



CURE FOR VANDALISM

THE CYNICS ARE RETREATING

INTERVIEW WITH QUEBEC CABINET MINISTER

MALTA SEES 'THROUGH THE GARDEN WALL'

MRA

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BRITAIN — THE HINGE OF HISTORY?

By PETER HOWARD*

I BELIEVE we are at a hinge of history, and on this country the future could swing.

The world looks on us as a nation of blockheads, not eggheads. They say, 'You can tell an Englishman anywhere, but you cannot tell him much! Welsh, Scots, Irish may agree. But in truth, with the majesty of our mongrel ancestry, we are a nation of prophets, warriors, poets. Our vision in the past built our greatness. Unless we find vision today, we may perish.

A Briton saw an apple fall from a tree, and his theory launched an historic leap ahead in science and experimental mathematics.

A Briton saw a kettle boiling, and created an age of steam that revolutionised society.

A Briton saw mould in a jar, and led man to penicillin. Our people first split the atom, invented jet engines, pioneered trade unionism from Tolpuddle, ended slavery, ended the degradation of child labour, educated, emancipated and finally liberated millions of our fellow men in Asia, Africa and elsewhere.

Age of adventure

This age of adventure was built for men like us. But we refuse to make it our own. What is the aim of Britain today, the goal, the theme of our nationhood and life? Russia has an aim. China has a goal. Despite their differences both are out to Communize every country. America, with bombs in one hand and dollars in another, strives to spread her vision of freedom across the earth. The Africans plan for a black continent and the end of white domination in the South. Many Latin American republics blaze to don beards like Castro, snatch wealth from the rich and scatter it among men of hunger and of hate. Germany longs to unite her land again. France

dreams of old glory and new influence on other continents. Shall it be said of Britain now that the span of our purpose is, 'We never had it so good, and we mean to go on having it better'?

Man cannot live by bread alone. But he needs bread. The struggle for food, work, homes, education, material environment becomes more urgent than ever in this amazing age. It must be fought and won. But heaven help us if we are so concerned with material things that we multiply welfare and destroy wisdom, that we gain all for the body and lose a nation's soul.

Man or beast

Oliver Cromwell was a man of many errors but he had greatness and gleams of wisdom. He was once talking to a new Parliament. He told them he was out to raise the moral standards of the country because liberty and prosperity depended on a change of character in Britain. He said: 'Make it a shame to see men bold in sin. And God will bless you. The soul and spirit of men are the real men. The mind is the man. If that be kept pure, a man signifies somewhat. If not, I would fain see what difference there is between him and a beast.'

We are soon to have an election. An appeal only to the materialism of our country is a denial of the dignity and greatness of the common man. I hope one great party at the coming election will challenge us to revolution as well as riches, to sacrifice as well as self-interest, to purpose as well as to prosperity.

We should strengthen and sustain and return to the next Parliament men of whatever party who take seriously that mighty purpose, 'Thy Will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.' It is a phrase that as a mere pious personal drone means nothing. As a passionate commitment, it touches every social, political, economic issue, every relationship, every moment of every life of every man, woman and child on earth. It is an idea far more

* From an address at an Easter Assembly in London, 'History's Highway for Britain' was the Assembly's theme.

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On the trail of a cure for vandalism

NO British newspaper has yet discovered a cure for the virus of teenage vandalism, though many have analysed this mysterious 'Scourge of the vandals' as the *Yorkshire Post* called it in a recent editorial.

Vandalism—the wrecking of public and private property by youthful gangs, even children—costs this country over £3 million a year, according to a *Spectator* article on 3 April. Ratepayers fork out £1 million of this from their pockets, a report of the Local Government Information Office stated last week.

But on Easter Monday an *Evening Standard* reporter got on the scent of a cure. His story was headlined 'I was a teenage vandal, youth tells MRA conference'.

Philip Cowan, 15, of Sheffield told a London conference:

'The cause of this vandalism in Clacton or elsewhere is boredom. It is possible to banish boredom completely. It is unnecessary if you have got something to work for.

'My something is a united, peaceful, morally re-armed world. I have to fight every minute of every day of every year for the rest of my life for that. I haven't got a chance to be bored.

'I try to fight for each person and meet his own particular problem. It could be family trouble or sex or violence or boredom. I try to show each of them what

fun it is to be part of this world-wide movement.

'There are ten thousand youth in India, two thousand in America coming for training in moral re-armament this year. We try to bring each one into a relationship with God, or if he is an atheist you can call it his conscience.

'I am enjoying it immensely, it's smart, it's terrific. I am never bored. This is the answer to vandalism. It is also the answer to hunger, political evil, suicide rate, illegitimacy and materialism.'

The Times on 31 March reported:

'The weekend incidents at Clacton were the subject of a resolution passed unanimously at the Moral Re-Armament Easter Assembly in London yesterday. Mr. Anthony Craig, a former Gordonstoun head boy and the assembly chairman, said: "Instead of wrecking towns we have to rebuild the world. This is a task young people respond to wholeheartedly."

'The resolution said: "The men in the British Broadcasting Corporation who feed violence, lust, aimlessness and cynicism into millions of homes nightly, must squarely consider their responsibility."'

The resolution added, 'We call on the BBC to speak out with a mighty national aim . . . and set a new pattern of character and conduct which all humanity will want.'

The cynics are retreating

A COLUMN threads through Madras. It enters the Head Offices of the State Railways. It is young men returning money they have stolen. 'We are school students against corruption' is their slogan. A bonfire on a college campus. Filthy books incinerated. 'We decided to burn all such literature in our hostels when the eight o'clock siren went off' shouts one student.

'What is this magic MRA has performed in Madras?' commented Sri Rajagopalachari, first Indian Governor General of India. After hearing 50 young men and women speak to a mass rally in his city, he said, 'Provided these students hold to the decisions they have made, no government can stand in the way of India becoming great.'

The Times recently expressed concern for the students of India. It blamed the political apathy and cynicism on the example set by men in public life. A professor was quoted: 'The trouble is there has been no revolution since the British left.'

Events in Madras are part of a new revolution led by Rajmohan Gandhi, grandson of the Mahatma. These Madras schoolboys will join thousands that he will train this summer.

Seventy-eight million Indians ride trains annually without paying. These sixty-three Madras teenagers decided they could do something about it. They delivered a letter of apology to the Head of the Railways along

with the money they owed. 'A saga of sacrifice,' said *The Sunday Standard*, adding, 'How much ice cream and how many cinema visits have to go by the board there is no calculating.'

'The cynic who said that man cannot be reformed by public oration is mistaken,' *The Sunday Standard* wrote. 'Youth never does things by halves. The schoolboys concerned are certain that they have set up an example for the whole nation.'

In their letter to the General Manager of the Southern Railway, the students said:

'We, the following students of Madras, sincerely apologise for having travelled ticketless in trains. We wish to make up the loss by returning the money to you today. We assure you that we will not repeat this in the future. This change was brought in us by the urge to fight for our nation.

'We are schoolboys against corruption. The idea of doing this is so that if we return the money for travelling ticketless, all the others, young and old, would stop cheating the government.

'Unless we put an end to these small mistakes, we cannot put an end to unemployment, poverty and corruption in our nation.

'By doing this in India we hope to spread the idea of the Moral Re-Armament throughout the world'.

‘Moral Re-Armament is the right answer to Canada’s conflicts’

At a time when French separatism threatens the unity of Canada, a force of Latin Americans with their play ‘El Condor’ have crossed from coast to coast presenting what the Mayor of Vancouver called ‘A theme for nationhood’. In the French-speaking province of Quebec, 45,000 have seen this play. The following interview was given by the Quebec Minister for Family and Social Welfare, M. Emilien Lafrance, in a T.V. programme.

The Latin American play ‘El Condor’ seems to have had a great success in Quebec. Have you seen it?

I had the opportunity of seeing this play some time ago, and I must admit that I was absolutely overwhelmed by it.

I have since had the privilege of meeting the authors and the cast. Their whole-hearted fight for their beliefs impressed me very much.

I have taken steps to see that the personnel of my ministry, over two thousand officials in different parts of the province, see the play.

The cast of *El Condor* have since travelled over 2,500 miles through Quebec; they have given their message in 23 towns before record crowds who received them with the greatest enthusiasm.

I sincerely believe that this play has opened a new era in the history of South American countries and of my own.

What struck you most in ‘El Condor’?

What struck me most, as a man in public life, is this great truth which it recalled: ‘You cannot live crooked and think straight.’

This is a lesson too many leaders, unfortunately, either do not know or neglect to practise.

Personally, I immediately decided to apply it in my own life and to urge my colleagues to do likewise, for it is not politics that need to change but the private lives of those who make the politics.

On the day that all those who represent the people understand that to put the world right one must first begin by putting oneself right, then and only then will there start the greatest revolution the modern world has ever known.

On the other hand, I may say that the play taught me nothing new about my religion.

But the cast have reminded me, with conviction and brutal frankness, of the great truths which the Papal Encyclicals teach us: that the social disorder which we deplore is basically in the heart and spirit of individuals, and that it is unrealistic to want to remake society and its institutions without also and above all changing men.

What in your opinion is the role of Canada in the world?

We in Canada are the heirs of very rich religious, social and national traditions. I believe it is our duty

to enable other countries of the world to profit from them.

I think that we have an important role to play on the American continent and that we will do it provided that we practise the lessons of this play.

This can only happen when there is a real renewal in our own society; for the real change only starts when we decide to live our faith, not with our lips only, but with our whole lives.

You have spoken of traditions. Where do you get them from and what are they?

We derive these traditions from our forefathers who were men of faith, like Champlain, the founder in 1608 of the first Canadian town, who declared: ‘The saving of one soul is worth more than the conquest of an empire.’

But the characteristic of our people, and our strength, is our large families. These have in three centuries, without immigration, grown from a little group of 60,000 Frenchmen into a people of over six million Canadians who speak French and practise the Catholic faith.

What obstacles prevent your country from fulfilling its destiny?

In my view, the biggest obstacle is the climate of materialism and atheism which is invading our people today. It inevitably brings in its train a whole crop of corruption and immorality, and sows division and hate between the different classes of society.

For the problems we have to face are not basically economic and social, but moral.

And indeed, Moral Re-Armament with its message of faith, peace, brotherhood, purity and social justice, is without doubt the right answer to all our conflicts of race, class and ideologies.

Already, here in Quebec, a whole legion of citizens, trade unionists, students and men in public life, have begun to apply these principles in both their private and public lives. We are already beginning to feel the beneficial results.

The choice we all must face today is not between two systems, Capitalist or Communist. The choice is between being governed, as free men, by God, or becoming slaves under the boot of dictators.

Did you know?

—The Mayor of Phoenix, Arizona, has written to every mayor in the United States about the youth assembly next summer at Mackinac Island, Michigan, telling them of his plans to get 100 Arizona students there.

—‘The Westminster Theatre has installed a system of multi-lingual listening which puts it in the avant garde of international artistic co-operation.’ (*Le Berry Republicain*, French daily paper.)

—The Australian Broadcasting Commission reported the resolution at the MRA Easter Assembly urging the BBC to set a new pattern of character and conduct.

—*The Times Literary Supplement* calls *Britain and the Beast* ‘Straight-from-the-shoulder stuff’.

—‘What colour is God’s skin?’, a speech by Mr. Peter Howard in Atlanta, was the title of a full page carried by *The New York Times* and leading papers across America.

BRITAIN—continued

radical and rapid than anything concocted by Karl Marx or by the foul philosophy of a Hitler or Stalin.

I happen to be a Christian who believes and, so far as in him lies, lives for the greatest revolution of all time whereby the Cross of Christ will transform the modern world—if the men of God match the pace and persistence of the men of anti-God.

What Christians have done to Christ since He hung on the Cross passes human understanding. We have camouflaged Him for centuries by our Crosslessness. The same is true of others who profess faith in God but live as if He was not there.

Not long before he died, I spoke about the future with Frank Buchman. We often talked privately in his last years about what lay ahead. So far his predictions have proved amazingly accurate. But he said to me, ‘We are going to win if we decide to win. We’ll never do it on the cheap.’ He added, ‘It’s the best life in the world. I would choose no other’.

Malta sees ‘Through the Garden Wall’

THE Manoel Theatre, in Valletta, built by a Grand Master of the Knights of Malta in 1731, was a blaze of colour and light as a procession of the island’s luminaries walked down the red carpet stretched from door to stalls. The occasion was the Maltese première last Saturday of Peter Howard’s comedy *Through the Garden Wall*.

The George Cross island is tense with controversy over the proposed new constitution, but representatives of every point of view were in the audience. The première was sold out. Rounds of applause several times stopped the show.

The Archbishop broke precedent by giving permission for his clergy to attend the performances. This was announced in the press including the socialist papers. A half page picture of the cast appeared in *Il-Helsien*, the organ of Dom Mintoff, the Labour leader.

Through the Garden Wall was

invited to Malta, with the official backing of the cultural department of the Italian Foreign Office, by the Italian Consul General. It is being performed by one of the five ‘prima categoria’ companies of Italy. The cast are well known to the Maltese from their appearances on Italian T.V., which is easily seen on the island.

On the eve of the première the *Times of Malta* carried a letter from the Director of the Manoel Theatre in which he said:

‘The theatre can make for better understanding and eventually promote goodwill and peace among peoples of different views, social standings, creeds, colours and nationalities. If you who read this are tempted to prove me wrong, go to the presentation of *Through the Garden Wall*. . . Just try, brother, to see through the garden wall and you will like as not agree with the under-signed.’

10,000 new homes through curing corruption

LAST month the Governor of Sao Paulo, Brazil’s largest industrial state, set up a working group to eradicate the ‘favelas,’ the slum dwellings.

Present were MRA trained leaders of the Rio and Sao Paulo favelas whose initiative led to the Governor’s action.

The Secretary of the Confederation of Favela Workers of Rio was quoted in *O Globo*, asking the Governor to ‘adopt similar methods to those applied in Rio which have been oriented by the basic principles of MRA’.

Euclides da Silva, elected representative of 60,000 Rio slum-dwellers, describes how applying MRA resulted in building thousands of homes for the poor of Rio. ‘We waited 30 years for those new houses,’ he says, but ‘corruption in men like me prevented it happening.’

‘I obtained electric power from the city for 4 cruzeiros per kilowatt but sold it to families I was responsible for at 11 cruzeiros a kilowatt. Now these families are getting electric power at the fair rate.’

He was interested in MRA, he says, because it was tackling social problems by dealing with the corruption of people involved. ‘As a result we are now building ten thousand new houses for people who live in the shanty towns of Rio and we are marching forward to solve the problem for Sao Paulo.’

‘Topped Government’

Dame Flora MacLeod at an early age toppled the British Government! Read the story in *Dame Flora MacLeod of MacLeod* by Anne Wolrige Gordon in the April-June number (33) of *New World News*.