

MRA Information Service

15,000 in Hollywood Bowl US President, Vice-President wish cast well on Asian tour



4,300 see *Sing-Out '65* in the Washington Hilton Hotel photo: Fleming

Supervisor Kenneth Hahn, who was lacerated by a Molotov cocktail in his Watts area of Los Angeles during the riots six weeks ago, led a 300-strong MRA student force into the devastated district this week. This was part of an all-out bid by the Los Angeles Board of Supervisors, the administrative authority for 76 communities, to dispel the hate and fear which still hang over the city. Every facility, including free transport and the free use of the vast Hollywood Bowl, was put behind the MRA force, who have now left for Asia at the invitation of the Prime Ministers of Japan and Korea. The President and Mrs. Johnson and Vice-President Humphrey sent messages wishing success for their Asian tour.

City buses carrying the cast of the musical extravaganza, *Sing-Out '65*, moved in past blocks of rubble-strewn, fire-gutted ruins, reminiscent of Berlin after the war, to give their show to 4,000 Negro teenagers, most of whom had participated in the riots.

At Jordan high school a solid mass of clapping, waving coloured youth

packed the football stands. Led by school cheerleaders, they joined enthusiastically in the songs, 'Freedom isn't Free' and 'Which way America?' Then a poignant moment as the Colwell brothers, co-authors of the show, sang 'What colour is God's skin?', ending with the lines:

'These words to America a man once hurled,
God's last chance to make a world,
The different races are meant to be,
Our strength and glory from sea to sea.'

A negro teacher said, 'Those faces, that spirit! Man, I've never seen anything like it. That is what the country needs.' Said another, 'This gives you hope for tomorrow.' 'You do not realize what you have done here,' said one headmaster. 'This was the opening day of term, the first time they have been together since the riots.' 'This is the answer for Watts', said UPI civil rights desk editor, Al Kuettner, after seeing *Sing-Out '65*.

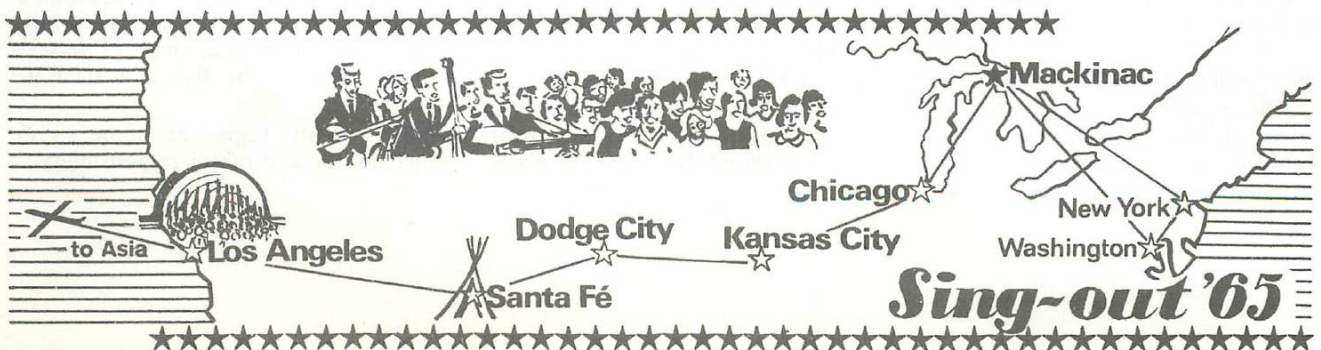
Supervisor Hahn said, 'It took great courage for the cast to come here today. *Sing-Out '65* is the greatest wea-

pon for good ever put into the hands of the American people. The force it represents ought to become US foreign policy.'

Official invitation

The cast had come in a special train, whistle-stopping all across the Midwest to give their songs and convictions. They had come on the official invitation of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors. The Board met for an hour to welcome the youth. Forgetful of a crowded agenda, they listened to the hit tunes from the show. 'We have been injected with something this morning,' said the Board President, Burton Chace, announcing the decision to make available the outdoor amphitheatre, the Hollywood Bowl, free of charge. 'I have never seen such enthusiasm and talent.'

A motion was passed ordering a plaque to be placed at the Bowl honouring Dr Frank Buchman, who from that platform launched MRA in America in 1939 (photo, right).





scene from *Sing-Out '65* photo: Wennberg

15,000 (continued)

And a rollicking new song 'Los Angeles', composed on the train the previous day, was adopted by acclamation as the official County song.

The cast, all of whom were staying in homes, fanned out through the vast metropolitan area, interviewing civic, business, labour and education authorities in preparation for the Hollywood Bowl showing. They gave a preview of their musical on the steps of the Music Centre and were presented with the key of the County. They appeared on television before millions, gave a programme at half-time to the 60,000 watching the University of Southern California vs. Minnesota football game. And went to Watts. As the cast set to work, the comment of one public official was echoed by many others: 'I don't know what happened to me when I heard those kids but I knew I had to do something big for my country.'

So busloads from Watts, and from the Monterey Peninsula, 400 miles to the north, and thousands from high schools and colleges in the area came to the Hollywood Bowl last Sunday. For ten minutes the crowd of 15,000 were on their feet shouting for more, refusing to let the cast close the show at the end of their presentation. Said one senior businessman, 'I have been to the Bowl for thirty years and this is the finest show I have ever seen.' The president of the student body of the University of Southern California ran up to the cast and said, 'We are going to have this on our campus. Give me a date.'

The publicity head of CBC said, 'This is electrifying'. A distinguished university administrator added, 'We will have the show in the Colosseum (built for the 1932 Olympics) and then go through every college in the State.'

The crowd responded to a new tough breed of young American, out to put militancy into the country's ideals.

Following the show the cast left for Asia. They will return to follow up invitations given at the Bowl. At the airport Supervisor Warren Dorn announced that a 16,000 seat sports arena in the curfew area of South Los Angeles had been booked for *Sing-Out '65* on 1 November. 'We are not going the way of violence and protest, we are going the way of this amazing force of youth,' he said.

The Board of Supervisors passed a resolution thanking MRA for what has been done in the County and stating that they would sponsor further presentations in the area. They are also appropriating money to make a film of *Sing-Out '65* to be distributed throughout the whole school system. Supervisor Hahn reported to the Board, 'This crowd will do more good in three weeks in the Watts area than all the aid, investigations, commissions and money that we are getting.'

Uprising

As British papers begin to feature the growth of pacifism in the youth of America, and the songs of protest are repeated on our TV programmes, these young Americans are presenting a different picture. J. Blanton Belk, US Director of MRA, told the thousands in the Bowl, 'We are out to enlist both the militant pacifist minority on our campuses and the non-militant purposeless majority in a revolutionary programme that will unite America and offer the world a positive alternative to violence and war. America's chief problem is not conditions—not colour, class or Communism—but millions of people with nothing great to live for.'

These youth believe that an uprising of all that is finest and best in the country can seize America as swiftly and as passionately as the spirit of anarchy seized the streets of Watts.

from an editorial in the *Nashville Banner, Tennessee*

The most heartening spectacle to come upon the American scene after several years of planned confusion and contempt for authority is the Moral Re-Armament programme for the youth of the country.

Those who have joined the movement represent cleanliness of mind and body versus promiscuity and the need of a bath and a haircut. MRAers are not ashamed to express their belief in God or their love of country. And they seem to get hearty enjoyment out of disciplined living without rolling in the gutter and thumbing their noses at religion and decency.

This new youthful force has been through a strenuous training course at Mackinac Island. They believe the time has come to jerk the microphone from the minority but image-stealing college pacifists and speak up for 'the' America.

'We are interested in building a new society with a backbone of patriotism and character,' they say. 'Follow us,' they chorus, 'and we will turn the world right side up again.'

Those who have followed with admiration the Moral Re-Armament programme cheer too when word comes of the applause given the whistle-stop show *Sing-Out '65*.

But after the performance in Los Angeles MRAers take to chartered planes for the Orient. Instead they should turn back and criss-cross the United States until every city of any size is visited.

With beatnik riff-raff promising nation-wide campus chaos in the name of pacifism as the country goes deeper into war, what a contrast *Sing-Out '65* would make.

St Louis and Nashville even more than Tokyo or Seoul need to hear the voice of clean, young people raised in song for America, expressing the willingness to die if need be for America.

Foreigners for Moral Re-Armament say the rest of the world is looking to the United States.

Then let's get the United States straight first. It won't be, if the national campus stage is left clear for a minority of long-haired, amoral litterbugs who sneer at the flag and steal the show.

If charity begins at home so do patriotism and moral responsibility.



Call for new plays

from a speech given by actress Phyllis Konstam at the Fringe Club during the Edinburgh Festival, September 1965

The artist, although he likes to think of himself as advanced and progressive, is sometimes extraordinarily conservative. He finds it hard to believe that, great as the artist often has been in the past, he is capable of rising to even greater heights in the future. We have not yet seen the new horizons which the great Creator Himself can open up to the artist if he is humble enough to seek His inspiration.

Fine acting

I have been to many plays lately and seen some of the finest acting and most wonderful productions in my life. Production and acting *have* moved into a new dimension, but the plays are often retrogressive, nihilistic, and divisive.

Many of my colleagues in the theatre tell me that art must hold a mirror up to life. But what I have seen recently in the theatre is not a true picture of life. Life is not only cruel, sordid, destructive and hopeless. A mirror, in order to reflect a perfect image, needs to be clean. If it is dirt-covered you see no image at all, and if the mirrors are like those distorted mirrors in fun-fairs then all you can see is a distorted image.

The artist has been getting away with a great big, fat confidence trick. He has sold the public the idea that *because* he is an artist he doesn't have to be responsible. He can do whatever he likes, create whatever he likes and nobody must interfere with him. And he is the only member of society who thinks he can get away with that kind of nonsense. What would happen if a butcher one day decided that he would sell the public contaminated meat, because that was the way he felt about his customers? Supposing a doctor made all kinds of experiments on human beings because he felt he should be free in the sphere of science to try out new ways of doing things? Wouldn't there rightly soon be a public outcry and wouldn't there be immediate action taken to prevent that kind of cruel irresponsibility?

The artist up to now has got away with it, because in a way he has been able to, because his sphere of things up to thirty years ago has been com-

paratively small. When I was a young actress we did plays which were a success or not a success, but they were only seen by a few hundred people a night. But with the coming of mass media, radio, television and the motion picture industry, the entertainment world has moved into an entirely new era. Out of that small box in the living room ideas pour forth which condition the living and thinking of a whole generation.

The artist likes to think of himself as adult and advanced. In fact many of us are children playing with very dangerous toys for our own pleasure and satisfaction, thinking only of expressing ourselves and not of the effect and consequences of what we do. I was talking to a young girl the other day about the theatre. She said to me, 'The dramatist has a great time expressing himself but we, the younger generation, have to pay the price.'

Prejudice

I have the greatest admiration for some of the men of genius writing for the theatre today. But their vision is often clouded by prejudice and is too small. To take a running swipe at everything isn't particularly clever. It is easy to be destructive. I stood on a street corner and watched a demolition squad pulling down an old building, a building that needed to come down. The men walked away and left a pile of rubble in a hole in the ground. It took far more intelligence, sweat and inspiration to be the architect who created the new building that was to take its place.

We need a wave of constructive dramatists who have the courage not only to point out what is wrong, but also to point the way to the new society. The establishment *does* need shaking up from top to bottom. Right-wing writers have neither passion nor commitment. Their plays are often pointless, irrelevant and selfish. But the Left-wing writers, brilliant as they are, with passion and commitment, are also thinking too small. They don't face facts. All the answers don't lie with one class. Bitterness, hatred and division are dangerous precepts to let

loose in an atomic age and can never create that new society.

There are also dramatists who are considered neither to the Left, nor to the Right, but who are out to debunk faith, patriotism and morality. They say they are against hypocrisy. But men of faith are not necessarily hypocrites. Hypocrisy is, of course, wrong. But because hypocrisy is wrong, it does not make depravity right.

Great heights

Can't we find the courageous young dramatists and artists of every kind who love God and don't spit in His face? Who dare to say that hate is curable, that passion can be redirected and that man, who is capable of sinking to great depths, is also capable of rising to great heights? There is a hunger deep in the heart of every man for great living. Let's for heaven's sake, feed that hunger and not gorge it on things that create a sick society.

My husband and I are on the Council of Management of the Westminster Theatre. I want to say to young dramatists: we need the dynamic new plays by playwrights who passionately care about the youth of their generation, many of whom are bored, without aim, purpose or faith, but who long for something great to live for. We need dramatists who don't think of men as black, white, brown or yellow, or as upper class, middle class or lower class, but who care for all men, the boss and the worker, the young and the old, everyone everywhere—dramatists who will carry humanity on their hearts.

Today we artists must have the humility to know we need the help of Almighty God. For without Him, with all the good intentions in the world, man simply will return to cruelty, viciousness, cunning and destruction on a scale yet unknown. But with Him, there are no limits to which the creative artist can inspire, save, unite and redirect humanity. It is to a theatre of that dimension that I and my friends have dedicated our lives. I would like to say to all of you, 'Come and work with us, and let us in these days of crisis create this new theatre together.'

PARIS A drapery factory owner last week told delegates at an assembly in the City Hall of the Paris suburb of Boulogne Dillancourt that through applying MRA, 'We have already eliminated wastage and absenteeism in my factory. Salaries have been raised and orders have increased.'

RIO *O Globo*, Rio's popular daily, and TV Globo, have carried reports of the portworkers' play, *New Weapon*. The play shows how the portworkers transformed the economic situation in the port of Rio. It will be used to back the call by the Minister of Labour for an intensification of the training in MRA of Brazilian students, workers and industrialists.

LUANSHYA Harr Musambacime, Branch Chairman of the National Union of Zambia Students, introducing a showing of *Tomorrow Will Be Too Late*, said, 'Before we become leaders of our people we should be given training in basic moral standards so we learn to serve our country honestly and unselfishly.'

CANBERRA Nearly 1,000 delegates are expected to attend an international conference for MRA here in January 1966. The Conference, which will draw people from all over Asia, will be held in the College of the National University. This was announced last week in *The Australian*. Peter Howard's play, *The Ladder* had three performances in two days in the capital's newly opened Theatre Centre. Students from Catholic and State High Schools attended special performances in school time. The cast have now moved to Melbourne.

COLOMBO Radio Ceylon has given a second half-hour programme on MRA following a broadcast by Rajmohan Gandhi last week. Masahide Shibusawa outlined plans for next month's Odawara Assembly which, he said, would be opened by Prime Minister Sato and 'would demonstrate an idea which will lead the whole continent forward.' The Radio announcer commenting on 'the terrific impact' of 'the dynamic idea of MRA', said, 'Moral Re-Armament is for all mankind. It is a practical ideology that applies to all colours and nations.'

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE Two great grandsons of Wilberforce were in the audience at the Flora Robson Playhouse for the première of *Mr Wilberforce MP*. People came from all over the North-East of England, including mayors or deputy mayors from Whitley Bay, Jarrow, Gateshead, Tynemouth and Darlington. 'This play

is very wonderful', said the Lord Mayor of Newcastle, Alderman Mrs Theresa Russell. 'It brings you back to the necessities of Local Government—sincerity and sanity of purpose.' She was speaking at a reception following the performance hosted by Alderman Sir Nicholas Garrow, Chairman of the Northumberland County Council.

Howard and Brecht

Gabriel Marcel, the French Catholic philosopher, in an article in the weekly, *Les Nouvelles Littéraires*, describes the men of Moral Re-Armament as 'animated by a spirit closely resembling what Pope John XXIII wanted to promote.' He hails Peter Howard as 'one of the most honest and radiant men' he had ever met. 'Here one has no idea of the life-giving enthusiasm he inspired in hundreds of thousands of young people in Asia and the Americas as well as Europe,' he writes. 'The many dramatic works he produced were for him very often the most effective means of reaching and renewing the inner life of the individual. In this sense, his work can be compared with that of Brecht. For both it is a matter of forming a new type of man; the one being Marxist, and the other trained to the dictates of a Christian conscience.'

Reviewing *Through the Garden Wall*, Peter Howard's play now run-

ning in Paris, Marcel writes, 'It is fair to evaluate the play in the light of Peter Howard's standards. His express purpose is to reach the individual and project him into a spiritual dimension hitherto unattainable. To a certain extent, such plays can be likened to a kind of ABC for "moral illiterates". And, alas, they are legion in the modern world. The most important question, I would say almost the only question, therefore, is to know whether this goal has been reached in an appreciable number of cases. The answer is certainly in the affirmative: and I would say, from undeniable evidence, that in the course of last week, people have been coming out of the Théâtre des Arts declaring that they were conscious of having changed.'

Marcel pays tribute to the intelligent directing of Marc Cassot and the fine stage setting by Marillier and comments on the distinctive performances by members of the cast.

Plans and people

Britain has a National Plan. We now need the passion to make it work. That would apply whatever the government.

Parties lose elections. Plans are modified. What is vital is an aim for our people that is big enough, demands everything and remains constant.

Two hundred thousand words may lay bare the course we should follow. Two hundred million words will not make us go along it. It will require more than the vision of the prosperous seventies or even the threat of bankruptcy.

The Minister of Economic Affairs forecasts a 25% up in output in five years. There are men in the housing industry, trained in Moral Re-Arma-

ment, who have achieved that and more in one year—and have the figures to prove it. For MRA offers a worthwhile target for everyone that goes way beyond Britain's recovery to a world where hunger, homelessness and despair are eradicated.

Many on both sides of many industries say they found that new dynamic through the Westminster Theatre. Now the Westminster Theatre is going to the country. Next Monday *Mr. Wilberforce MP* opens for a week's run in the New Theatre, Hull.

George Brown—and his detractors—might take a look at the show and talk with these men with results. It is in the national interest.

The Editor