

Indian Opinion

MORAL RE-ARMAMENT WORLD ASSEMBLY CELEBRATES ANNIVERSARY OF INDIA'S INDEPENDENCE

(From An Esteemed Correspondent)

Caux-sur-Montreux, Switzerland, August 19 (By Air Mail).

THE flags of both India and Pakistan flew this week above the Mountain House at Caux, where the Moral Re-Armament World Assembly is in session, in celebration of India's independence. Indians, Pakistanis, Burmese, Indonesians, Sinhalese and Africans grouped around the flag-staff, and the brocaded silks of the East and the traditional costumes of the Scandinavian countries provided a brilliantly colourful background for the celebrations.

Special sessions of the assembly were presided over by Dr. Frank N. D. Buchman, who spent three years in India at the close of the first World War and became a personal friend of Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Motilal Nehru, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Rabindranath Tagore. "I am a lover of India," he said.

Representatives from Australia, South Africa, Ceylon, Burma and Indonesia extended congratulations to India before an audience of 1,200 from 52 countries. They spoke of the great heritage of India's past, the difficulties with which she is faced today and the contribution she can make to the future of East and West.

The Hon. C. P. Stoneham, formerly Minister of Transport in Victoria and a member of the all-party parliamentary delegation to the Assembly, said he brought greetings to India from her sister Dominion, Australia. "We believe in a common destiny for that part of the world," he said. We are conscious of the great things India has accomplished and at Caux we see a glimpse of the glorious destiny that awaits her."

Mr. Bremer Hofmeyr of South Africa said he felt very humble to speak on this occasion. He referred to his late cousin, the Hon. J. H. Hofmeyr, the former Deputy Prime Minister of South Africa, who had been a great friend of India. Indicating the change which is taking place in

South Africa, he spoke of the reception of the Moral Re-Armament play "The Forgotten Factor" throughout the Union, and quoted from the editorial page of the Bloemfontein "Friend": "It is high time for everyone, men and nations, not only to listen but to act. If it is the world's only hope against materialism, it is at least a safe and shining hope." He said that it was with the greatest joy that the cast of "The Forgotten Factor" had responded to the invitation to present the play in the Gandhi Hall in Durban. He quoted also from an article in "Indian Opinion", founded by Mahatma Gandhi, which read: "This work is a light-house in this dark and stormy world of ours and it will guide us to the right way. It has given us new hope and strength in our dark days."

Mr. Chitta Sen Mazumdar, recently General Secretary of the Bengal Students' Congress with a membership of a million, said: "It is significant that I who have lost all my property in East Pakistan should be taking part in these celebrations. This has only become possible here at Caux. I am convinced that this guiding philosophy will go to the East, and the East will give it to the whole world."

Mr. Waheed Zaman, who with his family is a refugee from Hyderabad, spoke of Pakistan relations with India. "Every nation wants the other nation to change," he said. "But here at Caux I have learnt that if you want the other person or the other nation to change, you have to start with yourself and your own nation. We Muslims pray five times a day to God. That is where I need change. I asked God for more and more instead of making certain that He was the ruling power in my life. My prayer today is that Pakistan will be a spiritual force in remaking the world."

Mr. Hamid Farooq son of Mahommed Ali, well-known translator of the Koran into English,

who had earlier recited the first few verses of the Koran during the flag-hoisting ceremony, referred to the political situation in Pakistan. "Many Pakistanis want a change," he said, "but they cannot agree upon what change they want. I am convinced the change we need is to live by the absolute moral standards and the guidance of God. This is what Dr. Buchman teaches, and the prophet Mahommed said: 'God does not change nations unless individuals change first.'"

"The prophet taught that knowledge was the lost property of Muslims," Mr. Farooq told the Assembly. "Muslims should pick it up wherever they find it and take it home. We should come here to Caux in the spirit of taking back our lost property."

Mr. Mazumdar also described the economic and social conditions of India today. He said that Gandhi had brought a moral focus in political crises. After his death a great vacuum had been left. Who was to fill it? "To change and live by the four absolute moral standards is the only hope," he said. "People say, 'Is it practical?' What is more practical? Is bitterness, dishonesty and selfishness? We must change and create a new nation."

"Today we see the beginning of a new East; with Pakistan, India and Ceylon standing together," said Devar Surya Sena, the celebrated Sinhalese. "I bring the greetings of the small sister, Ceylon, to her sister on this happy day. I believe the great treasures of India will be brought to new life and spent in the remaking of the world."

I.N.T.U. Official On Moral Re-Armament

Caux-sur-Montreux, Switzerland.

"Gandhi's philosophy and Moral Re-Armament are coins from the same mint," declared Mr. Days Ram Beri, Vice-President of the Indian National Trades Union Congress, in an interview before leaving Montreux for Rome last month. "If Gandhi were alive today he would be taking a great part in Caux."

Mr. Beri, who had previously spent a number of days at the World Assembly, was on his way back to India after seeing Moral Re-Armament at work in the London docks and the industrial Ruhr.

"Change is the only idea adequate to remake Europe, India or any part of the world," the Indian Labour leader continued. "Whether we give it its English, its German or its Indian name, the snake is

materialism. And snakes bite in any language. They kill people. We will never change the world until we kill that snake.

"It is easy to see where others need to change," he added. "It is not so easy to change yourself. Dr. Buchman is a great man. What he says comes true, because he starts with himself."