

NEW WORLD NEWS

FOR MORAL RE-ARMAMENT



'Song of Asia' cast sing for the Scottish press in front of Edinburgh castle

Photo: Rengfelt

'You will confound modern scepticism'

FOUR DANCERS — Turkish, Indian, Arabian and Japanese — weave threads of light, sound and movement into a tapestry of hope.' Thus *Student*, the newspaper of Edinburgh University, previewed *Song of Asia* which played to a full house at its British premiere.

Song of Asia, which arrived in Britain from its Norwegian tour, will be in Scotland during October before proceeding to the Westminster Theatre, London.

After a welcome at the airport to the sound of the bagpipes, the cast were given a curry lunch at the Leith Town Hall, prepared by the Shukla family from Newcastle, where Mr Shukla, a Kenyan Asian, is Community Relations Officer.

The Marquis of Graham read a message of welcome from distinguished British personalities (NWN 4 October), and told the visitors, 'You will confound much modern scepticism. You will find the faith and education in Scotland which have motivated people to go to many parts of the world with a aim of caring for people.'

The British premiere was in the Theatre of Moray House Teachers' Training College, where the President of the Student Representative Council arranged a dialogue between members of the cast and students. In a lively discussion Niketu Iralu, from India, told the students, 'We in the developing countries will suffer the consequences of whatever you in the developed countries try out. We appeal to you not to export ideas for our development which are prompted only by your prejudices and hates.'

Articles anticipating the arrival of *Song of Asia* appeared in the press under the headlines: 'Song of Asia comes to Scotland' (*Scottish Daily News*), 'Youth world peace message in music' (*Evening News*), 'Song of hope from Asia?' (*Fife Free Press*). Three of the cast were interviewed on Radio Forth.

A thousand schoolchildren at George Watsons College, one of Edinburgh's best

known schools, sat transfixed as Maoris performed a war dance in their morning assembly. Others of the cast sang and spoke and returned on the next two days to meet the pupils in smaller groups. Later in the week they visited other schools in Edinburgh and Lochgelly.

The cast met militant miners and prominent businessmen. Some were entertained by the Edinburgh Pakistani Association. Members of the cast gave a recital to the members of the musical society of Heriot-Watt University and visited the Mod, the annual Gaelic cultural festival, as guests of Lady Bannerman of Kildonan.

Others visited the Sistercian Sancta Maria Abbey at Nunraw, in the Lammermuirs. Received by the Abbot, they sang and spoke to the community and their neighbours. One of the monks commented, 'I am sure that the

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Traditional Scottish welcome

Photo: Gruer



At the book table after the Edinburgh premiere

Photo: Rengfelt

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world will one day decide to live the way you have decided to live.'

Parties from Northern Ireland, Newcastle, Liverpool, the Borders, the Lake District and the mining areas of Fife came to see *Song of Asia* in Edinburgh.

Young Asians meet 4,000 students in Norway

THE AUDITORIUM MAXIMUM of the National Agricultural University at Aas was the venue for the final performances of *Song of Asia* in Norway. Aas is a rural town of 6,000 inhabitants, between Oslo and the Swedish border. Capacity audiences of 600 each night enthusiastically applauded the shows. Among them were the Rector and the President of the University, teaching and research staff, including some from Uganda, Pakistan and Kenya, and many students.

The first performance was backed officially by the students' union which represents the student population of the university of 850. One student commented, 'You are feeling the pulse of the world. Your remedy is needed now and in the future.'

A busload came over the border from Sweden to see the show. Among them were fifty school students. Their teacher had seen two days earlier a four-minute item on Norwegian television news, which included singing and an interview with the cast. She decided to bring the class.

The Christian national paper, *Vaartland*, wrote, 'To characterise *Song of Asia* one impression strikes immediately: it is an explosion of colour and originality. *Song of Asia* suggests the simplest and most difficult of all solutions — the one which starts with oneself and where our first concern is for our brother . . .'

Twenty from the cast were officially received by the Secretary of the Norwegian Trades Union Congress in its headquarters. Groups from *Song of Asia* were also received by the President of the Parliament and the Minister of Social Affairs.

More than 4,000 students in 18 schools were met in two weeks by the Asian force in Norway. In one school students decided to postpone an exam to have them in their school. At another a boy successfully won the support of every student in his school to invite the group. That was a stipulation of his teacher. Several students have decided to get together and produce a drama to continue the action.

Lapp leaders in Oslo arranged a special programme for the cast. Dressed in their colourful costumes they gave the group a taste of their unique culture through poetry and their traditional singing (Joik). Then they went on to attend a public meeting with members of *Song of Asia*.

A twenty-five-minute national television programme and a fifteen-minute radio programme were recorded for broadcasting.

When a phone call reached us from Caux, saying that June Chabaku was spending a day in Berne, we were sure that an encounter with her would not only be informative about the life of a woman in South Africa, but also of value for purely human reasons. And this has proved true, as the following conversation shows.

HOW DID YOU REACT to the theme of the United Nations 'International Women's Year' as a black woman and as the President of the Central Committee?

To us, 1975 is the beginning of an era where women will freely and openly work together with men (and definitely not in rivalry!) to help create a happy society for all people. It is a year of introspection for both men and women in which to create opportunities for women to make a greater contribution to their country than they have done in the past.

What do you think of the fact that many rights are barred to women in the political and legal fields?

It is true that many women have been denied many privileges and rights. It is also true that many women have also not favourably responded to responsible roles in various facets of our society.

Which do you consider the most pressing problems in the society of today?

To us this is the beginning of an era of change. A change from demanding more and more for myself out of society to a far more exciting role of how best I can offer myself, my time, skills, energies and resources for the benefit of man and society. Too many of us have geared ourselves to hoarding material comforts and luxuries without ever saying, 'It is enough'. With all these benefits, marriages are less stable, families are divided because selfishness hates to compete against itself.

Have your women's organisations chosen a specific theme for the International Women's Year?

We decided that our theme for International Women's Year will be focussed on the family, since man, woman and child belong to it.

We went out to sell the idea. We sent out over 500 invitations to women's organisations of all racial groups and backgrounds and to individuals, women's groups big and small, local, national and even those with international links like the Business and Professional Women's Association, Young Women's Christian Association, Die Vroue Federasie, the Society of Jewish Women, and Indian, Coloured and African social, religious and even white political groups.

We tried to cover as many women's groups for an hour's meeting to share this idea. We were hoping for about 50 to 100 women. The interest was far beyond our expectations with enthusiastic response from press of all

A time of change

This interview with June Chabaku, Johannesburg, President of the Central Committee for 'International Women's Year' in South Africa, appeared in September in the Swiss daily 'Der Bund'.



languages and radio. At this initial meeting one newspaper sent six women reporters to cover one session! This was the widely read and influential paper called the *Star*. Over 250 attended the meeting. At this occasion Lindy Myeza was unanimously elected as the Secretary and I also unanimously elected as the Chairperson of the International Women's Year '75 Central Committee for South Africa.

What was the interesting thing about this first session?

The interesting thing about this meeting was that:

- In South Africa, notorious for its racial discrimination, women of all races were excitedly and unanimously together.
- Women of all races unanimously elected two black women to lead them.
- Women of South Africa for once racked their brains to find the things that unite them as women and *not* their differences.
- It was a day of discovery of how much women had in common and what personal responsibilities they could together and equally undertake to cater for the needs of *all* women.
- The black woman with more disabilities than women of all the other racial groups, instead of sitting down, feeling sorry for herself or waiting to receive handouts, also

saw her role as offering herself towards the betterment of all women while other women with privileges did likewise for her.

What did you do after this first successful meeting?

Women of similar professions met under our aegis to exchange ideas and share programmes and experiences. This new excitement caught up faster with the black women! Women played football to pay air fares to two women delegates to the Teachers Congress that was recently held in Berlin. Women hunted out women in unusual occupations to bring them to the public eye. These women received excellent write-ups, not only for personal gratification, but also to inspire other women to do likewise or more. It also helped women of other races to discover advances made by black women with limited resources, yet with commendable results. Among many discoveries in womenfolk were coalmerchants driving heavy trucks with men at the back employed to offload the heavy bags, cobblers, a chainstore owner, a butcher, a headmistress over teachers of both sexes and a woman motor mechanic, whose husband had to abandon his taxi and take employment under his wife and happily too!

Have the women taken other action after this beginning, say in education?

Following this enthusiasm, the women decided to run seminars with papers read by eminent women from all the racial groups and the simple women to be especially invited to participate in group's decision-making workshops. For too long decisions have been made for her, due to lack of formal education. This has deceived many people to forget that intelligence does not necessarily go with school educational achievements. We created women's committees to run the three seminars. We did not know yet that we would be away from home when these seminars would be held. We had however unleashed sufficient initiative that they could hold their own! The first seminar was held on Saturday, 9 August, while we were in Caux here in Switzerland. The telex we received from them merely said: 'Seminar splendid success but missed you!' Our happiness was that women of all races shared and made this success.

How would you describe the aims of these women's organisations?

I am unable to state the aims of the women's organisations since they vary according to their constitutions; nevertheless they agreed on the three themes of development, equality, peace in that order. That is why these seminars were an education as seen in the press.

My friend, Lindy Myeza, and I work with 12 other women of all races on the Central



June Chabaku

Photo: Franzon

Committee with delegated responsibilities to committee members. They are housewives, teachers, church workers, social workers, a sister tutor and a doctor's wife.

You have attended a conference in Caux. What is your personal impression?

I am overwhelmed that people from all corners of the world of many cultures, languages, backgrounds and religions could happily meet at this Swiss mecca to share the problems of the world and even find an answer to them.

Many of us have seen effective results of Caux's inspiration and training, where men and women have put right what is wrong in their lives and took on to put right their nations and continents.

We had been geared to believe that structural changes in the fabric of our society would answer all the evils that emanate from it. Instead we find rivalries, assassinations, corruption being on the increase because man did not face the simple truth that changed men can bring a changed society and stability. If you do not change your life on the absolute moral standards of honesty, purity, unselfishness and love, how can you answer corruption in others when you are also part of the problem? This is the crucial decision of our day and age. We need to answer the moral problems in the lives of people where the rich get richer and the poor poorer.

Coming back to your programme for International Women's year. Do you have already concrete results?

As regards the results of the International Women's Year programme in my country I would say that already:

- There has been contact across the colour

line.

- We have released tensions between races.
- We have created an atmosphere for unity, and for reconciliation, so that we have hope instead of fear of each other and the future.
- Through the women's influence we are bringing changed attitudes, rebuilding homes, restoring faith in people and working towards a shared society without violent means in our lifetime.

This will be an answer to problems of Europe and the world that Africa, beset with many complex problems, can also bring an answer to the lives of men and nations.

We take 1975 to be the beginning of a new and exciting era where far more effective leadership will take over from us and we become faithful followers and helpers if that is what is right for God and the people. There is still a lot to live and fight for. Life can be very exciting. It only needs a person's decision.

What could we from our side contribute?

I would very much appreciate having contact with members of women's organisations in Switzerland.

The conversation recorded on this page with June Chabaku would be lacking something, if it were not completed by some thought about her personality. Because she impresses through her pronounced openness, her preoccupation with the essential things in life and through her self-assurance, which is without a trace of superiority. June was born and grew up in a black township in Johannesburg. She trained as a youth leader with a special interest in problems of youth. She studied in Johannesburg and at the Rose Bruford College and the Actors School in Sidcup, Kent, England, and became a drama teacher and adjudicator. Today she is a theatre producer and an Associate Member of the Drama Board of the United Kingdom.

Although unmarried she adopted a daughter. She called the girl who is eight years old Mamolemo, a name in which she expressed all her wishes for the child's future, as it means 'mother of goodness and kindness'. In spite of her many activities she still finds time as a senior church elder of the Anglican Church of St Francis in the township of Moroka in Johannesburg, as well as a member of two school boards, that are responsible for over 12 schools with 12 teachers each, to take on tasks and duties. Recently the President of the South African Society of Jewish women presented her with a citation for outstanding contribution towards the development of women.

Whoever meets this determined active woman will understand immediately that he faces a woman who knows how to give purpose and fulfilment to her life by being alert and ready to give her best: qualities, which one would wish for many more women to have, no matter what their colour or background.

Meta Völk

Moral backbone to Labour movement

A TRADE UNION SEMINAR, which, according to participants was a 'landmark in the history of Brazilian trade unionism', took place in Petropolis under the auspices of Moral Re-Armament from 26 September to 2 October.

The organising committee consisted of four union Presidents from Rio de Janeiro, headed up by Herondines Saraiva de Carvalho, President of the Cabinet-makers Union, and other veteran trade union militants.

Most of the 95 participants were sent officially by 46 unions and four federations representing over one million workers from seven states of Brazil. Foreign delegations included six trade unionists from Uruguay; Irène Laure, former Secretary General of the Socialist Women of France; René Prou from the Christian Trade Union of Nantes (CFTC); Lucy Mvubelo, General Secretary of the National Clothing Workers Union, South Africa; Fred Small, officer of the International Longshoremen's Association, New York; John Morrison of the National Education Association (AFL/CIO) of New Jersey, USA; Frank Abbott, for many years TGWU shop steward at London Airport; Jack Carroll, formerly Branch Chairman (TGWU) of Bristol Docks; George Freeman from Pan American Airways and member of the Transport Workers Union, New York.

The theme of the gathering — 'Trade unionism and the reconstruction of society' — was underlined in the final document unanimously approved by the delegates to the seminar. In ten points it expressed the need 'to promote a new dynamic of leadership capable of giving to the Brazilian Labour movement a solid moral backbone resulting in a clear line of action with a definite thrust towards the rebuilding of Brazilian society'.

Absolute moral standards were an essential factor in the effectiveness of this new leadership, the document goes on. Collective bargaining, full participation of unions in the study and solutions of Brazilian problems are amongst the other points stressed in the statement, which ends: 'We need always to say "No" to corruption, "No" to ideological materialism, "No" to lies and apathy, and to say "Yes" to constructive work, "Yes" to absolute moral standards as the basis of greatness and for rebuilding. We must always say "No" to the enemies of democracy and "Yes" to Brazil and its great destiny as a nation which will export love, faith, hope and social peace.'

The statement was read at a closing gala dinner chaired by the Regional Delegate of the Ministry of Labour for Rio, Dr Luiz

Carlos de Brito, who offered his backing to further seminars. Also present at the head table were the personal representative of the Minister of Labour, and representatives of the Governor of the State of Rio, the Mayor of Petropolis, the Army and the State Parliament.

With wide coverage by press and television, there were each day two plenary sessions of training in the principles of Moral Re-Armament, group discussions on union matters, films and the new audio-visual production of the rehousing of Rio's slum dwellers, *Build on Solid Ground*. The highlight was a performance of *The Forgotten Factor* by a Brazilian cast of students and workers. The National Confederation of Industry, the leading employers' organisation, sent two observers to the seminar. Further seminars are now requested for Paraiba, Pernambuco (North East Brazil), Goias (near Brasilia), Sao Paulo, Santa Catarina, and Rio Grande do Sul.

After the final session, in which many delegates spoke of decisions they had made as a result of the seminar, one summarised the whole event in this way: 'This seminar has brought God straight into the trade union life of Brazil and particularly into the life of us trade union leaders. It was long overdue — it is the start of a new era.'

Fighting the wrong enemy

THE REV A T KANODEREKA, the Methodist minister of the Harare African township, who has been three times arrested for his nationalistic activities in Rhodesia, last week led a service in Salisbury's principal Methodist church, Trinity, on the invitation of its minister, the Rev Fred Rea.

Members of the black and white congregations met and worshipped together under the leadership of the two ministers; the two African choirs led the singing.

'I thought the only way to make the white man listen to us was by the violent methods of Belfast,' said the Rev Kanodereka. 'I taught my children to hate white people, even while I preached about loving your enemy. I have put that right with them.'

'Through Moral Re-Armament I have seen a greater vision. God made a multi-racial world. As a minister of the gospel, I am as responsible for the white people as for the black people in this country. Woe to those who try to divide us on the basis of colour! Such people make us fight the wrong enemy.'

'All over the world the real problem is moral. What is needed is a grass-roots moral revolution; a struggle not worked out by guns or human power but by the power of God working through men whose lives are changed.'

'Powerful portrait'

—Methodist Recorder

THE METHODIST RECORDER has reviewed Bunny Austin's *Frank Buchman As I Knew Him* as its 'book choice'. The reviewer, Douglas Cock, writes:

'Several books have been written about the founder of Moral Re-Armament, earlier known as the Oxford Group — but the latest, *Frank Buchman As I Knew Him* by H W Austin (Grosvenor Books, London, £2.50) captures the spirit of its subject more vividly than most of its predecessors. 'Bunny' Austin, who wields his pen as deftly as he once did his tennis racquet, paints a powerful portrait of this fascinating personality with an engaging frankness that would scarcely have been possible during his lifetime.'

The narrative cries out for quotation. There is, for instance, this glimpse of sheer physical guts of the man. Toward the end of his life, before going to India with a force of 200 men and women, armed with three plays and five tons of stage equipment, his hostess overheard him saying 'Lord, I can't do it. I can't do it.'

Writes Austin: 'She told me this story many years later. She was deeply moved, learning, as she could have learned in no other way, what it cost Frank to make that Indian trip. But Frank's Master had said "Go." And he obeyed. It was indeed an undertaking of great heroism for a man who was unable to lift himself out of a chair or to walk unaided.'

There is an example of his world vision when, arriving at an international assembly at Caux in 1946, he immediately noticed one gap. 'Where,' he asked, 'are the Germans?' There is the story of the girl found kneeling beside the bed in which he had died. 'That man was nearly four times my age,' she said. 'He did not say much to me. But keeping a room clean has been an experience that will last me all my life. I have found a faith in God because I understood what he was living for. I shall never be the same again.'

What chiefly comes over is his sense of caring for individuals of all races and classes and his meticulous attention to detail. A bachelor, he immediately won the affection of children. The scope of his contacts is shown by three pictures on one page of this well illustrated hardback — 'John Riffe, a leader of the American steel workers with Mrs Thomas Alva Edison, widow of the inventor;' 'Tod Sloan, the fiery revolutionary from London's East End with Buchman;' and 'Bill Pickle, the bootlegger, whose change transformed the atmosphere of State College, Pennsylvania.'