

11.2.39

FINCHLEY'S "CLARION CALL"

Remarkable Meeting at Woodhouse School

THE MORAL RE-ARMAMENT CAMPAIGN

Speeches by M.P., Mayor, "Bunny" Austin, Tod Sloan, and Others

"This meeting desires that the Finchley Parliamentary Division shall give the lead to Britain in creating confidence and unity by applying the principles of moral rearmament."

The passing with acclamation of this resolution concluded a history-making meeting at the Woodhouse School, Finchley, on Thursday night, when three hundred leading citizens of Finchley and Friern Barnet met at the invitation of the Member of Parliament for the Finchley division (Mr. John Crowder), the Mayor of Finchley (Cr. J. Hugh Jones), and the chairman of the Friern Barnet Urban District Council (Cr. J. E. Pickering), "to consider the application of the principles of moral rearmament to civic and national life."

The meeting, the first in which an M.P. and a mayor in the same constituency have summoned together leading citizens to consider a practical policy "M.R.A.," launched Finchley with enthusiasm into the nationwide campaign for moral re-armorment, which will begin this Friday.

First step in the campaign will be the distribution by the hundred thousand of H. W. ("Bunny") Austin's book, "Moral Re-armorment: The Battle for Peace." Within six weeks of publication a quarter of a million copies of the book have been sold, and another 250,000 are now being rushed through the presses.

A Mixed Platform

"Bunny" Austin himself was on the platform at Woodhouse School on Thursday evening, in company with the Mayor of Finchley (who presided), the Mayoress, Mr. Crowder, Cr. Pickering, Ald. C. S. Syrett (Deputy Mayor of Finchley), Lord Addington, Lady Gower (chairman of the Advisory Committee of the Unemployment Assistance Board), John Guise (Oxford and Middlesex cricketer), Tod Sloan (former East End political agitator), the Rector of Finchley (Prebendary S. F. L. Bernays), and many others.

Guests at the meeting were received by the Mayor and Mayoress, and by Mr. Crowder, as they arrived.

In opening the meeting the Mayor read a letter from the Bishop of Willesden, who expressed his regret at being unable to be present, and his pleasure that the meeting had been called.

"People are realising," the Bishop added, "that we need the strength of the Christian foundation on which the standards of our country have been built. I am confident that we must all work together with this great need in view."

Finchley Makes History

The Rev. H. Cecil Pugh (Friern Barnet Congregational minister), who was introduced as "chief organiser of the meeting," described moral rearmorment as "the battle for peace." He said that Finchley could lead the way in that battle.

He went on to describe some of the ways in which moral rearmorment was manifesting itself throughout the world, as well as in Finchley and Friern Barnet.

"I believe that here in this division," Mr. Pugh continued, "we can set a pattern for the rest of Great Britain, and I believe each one of us here can be part of this force for moral rearmorment that is working throughout the country."

"Finchley can make history for Britain to-night," he added.

"Bunny" Austin's Changed Outlook

"Bunny" Austin, who was introduced by Mr. Francis Goulding, began with an amusing reminiscence of how spirits had once been the downfall of his opponent in an important tennis match. Today, he went on, it was a different spirit which was causing the downfall of nations—the spirit of fear and hate and greed.

Mr. Austin then told, as he tells in the preface of his now-famous book, how the recent crisis brought about a revolutionary change in his outlook on life; how he realised that he had to get rid of his own fears, hates, and greed before the world could be changed.

This brought him, he said, an entirely new vision of the part that sport could play in the world. He saw that it was being used for selfish ends, for self-glorification, and commercial gain. It was failing to promote international fellowship.

"I realised that Davis Cup matches may often cause more trouble than good," he added.

"Those who are fighting for moral rearmorment," he went on, "are fighting the true battle for peace. We must fight to-day for a change in human nature," he declared. That was something which every man and woman could contribute to world peace and the betterment of mankind in general.

"Highest Form of National Service"

"Bunny" Austin was followed by another famous sportsman, John Guise, the Oxford and Middlesex cricketer, who described moral rearmorment as "the spirit behind which the whole of England could unite."

Lord Addington said that moral rearmorment had given him a call to the highest form of national service. It was a call to give all we were and all we had in the battle for peace—a call far more insistent than that of August, 1914.

The elimination of the fear, hatred, and greed which made for war, he said, was only to be effected by absolute honesty, absolute purity, absolute unselfishness, and absolute love—the standards of Jesus Christ. These had first to be applied drastically to themselves, because the fear and hatred and greed were in their own hearts, but they must also be extended to every sphere of life.

"A morally rearmored Britain," his Lordship added, "will bring peace to the world in a way no other country can achieve it."

"Moral Rearmament Wardens"

How moral rearmorment can be put into practice was described by Lady Gowers, who spoke of changed relationships in her home, between herself and her family, and her domestic staff.

Mr. Gordon Hassell, of Finchley, spoke of a new spirit arising in the world of business through the application of M.R.A. principles.

Mrs. Pugh, wife of the Rev. Cecil Pugh, also testified to the need for moral rearmorment first and foremost in the home.

"We can make each house mother," she said, "a moral rearmorment warden for her street by making her home a centre of peacemaking."

Other speakers were Bill Yaeger, from West Ham, who told how M.R.A. was spreading through the Councils of East London boroughs; and Tod Sloan, who, with all the fire and passion which made his fame as a political revolutionary spread far beyond the Tidal Basin where his agitation centred for 47 years, spoke of the revolution in his own life which had made him renounce class hatred and realise that M.R.A. was the only way to "restore sanity in the world and the peace that I want and you want."

Mr. Crowder and "Excelsior"

Mr. Crowder moved the adoption of the resolution quoted at the head of this report. He said they had to do more than merely adopt it. They had really to work for what they believed.

"We are only a little way up the steep hill," he added, "and it is a long way to the top. But if our motto is 'Excelsior,' I am sure we shall win through and succeed."

Seconding the motion, Ald. Syrett said he believed that Finchley could send forth a clarion call which he hoped would ring throughout the country and beyond its borders.

A tribute to the Rector, who attended despite indisposition, was paid by the Mayor, who was thanked by the Rev. Cecil Pugh.

11.2.39

SPORTSMEN AND MORAL REARMAMENT

Local Sports Leaders' Appeal

"HIGH STANDARDS OF SPORTSMANSHIP"

To the Editor of the "Barnet Press"

SIR, — Thirty-seven leading British sportsmen, in a widely read letter to "The Times," recently added their voices to those of Lord Baldwin and other prominent leaders in national life who had proclaimed their belief in the urgent need for moral and spiritual rearmament.

We, representing various aspects of sport in Barnet and elsewhere, align ourselves with their call, and especially with their statement that "high standards of sportsmanship require to be carried deeper to remove dissatisfaction and the spirit of unrest, and to restore to the country faith in its high mission and purpose."

We appeal to all sportsmen to put the same enthusiasm into applying moral rearmament to the life of Barnet as they have in achieving their many sporting records. We recommend that, as a first step, they read "Bunny" Austin's new book, "Moral Rearmament: The Battle for Peace," in which the sportsmen's letter and other manifestos appear, and bring it to the notice of as wide a public as possible.—Yours, etc.,

C. W. COOKE
(Member of the National Fitness Council; Vice-president, Barnet Cycling Club).

E. W. LAMBERT
(President, Barnet and District Football League; Hon. Secretary and Treasurer, Barnet and District Sports Association; Chairman, Barnet and District Football Cup Competition).

LESTER FINCH
(Captain, Barnet Football Club).

ST. JOHN STANWELL
(Secretary, Barnet Rugby Football Club).

W. H. MAYNARD
(Secretary, Barnet Hockey Club).

S. C. FRANCIS
(Track Captain, New Barnet Athletic Club).

E. G. STEVENS
(Cross - country Vice - captain, New Barnet Athletic Club).

J. BADDELEY
(Founder, Barnet Boxing Club and New Barnet Wrestling Club).