

MORAL REARMAMENT

03-02-008

The Battle for World
Peace

NEW DRIVE IN FINLAND

AULANKO, FINLAND, January 5
HIGH up on the tall flagstaff floats a blue cross on a white ground. Everywhere there is snow, and all round, as far as the eye can see, the limitless pine forests of Finland.

Gather, gather to one Empire;
Self-found, Northland, speak!
Right and Duty bid you higher,
Give what nations seek.
From Roald's northmost fjord in Norway
To Thyra's ramparts' sand,
From North to South, through town and highway
The Fiery Cross is fanned.
Gather, gather, Sweden, Norway,
Denmark, Finland, white Iceland.

So some months ago wrote Kaj Munk, Denmark's greatest living poet and author, and here I was, on the night between 1938 and 1939 travelling from Stockholm to Finland in the middle of winter with a party of Norwegians. The day before a large party of Danes had left for Finland, and many Swedes were already there. I found that England, America, Estonia, and Scotland were also represented.

With these different nations there are now gathered here at Aulanko for the weekend over 500 leaders in all walks of life in Finland with the conviction (as the invitation to the house party briefly sums it up) that "Finland united under God's control can be a power for unity among the nations," and with one common purpose—to demonstrate and increase moral and spiritual rearmament which is the foundation of true unity and reconciliation between men and nations; 1939's first great offensive in the Battle for Peace.

This Moral Rearmament gathering at Aulanko in mid-Finland is attracting national interest and attention. Daily, through the Press Association and the newspapers millions are able to take part in the House Party, and the Finnish radio has already arranged two broadcasts, one to-morrow (Friday) from 4.5 p.m., and the second on Saturday from 10.10-10.50 p.m. (Finnish time.)

AN EX-COMMUNIST'S TESTIMONY

It was only twenty years ago that Finland, after bitter, desperate, and bloody civil war, became a free and independent country. I talked yesterday with a Finnish bricklayer, Jukka Kaveheimo, who has been a leading Labour figure in this country. He fought through the Civil war as a Red, was made prisoner and sentenced to life imprisonment, and was for four long and bitter years in a concentration camp, where thousands died from wounds and lack of food.

Through an interpreter, he told me that the change in a nationalist member of Parliament had convinced him that there was a better way of dealing with one's opponents than shooting them or attacking them in the Press, and that through the Oxford Group God had become real to him, given him new feelings of love instead of hate, and shown him in a plan of Moral Rearmament a new and greater part he could play in serving his fellow-workers and his country. I can still see his stocky, rugged figure as he said to the whole gathering with quiet conviction, "That is the revolution I am giving my life to."

With him was the member of Parliament, Eino Tuomivaara, whose new honesty and unselfishness had interested and won him, and another young nationalist, Pentti Kuoppamäki, who, it turned out, had actually been one of the armed guards in Kaveheimo's concentration camp. Now they are firm friends and fellow-soldiers in this battle for peace, and planning and working together for the complete moral rearmament of government and politics. What God has done

for them, they are convinced, He wants the country to have.

A PLAN FOR SCANDINAVIA

Then there are Swedish-Finns, who are learning Finnish (not an easy language, I may say), and pure Finns, who are learning Swedish, one small sign of a new and growing unity and freedom from century-old superiority-inferiority feelings, and countless stories of individual change, homes remade, moral rearmament in the school, the factory, in business and in public life, a guided plan of reconciliation and understanding in all four Scandinavian countries which together they can pass on to other nations.

Another important sector in this world war against selfishness is literature. 1938 has seen a whole new type of Scandinavian literature grow up, as exemplified in the writings of Blomberg, Malmberg, Oskarsson, and Stolpe in Sweden, and Fangen and Ramm in Norway. Here in Aulanko are already two of the leading literary figures in Finland, Jarl Hemmer from the Swedish side and Sally Salminen from the pure Finnish.

A SWEDISH AUTHOR'S VIEWS

On his arrival at Aulanko, Dr Sven Stolpe, the Swedish author, questioned by the Press about this Christian world revolution, said:

"Our aim is to create, through a systematic and deliberate world war against selfishness, a new type of man. Already in all countries and in all classes there is appearing a type of man so new that modern literature and psychology know nothing of him, while Christianity has almost forgotten him. This type of man we can only define as 'the Christian man who lives in fellowship' (gemenskapsmänniska.)

"Instead of the purposeless, divided, repressed man, living in isolation and guided by his own selfishness, there is appearing the purposeful, unified, free man, living in fellowship under the guidance of God.

"This moral rearmament of every individual will not only prevent catastrophe but also create a completely new civilisation in which every character-forming movement in the community—home, school, sport, work, Press, literature, art, film, &c.—is directed to one common goal—i.e., the creating under God of that new, free, guided man, alone able to bear up and pass on civilisation."

It is snowing hard and every available bed for many kilometres around has been taken. But the Finns and, with them, the Danes, Norwegians, and Swedes and others from abroad, are singing:

"Vuoripohjahamme
Sillat rakennamme,

miehestä mieheen näin
maan ääret yhdistäin."

Or, in other words, "On sure foundations build we God's new nations. . . . Bridges from man to man, the whole round earth to span." And the battle is joined.

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