



Russi Lala

INDIAN EDITOR SPEAKS ON EAST EUROPE AND NORTH-EAST INDIA

RUSSI LALA, editor of the Asian newsweekly *Himmat*, spoke last Sunday at a Moral Re-Armament meeting in the Westminster Theatre. In the last two months he has been in Assam and the North East of India, to Austria, Switzerland and Yugoslavia.

We publish paragraphs based on the talk he gave:

It falls to my lot to study world issues and events. The more I study the more I see how complicated the world is and how simple MRA is—how great is the problem, how simple the answer. As Frank Buchman said, the answer comes back to the simple points of absolute moral standards, the guidance of God and changing people.

In Vienna, I met a Czech writer, squatty, as many of them are, fiftyish, his face lined and his eyes blue. As he talked to us he said, 'When I was out

of school, Hitler marched into Czechoslovakia. Then came the war, the Soviet occupation and Stalin's Communism for 20 years. Then there was eight months of relaxation.

He added, 'You know in all my life, in all my adult life, I've not known what freedom is. I don't know what it is to act as a free man.'

English was a difficult language for him, so he said slowly, 'I only hope that our tragedy will awaken others from their'—and he fished around for a word—'their dreams'. It made me realise what times we are living in.

There was another trade unionist in Belgrade I met two days ago. He is a man who is in touch with the non-Communist and the Communist trade union leaders all around the world.

He said, 'Who imagined that a Socialist country could invade another country, much less another Socialist country? The Soviet Union feels it is the only nation with the right to interpret what Communism is and if people don't agree, they march in.'

In Austria, the nation is gathering confidence again. They were afraid that Russia would want to march through it to Yugoslavia. The Yugoslav attitude is, 'We don't want to fight, but by jingo if we do, we will.' And they are a courageous people. They lost 1,700,000 lives in the last war, which is about twice the number lost by the entire Commonwealth of Nations. They are ready to fight again in the mountains. The consensus in East Europe is that Russia is so pre-occupied with Czechoslovakia she won't have the time to do anything else just now.

Continued on page 2

Czech crisis challenges West's living

CZECH-BORN PLAYWRIGHT and actor Peter Lotar, now a Swiss citizen, said that the tragedy of Czechoslovakia was a challenge to the West to overcome its own materialism. Lotar, an international award-winning playwright said that western countries owed more than sympathy to Czechoslovakia.

Speaking at the MRA conference in Caux, Switzerland, he asked fellow Europeans, 'How do we use our freedom? What has become of the ideals of progress and human dignity out of which it grew? Are money and enjoyment really the only purpose in life? And why is there nevertheless such a desperate emptiness? We give no satisfying answer to all that to the youth. It is as if we no longer had an organ which says to us what is good and bad, what is purposeful and purposeless.

'The youth in Czechoslovakia listens fascinated to the voice of the spirit which tells them how to over-

come a materialism which has been forced on them. Here in the west there is nothing else left for youth to do than strike out with force against a materialistic nihilism which threatens to choke spirit and soul.

'The youth do not know how to express it but they feel it in east and west: the man who denies his soul is a stunted, miserable, dishonoured being.

'The full truth is neither in the west nor in the east. Its front line runs straight through all countries, nations and classes, through everyone of us. We must never abandon truth, never give up our commitment for freedom, justice, human dignity for every single person. It is only as we make this recognition a fact that the fights and the sufferings of the people in Czechoslovakia are not in vain.'

Lotar said he was 'especially moved' to be at Caux which had been 'a turning point to my life' in 1948.

We met a senior diplomat of East Europe. He is an expert on Rumania and he said, 'Even after the Czech invasion, the leadership of Rumania was defiant, but only for four days. They have been cautious ever since. You never know what has been arrived at between the top men there and the Soviet Ambassador.'

The point in Europe today is that there is in Russia a power that wants to control. Rumania wants to be an industrial nation. Russia wants her to be an agricultural nation. Rumania wants to set up industries, and use her considerable resources to set up industries with the help of West German and Israeli loans. That's why it recognised Israel recently. And the Soviet Union does not want it to do so.

There is now, in the Soviet Union, a super power, with colossal weapons in its armoury, but with men holding their finger on the trigger who are fearful.

How is the West going to answer this colossal might of super power, except with the super force of God who is available to all people everywhere?

I was reading of the North East of India. Today's papers say that Peking

is broadcasting regularly to the hill tribes of the North East to rebel against India and has promised all help. Last month Mr Niketu Iralu* and I went to the North East and in the North East, there is this great meeting ground for all the races you can imagine. The greatest of the human races meet there—Aryan and Mongoloid—and there we have Moral Re-Armament working.

We met the other day one of the leaders of the hill tribes of Assam. He sought guidance from God with us at the end of the meeting. He said, 'I have used the hatred of my people to

* a Naga leader working with MRA

WHO SHOULD CONTROL NATIONS?

NOTHING that has taken place in Africa can compare with the upheaval and the struggle for control that is today taking place in the United States, said Clark Boyd McIntosh, an American who has worked for fifteen years in Africa.

McIntosh was speaking at the MRA World Assembly in Caux in Switzerland prior to his departure for East Africa. He said:

carve out a career for myself. I realise after meeting MRA that I have done the wrong thing. I want to put things right with the Chief Minister. I'll try and do it.' I said, 'Will you try to do it, or have you decided to do it?' He added, 'I have decided to do it.'

Four days later, soon after I arrived in Bombay, a trunk call came. The Chief Minister of Assam had told one of our friends, 'I was amazed to find this of all men come and put things right.' There is a healing of the hearts, a bridge between the races which can be the best answer to the ambitions of China in the North East. With MRA the North East could be a pattern of how man is meant to live.

'America is demonstrating that the white man does not deserve control. The countries of Africa in these last months are demonstrating that the black man does not deserve control. I think Caux is demonstrating the alternative to that, and that is God-control.

'I have just returned from six weeks in America. Now America is my home. I was born in California. That six weeks in America included two political conventions, and some of the bloodiest riots in my country's history. Now violence is a means of control. I have lived 15 years in Africa. I have seen tremendous upheavals for control on that continent. I have gone through three revolutions, but I have never seen anything to compare with what we saw in America.

Burning cities

'In 1963, MacNamara, who was then Secretary of Defence, said that America would never risk burning her cities for the freedom of far distant lands. Many decisions and policies and other things across the world have been based on that statement.

'But I would like to paraphrase what he said, and that is that unless far distant lands give America Moral Re-Armament her cities will burn, they are burning. And that is an appeal: that the nations of the world can demonstrate, as Caux is demonstrating, the possibility of God-control in men and nations. Any man who is controlled by God can give it to his nation. Any nation controlled by God could bring God-control to the world. It could be any nation.'

IRENE PRESTWICH

THE FIGHT OF THE FEW

Thoughts after a weekend conference at the Westminster Theatre London 14-15 September

AFTER WE ARRIVED HOME I listened to the account over the radio of the 'Battle of Britain'. It seemed a fitting close to what had been a glorious weekend—a prototype in sacrifice of the present 'fight of the few' at the Westminster.

I felt that these men—men governed by God—were the true government of the country who may yet save her from disaster and lead her under God to win the world to freedom and great living.

This was the challenge that Rajmohan Gandhi, Chief Editor of the Asian newsweekly, *Himmat*, gave at the end of the morning meeting and I thought: India and Britain who seem to have a natural affinity in many ways may be used to bring a new golden age that the world has not yet seen.

We live at a difficult time in history with what sometimes seem insurmountable obstacles to overcome, but last night I listened to the voice of a man,

Air Chief Marshal Dowding, who had the faith to overcome the impossible, and I thought of those young airmen who fell wounded or dead from their planes in the 'Battle of Britain'. We scarcely knew then that the 'few'—600 against over 2,000—were saving the freedom of the world.

May this greater fight today for freedom under God give it to the whole world. We have wise strategists today who have even greater vision.

I have sometimes thought that the world might be coming to an end, and it may indeed be coming to the end of its material way of living, which must end in a flaming death. But are we coming to a tremendous breakthrough of a new idea, a great new way to live, a way to freedom and care for all races, all men everywhere? Under God's wisdom and power this may be the destiny of mankind and it is for us in Britain to choose.

REVIEWS OF 'BISHOP'S MOVE' ... AND THE AUTHOR'S VIEWS

BROADCASTING, the Church, the family and government are the four pillars of *Bishop's Move*, a comedy about the avant garde now showing at the Westminster Theatre.

'The play is not out to bolster them up,' said author Alan Thornhill, 'and it is certainly not out to break them down, but it is out, if possible, to modernise them, streamline them and transform them so that on these pillars can be built a radically new and effective society.'

On broadcasting Thornhill said the trouble was, not that it gave too much truth, but that it did not give enough truth. 'It still selects a great deal of the truth it gives. We get a good platform given to drug addicts, homosexuals, defeated parsons, rebel priests and dustbin dramas. Fair enough, fair enough, give them their say, but why if we are going to do all that don't we get a real, fair and adequate hearing for Moral Re-Armament.'

THE STAGE

Television parson satirised

THE Moral Re-Armament plays which occupy the Westminster nowadays invariably have a message, though it is the contention of this writer that the main drawback has been that the message is vague. However, there is nothing unspecific about *Bishop's Move*, which opened on September 12. Alan Thornhill, the most able propagandist in the MRA, almost thunders his theme, which is 'Put not your trust in swinging parsons'.

It is something of a relief to find such a definite motive in one of the Westminster's offerings, and it is one with which many people will agree. John Harcourt, the central figure, is one of those priests who, almost despite themselves, have been taken up by the press, radio and TV. Without going so far as to actually condone adultery, pornography and general permissiveness, he has done his best not to condemn them. Always good for a provocative quote, John Harcourt revels discreetly in his fame, has a knowledgeable interest in camera angles and knows full well which is the best side.

From out of the blue, this rather

stormy cleric receives an invitation to become a bishop. Seeing this as an opportunity for even greater renown and influence, he accepts and to celebrate allows himself and his family to be interviewed on one of those hard-hitting TV programmes presided over by a 'personality' whose surface charm conceals an over-large sac of venom.

Unfortunately, his younger daughter, who had run away from home a short time previously, is film-slotted into the programme as well and turns out to be not an art student, as Harcourt had thought, but a stripper. Whereupon, in full view of the watching millions, Harcourt physically attacks the interviewer.

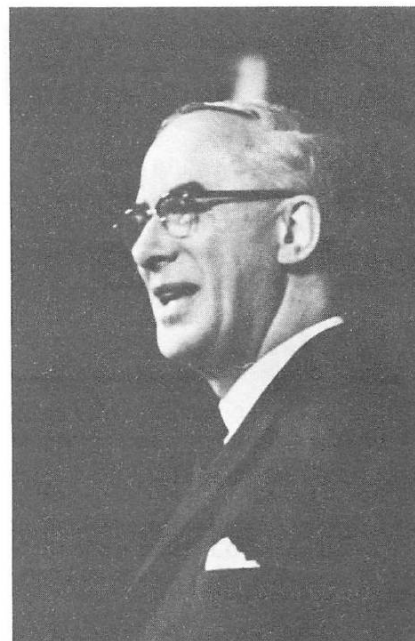
The recovery of his faith occupies the last act but the message is clear enough. Harcourt has been so busy 'communicating' with the young that he has forgotten the subject of his communication.

For one who has some slighting things to say about this 'age of satire', Alan Thornhill makes quite a good job of satirising TV techniques and the second act is by far the most enjoyable of the three, thanks to a smooth performance by Garard Green as the interviewer.

Clement McCallin, Jo Maxwell-Muller, Agatha Carroll and Roger Gale are good as the older members of the Harcourt family and Bryan Coleman is convincingly Establishmentarian as the Prime Minister's secretary, a former student of Harcourt's. But the most engaging interpretation comes from Alison Frazer, who makes Prudence Harcourt a vital, attractive and extremely sensible youngster.

METHODIST RECORDER Rebellion at the rectory

WRITER of a notice in *The Times* on the new play at the Westminster Theatre, *Bishop's Move*, by Alan Thornhill, found it difficult to believe in a parson who expressed the view that 'the whole Bible is the story of God's fight against religion,' and whose faith is summed up in the words 'Beauty is truth, and truth beauty' rather than in the Thirty Nine Articles. This critic has, apparently, not crossed the river at Southwark.



Alan Thornhill

TIME AND TIDE

ALAN THORNHILL handles a well-constructed plot with wit and sensitivity. Beneath the scintillating dialogue and the outright comedy of the family situation, a serious theme is argued out—the yawning gap between the generations, even where love is present, and how to bridge it.

THE CHRISTIAN AND CHRISTIANITY TODAY

HILARIOUS at times, moving at others, *Bishop's Move* convincingly conveys the thought that a man who defends his faith is more to be respected than one who seeks to destroy it.

Now published

Book of the play

BISHOP'S MOVE
BY ALAN THORNHILL

Westminster Productions

6s

Available from the
Foyer Bookshop
Westminster Theatre
and
MRA 4 Hays Mews
London W1

In my view

THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE LONDON

IN the 14 September issue of *The Illustrated London News*, there is a four page colour photo essay on London, entitled in large letters 'Sir, when a man is tired of London he is tired of life, for there is in London all that life can afford'—the famous words of Dr Johnson.

I loved looking at those pictures. I

wish it had been ten pages long. For as well as London's historical, musical and theatrical attractions there are few cities of the world so cosmopolitan, with such a diversity of students and visitors. Few cities with so many ideas being discussed, thought up, demonstrated about and sat upon.

What more interesting place to work if you want to help shift the thinking of nations than London? For the people who can affect this and most nations pass through London at one time or another during the course of the year.

In an age of innumerable problems, when you are not sure whom you can trust, or where violence will break out next, I would have included the Westminster Theatre Arts Centre in my ten page photographic essay. This provocative centre offers answers to family problems, industrial strife and racial

issues. Ideas which challenge permissiveness and demand a purpose big enough to include the whole of mankind.

Through the foyer walk leaders from Nigeria and Biafra, Cabinet Ministers from Asia and Latin America, businessmen from America and Australia, Black Power leaders, Cubans, Czechs, Russians, Vietnamese, students from all over the world, as well as thousands of British from every walk of life.

All get the opportunity of finding hope and becoming part of the revolution to dispel hate and fear, corruption and selfishness, and to restore God's values of absolute standards of honesty, purity, unselfishness and love. And up to 600 of them come every night of the year, apart from the breaks between productions.

I came to London four and a half years ago straight from the Highlands of Kenya, where the sun beats down almost every day, and I used to spend hours communing with nature. I had been told many tales about London by biased friends. It was foggy (I have been in the fog once), far too crowded, dirty, and the people are unfriendly.

Once I had broken down the dislikes I was able to discover London for myself. I found everyone interesting. My friends on the national magazine I worked with, art students I met in basement digs, a Biafran girl who's father is one of the leaders of that country, a student from Madagascar who had been living over here for two years in a hostel but had never been to an English home until she came to the one I was living in, and a German student from Munich University, who could discuss anything from Sartre and Greek philosophy to logic and modern music, but who was stumped by family problems. She decided to go home, get honest with her step-mother, stop living in a mess, and to find God's plan for her life day by day.

All these and many more friends have been to the Westminster Theatre. They have laughed, been moved, stimulated and challenged by the productions. Many like the German girl have returned to their homes and countries, from London, deciding to live differently, and take an active part in tackling wrong wherever they see it.

JILL HOPCRAFT

WESTMINSTER THEATRE ARTS CENTRE

Moral Re-Armament

Sunday Morning Assemblies at 11 am

6 October

HONESTY: KEY TO A MULTI-RACIAL SOCIETY THAT WORKS

Men and women of Asia, Africa, the Carribean and Britain are finding a uniting aim beyond differences of colour, language and nationality.

13 October

WAGE INCREASE – IS IT ENOUGH?

Employers and workers will consider the limits of financial incentives.

20 October

STUDENTS AND WORKERS: COMMON ACTION

27 October

THE FUTURE OF BRITAIN: CAN BRITAIN FIND A NEW ROLE IN THE MODERN WORLD?

3 November

LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN BRITAIN TODAY