

The Westminster Theatre Arts Centre is opened today by Shri Rajmohan Gandhi before an international audience.

Last week Louis Fleming, the first director of the Centre, gave this address at a reception in London:

MY AIM is to fulfil the vision of Peter Howard with whom I was privileged to work for fifteen years.

It is 'to modernise man', as he so aptly put it. 'To encourage men to accept the growth in character that is essential if civilization is to survive. To enlist everybody everywhere in a revolution to remake the world. To see the theatre once more play its part in restoring honour to homes, unity between colours and classes, and to all men faith in God.'

Revolution through the Arts

Whilst aware of the difficulties and complexities I may face in taking on this job, I look forward with great joy to the immense and exciting challenge it offers. To me, it is no less than to bring a moral and spiritual revolution to the whole world through the medium of the arts, and I see the Arts Centre as a base for this world-wide revolution.

The blood, sweat, faith, pounds and pennies of thousands have been invested in this Centre, and in it I know lies their hope for a new humanity.

We have had indelible proof over the last five years at the Westminster Theatre that this is a realistic proposition which works. I have seen it at work in theatre over twenty years. The theatre is ready for it, the public is ready for it.

Now it is up to us with all the vigour at our command to project this new hope massively. With these new facilities we will be able to accelerate this revolution in, by and through the arts to every hamlet in Britain and to every corner of the globe.

A Centre which will be as available to the world as it will be to Britain.

We will export plays, films, ideas, men and women, but we will all the time seek to inspire people everywhere to take up this task themselves. We will be a catalyst which will accelerate world-wide revolution. A beacon light of hope and of an answer to the urgent problems which beset mankind and Britain alike.

It is one thing to say from the stage that 'change is needed' with all the

'The Dictator's Slippers' ready December for world distribution

'The Dictator's Slippers' by Peter Howard was filmed at Caux earlier this year. It will be available in December from MRA Productions, 4 Hays Mews, W1. Photos: Maillefer





Louis Fleming (left) and S D Onions, director of photography, at 'The Dictator's Slippers' filming. Photo: Maillefer

gory details. It is another thing to care deeply enough to see an answer wrought.

While touring with Peter Howard's *Music at Midnight* in USA, Howard once wrote to me, 'I am not coming to America to tour with a play. I am coming to see if I can start a revolution.' He came and he started it in the colleges and today there is a revolution of MRA sweeping America led by young Americans with their Sing-Outs.

This Arts Centre is built on the rock. Built on the rock of thousands of people who have helped build it and are part of its policy. It has been built by the people of Britain and the world with nothing to gain save the knowledge and the assurance that it will be used for the ennoblement of mankind.

The Arts Centre will produce a theatre of the answer, of hope—not the problem—although we will be ever mindful of the problem. Its message will be wholly positive without a trace of cynicism. I am for getting back to simple ideas, simple themes, simple ways which work. Some of the talk and theory we hear these days by writers and churchmen is one thing, but the test is—does it work?

It will be a theatre which is constantly looking outwards and never inwards, which thrusts out to meet life itself. It will communicate not only with its audience, but with the whole world. We can reach the moon, but have we solved the problem of reaching each other?

It will be a theatre dedicated to change human nature instead of 'beef-

ing' about it. If those directors and writers who make headline news think that people are complacent about the horrors of life, they are just not living in the world. I will never forget my first experience of horror.

What about the horrors of war? What about Aberfan? We have all had personal horrors, and we will never forget them.

What nonsense that these men think they have a corner on the horror market. It is time they used their genius to answer it. Some theatres have hoisted the flag of sadism, perversion, nihilism, in the name of 'experimentalism' with the public's money. I call that plain sabotage of our national character.

What we are going to do

We are going to reverse this determined bid which is being made by a handful of 'progressive' diehards to lead the masses of the world into the

wastelands of despair, degradation and death.

We are going to make fashionable again (starting with ourselves) service, loyalty, care, discipline, hard work, honesty, character, leadership, purity, initiative, unselfishness, and God, and answer this breakdown in society which everybody bewails and is prepared to do nothing about.

We are going to challenge and prick the conscience of men and nations. The Arts Centre will be a harpoon in that part of Britain which is fat, self-indulgent and complacent and which keeps Britain endlessly and needlessly up against it, small and lacking a world purpose.

We will give an aim and a purpose to every man, woman and child who sees our plays and films because this is what we believe everyone is most hungry for.

We will enlist and train those who want to remake the world through this new spirit in art, theatre, films, and as individuals.

'A film that will go like wildfire'

A YEAR AGO Tunku Abdul Rahman, Prime Minister of Malaysia, said that a programme of training in Moral Re-Armament was needed for the schools of his country.

The request caught the imagination of teachers in Britain. To help meet the request they decided to raise the money to film the pantomime *Give a Dog a Bone*. A man from the Malaysian Ministry of Education said, 'It will go like wildfire through the schools.'

The project was daunting, as they had few financial resources and filming in colour would cost £35,000.

Journalists and diplomats from Russia and China had earlier seen the stage version and expressed surprise that London could produce such a show. Some of the teachers saw the possibility of a new generation of children building an enduring bridge between East and West, anchored in the ideas in this pantomime.

This week in London two of the teachers concerned with the project reported how they were reaching their target.

Miss Jean Robertson of Edinburgh and Miss Jill Robbins of Essex said

that £20,000 had been raised in six and a half months.

There had been international backing for financing the film. Colleagues from their profession in Sweden, Switzerland, Denmark, Holland, USA, Canada, Australia and Germany had raised £7,000. Swiss children had put on their own version in the Caux Theatre during holidays and raised enough to buy the first copy for children in India.

Teachers in Britain had given the major part of £13,000. British children with collecting tins had raised £120.

Copies of the ninety-minute film have already been ordered, from India (three copies), Zambia, Kenya, South Africa, Nigeria, Australia, Papua, New Zealand, Hong Kong, Japan, Norway, Sweden, Lebanon, the United States, Jamaica. Yorkshire citizens have ordered a copy.

There is a reduction of £20 on copies bought before the end of December 1966. Copies in 35 mm cost £400; in 16 mm, £250. To dub it into a foreign language costs £4,000.

The film, ready by 1 March, may be ordered now from MRA Productions, 4 Hays Mews, London W1.

'Up with People' at West Point

THE UNITED STATES Military Academy at West Point for the second time in nine months invited the MRA musical *Up With People* to give performances there last weekend.

Major General Donald V Bennett and the Dean of the Academic Board, Brigadier General John R Jannarone, attended with 4,400 cadets, officers and friends of the Academy.

A cadet regimental commander thanked the cast for giving up college scholarships and jobs to travel with the musical. He said that what most impressed them was the dedication evidenced by all taking part. Many cadets plan to travel with the cast during the next break in their course.

Victor Riesel, the noted Labour columnist, was present. He was blinded some six years ago by acid-throwing thugs, almost certainly in revenge for his exposures of gangsterism in trade unions. Despite this he has carried on his column and his fight for sound trade union practices. Riesel told some of the cast, 'You

out-pace, out-think and out-live everything the Communists do.'

In Puerto Rico

AFTER PERFORMANCES in Panama, many members of another cast of *Up With People* have returned to Puerto Rico where they gave performances during an earlier three-week visit. They are continuing the training of 2,000 students throughout the island who want to take part in the programme of MRA throughout the hemisphere.

In Jamaica at PM's invitation

'UP WITH PEOPLE' opened in Jamaica on 25 November under the patronage of the Governor-General. A distinguished island committee, headed by the Prime Minister and including Roman Catholic and Anglican bishops, had invited the cast to give its opening performance in the Kingston Stadium.

In California

IN LONG BEACH and Pasadena a West Coast cast of *Up With People* gave performances to 40,000 students

in one week. Admiral Carlton B Jones, Commander of the Long Beach Naval Base, addressed a performance attended by 5,000 people.

Catholics and MRA

IN ITS Question and Answer column the *Sunday Visitor*, official organ of the diocese of Marquette, USA, published the following on 20 November:

QUESTION: May Catholics have anything to do with the movement known as MRA?

ANSWER: Since the Second Vatican Council it is quite evident that they may and should support this movement which stands for Christian moral principles.

Scandinavian conference

A SCANDINAVIAN Youth Conference for Moral Re-Armament will be held in the ski terrain of Nordseter near Lillehammer, Norway, 26 December—3 January. 'Race With Time' is the theme of the conference.

Subjects listed in the invitation for discussion are: An action programme for Scandinavia; New ways in modern education; Is God dead—and man almighty? China and Asia—Europe's responsibility?

'Tap the great creative sources of God'

DR FRANK BUCHMAN'S concept of a new world, built by God-led men, inspired the people who initiated the theatre of Moral Re-Armament. Today, on the opening of the new Arts Centre, we publish extracts from Dr Buchman's address at the launching of MRA in 1938 at East Ham Town Hall:



MORAL RECOVERY creates not crisis but confidence and unity in every phase of life. How can we precipitate this moral recovery throughout the nations? We need a power strong enough to change human nature and build bridges between man and man, faction and faction. This starts when everyone admits his own faults instead of spot-lighting the other fellow's.

God alone can change human nature.

He has a nation-wide programme that provides inspiration and liberty for all and anticipates all political programmes.

Every employed and unemployed man employed in Moral Re-Armament; this is the greatest programme of national service—putting every-

body to work remaking people, homes and businesses.

Only a new spirit in men can bring a new spirit in industry. Industry can be the pioneer of a new order, where national service replaces selfishness, and where industrial planning is based upon the guidance of God. When Labour, Management and Capital become partners under God's guidance, then industry takes its true place in national life.

We have not yet tapped the great creative sources in the Mind of God. God has a plan, and the combined moral and spiritual forces of the nation can find that plan.

We can, we must, and we will generate a moral and spiritual force that is powerful enough to remake the world.

Ministry of Education in Brazil invites 'El Condor'

THE FILM 'EL CONDOR' (in its Portuguese version), written and acted by students of San Marcos University in Lima, Peru, was presented on 7 November in the auditorium of the Ministry of Education in Rio de Janeiro, by invitation of the Minister of Education, Professor Raimundo Moniz de Aragão.

The film is based on actual events. It portrays both violent anti-Americanism among South American students and also the development of a new understanding and working together between North and South Americans.

In the audience were Professor Canedo de Magalhães, acting Minister in the absence abroad of Professor Moniz de Aragão; Professor Jorge Boaventura, Director of the Extra-Mural Division of the Ministry; Professor Clementino Fraga, Rector of the University of Brazil; Professor Heitor Calmon; Marshal Ignácio de Freitas Rolim; Admiral Amorim do Valle; Marshal Antônio Guedes Muniz; General Calimerio Santos; Dr Schilinger of the National Railway Board; members of the armed forces and diplomatic corps; students from Rio, Petropolis, Bolivia and Peru; 'favelado' (slum dwellers) leaders, portworkers and tenants of Vila Aliança, one of Rio's slum-clearance settlements.

O Globo, Rio's largest circulation daily, reported Professor Jorge Boaventura's introduction to the film in which he said his Ministry sponsored the film because of the patriotic basis of Moral Re-Armament.

Twenty-two from Vila Kennedy in Rio de Janeiro, one of the slum-clearance settlements built with Alliance for Progress funds, came on 13 November to the Brazilian MRA headquarters at Sitio St Luis, near Petropolis for training in Moral Re-Armament. They included the President of the Tenants' Council, Antonio Amaral and two of his colleagues and fellow Directors. In the party also were portworkers from Rio.

AT BLADON

Tribute is paid to Sir Winston Churchill by the cast of 'It's our country, Jack!' Geoffrey Pugh, whose father won the George Cross posthumously in the Second World War, lays a wreath on the grave at Bladon. By his side is Test Cricketer Conrad Hunte.

In the last nine and a half weeks 'It's our country, Jack!' has been performed in nine British ports and two centres of the car industry.

Photo: Strong



GERMANY

'WELT AM SONNTAG', Germany's leading Sunday paper, announced 20 November the formation of a second cast of *Sing-Out Deutschland*. 'The Sing-Out wave in the Federal Republic has found such a response that the youth of North Rhine Westphalia has made it their ambition to form this second *Sing-Out Deutschland* because one national Sing-Out force cannot meet all the demands for performances. There are eight local Sing-Outs in North Rhine Westphalia,' the paper said.

Dr Otto Schmidt, MP, head of the Financial Committee of the German Federal Parliament, speaking after a performance of the musical in the Wuppertal Civic Auditorium, said, 'You have seen tonight a new modern youth that has put their hands to the plough and does not look back. We are grateful. They are a tremendous hope.'

THE NEXT public performances of 'It's our country, Jack!' will be in the Oliver Bird Hall, Solihull, 5 and 6 December, and in the Guildhall, Civic Centre, Southampton, 8 December.

JAPAN

FORTY MINUTES of *Let's Go '66*, the Japanese MRA musical, were presented to 8,000 students in the Waseda University Memorial Hall this week at the University's Annual Festival Programme.

In 1963 Peter Howard, as many world figures have done, addressed the students there.

A one-hour programme of the show was also broadcast nationally over Bunka Hoso, one of Japan's most popular radio stations.

LUXEMBURG

TELE-LUXEMBURG will show the film *The Crowning Experience* on 4 December. Muriel Smith and Ann Buckles star in this production, filmed at the MRA Centre, Mackinac Island, USA.

INDIA

'HIMMAT', edited by Rajmohan Gandhi, is making a special Christmas offer, available until 25 December, of a year's airmail subscription for £2 10s. 0d. (normal rate £4). Orders to Paul Williams, 43 Charles Street, London W1. Cheques payable to 'Himmat Weekly'.