

# NEW WORLD NEWS

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Meeting at Orléans

## FRANCE FROM ORLEANS TO EUROPE

by Nathalie O'Neill

WITH THE EUROPEAN ELECTION scheduled in June, Europe needs a basis for unity more fundamental than politics or economics. When 240 young people from Europe and beyond met in Orléans, France, over Easter, their main concern was to find meaning for their lives. But during the weekend they began to relate their personal quest to the search for better understanding between their countries.

French youth are perplexed at how to approach Germany—a nation which arouses terrible memories in their parents and grandparents. So the presence of 50 young Germans with their play, *Zum Beispiel, Deutschland* (Germany, for instance) was an important element in the conference.

Four hundred came to see the play and many hearts were touched by the courage and humility with which the actors presented their country in the past and present and expressed their search for an identity.

The author of the play, Heinz Krieg, told the conference how as a young man he had been a member of the Hitler youth. He had considered suicide when he heard of Hitler's death. Only after the war did he begin to understand the horror of what had happened in the concentration camps. 'My heart and conscience began, painfully, to wake up,' he

said. 'I decided then, never again to let my conscience fall asleep.'

Orléans was preparing to celebrate the 550th anniversary of its recapture by the national heroine Joan of Arc from the hands of 'the English oppressor'. British participants in the conference were shown the site of the victory by a local trade unionist, who spoke after the German play of how this expedition had made him realise how he resented the British. 'I was brought up in a family where they said, "Better an outright enemy than an ally you cannot trust"', he said. An English student thanked him for his apology to the British group.

### Atom bomb

This spirit of reconciliation was enhanced by the ecumenical religious celebration on Easter Sunday with readings and songs in French, German and English. Groups from Italy, Switzerland and the Netherlands were also among the 18 nations attending the conference.

'How can you be honest when dishonesty seems to be a condition of survival?' This question, discussed in groups and meetings, was also tackled by a play, *The Ladder*, presented by youth from a village in

Touraine. The play, by English playwright Peter Howard, tells of the conflict between ambition and conscience in a young man on his way to success.

'If I cheat at university I know I'll do the same later in my job,' said a Tunisian student. He had planned to study nuclear physics, because he saw the atom bomb as the only way to deal with Israel. Having lost his hatred, he decided to change his studies because he feels called to be 'a builder rather than a destroyer'.

One girl told how she had sought for happiness in physical love. 'But the more you look for happiness in that direction, the nearer you get to perversion,' she said. She had felt that sex was not an issue for her, 'but I know couples who are worn out by it—and have lost their balance. I realised that if I wanted to help them I had to find another dimension of love.'

The Orléans conference aimed to awaken people to discover their personal destiny. To make a fresh start, to reach out to people in their place of work, to reconsider attitudes towards neighbouring countries... through such decisions, shared spontaneously during the final meeting, one began to glimpse the impact of these days spent together against the background of a Europe to be built.

## NIGERIA

### 1000 kilometres at Emir's request

WHILE THE WORLD WAITS to see how Nigeria, Africa's largest nation, will manage the change from military to civilian rule, the northern capital of Kano was host to an important peace-making initiative. Last week leaders from Libya, Sudan, Niger and Cameroon gathered in the ancient city of Kano to effect a reconciliation between warring factions in neighbouring Chad.

His Highness the Emir of Kano chose this moment to ask that J. Ifoghale Amata's play *The Dearest Idol* be staged in the historic city, before 250 invited State officials, counsellors, expatriates and students. The play deals outspokenly with corruption and political intrigue, and suggests another way to run affairs of state.

Eighteen staff and students of Abraka College of Education drove 1,255 kilometres through the night to present the play. At an audience later, in his 950-year-old Nassarawa Palace, the Emir said to them, 'I pray that the spirit of this play may cover the whole of our great country. I desire you to return for longer.'

Thanking the Emir, Chukuyem Igborgbor, a lecturer in chemistry, replied, 'Your passionate concern for the well-being of our



The Emir of Kano (centre) with the cast of *The Dearest Idol* after the performance.

country and your crusade for peace even beyond our frontiers are an inspiration. We now resolve to carry this crusade of Moral Re-Armament throughout the country. It places on us a responsibility that we can not shirk.'

J. Amata

## POLITICIAN'S THRILLER

IT WAS appropriate that Malcolm Mackay's book, *More than Coincidence*, was launched last week by a former Moderator of the Church of Scotland in Edinburgh and by the Australian High Commissioner in London, for Dr Mackay writes as a Christian and a politician.

The book, a fruit of Dr Mackay's wide experience in politics as a former Minister for the Navy, in industry, in television and in academic life, was described by Professor T F Torrance, Moderator of the Church of Scotland in 1976, as 'a book that feeds people with hope'.

Dr Torrance said that on a recent visit to the World Council of Churches in Geneva he had found an atmosphere of gloom and disillusionment. This was due to their attempt at 'countering major world problems with temporal not spiritual solutions.'

'What Dr Mackay has given to us,' he said, 'is a message which Churchmen and national leaders all over the world should take to heart.'

Sir Gordon Freeth, the Australian High

Commissioner, said, 'Many books by politicians attempt to justify their time in parliament. This is quite different.' He described the book as the product of 'a mind active, creating and searching'.

*More than Coincidence* is published by Saint Andrew Press, the publishing house of the Church of Scotland. They made it their 'Book of the Year'.

The *Methodist Recorder* in their 'Book of the Week' column says, 'It is a piece of autobiography which occasionally reads like a thriller and it has the imprimatur of William Barclay. Who could say more?'

J P Thornton Duesbury, Canon Theologian of Liverpool Cathedral, writes, 'I found myself deeply challenged and immensely heartened by this searching story of peril and hope for modern man. A ripe experience of men and affairs has been fused into a fresh vision for both Church and State by a deep spiritual renewal in mature middle life.'

At the press conference in London, Dr Mackay fielded a wide range of questions on the relevance of faith to politics. Had his



Malcolm Mackay speaks at the press conference. Australian High Commissioner Sir Gordon Freeth listens.

political views changed, asked one journalist. 'Yes. My political spectrum has widened very considerably,' he said. 'I have met many socialists since I got out of the polarisation of politics. They have behind them the tradition of Keir Hardie who spurned class war and whose appeal was to the moral conscience of the whole nation. The rediscovery of this tradition is of great importance for the future.'

Dr Mackay was interviewed about the book on BBC national radio and the BBC World Service. **GDI**

## Perspective for puzzled church

A FEW YEARS AGO I asked Professor William Barclay, the distinguished New Testament scholar and commentator, what he felt to be the state of Christianity in Britain. His reply was terse: 'Tremendous interest. Little real commitment'.

Perhaps it is because this book abounds in stories of total commitment and the amazing results which follow therefrom that Professor Barclay got Dr Mackay to write it. Had he lived, he would have written the foreword—on reading the manuscript he called it 'a thriller'.

Not the least of these stories is the author's own. Malcolm Mackay took theological degrees at Melbourne and Edinburgh, and became the minister of several Presbyterian Churches including the famous Scots Church in Sydney. He was also, for three years, General Secretary of the Australian Council of Churches and for nearly five the Chairman and Presenter of his own weekly current affairs TV programme. He was three times elected to the Australian Parliament, ending as Minister of the Navy, before being swept away by the Whitlam flood-tide of 1972. Just about then he had time to stop and think, and realised that, amid many successes, his faith had become 'threadbare'.

He retired to his home in the Blue Mountains, where he was unexpectedly—and against his better judgement—visited by Roger Hicks, an MRA worker and so a representative of something Mackay had left in bitterness many years before. Hicks stayed five days and so fascinated the entire family that the Mackays looked forward to a long and fruitful friendship. But, a few days

after they parted, Hicks suddenly died. He left Mackay, however, with a renewed hope, a series of remarkable stories (many of which the author relates) and an insatiable curiosity to see if they were true.

During the next five years, Mackay investigated these stories—and the principles behind them—by personal experiment, by tracking down individuals in India, Africa, Europe and elsewhere, and by talking with a host of others, from leading politicians to professional theologians. Tracing, step by step, the road from primitive intuition in the Australian, Aborigines to the equivalent spiritual reality in modern, sophisticated man, he lays out what he believes to be the ground rules of a comprehensive Christian life-style. He quotes Archbishop Temple's, 'When I pray, coincidences happen. When I don't they don't'—a theme he extends into everyday life and national situations.

### Non-Christians

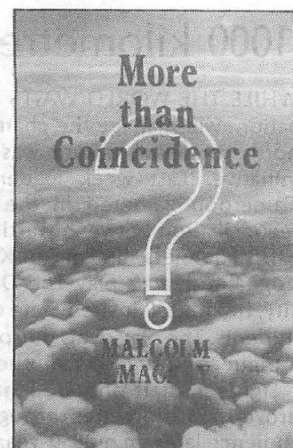
Half evidence and half thought, the book also gives his reflections on strikes and picketing, communism, socialism and capitalism, love and marriage, war and peace, poverty and plenty—all in the setting of the doom which the Club of Rome believes to be awaiting us unless we begin to live differently.

Especially interesting is his enquiry into the relationship of other religions with Christianity. In his foreword, he relates how he put the following question to William Barclay: 'It seems to me that when Jesus said, "No one comes to the Father but by me", he could be interpreted in two ways. One way would be to argue that unless someone becomes a Christian in the technical sense, subscribing to the basic Christian creed,

then he could not truly know God. The other way would be to assert that no one can have true and valid experience of God, whether he yet sees or understands it or not, except through Christ, for Christ is the Word by which the one and only God enters the created world.'

Instantly, Barclay replied, 'Of course, it is the second. But remember Jesus did not say, "No one can come to God but by me", but "No one can come to the Father but by me." There is a difference. It is only through Jesus that we can know God as the one whom Jesus could call Father.'

Dr Mackay's chapter 'Jesus and the non-Christian' illustrates this process. It provides a new perspective for a puzzled Church which finds itself losing people to, rather than winning them from, other religions in many parts of the world. **GARTH LEAN**



'More than Coincidence?' by Malcolm Mackay available from Grosvenor Books, 54 Lyford Road, London SW18 3JJ. £6.95 post free.

## Read before debate

THE SWEDISH EDITION of *Darkness and Dawn in Zimbabwe*, by Hugh Elliott, was sent by three Swedish MPs to every member of their parliament in time for a major foreign affairs debate. Reporting this, *Svenska Dagbladet* says the book deals with the changes in attitude and the new trust being created between individuals and population groups.

The Social Democratic daily, *Varmslunds*

*Folkblad*, writes, 'If you listen to voices like these, in both racial groups, you realise there is a hope for peace and just development.'

Meanwhile an abridged edition of the book has appeared in German.

In Britain the *Methodist Recorder* writes: 'This is a slim, cheap book which is never shallow, never slick, which acknowledges the justifiable horror of the daily headlines and exposes worse things behind them, but which still drives you to your knees with thanksgiving, hope and humanity. We see God changing lives, breaking barriers, work-

ing miracles and bringing hope.'

An article in the *Atlanta Daily World*, USA, gives one such example. In a 700-word article on Moral Re-Armament, Michael Henderson describes the change in Alec Smith, son of the Rhodesian Prime Minister, who since facing his 'arrogance and self-centred indifference' has been steadily at work, through the past five years, with people of all races, to challenge injustice and create a country based 'not on colour but on character'.

'*Darkness and Dawn in Zimbabwe*' by Hugh Elliott, Grosvenor Books, 80p post paid.

## Race in Britain

RACIAL ISSUES have come to the fore in the British election campaign. At the same time, an article has appeared in the *West Indian Digest*, magazine of the West Indian community in Britain, telling of British of all races who have radically changed their views on life and are working together to create a multi-racial society which is an example for the world.

The four-page article tells of the worldwide action of Moral Re-Armament, and the part which these British are playing in its programme of 'remaking the world'.

This topic is also the subject of a 1700-word article in the *Sunday Gleaner*, Jamaica.

## Helping heroes

RUSSIAN DISSIDENTS depend on the West to survive, writes the British Catholic weekly *The Universe* in a review of Victor Sparre's *The Flame in the Darkness*.

'This marvellous book is the testimony of the Norwegian artist and Christian Victor Sparre to the character and work of the Soviet dissidents,' it reads.

'The dissidents are fighting for freedom. They are heroes, modern martyrs, an inspiration. Read this book and you will see why we have to help and how.'

'*The Flame in the Darkness*' by Victor Sparre, Grosvenor Books, £2.15 post paid.

## From the scrum to the struggle

LAST MONTH'S *Rugby World* features former England centre, Brian Boobbyer, and speaks of his 'all-too-short career in international Rugby' which was terminated by his 'momentous decision' to work full-time with Moral Re-Armament.

'For a young man enjoying University life at Oxford and a sport of which he is passion-

ately fond, his decision was most remarkable,' comments interviewer Rupert Cherry.

'When your life is fairly easy and successful, there suddenly comes a moment when you pose the question, how does your life relate to the struggle in the world?' Mr Mr Boobbyer explains. 'When I left Oxford it seemed to me the most intelligent thing, and perhaps the most difficult thing, was to try to do for other people what someone had done for me, to help them find a faith and a sense of direction for life.'

## WALES Why entertain?

ELISABETH TOOMS, who is currently directing the musical play *Columba*, was recently one of the studio guests on BBC Wales' Sunday morning radio magazine programme 'This is the Day'.

Programme presenter Nick Page recalled how he had first interviewed her over the phone between performances of *Columba* in Bangor and Wrexham. "'Have you directed anywhere else?' we asked. 'Well, I have worked in Rhodesia, South Africa and India' was the reply. We couldn't resist finding out more!"

The first half of the interview dealt with Elisabeth Tooms' directing experiences as a student at Oxford and her meeting with

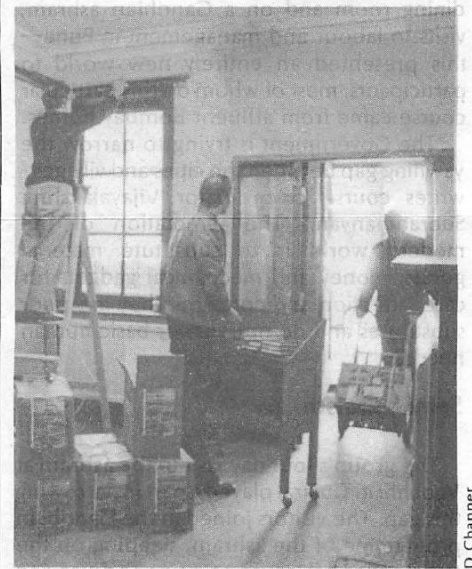
Moral Re-Armament there.

Then she described the tension at a performance of the MRA revue *Time to Choose*, which she directed, to hundreds of schoolchildren in the black township of Atteridgeville, South Africa, and their fascination when two members of the cast, a white and a black South African, told how they had found freedom from fear and hatred of each other's race.

'It is evident that not only do you entertain,' concluded the presenter, 'but that you are in it for trying to change attitudes. Is that right?'

'Yes,' replied Miss Tooms, 'we want to build a new kind of society where hate and greed and fear are no longer the norms.'

*Columba* will be presented at the Westminster Cathedral Conference Centre in London next week.



The entrance hall and reception room at the MRA Publishing Centre in London showing building work in progress and books arriving for despatch to the world. Alterations to create new office space and improve efficiency have been in progress since January and will be complete in June. So far £20,000 has been raised for this development and for complete re-equipping of the facilities. A further £8,000 is needed in the next two months.

## Surprising industrialist

THE STORY of an industrialist who puts people before figures, believes honesty is essential in business, and is not embarrassed to speak of God comes as a pleasant surprise to the *Harvard Business Review's* critic of Frederik Philips' autobiography, *45 Years with Philips*.

'He presents almost the diametric opposite of the characteristics urged on executives by such present-day pundits as Michael Korda in *Success* or Michael Maccoby in *The Gamesman*,' he writes. 'I found the book a delight to read.' The paper is the organ of the Harvard Business School in the United States, which draws executives from all over the world.

'*45 Years with Philips*' by Frederik Philips, available from Grosvenor Books, £8.00, post paid.

## INDIA

# Rural areas develop students

STUDENTS ARRIVING at Asia Plateau, India, next week for the second MRA 'course in effective living' are due for surprises—if the first course, earlier this year, is anything to go by. Seminars by authorities in their subjects from India and overseas, workshops on drama, electronics and how to make a solar cooker, manual work on the farm, in the dining room and on a Gandhian ashram, visits to labour and management in Pune—this presented an entirely new world to participants, most of whom on this particular course came from affluent Bombay homes.

'The Government is trying to narrow the yawning gap between the cities and villages,' writes course co-ordinator Vijayalakshmi Subrahmanyam. 'The temptation of the modern world is to substitute material goods, money and mechanical gadgets for care, affection and concern. They are poor substitutes and do not answer basic human needs.'

### Semi-atheism

The group's four day visit to the ashram at Vedchhi in Gujarat played a part in narrowing this gap. The visitors joined in the Gandhian programme of the ashram, sleeping on the floor, eating off leaves, spinning and weaving and visiting the homes of villagers. 'I always used to think I didn't have enough', commented one of the course, 15-year-old Sabin Patel, 'but I started thinking differently when I saw people who have practically nothing compared to what I have.'

The practical work back at Asia Plateau had a similar effect on members of the

course. 'I had hardly ever laid a table or waited on someone else,' writes Kais Rahimtulla, a 16-year-old from Bombay. 'At home my servants had always done this kind of work, and I never had any feelings for them. But now, after getting into the habit of serving I find it's not really all that bad and at times I enjoyed it!'



Leveling a field for an orphanage near Asia Plateau. From left: Neil Elijah, Tejas Shah, Sunil Munshi.

'Students began to think in terms of a career that would serve the nation and not just of a secure job with a high salary and position in society,' writes Miss Subrahmanyam. 'A new conviction was born in them to work to raise the living condition of the rural area.'

'I have learnt that the main development needed, side by side with social and economic development, is development of a strong character and fear of the Creator,' explains another of the participants, Neil Elijah. 'Human nature must change and I must start with myself.'

a programme—teachers, farmers, civil servants, students.

One of them I had first met when he was a Mau Mau leader. The idea of MRA so caught him that, at the request of the late Jomo Kenyatta, he gathered a team and translated the MRA film *Freedom* into Swahili. Over a million people subsequently saw it. Today he is Director of the UN Joint Refugees Services of Kenya. His job is to help refugees from many countries with money, jobs, homes and schools. As we walked to his office we had to pass at least 300 awaiting interviews. 'Each is a person in need,' he told us. 'You must think of each as an individual. No man would do this job for money. But I have found a higher priority than money.'

Another is a Muslim Indian businessman. He had come to an MRA musical in 1948. One song had stuck in his head, 'When I

Tejas Shah came to Asia Plateau because, 'My granduncle said, "I want you to attend the course whether you like it or not!"'. He also decided to start with himself.

'The absolute standards of honesty, purity, unselfishness and love helped me to see where I had been wrong,' he continues. 'I wrote to my parents and apologised for lying. To my bewilderment I got a letter back asking for forgiveness if they had done anything wrong.'

'I began to believe that the supernatural force could speak to me, if I was following these standards. Listening to the inner voice now means a lot to me. This training has been an answer to my semi-atheism.'

### Japanese

The students returned to Bombay with ideas for the future.

'We hope to meet regularly in Bombay to plan,' writes Neil Elijah. 'We would like to meet the Education Minister of our State and put forward ideas for our education system, and to give programmes about the ideas of MRA in our schools.'

Commented Toshiko Ichihara, a Japanese member of the course, 'Indian students think about their country. That is a hope for India—and it is something we Japanese have to learn. In Japan young people just think about their own lives. I'm starting to think about what I should do for others through the rest of my life.'

This month's course will be the second in a series which will continue in the coming years.

point my finger at my neighbour, there are three more pointing back at me.'

'I could not get that thought out of my head,' he said. 'I hated certain members of my family. I summoned all my courage and went to them. The division was healed and my attitudes changed.'

When he started in business, he decided to apply new concepts. The first was to upgrade his shop assistants—he started to pay them three times the going rate. That became a standard for others. He built decent houses for them and persuaded the City of Nairobi to make that the model of their housing. He started a medical service for his employees.

Finally he arranged for the sale of twelve of his shops to the employees who worked in them, letting them use the profits they made to purchase them from him.

## KENYA

### Incentive to care by Patrick Foss

WHEN DANIEL ARAP MOI, Kenya's new president, came to power, he said he was going to deal with corruption. Immediately several senior policemen resigned or fled the country.

Since then he has moved through the country, meeting the people, telling them of his determination to end corruption, and challenging them to quit tribalism and pull together for the sake of the nation.

It is an impressive undertaking. Whether it succeeds or not will depend on who will back him up.

On a recent visit to Kenya I met many people who are determined to back such