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# MORAL RE-ARMAMENT

## HITS BACK

By  
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*TRUTH today prints the third in its industrial series. It is an account of the work done in industry and of the philosophy of Moral Re-Armament. TRUTH prints it partly as a reply to the recent attack on the Movement by the ICFTU Secretariat and partly because there is almost no newspaper in Britain willing to print the challenging story of the work of MRA.*

**A** REPORT has been issued purporting to be the opinion of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions on Moral Re-Armament. It claims that MRA has tried to found 'yellow unions', that its achievements in industry are imaginary, that its finance is dubious and its tendencies dictatorial.

The report does not produce evidence to prove any of these points. Furthermore, the President of the Socialist Trade Unions of India (Hind Mazdoor Sabha), whose Union is alleged to have initiated the request for an investigation of MRA denies that he or his Executive Committee requested it. Let us, however, consider the charges.

The attempt to found 'yellow unions' is stated as a fact. Not a single example is given. The document simply passes on to another subject. In actual experience, however, one of the most frequent by-products of MRA in industry is the recognition of unions in organizations where they have previously been unwelcome. This comes about as the natural by-product of a basic recognition by employers and trade unionists of each other's human worth in industry.

In the same breath the report charges that the results of MRA in industry are illusory. If that were so then why does the ICFTU object. Yellow unions along with the industrial settlements etc, vanish into illusion. But what the report means is that MRA is credited with results to which others feel themselves entitled. Let it be clearly stated that the credit given to MRA for the solution of difficulties comes unsolicited from those concerned. Take one example, the *Miami Herald* (March 25th, 1951) headline NATIONAL AIRLINES. PILOTS UNION SETTLE GRIEVANCES. PHILOSOPHY OF MORAL RE-ARMAMENT USHERS IN ERA OF UNDERSTANDING, was not written by Moral Re-Armament, nor did Miami consider this settlement illusory.

### In a film studio

The question of credit is secondary. The fact is that MRA makes men in industry,

both management and labour, more reasonable, more ready to agree to just solutions, and more ready to give a full day's work for a full day's wage, and *vice versa*.

One example given of interference is an Indian film studio where a new spirit in the men enabled work to be done in about one-fifth of the time previously allowed. Another is a French building firm where during a crisis men suggested they work one hour longer for the same pay to make up for the employer's sacrifices in taking on work at a loss to keep them employed. Not quoted are the many instances such as Pan-American Airways (Miami Base) where the number of grievances for arbitration fell from 491 to 17 in twelve months, and the chief shop steward's statement that production in his crew had gone up from the low sixties to 110 per cent. Is the task of the Trade Unions to wage the class struggle at all costs, or is it to regulate the conditions of work and to confront new situations with new solutions?

A further unproven charge is that MRA 'is trying to introduce its directives into factories'. Mr Otto Cadegg, Secretary of the Swiss Railway Workers, replies categorically, 'Moral Re-Armament has never given me nor any of my fellow labour leaders "directives", but it has challenged me to direct my own actions as a labour leader by absolute moral standards.' Mr Cadegg is one of a number of labour leaders whose opinion on Moral Re-Armament was solicited by the Secretariat of the ICFTU. He with four colleagues wrote a factual report in support of MRA, and received an official acknowledgment from Brussels. Not one word of this appears in the report.

### What about finances?

How about MRA's finances? The Executive Committee of the AF of L and the President of the CIO have seen the audited accounts and the list of subscribers. They expressed surprise at the small budget and at the fact that in America less than 5 per cent, and in

Britain less than 3 per cent of the contributions come from industrial sources. Yet the ICFTU report says that the amounts which MRA uses for its 'very large-scale general expenditure' can 'by no means come from the workers in the ranks of its supporters'.

Here there is a basic misunderstanding. The report assumes there is a large central fund bearing all expenses for delegates to conferences, for the handling of congresses etc. Actually MRA rarely pays the expenses of a delegate to come to its assemblies. Local friends may do so; fellow workers, even management, may do so; and all these methods are encouraged. The MRA full-time workers, not one of whom receives any salary, use any finances they may personally possess for their own expenses and those of their fellow workers.

MRA income from gifts in Britain in 1952 was £54,535: 43 per cent of the gifts were under £10, 48 per cent were between £10 and £100, and 9 per cent were £100 and over. The accounts were audited (by Messrs Price, Waterhouse & Co) as required for a charitable association under the Board of Trade.

## In America

In America the following statement was submitted last year to the Executive Council of the AF of L: 'Of the contributors to Moral Re-Armament during 1951, 40 gave more than \$3,000, and approximately 10,000 gave less than that figure. Of the contributions of \$3,000 and over, most represented capital contributions made at a real cost to the donor. Contrary to reported allegations, there were no contributions from the larger industrial organizations or corporations. Indeed, the larger contributions came mainly from retired persons.'

The ICFTU report then states: 'MRA certainly needs these funds and this certainly means that the movement has to make concessions scarcely in keeping with the original Buchman programme.' Since there are in fact no vast resources, this charge loses its cogency. And if there is

one thing for which Frank Buchman has been criticized more than another it is his refusal to adapt his 'original programme' to any particular interest. Many men would gladly have paid him large sums had he done their bidding or made the absolute standards less absolute.

In all fairness, too, it must be said that in each country Frank Buchman has democratically turned over the administration of its finances to a national committee. Why then is there so much discussion of MRA's finance? First, because if you wish to prevent people from giving to a cause, an excellent way is to invent vast millions and then hint that the cause already has all the money it needs. Second, if money can be made to stretch further by the sacrifices of those who give and of those who expend it, then others who spend less sparingly may have to change their ways. The expense of administration in industry, unions and government could be diminished by unbelievably large sums if all the men engaged in it had the spirit and standards of Moral Re-Armament.

## From slim resources

When a special financial need arises it is met from the slim resources of the full-time workers and the sacrificial giving of their friends. In this connexion the Workers' Funds have developed out of the desire of men to help their fellow workers go to assemblies and meetings. Personal gifts for the support of individuals have their place, and gifts for special occasions, but all are the fruits of a change in basic motives so that men desire to give and not to hoard. That is the richest source of MRA's finance.

Finally the charge of dictatorship. 'Buchman' says the report 'does not build up his movement from below, by recruitment from the "masses"'. His is not the path of a democratic movement, but that of a dictatorship, since he builds up his movement from the ranks of the leaders.'

Three pages later, however, the report condemns 'the technique of mass-sug-

gestion as practised by MRA'. But is either of these charges accurate?

The democracy that operates in MRA is considered by many who come from all corners of the earth the ideal they would like to carry back to their countries. No one gives orders, all work as one. Many a man has said he sees in Caux the living International instead of listening to phrases about brotherhood.

## Buchman's men

As for the men with whom Buchman has surrounded himself, if they are in any way exceptional, it is not for any capacity for individual leadership, but for their ability to work together. It is hard in this success-ridden generation to believe in the selfless working together of ordinary men and women to produce extraordinary results. What was credible in Keir Hardie and Ben Tillett and their generation has to be explained away today.

'I like Frank Buchman' Ben Tillett once said. 'He is a great man because he is a great lover of his fellow men.' When he lay dying, Tillett sent Frank Buchman this message: 'You have a great international movement. Use it. It is the hope of tomorrow. It will bring back sanity to the world.' A later generation of dockers feels the same way, and they are not men who approve dictatorship.

Among the conclusions of the report is one significant little sentence. 'There was no need for MRA', concludes the report, 'in order to find a basis for bringing people nearer to God. This is an attitude which has long been held by a considerable part of the Trade Union movement.' It is heartening to have this reassurance. The difficulty begins when God represented as absolute honesty, purity, unselfishness and love, encroaches on 'Trade Union preserves'. Then He is brusquely asked to keep out. The ICFTU speaking on behalf of 'a considerable part of the Trade Union movement', apparently

accepts God as a patron but objects to Him as a force.

## Parting of the ways

This is the parting of the ways. Frank Buchman believes the human will is the key to the ideological struggle. So he holds up to all men, the control by God of a man's will, the dictatorship of God's Holy Spirit. This is what the reporter, a few words of whose famous interview with Frank Buchman in 1936 have gone round the world, never grasped. Buchman was not approving of dictators in the interview which has been used so much against him; he was offering the one practical solution to dictatorship. And he went on to say, 'Human problems are moral. *They cannot be solved by immoral measures.* They could be solved with a God-controlled democracy, and they could be solved through a God-controlled dictatorship. Then in a God-controlled nation, capital and labour would discuss their problems peacefully and reach God-controlled solutions.'

This is a conception of Frank Buchman's political outlook very different from the one with which he is popularly credited. It is the Godlessness of Communism against which he fights. It is the Godlessness of an atheism that leads men down grey vistas of collectivism towards unattainable utopias. It is the Godlessness of the pious whose phrases fall like stones into the bread-hungry hands of the masses. It is the polite and treacherous Godlessness of the brilliant self-willed individualist who brooks no control, and it is the furious Godlessness of the morally defeated who fears to be found out.

One of Frank Buchman's deepest convictions is that, 'Labour led by God will lead the world', and to this he adds the ominous thought, 'Labour without God will wreck the world.' That is his *Credo* and he will work with any man, Left, Right or Centre who will help realize that programme.