parts of the country, most of whom have many years of experience with MRA.

Discussions in schools have been stimulating and once again we have received many letters from appreciative teachers. A Worcester teacher wrote: 'Thank you very much for the challenging and stimulating afternoon... The experience was enormously worthwhile, and I hope that you will return next year.'

What of the future? Summer term is not a good time for school visits because of impending exams. But we can approach schools about the autumn term. We shall continue with a theme related to the Clean Slate Campaign. At present I don't know who the team will be. If you know of anyone who may be interested in this unique opportunity to do something worthwhile or simply to step back and think about where their life is heading, do let me know.

.....and

GLOBAL CLUB – THE VIDEO – MARK 2

An amateur video of the recent Global Club at Tirley Garth (see April WB), lasting 50 minutes, is available. Added to this is a session (55 mins) of the UK Sixth Form Venture in a Nottingham school.

If you are interested in some of MRA's present initiatives with young people in the UK this is your chance to get an insight. £5 will cover the cost of the video and postage but I will happily send it free to anyone without a UK bank account.

Howard Grace <hmgrace@aol.com>

CHALLENGE TO FILIPINO YOUTH

Absolute standards of honesty, purity, unselfishness and love help people use their eyes, ears, mind and heart properly so that everyone is able to create new dimensions for effective living.

This was the challenge received by 25 participants in the first Philippine Moral Re-Armament Summer Youth Conference, in Albay Province, on the southern island of Luzon, March 26-29. The conference theme was: 'Effective living in the 21st Century: clean life,

clean nation, clean world'.

Ching Honrado, a rural bank manager, coordinated the conference. She had participated in an Asia-Pacific Youth Conference and helped organize an MRA gathering in the Philippines last year. 'I want my fellow Albayanos to find the fulfilment I have experienced through MRA,' she said.

James Calisin, Vice-Governor of the Province, stressed in his keynote address that there is always a need for introspection, since no one can give what he does not have. Dr Met Palaypay, pioneer in Zero Waste Management, told how his involvement in MRA had inspired him to embark on enlightening Filipinos about responsibility for their environment.

A post conference meeting was held in the province on April 10, attended by two mayors and community and youth leaders. Further meetings are planned. Meanwhile, young people in Manila have launched a monthly gathering. The first was held on May 8.

Ed Espiritu, Dante Calma

ISN'T IT TIME TO CHANGE?

News in the *World Bulletin* shows that MRA has a vital role in creating a new society. Is it playing the full role that it is meant to? If not, what prevents it? Are we excluding many fellow-fighters because we will not recognise the need for change in ourselves? Must it be dark at the foot of the lighthouse?

How can we tolerate the ambiguity, expediency and contradiction whereby people define the word MRA to suit the circumstances of the moment? In one country the advancement of the Christian religion, in another a strictly secular purpose, to the United Nations something else.

There is a solution. Every national MRA organisation draws strength from the faith and culture of its region. A difference in emphasis is acceptable. But, globally, MRA is multi-faith and multi-cultural. This may be its biggest contribution.

National bodies can pursue and amend their specific aims and names – but should be affiliated to 'global MRA'. This could be a loose federation, little changed from present methods of operation. But it must define the principles which unite us all.

The Cyprus Statement broadly defines them. I would add that MRA encourages everyone to develop their understanding and application of their own faith and culture. This indeed is one of the responsibilities of the national bodies. Otherwise one could drift into a rootless theism or new-ageism.

Manifestly, the name MRA cannot be used for the global body and programme, since it is already defined, albeit contradictorily, in many constitutions. There must be a new name, which can be honestly and unequivocally defined, to correspond with what the work now is. This leaves national bodies to make any changes or none in their constitutions but gives a straight answer to the simple (global) question "What is MRA?".

Then, with an unnecessary problem out of the way, let us get on with renewed energy with the real job.

Neville Cooper

YEAR 2000 CONSULTATION

A FRESH LOOK AT THE WORLD AND MRA'S PRIORITIES FROM A NON-WESTERN PERSPECTIVE

Subtitle: A chance for North Americans, West Europeans, Australians and New Zealanders to listen to people from Africa, Asia, Latin America, Eastern and Central Europe, and vice versa, and take on the world together.

This Consultation will offer an opportunity to look at the world, and our work, from a different angle – in the belief that what we learn could make MRA more universal and more effective in the new millennium.

Venue and participation: The Consultation will take place in the beautiful setting of Asia Plateau in India, 4-11 February 2000. The theme has the full support of the Indian team. They have asked us to agree on the attendees well in advance, so that participants have time to put in adequate thought, and gather the views of others in their region.

Planning: At the South Africa Consultation, those of us named below volunteered to begin to prepare the 2000 Consultation. We will work in cooperation with the International Council. The agenda will be finalised by the end of Caux. We would welcome suggestions on any aspect of the Consultation.

Thought could also be given in advance to the theme for the Consultation in 2001. One suggestion made in South Africa was: 'New ways of expressing and living eternal truths'. But events in the next 12 months may lead us to something different.

Bhanu Kale and Amit Mukherjee (India), S'fiso M'simang (South Africa), Marta Dabrowska (Poland), Claire Leggat (UK), Ernesto Veras (Brazil), Lotty Wolvekamp (Holland), as well as Ren-Jou Liu (Taiwan) and Anne-Marie Tate (France) from the International Coordination Group.

MANUAL FOR OFFICIAL MRA BODIES

For the past 10 months, Philippe Lasserre, Chris Mayor and Richard Weeks, together with us in the ICG, have worked on a manual of guidelines for those wishing to set up new MRA legal bodies. The manual gives advice on selecting the type of body (association, charity etc). It covers the wording of the purposes and some ground-rules of governance. It is available from Philippe Lasserre in Paris until June 24, and then after July 1 from the IC secretariat. A copy will be sent to all MRA bodies and we would urge all trustees to read it with their own situations in mind, and to pass it on to potential new ones.

James Hore-Ruthven, on behalf of the ICG

LATIN-AMERICAN STYLE

Latin America will be well represented in Caux this summer. For the month of July, there will be about 25 people, aged 18-30, involved in the musical and

life skill programme, 'Gente que Avanza'. Between them they represent nearly all of Latin America.

They come from ordinary backgrounds, and are now hard at work trying to find the money necessary for the trip – one fare costing approximately US\$1,300.

GqA was born out of MRA and Sing-Out, and we are thrilled that they will be with us. We would value ideas for their visit, and would welcome Spanish speakers who could help. Please let us know.

In God's wonderful, unexpected tapestry, South Africa is playing a key element in this adventure. Francois Duigan, son of Helen and Anthony, and nephew of Pieter Horn, has worked with GqA for nearly two years. Several South Africans plan to be in Caux to receive and care for this group.

Helen & Anthony Duigan, Pieter Horn, Gunnar Söderlund, Lotty Wolvekamp, Christoph & Marianne Spreng

ASIA-PACIFIC YOUTH CONFERENCE

The 9th APYC will be held in Tainan, Taiwan, from July 24-29. Its theme will be 'The dynamic of renewing society'. For more information, contact Miss Dinger Chen: Tel: +886 6 239 3447; Fax: +886 6 239 3795 or E-mail: mratw01@ms1.hinet.net

CLEANING THE SLATE

One particular corner of my slate consists of the 'Resentment Chart'.

So easily it has been second nature to chalk up the resentment score on my slate, and as time went by I was even unaware how messy the slate looked.

A while ago I had a phone call with a friend. As I hung up I had a feeling that there had been dismissal of 'my good ideas'. And here was the decision: was I going to chalk up yet one more thing to be resentful about? Quite clearly it came to me to cease messing up my slate in this way – a liberating experience.

Ten days later I got another chance to practise the same: not even to reach for the chalk for 'another one' on the resentment score.

Liberation again – and gratitude! *Anon.*

DIALOGUE IN MALTA

Over the years many people who know MRA have worked for this region to reflect God's colourful tapestry of cultures and religions in harmony instead of its being associated with conflicts and wars. In order to strengthen this development we are planning a dialogue in Malta, November 5-10 this year. We hope for the participation of people from the Mediterranean region as well as Maltese. It will start with three days of reflection and discussions at a retreat/conference centre. Then there will be three days of outreach, when we will meet with people from many sectors of Maltese society.

The idea came when Mona Marzouk and Josephine Austad visited Lebanon two years ago, and was strengthened by Mona's visit to Malta in November last year. Charles and Kathy Aquilina, with their son

Charles Albert, plan to come to Malta for six months from September in connection with this.

Themes for the dialogue will include, 'What can we glimpse of a God-given agenda for the three Abrahamic faith-traditions present here?' and 'How do we overcome prejudice, whether born out of ignorance or whether shaped by the conflicts of history and nursed by selective memories?' The tragedy of Kosovo gives urgency to this search.

*Josephine and Bjørn Ole Austad, Mona Marzouk
Charles and Kathy Aquilina*

ASIA PLATEAU CAMP

May I invite any who would like to come to a Vipassana meditation camp at Asia Plateau July 3-14, 1999. Those interested should contact me at <lnazareth@hotmail.com> and I will send them an application form. They would need to arrive at Asia Plateau by July 2. Details about Vipassana meditation may be found at www.dharma.org.

Leslie Nazareth

FOR A CHANGE JUNE/JULY ISSUE

Healing history in Central Europe features through stories from Germany, Poland, the Czech Republic and Bosnia, with the editorial and a book review linked to the same subject. The lead story and a guest column by John Boccock deal with ethical food production. South Africa and aspects of its evolution are observed by Mary Lean, a participant at the recent global consultation, and there is an account of what the police in Utrecht, Holland, are doing to improve relations with ethnic minority groups.

Tom Jones

MRA BOARDS' REPRESENTATIVES TO MEET

On August 15, 1999, afternoon and evening, there will be a meeting, in Caux, of representatives of MRA Boards around the world.

We will review our various associations and/or trusts; examine changes that have taken place in our legal bodies during the past year; look at the 'guidelines for

new MRA legal bodies'; think through the implications for our legal bodies of the decisions taken at the Consultation in South Africa; and consider the issue of finances for new full-time workers.

No formal letter of invitation will be sent. Ideally, we hope for two representatives per legal body! May we ask those who carry responsibility in legal bodies to let Philippe Lasserre (c/o MRA France or at e-mail: PHLasserre@compuserve.com) know who will represent your association. Please feel free to suggest points you want to see on the agenda.

Philippe Lasserre

REMINDER FROM YOUR CAUX TRAVEL TEAM

As you all know, the 'Swiss Transfer Tickets' request is part of the Caux application form. Stocks of these tickets are available from the Caux Conference Secretariat, and from the London, Ottawa and Washington offices. So you can apply to one of these four places when filling out the Application Form. We have also set up a special procedure when the ticket(s) cannot be sent by mail. If you have further questions on this, or your travel within Europe, please ask Charles Danguy, e-mail: DroYutz@AOL.com – Fax: +33.3.82.56.27.95 This will release Mrs Schertenleib for other tasks.

MRA LONDON CENTRE

The move to our new London centre has been delayed, due to delays in its refurbishment. However, the work is now back on track, and we plan to move in the first week of August. The new centre's address is 24 Greencoat Place, London SW1P 1RD.

Geoffrey Craig

FACTS ON FAXES, PHONES AND ADDRESSES

Kenya: Ashwin Patel's e-mail address is: aswin@form-net.com

Zimbabwe: the Tel/Fax number at Coolmoreen Farm is: +263 - 54 - 23936.

India: Bhanu Kale's new direct e-mail address is: bgkale@pn2.vsnl.net.in

Calendar of Events

MAY '99	<u>Dares Salaam Tanzania</u>	All Africa consultation/conference	May	12 - 17
MAY '99	<u>Odawara Japan</u>	22nd annual conference: 'Working as a World Family for a better 21 st Century'	May	22 - 23
JUN '99	<u>Novosibirsk Russia</u>	'Foundations for Freedom' Visiting Course	Jun	1 - 10
JUL '99	<u>Caux Switzerland</u>	Summer conference: 'Cleaning the slate, the promise of a new start'	Jul	10 - Aug 22
JUL '99	<u>Tainan Taiwan</u>	9 th Asia-Pacific Youth Conference (APYC)	Jul	24 - 29
NOV '99	<u>Schengen Luxembourg</u>	One-day seminar 'Où allons-nous en Europe?' – organised by families and local leadership of the east of France	Nov	6
DEC '99	<u>Collaroy Sydney Australia</u>	A conference to mark the new century	Dec	3 - 7

The deadline for the next Bulletin is Tuesday, June 15th, 1999

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