

French fly to Britain

REGARDLESS of recriminations between France and Britain, the Concorde took off on Sunday.

At the same time a group of twenty-five French were the third successive weekend party to fly in for the European Musical Revue *Anything to Declare* and a conference at the Westminster Theatre. They included the Lorraine Miners Saxophone Quartet, one of only seven such in the world, who later gave a concert in the Theatre.

Michel Sentis, graduate of the famous Ecole Polytechnique in Paris and one of those responsible for Moral Re-Armament in France, said:

A FEW DAYS AGO some of us were talking with President Bourguiba of Tunisia about the world problems. One point on which we agreed was that international morality is the same as personal morality.

This is also true in other fields. The delegations which have come from France over the last four weeks to take part in the Moral Re-Armament programme in Britain have learned that the way to build friendship between nations is the same as the way to build friendship between people. We have learned that we have the same problems, and that the same answers are valid not only for our two countries, but for the other countries of the world.

The world is waiting for two nations to demonstrate that they can help each other by honestly sharing their problems and their answers.

We found President Bourguiba quite pessimistic because he feels that great nations like Britain and France are far too concerned with national interests to be of the slightest use towards solving world problems. He would be encouraged by a united force of British and French determined to solve world problems. We need to demonstrate together to the world that our nations can be moved by a far bigger force than national interest. Why not, joining hands as workers, farmers, en-

Modern men to make modern nations

ASMARA in Ethiopia stands at the crossroads of the continents of Africa, Asia and Europe. It will be the scene for an international conference of Moral Re-Armament from April 25 to May 5 with the theme 'Modern Men to Make Modern Nations'. There will be delegates from all over the world.

On the invitation is a message from His Imperial Majesty Haile Selassie I, the Emperor of Ethiopia, which he gave in an Audience this year. **'The work of Moral Re-Armament is essential. We welcome the international conference here. If we strengthen continuously the action of Moral Re-Armament, we help ourselves. When we say ourselves, we mean the whole**

people of Ethiopia. Man must be free from his guilty conscience. Everything is brought into balance through the real education of MRA. Keep fighting —We are at your back. Let God who is the initiator of moral standards help us!'

Rajmohan Gandhi, grandson of Mahatma Gandhi, also sends a message. 'I salute the vision of the Governor-General of Eritrea in arranging this timely conference. If divisions exist today inside Africa and Asia, they are not absent either in Europe or the Americas. Africans and Asians are learning to turn enemies into friends and showing examples relevant to every continent. Moral Re-Arma-



gineers, industrialists, unite not only in friendship but at the same time to tackle the pressing world problems?

Why not open the hearts of the ordinary people in our two countries to make a miracle of our difficulties?

An East European journalist interviews a member of the cast of 'Anything to Declare?'. People from 109 countries have seen the play during the four week run at the Westminster Theatre. 5,000 people have met the cast at the receptions after the show

photo Franzon

ment is changing Asians to enable them one day unselfishly to serve Africa.'

The citizens of Asmara who have arranged the conference have set out the aims of the assembly. They are clear and simple:

★ To raise up men and women who love their country more than themselves or their sectional interests.

★ To study the secret of turning enemies into friends.

★ To unite old and young in a programme more radical and effective than violence.

★ To produce leaders humble and realistic enough to admit their failures and so to inspire trust and teamwork with the people.

★ To explore the way to make honesty, purity, unselfishness and love the strength and security of personal, family and national life.

★ To listen daily to that inner voice which brings to us God's ever-fresh ideas for ourselves and our country.

★ To give evidence of a revolution in human nature valid for the whole world which cures the causes of division and war; crosses religious and regional boundaries; answers cynicism with a decision to put right what is wrong; transforms paper plans into development achieved; changes men instead of crushing or destroying them—and costs less.

EUROPEAN CAST GO TO PRISON

ANYTHING TO DECLARE? had on Monday night what was probably its most responsive audience yet. Repeatedly the performance was interrupted by cheering and applause. It was not for the costumes or technical effects, for none were used, but for the spirit in which the hour's programme was presented.

The stage was a hastily erected platform in Pentonville Prison Chapel, North London, the audience were 300 inmates and their wardens.

The cast had been invited by the Prison Chaplain, the Reverend Waal. The prisoners, serving sentences for the second to the 28th time, were sometimes moved to silence, even to tears, as they were during the reconciliation scene between father and son in 'Les the Plumber'.

ETHIOPIA: Land of Contrasts

from a correspondent

ETHIOPIA, for centuries independent and isolated in her mountain fastnesses, now assumes an increasingly responsible role in the world.

It is a country of many contrasts, situated in the tropics with blazing sunshine, but often chilly because of the great altitude. Most of the Ethiopian highlands are over 8,000 feet and the country contains some of the most fantastic mountain scenery in Africa. It is a country steeped in history and tradition, where the visitor from the West often feels he has stepped into the pages of the Bible.

Old and new

The Bible is of course a powerful influence still—both the Old and the New Testaments. A Christian Jew of the first century transported to an Ethiopian village today would not feel greatly out of place. Yet Addis Ababa, set in its majestic mountains, has towering modern skyscrapers; and Africa Hall, where the 12th session of the conference of Foreign Ministers of the Organisation of African Unity opened on 17 February, has all the paraphernalia of a modern international conference centre.

It is impossible to be in Ethiopia for even a short time without being aware of the presence of the Emperor. Small of stature and frail in appearance, he is 76 but always erect and alert. His lion heart has certainly lived out his ancient title of Lion of Judah.

His Imperial Majesty is beloved of his people both for the courage with which he fought for his country through invasion and exile and returned triumphant, but also for his endless labours for the well-being and advancement of his peoples. He is determined that Ethiopia shall take her rightful place in the modern world.

Reforms sought

There is however much restlessness and impatience for reform. By nature a reticent people, Ethiopians nonetheless feel passionately about corruption, nepotism and tribalism, of which this country has its share. Clashes between

regional groups have from time to time threatened national unity and relations with neighbour states. There is chronic unrest among the students in Addis University. Many anticipate a stormy path ahead.

Against this background a revolution of another kind is taking place in Asmara, capital of Eritrea, the northern province, bordering the Red Sea and the port of Massawa, lying below a breath-taking escarpment. A growing number of people in Asmara are convinced that training in Moral Re-armament is the only effective way of fitting themselves and their nation for the demands and responsibilities of the modern world.

This move has been spear-headed by a group of men and women who attended the Leadership Training Course in Caux, Switzerland, last summer. One of them, a boy of 16, came back determined to make what he had learnt practical. His drastic honesty with his parents and teachers about where he himself had to change had an electric effect on his school. In a matter of weeks 10 other boys decided to join him. He introduced them to the four absolute standards of Moral Re-Armament and to the guidance of God as a practical experience in their lives.

Transformed homes

They decided that to be effective they must meet each day before school at 7.30 am. The first steps were not easy. Most of them had stolen or cheated and becoming honest with their parents meant telling them about the secret visits to bars and other night activities which most of them had practised. The effect on the older generation was startling. It transformed many of their homes.

In order that the country should hear of their revolution a number of the students have written a play. It has all the power and liveliness of a weapon forged from their own experience.

Now, with the forthcoming conference, Asmara plans to take Moral Re-Armament to the nation, to the rest of Africa and to the world.



At Panchgani: (left to right) Captain Fadl Ahmed Abdalla; Second Lieutenant Ahmed Abdel Rahman; Air Vice-Marshal Blair-Oliphant; SIRR Makwenanai; Second Lieutenant Mohammed Abdel Gadir
photo Leggat

SUDAN can wake up again

by SIRR Makwenanai

THREE TOUGH SUDANESE army officers from North Sudan who are in India studying engineering at Poona came all the way to attend the opening of the second main building of the MRA centre at Panchgani, in the majestic hills of Maharashtra, on 15 February 1969.

They wanted particularly to meet, talk and listen to all these men and women who had come from many different parts of the world to hold a world conference of MRA in this Centre. As one of the officers later remarked after the opening session was over: 'This is more than the United Nations; they examine the problems in an entirely new way.' I conclude that they were absolutely captured and liked it immensely.

I am, personally, from South Sudan. We have a situation between the North and South Sudan in which, I can frankly say, all hopes for friendly settlement, in any foreseeable future, are completely dim.

Pledge before God

I had an implacable hatred, to be honest, against the North; and I had many times pledged before God to give the strength of myself and my people from South Sudan to take revenge on the Northerners who have so often treated us as second-class citizens. I was going to stop at nothing but a complete liquidation of all the Arab-North if I had had such tremendous strength! I thought they should not treat us like that in the land of our birth—the land that God had given to us. My real feelings were exactly like those of a militant Marxist towards a bureaucratic capitalist!

When I met MRA I stopped it all and apologized to the Northerners for my hatred. I have now realized that if the hate and bitterness we have against

the North is speedily ended, we can have much to contribute towards a peaceful solution to our problem. And we could also find unity among ourselves and teach it to the North, for they too lack unity among themselves though they publicly appear to champion the fight for unity here and there.

My encounter with these Northern officers has a remarkable significance. It had never happened that a Southern and Northern Sudanese talked to each other with such an atmosphere of affection, as it happened on 15 February 1969, between my Northern friends and myself.

We stood outside the main building and looked at the direction where the flags of the nations to which the delegates belonged were flying. Among the flags was the Sudanese tricolour.

We fell into dead silence for a while; but soon one of them said: 'With this atmosphere all things are possible.' The other added later: 'But can we have this spirit in the Sudan?' The third said: 'It is said that a change in people can produce such a thing. We must therefore have a centre like this in the Sudan, where our people can be taught how to change and work together. The quicker we start working together in this spirit, the sooner Sudan can wake up again. Now, Sudan cannot give anything to our continent of Africa until she can find an answer to her division inside.' I was so impressed by these words that I burst into hearty laughter—the first time I have ever laughed with Northerners.

God has a definite plan for every man and nation. I believe He has a plan for the Sudan. She is meant to give an entirely new type of leadership to Africa and the world: a God-guided leadership.

The desperate efforts on the part of

our leaders to solve these complicated problems without God in their planning, I think, is very dangerous and unwise. We must consult God, the Peace Giver, about peace. To make our own programmes and claim boldly that we can solve problems by ourselves without God's intervention is, in fact, non-practical.

Dr Frank Buchman said: 'The nations must re-arm morally. Moral recovery is essentially the forerunner of economic recovery. Imagine a rising tide of absolute honesty and absolute unselfishness sweeping across every country! What would be the effect? What about taxes? Debts? Savings? A wave of absolute unselfishness throughout the nations would be the end of wars.'

'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 spotlighting the other fellow's.'

History shifts

When a small number of men and women wholly give themselves to God, listen to Him and seek His mighty plan, they can find it and miracles can happen. The spirit of change 'active in a minority can be the solvent of a whole country's problems.' If leaders change, a nation's thinking is immediately affected; and when the change comes the nation's history shifts.

Isn't this what the Sudan needs? Truly, the dream of that Sudanese officer that 'Sudan can wake up again' must be fulfilled; and I want to lay down my life for it.

Three cheers for the French and British

I HAVE BEEN in Europe for seven months now. For most of this period I have travelled with *Anything to Declare?*, the European musical revue, through Switzerland, Holland, France and Britain. What has intrigued me and, as a matter of fact, given me the greatest hope as an Asian in Europe, has been the partnership between the nine French and nineteen British in the cast.

They have worked out this participation on a laboratory scale, and with the Germans, Dutch, Belgians, Scandinavians and others have forged a weapon—a play expressing their experiences. For the last eighteen months they have used it to try to get Europe to look beyond its own material well-being to the needs of the rest of the world.

I have been in both France and Britain. You could not find two nations, neighbours, who are so different in outlook, habits and humour.

Two of my friends recently proposed marriage. One was French and the other British. The Frenchman asking the lady to marry him presented her with a bouquet of red roses. The Englishman proposed over a pot of tea.

Over a meal you will notice that the French all speak at the same time, while, I have a suspicion, the British compete with each other over who can hold the longest silences.

I heard a French lady remark indignantly the other day, 'We never invaded Britain. They always invaded us. Britain is too small for us anyway,' she said with mouth pouting, shoulders shrugging and hands spread out expressively—gestures so typical of the French.

This triggered the Englishman listening to give a glowing account of one of the many victories of the English over the French (which incidentally the French regard as a 'brilliant tactical retreat').

'What about Pondicherry, in India that you lost to the French?' I asked. 'Oh that was a minor reward on the side. In the long run we won in India,' was his prompt reply.

Through centuries of mistrust, suspicion piled up and bequeathed, from

the days of the Normans, the times of Nelson and Napoleon, to the present day conflicts, these two nations have been at war or loggerheads.

What the French and the British in *Anything to Declare?* have been able to create, in that light, to me is historic. They are able to laugh at themselves. They enjoy each other's company. They serve each other. They can sit down together and talk about any issue honestly, freely and without fear of offending the other person. Their aim is not to prove how right they are, but to build a new world.

I have been trying to discover what has gone into building this partnership. What is the secret behind it? How does it work out in day to day combat with each other's human nature?

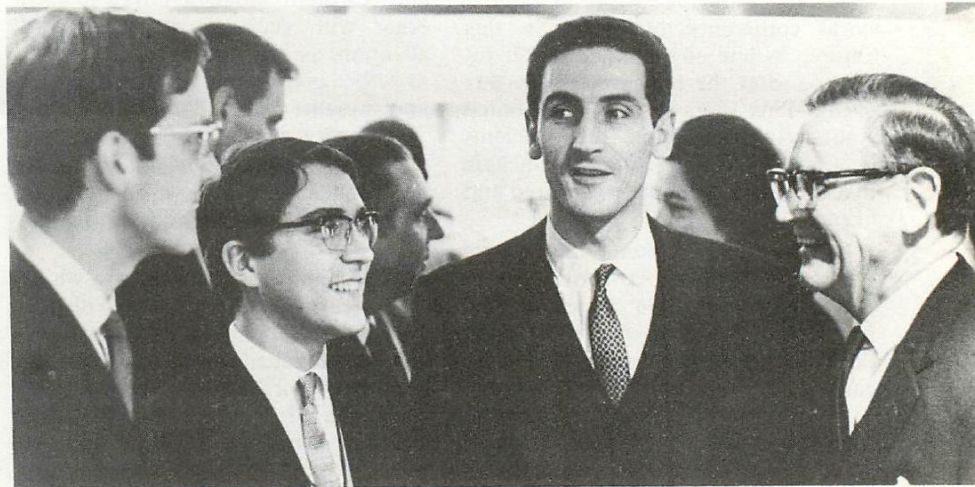
Twenty-one year old Andrew Stallybrass gave me a clue to it. Tall and serious—'very English'—is the way

French. Anytime they did anything, I said to myself, "Aha, that's the French again". For instance, whenever the English came late for rehearsals it was called "being late". When the French came late it was termed "very French", said Andrew. Rather like the way racialism works in the world.

Henri felt the same way about Andrew—so self-controlled, so right, so English.

Honesty between Andrew and Henri was a very big first step. 'I apologised to Henri,' continued Andrew. 'It's a funny thing when you begin to say what you really feel, then you also begin to see where you may be wrong.'

Soon Henri and Andrew got to the stage where they were able to laugh about their personal and national characteristics. They found themselves in Austria, in a new country where with important issues to consider they felt they needed each other. The joyous



Jean Louis Chaduc and Michel Orphelin of France (centre) talk with William Stallybrass (right) and his son Andrew
photo Franzon

Andrew is often described. He has worked at close quarters with many of the French, especially Henri Thébaudeau, a drama student from Paris.

Andrew speaks fluent French. According to him language is a great barrier, because though most English students learn French for seven or eight years in schools, they are not able to speak it properly.

'I have always had a fixed idea at the back of my mind about the

buoyancy and openness of Henri and solid reliability of Andrew made an effective combination.

These answers worked out between the men and women of France and Britain will be valid and valuable for that divided continent of Asia. I hope the whole of Asia will see the new type of European demonstrated in *Anything to Declare?* It is the kind of Europe we want to work with.

NEERJA CHOWDHURY, India