

'M.R.A. Has Brought Unity In Labour Ranks'

I. C. F. T. U. CHARGES REFUTED BY MR. SIBNATH BANERJEE

By A Staff Reporter

"MORAL Re-Armament is a fundamental factor in the world. It brings unity in labour itself," said Mr. Sibnath Banerjee, President of the Hind Mazdoor Sabha, answering point by point the statement denouncing M. R. A. issued by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions.

Mr. Banerjee was speaking at the World Assembly for Moral Re-Armament held recently at Caux. A report on the activities of M.R.A. was adopted at the recent meeting of the Executive Board of the I.C.F.T.U. in Stockholm. The report was made after an investigation by the General Secretary of the Confederation at the instance of Mr. Dinker Desai, General Secretary of the Hind Mazdoor Sabha of India, who had stated that he thought that the M.R.A. movement was a danger to the workers' movement.

Mr. Banerjee took a different view of the M.R.A. movement which he defended strongly at Caux. When his attention was drawn to his speech, Mr. Desai said in Bombay on Monday that Mr. Banerjee had every right to express his personal view which, he (Mr. Desai) was positive, was not put forward on behalf of the Hind Mazdoor Sabha. Mr. Desai himself had spoken about M.R.A. in his personal capacity and not in the capacity as the General Secretary of the Sabha, of which Mr. Banerjee is the President.

Mr. Desai further said that the report of the I.C.F.T.U. would be placed for discussion before the Hind Mazdoor Sabha's Convention to be held in Uttar Pradesh early in December, when the Sabha would define its attitude towards Moral Re-Armament.

Mr. Banerjee stated at the World Assembly for Moral Re-Armament that he was not aware of any discussion about M.R.A. by the Executive Board of the Hind Mazdoor Sabha or of any instruction from the Sabha to make any official inquiry about M.R.A. Mr. Banerjee said the I.C.F.T.U. claimed a neutral attitude in political and religious matters, and "yet they have issued a seven-page attack on that great world force of Moral Re-Armament."

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"Many of the points in this attack are familiar to us, because they were used by Moscow Radio in their broadcasts against M.R.A. I offer my unqualified apology now to all of you and Dr. Frank Buchman because my union has been used to bring an attack on M.R.A." He added that the charge of M.R.A. interference was absurd, because everywhere M.R.A. united trade unions, which was the greatest need at the present time. "This ideology may well prove to be the road on which millions from East and West can travel together to a new world of social justice, security and peace."

Referring to the suggestion that M.R.A. worked in an undemocratic manner, he said in India it had been the masses in textile, docks, shipping, engineering, railway and other industries who had supported M.R.A. During his recent tour of investigation in Britain, Holland and Germany, he found it was the men in the mines, factories and mills who saw in M.R.A. the hope of world peace.

He declared that he had been satisfied that M.R.A. was run on a voluntary basis and confessed that although he had been at the Caux Congress for less than 30 days, he had learned more in that time in Socialist living than in his 30 years of "Socialist thought, struggle and practice." He agreed with the delegation of the British trade unions that the report from the I.C.F.T.U. misrepresented facts and the implications "were untimely, unjust and untrue."

Present at the Congress were Mr. Rajnai Mukherjee, Vice-President of the West Bengal Hind Mazdoor Sabha, and Mr. H. N. Trivedi, trade union leader of Bombay.