



# MRA INFORMATION SERVICE

VOL. 11 NO. 267

FOUR HAYS MEWS, BERKELEY SQUARE, LONDON, W.1

SATURDAY, 12 MAY, 1962

BRAZIL: 'THE ONLY REVOLUTION  
THAT INTERESTS US WORKERS'  
'CONCRETE CHRISTIANITY'  
BY THE BISHOP OF BORGA, FINLAND  
'MY MOST IMPOSSIBLE PARTY' BY ANTONY QUAIN

## Capacity audiences for 'Music at Midnight'

'MUSIC AT MIDNIGHT' has played to capacity audiences every time up to the moment of going to press, with the 'House Full' notice up each night.

The first night was a brilliant occasion. 'Moral Re-Armament's claim to appeal to a wide cross-section of society is no idle boast,' commented the *Glasgow Herald*, naming personalities from industry, sport and both Houses of Parliament who were present. 'Parliamentary representation seemed apter than usual on this occasion,' the paper added. 'The play is about the dilemma facing the Prime Minister of a western country, when a revolt breaks out in an Iron Curtain country, which he has encouraged and which he is powerless to support without causing a nuclear war.'

The distinguished audience at the Westminster Theatre was moved to tears, laughter and living silence, as highlights of emotion, humour and excitement followed each other. They responded swiftly to the sparkling dialogue and to the mature acting of the cast.

'The Chief Minister,' commented *The Times*, 'becomes a very human person in Mr. Wooland's hands.' Miss Nora Swinburne, as his wife, brings depth and gaiety to another key part, while John Forrest plays their squatting son with humour and understanding, and Philip Bond makes a rebel of immense power and range. Robert Perceval as Southstream, the newspaper proprietor, and Walter Horsbrugh, as the Ambassador, provoke much laughter, while Sheila Shand Gibbs,

Edward Waddy and Langton Jones make the Iron Curtain scenes unforgettably moving.

'The person most responsible for inducing the Chief Minister to try out a new, unselfish policy is not his wife,' continued *The Times* reviewer, 'but his son, a rebel, who in turn had come under the influence of a freedom fighter from an occupied country. The arrival of the one in the free world fires the other, and by this means a new impulse is in the end transmitted to the latter's father. Thus the play fairly exploits a valid dramatic situation to make its point.'

'There is no mention of Moral Re-Armament as such,' says *The Times*. 'The kind of thing that Moral Re-Armament wishes to see happen in the world happens in this play.'

The crowds flocking to *Music at Midnight* show that thousands want these things to happen. They are also a positive reaction against the dirt, atheism and materialism of so many London productions—and against those of the theatre critics who sustain these productions and their philosophy week after week. 'This is that rare thing—a play to which I can take my family,' said a London Mayor. 'The greatest play I have ever seen,' commented an Air Chief Marshal. 'This is the first time I have been moved to tears in the first scene and kept being moved right through,' said the head of a theatre agency. The London editor of several provincial newspapers called it 'a first-rate play with a first-rate cast.'

## Chief Luthuli: 'You are soldiers in a great army'

CHIEF ALBERT LUTHULI, last year's Nobel Peace Prize winner, last week spent a day conferring with an international Moral Re-Armament force, led by Ruhr miners, who had gone to see him near Durban at his invitation.

'I have reports of your work throughout South Africa,' Chief Luthuli told them. 'You are sowing a good seed.

It will germinate. It is hypocrisy to expect good in the world if it is not in you. I am troubled at the growing tendency to go beyond hating evil to hatred of the white man. Your visit, projecting these moral principles, will be beneficial not only to our movement but to the African peoples.'

Responding to a special song written and sung for

him by the Colwell brothers, the American television stars, he said, 'This is a great challenge—can Africa be the Answer-continent? It reminds me of what I have always hoped for. You are soldiers in a great army. I will not forget you.' Following lunch, the Chief brought scores of people to attend a packed-out performance of the German miners' film, *Hope*, in the Taj Mahal Cinema. In the audience were European, Indian and African leaders from the area.

Two sons of Albert Luthuli are students at Marianhill, a pioneer Catholic college, where sons and daughters of leading Africans are trained. The college opened its doors to welcome the MRA force, and in the crowded assembly hall Father Rector Frei presented the visitors to the students, the teaching staff, the priests and the nuns. Following a showing of *Hope*, revolutionary students stayed eagerly discussing till midnight. 'The students will be talking about this for months to come', said the Father Rector, and asked for the film *The Crowning Experience* to be shown in the college.

A feature of the recent Moral Re-Armament Assembly at Johannesburg was the large number of militant African leaders from Johannesburg and Sharpeville. One of these men, among the first imprisoned during the defiance campaign, had led a contingent in the Sharpeville riot. He electrified the audience when he spoke from the platform, challenging his friends to join him in this new revolution. 'The leader of our organisation did not teach us hate, but I was anti-white and anti-Indian. I organised people, even children, to hate the white man.

'I heard of MRA in prison, but I dodged the challenge. Last night, after seeing the play *The Ladder*, I was absolutely honest with my wife.' Turning to his fellow militants, he said, 'I challenge you to take up this battle. I am not afraid. I am going to go ahead, no matter what anybody says. I am going to take this idea to the world.

'Great powers are threatening to blow one another up with atom bombs. If conferences like this were held all the time, we could live without fear in the world.'

## Brazil: 'The one revolution that interests us workers'

THE PRESSING POVERTY of millions in Latin America leads millions to put their faith in economic aid. America and Brazil have just entered into a \$276,000,000 agreement to develop Brazil's poverty-stricken North-East. America has pledged \$131,000,000 of this sum.

Leading Latin Americans admit that this aid will not be fully effective unless corruption and immorality are cured and a new co-operative effort developed.

Mr. Waldemar Agra, manager of the Portworkers' Co-operative in Recife, key North-Eastern port with a population of 800,000, says that a new factor has come into the situation since the visit of an MRA force last June. A new and sound leadership is developing and fresh channels are being opened up for the efficient use of the money and goods being poured into this hard-hit area.

The effect, he says, has been felt especially in the Portworkers' Co-operative. Honesty has come in, stealing has gone out and prices have gone down. There is a new confidence between the wholesalers, the Co-operative and the members. New members are steadily enrolling. Liquor consumption has dropped so much that the Co-operative can stock its shelves with food, at a price the dockers can pay.

### Dispute solved without a strike

Thanks to this new spirit, a problem of non-payment of overtime money was solved recently without a strike. Agra himself took instant action with the superintendent of the port, asking him, 'Is this payment morally right or not?' The superintendent turned to his legal consultant and asked, 'Is it right?' 'Yes, it is,' was the reply. The superintendent said simply, 'Then we pay.' The

dockers received their overtime money. There was no bitter haggling.

'You see,' said Agra, 'we are learning now to decide issues by not Who, but What is right.'

Men who once hated and fought against each other as well as against management, are working as one to give this uniting idea to the port and to the world. On May Day the Mayor of Recife attended the official launching of a special issue of the portworkers' paper, *Tribuna Portuaria*, which gave all eight pages to news of the world advance of Moral Re-Armament. An editorial challenged the workers to 'live a new dimension—the dynamic of the Holy Spirit'.

### A superior revolution

In other May Day demonstrations throughout Brazil, at Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo, Campinas and Santos, labour leaders proclaimed Moral Re-Armament as the ideology that will bring social justice and unity to the world. Agra himself, who was once a lecturer in the Communist school for the sugar workers of North-East Brazil, told a gathering in Sao Paulo, 'This is the one revolution that interests us workers. Here we find the only idea creating unity between men of every race, class and social background.'

At a second workers' mass rally in Sao Paulo, metal-worker Sebastiao Rivot twice gained the microphone to urge the men to 'get behind this ideology of the future.'

In Campinas, Dario de Moraes, Vice-President of the railway workers of the Mogiano line, called on the assembled trade unionists to create a superior revolution, free from hate, in which every class can play its part.

# CONCRETE CHRISTIANITY

By

THE RT. REV. KARL-ERIC FORSELL, BISHOP OF BORGA, FINLAND

(From an article in 'Hufvudstadsbladet')

IT HAPPENED AT A DINNER given by the newly installed Bishop of Kuopio for the President of Finland and other notabilities, after the service of consecration in the Cathedral. One of the foreign guests was late. Everyone else was already seated when he, looking embarrassed and rather nervous, at last arrived to take his place. How could such a thing happen?

It turned out that the distinguished guest had been so absorbed in and so fascinated by a book, that he had completely forgotten the passage of time. He had been reading the biography of one of the most remarkable personalities of our age, Frank Buchman, leader of the movement now known all over the world as Moral Re-Armament. Surely this episode says a great deal for Peter Howard's book!

Reading this biography of Buchman myself, I noted one particular feature, which must have been to a high degree characteristic of Frank Buchman's personality and which has in many ways come to typify the movement he created. It is what I call concrete Christianity.

## 'I was the one to begin'

The starting point, the decisive turn in Frank Buchman's life, was a very concrete experience of the Cross of Christ. Buchman was right in the middle of a crisis—a very concrete crisis—in his spiritual life, when he came one Sunday evening to attend a service in a little church at Keswick. A woman was preaching. Buchman says himself: 'She unravelled the Cross for me. A doctrine which I knew as a boy, which my Church believed, which I had always taught, that day became a reality for me.'

Buchman realised what was wrong in his life, asked forgiveness, and tried to restore as far as he could. Typical of the centrality of the Cross of Christ from now on in his life, was that he began each letter to people whom he had wronged by quoting the famous lines: 'When I survey the wondrous Cross, on which the Prince of Glory died'. That is how it started. More than fifty years later, when Buchman spoke about the experience of Keswick, he said, 'In Keswick I learned that I was as wrong as anybody else. I was most in need of change. I was the one to begin.'

## 'Silent in seven languages'

Frank Buchman did not like general statements. He knew that people's misfortunes and difficulties were due to wholly concrete circumstances. And as time passed, he developed an amazing ability to find the right diagnosis

and to recommend the right cure. Peter Howard writes: 'Buchman's dealing with people was down-to-earth and direct. It is true that he often found that the real problem in a person's life is something much more simple than he is willing to admit. His surgical skill with the spirit of men was a delicate and intricate art that continued through the lifetime of those who became his friends.'

Buchman's ability to listen in the right way to other people (how many of us actually know that secret?) certainly played a great part in his art of caring for souls. Once he said, 'You must learn to be silent in seven languages. People talk too much. That is not the way to win people. Often the best thing is not to say anything.' Yes, but when he had listened long and sensitively enough, he could also say the right words.

Concrete also was Buchman's advice regarding the care of the personal life of devotion. If we want to be instruments for the will of God, then we must put aside enough time to listen for it. Buchman was convinced of the importance of prayer—but for him prayer was even more a matter of listening than of uttering words. I am convinced that one result of Buchman's listening (Peter Howard tells how he woke up, almost every morning of his life, at four o'clock to have his 'quiet time') was that his care for other people became so concrete.

## Reaching the millions

He expressed this himself very clearly in these words: 'If you want to be used to change other men, it means a care for them so deep and so sensitive that when the other fellow has a hole in his shoe, your own foot feels the cold.' Buchman also looked very realistically at modern techniques as an aid to building the Kingdom of God. He 'wrestled unendingly with heart and mind to find new ways of putting old truths, so they could reach modern millions. The use of the theatre, the screen and television struck him as of importance without limit in changing history.'

As Frank Buchman, towards the end of his life, stood on the rolling hillside in Pennsylvania beside the family grave, where he now rests, he said: 'I have been wonderfully led.' One might recall a word from the Old Testament which in the Bible translation of Charles XII runs: 'The Lord guides his Saints wondrously.' And the secret—Frank Buchman's secret and the secret in the lives of all who have become real tools for God—is the unconditional faith in that Jesus Christ, Who died for us, and therefore has power to forgive sins and Who, because He is the Resurrected, can change our life.

## 'My Most Impossible Party'

The following article is by Antony Quain.

It appeared in his column 'Stoep Talk' on 24 April in the Johannesburg Star, largest daily paper in South Africa.

IF YOU WERE ASKED to throw the most impossible party—impossible because it could never happen in South Africa—whom would you invite? Its success would depend on each guest accepting each other as a social equal within the limits of the law.

This would be my short list of 'unthinkable' guests: An Afrikaans judge of the Supreme Court, the elected African spokesman of some 600,000 Africans who live round Johannesburg, an eminent Coloured leader in the Transvaal, a leading State prosecutor in the treason trial, some leaders of the African National Congress and the Pan African Congress, a cross-section of the most rugged 'revolutionaries'—members of the executive council of the A.N.C. women's league—eminent White leaders of Johannesburg commerce and industry, Basutoland chiefs.

And while we are letting our imagination run wild we might as well include a certain African leader from a Johannesburg township who, embittered after a term of prison, had the declared ambition of being able to find himself in Eloff Street with an opportunity of killing any White person he could lay hands on.

His expressed idea was that 'the best White man is the dead one.'

### Strange neighbours

I would also invite Leslie Petersen, the militant Coloured leader from Cape Town, notorious for his extreme antipathy to every 'privileged' White man. I would seat him and his pretty wife, Olive, next to the Treason Trial prosecutor who had prosecuted their friends.

To ensure the roaring success of this impossible party I would include

several die-hard nationalists to whom you would be a 'kaffirboetie'<sup>1</sup> if you shook an African by the hand, and one or two of the more hot-headed members of the Jeugbond<sup>2</sup>—not forgetting, of course, those unobtrusive security men from Marshall Square.

To make the party as improbable as possible, it would go on for four days, with the guests having their meals together—400 at a time—served by Europeans off spotless linen in beautiful surroundings, everyone oblivious to the colour of the skin of his neighbour.

### Danger ahead

Impossible? No. I attended the tail-end of this four-day 'party' yesterday. I was uninvited, and I went there out of sheer curiosity.

I came away vastly impressed. Who could fail to be?

For lack of space let me quote just Mr. Petersen. He will return to Cape Town today in the same predicament as St. Paul—to be branded by his friends as a traitor (a 'sell-out' was the term he used to me).

And I would not like to be in the shoes of my friend, the potential killer from the Johannesburg township, when he publicly renounces—which he will do—his gospel of hate of the White man.

### Uneasy conscience

The 'party', by the way, was the Moral Re-Armament Assembly at Witkoppen. As an uninvited, un-informed casual onlooker, my conviction is that Communism in Africa has in this movement a tough customer to deal with.

But I wonder what is the root cause of the antipathy towards MRA apart from Communist-inspired hostility.

Could it be the lash-back of a stung conscience among people?

## NEWS IN BRIEF

**Pretoria, South Africa**—An audience of all races sat in stunned silence as the curtain went down on the première of Peter Howard's play, *The Ladder*, on 4 May. 'It is the greatest play I have ever seen,' said General Klopper, Commander-in-Chief of the South African forces after the war. The power of the presentation was such that men for whom such a cast would have seemed impossible in South Africa declared 'We were never even aware that this was an inter-racial play or an inter-racial audience—it lifted us on to a new level of thinking'. Immediate requests came for the play to be presented in strategic cities throughout South Africa. The Father Rector of a large Catholic institution said, 'You are the spark to dynamite the world and bring it back to God'.

**Tumble, Carmarthen**—*The Crowning Experience* had three days of commercial showings in this anthracite coal-mining centre, on the initiative of the Miners' Welfare Committee. The Dean of Lampeter and a group of Baptist, Congregational, Methodist and Presbyterian ministers, together with a Catholic priest, wrote in the press urging readers to see 'this outstanding film'. They said, 'We have seen it; it gives the answer the world needs today. It is inspired; it shows how God's spirit brings a solution to problems and new life to people'.

**Chittagong, East Pakistan**—A packed and enthusiastic house greeted the first performance of *The Tiger* in Bengali on 5 May. Bengali is the ninth language in which *The Tiger* has been produced. Agence France Presse, in a recent despatch, reported, 'This sensational drama, which comes to East Pakistan when the administration is facing serious student trouble, is having a tremendous success.' *The Tiger* was heard by radio listeners from Karachi to Calcutta and throughout East Pakistan in a broadcast from Dacca.

<sup>1</sup> A friend of the Africans.

<sup>2</sup> The Afrikaner Youth League.