

Rhodesian task force

WITH THE SMITH-NKOMO TALKS ground to a halt, a new initiative is being launched to inject fresh thinking and faith into the situation in Rhodesia. A programme of public and private meetings is being planned, to give the ideas of Moral Re-Armament to the country; and a mobile task force of black and white is preparing to go from centre to centre across the country.

One man responsible for this move is Isaac Samuriwo. His family holds a powerful hereditary chieftaincy; he himself preceded Nkomo as president of the first African political organisation in Rhodesia. He served as a member of parliament in the Central African Federation, and today his business interests are nation-wide.

Last week he showed the film *Freedom* to an invited audience in his home, which stands next door to that of Bishop Muzorewa, President of the African National Council. Before the film, Samuriwo and his wife spoke. 'This film, made by Africans under the guidance of God, carries the answer for Africa,' he said.

His wife Rhodina, a leading figure in the National Council of Women and in many other women's organisations, stood by his side. She said, 'The only way which will make us free is the change of heart. Hate and bitterness make you a prisoner of yourself. I have often thought the white man must change first, because he has done more wrong in Africa to us Africans, taken our land and brought discrimination. But I have had a lot of things to put right with Isaac. I was a nagging woman. I wanted him to listen to me and do what I wanted. I did not trust him. I hated him for coming home late. I had to apologise, and now I am a free woman.'

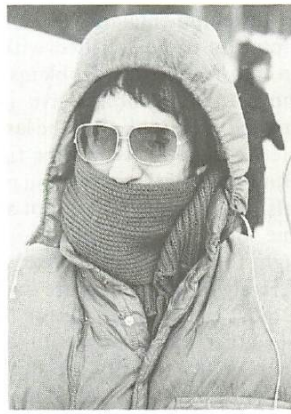
'We are at the crossroads in Rhodesia. We need men and women who will decide which road to take — whether we want to be guided by God or by our own selfish ways. Let us take the road based on the four moral standards of absolute honesty, purity, unselfishness and love, so that together we can build a new world.'

THE SONG OF ASIA STORY

- What does a young Papua New Guinean feel about Western society?
- What should Asia be known for?
- How is the show financed?
- Why did a Chinese not want to work with a Japanese?
- What is the effect of the cast?
- How did a Filipino end his desire for revenge?
- What musical instruments are used?
- Why did a Turkish girl take part in riots against America?

These and many other questions are answered by the cast in the new 60-minute cassette. Plus extracts from scenes and songs from the show.

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On top of the world?
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**NEW
WORLD
NEWS**
FOR MORAL RE-ARMAMENT

THE VOICE OF THE SEA

by
Kumalau
Tawali



Kumalau Tawali is one of the first graduates of the University of Papua New Guinea. He has won two national literary awards for short stories and poetry. His first collection of poems was published in *Signs in the Sky* (1971).

*That was it,
The old man and I sailing.
He with the knowledge of years,
I with nothing but a sense of adventure.
He took the steering,
While I, as he said,
With my good seeing
Would keep my eyes ahead.*

*The sun had just gone to swim
After its day's work.
The seagulls were flying home
In groups of four and five,
Singing those ancient songs
Of ceaseless bread seeking.
And who knows
Whether those stomachs may be full or empty?
The silence.*

*As the sail moved it,
The canoe slashed its way
Through the phosphorescent water,
Giving those sounds
Pleasing to the ears of the old man.
But then my eyes could see no further
As the sky was flooded with darkness.
So I thought of the old man's eyes
And the countless times
He went through safely.
What was his secret?*

*Remember son,
When darkness comes
And you are sailing,
Listen to the voice of the sea,
With its unending chorus
Of water splashing on rocks
And the sea-sawing sounds of waves
On sand bars.
Then safely shall you guide your boat
Among the sharp rocks of the reefs
Without seeing.*

Is it your battle?

by Edward Perry

THE WORLD will not be remade, even though you and I change and build unity with a few people, if we then sit down and wait for it to happen. The forces of evil are active; to overcome them requires a hard fight. In this fight everyone can have a part. Everyone must have a part. For it is not a fight to be won by guns and tanks and planes. It is not a fight against other people.

In my heart first

It is a fight against the exploitation of men by slave labour, injustice or discrimination. Against the exploitation of man's greed or lust for the sake of power or money. It is a fight against the ideas that produce tyranny in any form. Against confusion, division and self-seeking that destroy unity. It is a fight against moral breakdown — against hate, fear, greed and lust. It is a fight against the exploitation of men's minds with false promises.

The battle line runs, not between certain hilltops, not between certain nations nor between certain classes, but it runs through every nation and every class, through every organisation or community, through every home and through every heart. It is the battle against 'I want', whether limited to my purely personal matters, or projected out through the channels of power of an organisation, an industry, or a nation, to create a tyranny over others. This battle will be won only in my heart first of all, and then in millions of others.

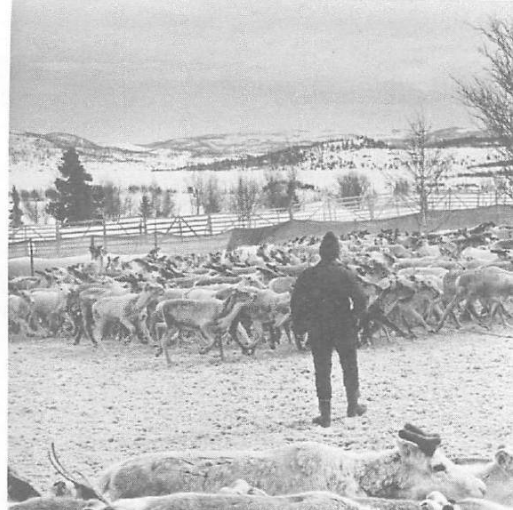
It is very easy for any of us, at any stage of our development, to yield to the subtle temptation to be satisfied with solving our own most pressing problems. 'I am now happy, I am secure, I live in peace. Let somebody else look after the larger problems — let somebody else do the fighting.'

But happiness, security and peace are false goals. Desirable, yes, but not as goals. They come only as by-products, not as ends sought for themselves. Those who seek most feverishly for happiness are quite likely to be the most unhappy of all, for happiness is a by-product from service to others. Those who seek for security are beginning to see that it is constantly threatened by a world with other ideas; for real security is found only in the guidance of God, since His plans are the only ones that work universally and unchangeably for the ultimate and highest welfare of each one of us. Those who seek peace as their great goal are apt to appease until they sell themselves out; for the ultimate permanent peace is a by-product from the building of a new world of honesty, justice and freedom for all.

Willing to fight?

The creation of this new world is your battle too. Are you willing to fight? The battle is a daily one. It is the daily letting go of personal preference and the acceptance of our part in God's whole plan to remake the world. It is a daily determination that, come what may, we will fight with every resource at our disposal to build that world where God rules in human hearts — the Kingdom of God.

This article is taken from 'God Can Be Real' by Edward Perry, long-time American friend and colleague of Frank Buchman. The 40-page booklet is available from MRA Books, 54 Lyford Road, London SW18 3JJ. Price: 50p plus 13p p+p



On top of the 'Song of Asia' inside

A GROUP OF 27 from ten countries from the force of *Song of Asia* crossed the Arctic Circle to go to the far north of Sweden. This followed the visit of the cast to Stockholm and Umea. They were invited to Jokkmokk by the Samic Association of the town. Jokkmokk is a major educational and cultural centre of the Samic people, and the site of the Samic County College.

There are 50,000 Lapps at the top of Europe. The Lapps, who call themselves Samic, are the original inhabitants of Scandinavia. They live in the north of Scandinavia and on the Kola Peninsula in Russia. In the north of Sweden there are 10,000 Sami.

Many of the Asians are from minority groups. They quickly felt a part of the community and greatly enjoyed the hospitality of the Lapps, who have much in common with the Asian tribes, both in customs and religious traditions (Shamanism — the worship of spirits).

These people depend for their livelihood

As big as a mountain

THANK GOD for a wonderful mother. Each evening after my brothers and sisters repeated the family prayer around her knee she would say, 'Children, if you see something wrong in this world and do nothing about it, you are committing a crime against the whole of humanity.'

At the age of six or seven this statement does not mean much. But, thank you, mother, for giving me a faith, the faith that Charles Wesley wrote of in one of his hymns:

'To serve the present age,

My calling to fulfil,

Oh may it all my powers engage

To do my Master's will.'

At the age of 14 I went to work in a weaving factory for less than one pound a week. What did I find? Poverty was the order

of the day — mother's words were daily in my mind. And that day began my struggle for a decent living for textile workers.

When we started to organise the textile workers into the trade union, the late Ernest Bevin said to me, 'It is a task as big as a mountain but I believe it will be done.' And it was.

We had to fight not only the bosses but our own people as well, and help them to see there were three sides to every story: the bosses', the workers', and the right side.

I know that God spoke of old to His people and I have proved in my own life hundreds of times that 'when ye shall turn to the right hand or when ye turn to the left, thine ear shall hear a voice behind thee saying, "This is the way. Walk ye in it."' Not always easy.

Injustices were done all around, but I believe that the past put right is the foundation for a sure future; if we put right what we can the Good Lord will put right

what we can't. This I prove daily.

I met MRA in the early '40's and was invited to attend a conference in Caux, Switzerland. I accepted the invitation. I was there for two weeks. What a revelation, with over one thousand people present, from many countries. I saw a new world being built. For me, there were challenges to be met and overcome, and I found this was the way of life I had longed for, Methodism at its best.

Thank God for the women of Northern Ireland, many of whom are members of our 'Women Together' movement. They know that blame and hatred is wrong and are learning that when the same bomb rips the slates from a Catholic or a Protestant house in fringe areas, it is the same rain that seeps through the ceiling.

We are fighting together the battle of 'what is right', not 'who is right', and we will win.

SAIDIE PATTERSON



people in the world with minority problems, and we feel we are not alone. There is no racial discrimination here but economic discrimination against the Samic people.'

Strong feelings

After the lunch, the 27 Asians gave a two-hour presentation of songs, dances, sketches and speaking. 150 Lapps and Swedes enthusiastically applauded the sketch set in Papua New Guinea which portrays the solution to a mining dispute which was brought about without bloodshed. The audience sensed the relevance of the scene's message since feelings are strong in the Samic land about the building of dams, destruction of nature, the forests and rivers, and the question of land ownership.

Hans Ragnar Mathisen, a Samic from the north of Norway spoke of his experiences, and his convictions for all the Samic people. An artist, and editor of a Samic newspaper, he is also the Chairman of the Young Samic Association in Oslo. He contributed a thousand Norwegian kroner towards the expenses of the Asian group in Jokkmokk and has decided to travel with *Song of Asia* to Canada. 'What we have seen

and heard now I'm sure we can learn from,' he said. 'I have been very bitter, both against my mother, because she won't accept that she is a Sami, and against the Scandinavians, because they have treated my people so badly for thousands of years. I wanted to take revenge. But at the same time I was afraid that the hate in me would lead me into a desperate and unhappy situation.'

'I saw *Song of Asia*, which touched me very much, I met a member of the cast from the Philippines, and he told me his story of how his people were exploited, how his relatives were killed and how he overcame his bitterness. His experience of change had affected not only his family but also his community. I decided to write to my mother and asked forgiveness for my bitterness towards her. As a Christian I knew this was the right thing to do. Hate is destructive both to others and yourself; to ask for and give forgiveness is a good Sami tradition.'

Ancient tunes

Song of Asia was invited to Jokkmokk by Mr and Mrs Lars Pirak, and the whole family. Pirak is an outstanding craftsman and joik singer of the Samic people. Joik



Lars Pirak, in Samic costume



Swedish Ombudsman John Soderlund welcomes some of the cast.

world the Arctic Circle

on nature. Most of them are reindeer keepers. The basis of the Lapp culture is the reindeer, as can be seen from the language, and in song and legend.

The Asians were taken into the forest to see the reindeer. They saw a big dam built by the government, the greatest source of hydro-electric power in Sweden. But the dam has destroyed the living conditions of those who lived near the river. These and other actions have created bitterness and conflict between the Lapps and the government (and perhaps a majority of Swedes).

The Town Council of Jokkmokk invited *Song of Asia* for a luncheon with Samic leaders. Jovaa Spik, who is a reindeer keeper, spoke to the Asians. He said, 'We had visits here from American Indians last summer. There are bitter wounds that have not been healed. Through reconciliation these wounds will be healed. In our democratic society there is a place for everyone. We hope that through teamwork, we will remain a people. We are meeting other

Front page photo: Patrick Waihape, a Maori from New Zealand, dressed to cope with -23°C. Photo: Rengfelt
Jovaa Spik (right), reindeer keeper from Jokkmokk, with 'Song of Asia' cast members. Photo: Rengfelt



singing is a combination of yodelling and chanting, to ancient tunes, sometimes happy, sometimes sad. The Pirak family also gave a thousand kroner towards the visit, as well as having four of the Asians staying in their home.

Original inhabitants

For many of the Asians who come from near the Equator, it was an historic step to cross the Arctic Circle. It was a great experience for them to live with the Samic people, especially since they are invited to Canada by the Canadian Indians, another people who can claim to be the original inhabitants of their land.

The cast of *Song of Asia* have formed small commandos, and scattered to the north of Norway, to Tromso, to Switzerland, France, Germany, Britain, Holland, Portugal, Turkey, Italy and Malta. In mid-April they re-assemble in Britain.

GENIS IBOT



On the warpath

RIDE! RIDE! is continuing its British tour with performances this week in the New Theatre, Hull.

Reviewing last week's visit to Bradford the critic of the *Yorkshire Post* wrote, 'The story and strongly drawn characters illustrate acutely Wesley's impact during the tempestuous eighteenth century... I found the production impressive and, at times, extremely touching.'

The Bradford *Telegraph and Argus* wrote, 'Peter Coe directs the show with flair and creates a Hogarthian atmosphere.'

The London *Evening News*, world's largest evening paper, carried a five-column news story with photo. It announced the London run of the musical starting in May.

It quoted Australian actor Gordon Gostelow who plays the part of John Wesley: 'Its message is very powerful indeed. Certainly it has had an enormous impact on me. I was raised as a Methodist, and playing this role is both a great honour and compelling experience.'

'Even during rehearsals I constantly found myself being reminded of my boyhood roots. Life is taking on much more meaning for me as a result.'

Methodist Recorder

The 'Methodist Recorder' of 18 March carried a four column headline 'Not impressed by Ride! Ride!' over a letter by a reader who felt an opportunity had been wasted.

Last week the 'Methodist Recorder' had a headline over six columns of its Letters page 'Ride! Ride! — there is a challenge'. The paper carried the following letter from Brian A Greet, Chairman of the Nottingham and Derby Methodist District:

I write to thank Mr Alan Smith for his letter about *Ride! Ride!* and you for giving it a centre-spread in last week's *Recorder* (March 18). I think that Mr Smith's expectations, which he described so clearly, were shared by hundreds of other Methodists. And if those expectations were not fulfilled at the Theatre Royal in Nottingham, some comment may be helpful to the thousands of people who will see *Ride! Ride!* during the weeks ahead.

I gladly joined the Board of Aldersgate

Productions, believing, as I continue to do, in its aims and objects, though I am writing now in my own capacity without having had the chance to consult anyone else.

Mr Smith mentions three things that were 'billed' in preparation for *Ride! Ride!*:

1 The event of the year in the Methodist calendar.

2 The medium to encourage people to live in accordance with the principles of Christianity.

3 A life of John Wesley.

To be strictly accurate, none of these items was printed in those words on any bill known to me. But I do not quarrel with the word 'billed'. Any publicity must be judged by what it led the recipients to expect. And clearly Mr Smith went to *Ride! Ride!* expecting those three things.

Corrupt and seamy

In last Autumn's Synod, I spoke with great enthusiasm about *Ride! Ride!* I said that no-one must miss it. There was an overwhelming response from the loyal people of this District (of which Mr Smith is one). I certainly regarded *Ride! Ride!* as the event of the year for us. I still do. Can anyone recall, in this District, a Methodist event which, in five days, drew ten thousand people? They came from every circuit, from

'Love of God and all mankind is the centre of religion. This love we believe to be the medicine of life, the never failing remedy for all the evils of a disordered world.'
JOHN WESLEY

Uttoxeter to Grantham. It has been a talking-point in all my travels throughout the District. Several groups have used John Gibbs' study notes.* Many more are going to do so. The story of Martha Thompson has been told to numerous congregations and has caught the imaginations of hundreds of our young people.

If 'the principles of Christianity' mean the fruit of the Spirit, I thought that, in the play, the corrupt and seamy aspects of eighteenth century church and society stood out in stark contrast to the 'even joy' of Wesley and the Methodists; and who could fail to be moved by the plight of the poor wretches in Bedlam, and even more by Martha's courage and patience as she ministered to them in the strength of her new-found faith?

Ride! Ride! is not a life of Wesley. When Dr Maldwyn Edwards expressed his hope that such a play might be written, Alan Thornhill (the author of *Ride! Ride!*) said it would be impossible to compass Wesley's remarkable life on the stage. So he asked for an incident from Wesley's life around which a play might be built. The result was the

musical which burst upon us with enormous vitality and power when it was originally presented at the Newcastle Conference.

Talking point

Most of all I am grateful to Mr Alan Smith because his letter challenges all of us to think again about our strategy of mission. I think that some disappointment about *Ride! Ride!* arose because many people went to it expecting a 'Methodist occasion', when (perhaps) the rafters of the Royal would echo to the voices of a great throng singing the hymns of the Wesleys.

I, for one, enjoy great occasions like that, but it is clear that they are not obviously successful in communicating the Gospel to the uncommitted. I believe that we must always be prepared to try new ways of advocating the Christian Faith. I also believe that the theatre can be one of the successful ways of doing this. The techniques, material, presentation etc may not always appeal to a traditional Methodist audience. But the Holy Spirit has ways of entry into people's lives which I, born and bred in Methodism, may wholly fail to recognise.

I think we tend to romanticise Wesley and the early Methodists. Certainly the presentation of them in *Ride! Ride!* challenges us to a greater realism in our assessment of our forbears in the Faith. A Wesley Deaconess yesterday told me that her women's class, normally prepared to listen without comment to her weekly talk, spent the whole hour in spirited and articulate discussion in the meeting that followed their visit to *Ride! Ride!* This has been happening all over the District.

Authentic, transforming

Notably, the most enthusiastic comments on the first night when I attended, came from the Salvation Army Major, the Roman Catholic Vicar-General and the Anglican Diocesan Bishop. I think this was partly because they came to it without the preconceptions of most Methodists.

If such reactions come from Christians of other churches, what about those who are outside the structures of institutional Christianity? I dare to believe that in *Ride! Ride!* there is a word for them, which my well-insulated Methodist ears may fail to catch. It is the authentic and transforming word of Christ, which, for all who receive it, means freedom.

* A study guide to 'Ride! Ride!'

by John Gibbs

Twelve pages of questions, themes for discussion and study.

Available from MRA Books,

Price: 20p plus 10p p+p