

## DANES CONTRIBUTE TO HOPE IN THE CITIES

In July Mohamed Mansuri and Keld Jorgensen, both from Denmark, visited Britain for two weeks. Councillor Mansuri, originally from Jordan, is a Council member of a Copenhagen municipality, and Director of the Islamic Cultural Centre there.

Their programme in Britain was co-ordinated by Hope in the Cities, and jointly arranged by Directors of Racial Equality Councils, civic and community leaders, and the police. They were received by Members of Parliament, by the Lord Mayors of Liverpool and Bradford, and by Imans in a number of cities. Interviewed on BBC Radio Merseyside, Councillor Mansuri spoke of the work they were doing in Denmark 'to build a bridge of faith between different groups in the country'. In Cardiff, they spoke to the executive of the Race Equality Council. One member thanked them for the hope they had brought. 'You have given us the chance to start again.'

*Gerald Henderson*

## FFF SEMINAR IN LITHUANIA.

A seminar on 'Living in a changing world – making faith practical and relevant' brought 30 people together near Kaunas in August. The ancient religious centre of Pazlailis, now being restored to its former glory, provided a very special atmosphere. Topics included the dynamic of silence, personal attitudes and relationships, family life, a study of reconciliation in three European countries, and the ethnic situation in Lithuania.

*John Bennett, on behalf of the group.*

## RECONCILIATION, GIFT OF GOD AND SOURCE OF NEW LIFE

In June 10,000 Christians took part in the Second European Ecumenical Gathering in Graz, Austria. Their aim was to define the role of believers working for reconciliation in a divided world. Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant Christians emphasised they would first have to reconcile with each other.

Mrs Brigalia Hlöpe Bam, Secretary General of the Council of Churches of South Africa, described the measures taken towards justice, redress and forgiveness, aimed at laying foundations for a new South Africa. She smiled as she said, 'There is something flattering in the fact that some Europeans believe Africa can teach them something.'

In a huge pavilion, 100 organisations displayed their exhibits. Among them, Hubert Eggemann, helped

by German, French, British and Swiss friends, displayed publications on Caux. The Caux stand attracted many visitors. Many young people from Eastern Europe shared with us their concerns and their search for hope; there were young Albanian women frightened by their situation, and a young Lithuanian woman asked herself what steps towards reconciliation she could take vis à vis the young Russians at the gathering.

We left more aware than ever of the huge tasks before us, but when 10,000 people pray, sing and walk together in the same direction, what a great hope is thereby expressed.

*Michel and Catherine Koechlin*

## 'IS HE MY BROTHER?' AVAILABLE

This 28-minute video had its premiere at Caux this summer. The story of two Kenyans, Stanley Kinga and Alan Knight, men of different races and backgrounds, who have been working to build a hate-free, fear-free, greed-free Kenya, it is available from MRA Productions London: price £15 (plus £2 p&p in the EU). Also available from Grosvenor Books, USA, and MRA Productions in Australia and Canada.

## BRAZIL - NEXT STEP FOR THE SITIO

Sitio Sao Luiz is the MRA conference and training centre in the hills above Rio de Janeiro. For 32 years it has been a fruitful meeting ground for labour and management, port workers, favela leaders, taxi drivers, students and trade unionists. Initiatives have been generated there which have brought social and economic change to large segments of the population.

Now Ernesto Veras, Luis Puig, Erwin Zimmerman and others responsible for the centre have launched a campaign to raise US\$100,000 for necessary improvements to the campus. These will increase their ability to receive people by at least 40%, and will allow the centre to be hired out when not needed for MRA gatherings. 'If you think you can help,' they write, 'please don't miss the chance!' They can be reached at Cx Postal 90250 - 25621.970 Petropolis-RJ, Brasil; Fax +55 21 502 1262; or [mrbrasil@compuland.com.br](mailto:mrbrasil@compuland.com.br)

Ernesto who, with his wife Tania, hosts the centre, writes: 'This week-end (13-14 September) 74 community leaders from Rio de Janeiro and around met here. We have been encouraged by our growing relationship with these poor communities. Most of these leaders are committed and doing their best to



achieve tangible improvements in their communities. A National Gathering of Community leaders will be held on 21-23 November in Fortaleza, Brazil's fifth largest city. This gathering is being organised by the leaders who attended the National Gathering in Sitio Sao Luiz two years ago.

If you wish to keep up to date with news about Sitio Sao Luiz and MRA in Brazil, both in English and Portuguese, you can visit Ernesto's homepage: <http://homepage.usr.com/e/elveras>.

## STOP PRESS

*The Independent* (London), September 15, writes of an international initiative to be launched the next day by the British Chancellor of the Exchequer to lift the burden of debt payments from the world's poorest nations by the start of the new millennium. '(This) will delight the *Jubilee 2000* campaign run by churches, unions and other organisations,' writes the paper. '.....in an echo of the other campaign, the working title of the Government's new initiative is *Debt 2000*.'

## MRA'S CONTRIBUTION: PEOPLE MADE WHOLE

Brian Lightowler's and Howard Grace's comments on the Melbourne Consultation Report (June WB) touched on the need for a fresh presentation of MRA.

Rather than trying to express what we are, I feel we should concentrate on assessing what we, as a world network, have to offer.

What is Frank Buchman's heritage? Looking back on his contribution to this century, I would emphasise the welding of the human personality. The separation of Church and State in Western Civilisation was made inevitable when the Christian message became an institution, holding power in the affairs of men. This has been increasing through the centuries. The result is a split personality, individually and collectively. Look at the way an immoral act in State affairs is justified by saying it is 'in the national interest'.

Buchman was not a philosopher. He had a pragmatic outlook. He did not offer a set plan to implement his call to 'remake the world'. He worked intuitively and chose his principles from other people. For those he touched at the beginning in the universities, primarily in a Christian environment, the four standards were like searchlights, and rows of these young men and women bridged the gap in all aspects of their own lives. An essential message resulted from that: to change the world, start with the individual.

The second essential discovery is 'guidance'. The binding element in a community was no more a set of dogmas and rules presented as valid for all, but an intuitive march forward in which any man, woman and

child could engage. Here again, when guidance is searched and followed in all aspects of life, the gap is bridged between body and soul, heaven and earth, institutional power and spiritual demands.

Those who accepted those two elements became new people, people made whole. They had reconciled their actions with their deepest aspirations, in the same way as Buchman was reconciled with himself and his God when he put his life in order at Keswick, and later in China.

This experience of people becoming whole is not only an answer to stress – one of the main diseases of our time – but also to the split in human communities.

The challenge is to express this today in a language which is understandable to all cultures without cutting out the essentials. The fact that the four standards came from the Sermon on the Mount is secondary. The main need is to offer an acceptable mirror, a set of values which encourages every person to bridge the gap between what they say or believe and what they live. This leads to the recognition of a universal authority, valid for all. Isn't it amazing to discover by experience (that is, 'scientifically') that Nature (or the Creator) has put in the heart of us all a chord which is common and can sound the same tune.

*Charles Piguet*

## MRA'S IDENTITY

Brian Lightowler's piece (June '97) is important. We must clarify what MRA stands for when (hopefully as soon as possible) a properly-constituted world body is set up to represent MRA.

National bodies could pursue their defined religious or cultural missions, while cooperating in the world work of MRA and being affiliated to this world body.

This body might have a limited role in (1) coordination (2) proposing world initiatives (3) determining the eligibility of proposed MRA national bodies (4) being the custodian of the definition of MRA. It should consist of people delegated and mandated by most, or all, of the established MRA national bodies (plus a few co-options) – but not by self-selected volunteers.

*Neville Cooper*

## PASSING ON THE BATON

I am passing on the baton after two years with the Co-ordination Group. There is nothing mysterious about the 'CG'. It aims to help all of us to care for the world MRA family. I began to care for parts of the world with which I have had little association. The CG has challenged me to create a culture that pulls anyone who comes my way towards the discovery of a Creator who loves the world and every single individual in it.

The world today is looking for an answer. But be clear on this point. The answer is not in any man or any group of men. The answer rests in the living God. It rests in a God-controlled person. It rests in a God-controlled nation. It rests in God-controlled supernaturalism.

Frank Buchman, Metropolitan Opera House, New York, 1935

(quote suggested by Arthur Strong)



We are available for people who want to talk, about their work, their wishes for their nation and about any difficulties they may have in relationships. We listen and, most of all, encourage people to listen to their own inner voice.

Personality conflicts are always possible wherever there is human nature. But I often wonder why some of us do not apply to ourselves, much more quickly, our conference themes such as 'healing the past' and 'agenda for reconciliation'. Do we need to recapture the depths and freshness of our calling, when first it touched our hearts and we became enthralled by the certainty that 'adequate, accurate information can come from the mind of God to the mind of man'?

It is understandable to want to move with the times. Minimal structures may be needed. But if our concern is to find God's way for ourselves, our nations and the teams we work with, the next step is simple: go back to God and ask him what to do.

*Elsa Vogel*

May I also be allowed a few words as I retire from the CG along with Elsa.

If crisis can be defined as the meeting point of danger and opportunity, our world work is surely in a good old crisis. There are sad conflicts in several of our national works, there are issues to work through in our flimsy global governance, and big issues concerning the nature of our work and its future direction, all heightened in intensity by fears about shortages of money and manpower, as well as fears about dilution of the message or a lack of effectiveness. One thing piles upon another.

Perhaps nothing short of a global transformation is needed. Tough decisions will have to be made. A streamlining may be called for and clarity on what we are about. May I offer three thoughts as we enter this interesting period in our life together.

1. Frank Buchman said that the only thing to do in a crisis is to change people. We can play around with whether it is we who change people or whether God does it with us as His 'helpers', but I think we know what Frank meant. Let's be sure we all do it.

2. As we embark on these necessary changes, let us be sure we are all run by a love of God, a love of one another and a love for this world work, and that we claim great globs of grace from the divine source. Those who know me know that I can easily get impatient or frustrated or even angry if I don't think things are going right. If these things fuel our desire for change in our world work we'll do it a disservice.

3. It is natural that we should think about questions of leadership. There are different types of leadership skills. As we quest leadership let us be sure it is not so much strong leadership as good leadership, and that the people involved have good person-to-person and consensus-building skills, not just management skills or a lot of self-confidence. We are a Spirit-led fellowship. That Holy Spirit is sometimes strident but at other times shy, and surely cannot be managed.

*Bryan Hamlin*

## THE CAR AND THE ENGINE

Frank Buchman once spoke of MRA as 'the car' and of the Oxford Group as 'the engine'.

What is the car today? There are a number: FFF, Hope in the Cities, Caux Round Table, Media Forum and more. Is there one 'car' that encapsulates the challenge to be met in our age as Moral Re-Armament did in 1938?

Today, in East and West, North and South, the challenge is to find and establish freedom – personally and collectively. 'We are not yet free; we have merely achieved the freedom to be free', as President Mandela said. 'Foundations for Freedom' in my view links personal and collective change, embracing all the other 'cars' as well as specific FFF programmes.

What is the engine today? Our Consultations have necessarily focused on organisation and more recently training. Following the start made in the last Consultation, should the next focus be exclusively on the spiritual basis – the 'engine' – of MRA today?

*Graeme Cordiner*

## THE SAP OF RENEWAL

At the threshold of a new century we are reminded that MRA has come of age. Next July it will be 90 years since Buchman's Keswick experience.

This summer at Caux we spent three afternoons on the need for renewal, focusing on our methods of governance, enlistment and funding and the challenge of combining core truths with the flexibility required in an age of rapid change. We were aware that a new flowering can only spring from the sap of spiritual renewal in ourselves.

When faced with difficult relationships or conflicts within MRA, it is worth pondering how this work came about. Trapped by feelings against people who had wronged him, Buchman was given the grace to discover where he himself had been wrong and to put it right. It freed him and released a strong current of spiritual power.

Some conflicts are due to genuine disagreements or different perceptions of the facts. In that case they are not to be feared. Discussed with open minds, they can help us to get closer to objectivity and the truth.

Wrong motives give rise to a different kind of conflict often resulting in power struggles and misery all round. But there is a way out: taking seriously the niggling doubt as to whether I am as blameless and right as I hope to be. When that is allowed to happen, God has a chance to speak and to answer deadlock.

I myself was trapped and preoccupied by such a conflict longer than I care to think about. Early this year it became clear to me: 'Whatever wrong anyone else has done, your ever-active desire to be number one has been a hindrance and a burden for your friends.' I wrote to the person concerned and asked for forgiveness. It did not solve everything, but at least my own heart, which was weary and on guard after a long conflict, was freed.



This is the ABC of our message. We cannot produce renewal ourselves, but it may be given if we are open for it.

**Jens J Wilhelmsen**

### MRA BOARD REPRESENTATIVES MEET

Thirty of us representing 18 MRA boards across the world had three very useful sessions in Caux on August 11 and 12. A comprehensive report is being prepared and will be sent from Paris in the first days of October to all participants. Anyone who wishes to receive it can order it from me (MRA Paris) and it will be sent by e-mail or by post.

**Philippe Lasserre**

### ONE CAUX TO THE NEXT/ WELCOME TO PARIS

The evaluation of this summer and preparation for the next will take place at the MRA house in Boulogne, near Paris, from Wednesday October 22 (dinner time) to Sunday, October 26 (lunch included). We will be happy to welcome those responsible for the main sectors of life in Mountain House as well as one or preferably two of the organisers of each session for 1998. It is also important to have a few who feel responsible for the overall 'learning community' spirit in Caux. The signatories below will ensure the best possible balance of participation.

Among points on the agenda:

- 1) Analysis of your answers to the questionnaire on Caux '97 (for those who do not have it, it is available from your World Bulletin distributor).
- 2) Community life in Caux '98.
- 3) Finalising of title and text for the 1998 programme.
- 4) Sessions and special events.
- 5) Finance and personnel.

We will also ensure there is enough time during these days for spiritual inspiration and sharing.

Please announce yourselves to Chavannes, Lasserres or Tates before October 10: Tel: +33 1 41 10 40 55 (home); & +33 1 41 10 40 50 (office).

Fax: +33 1 41 10 80 67.

E-mail: MRA\_France@compuserve.com

Cost of stay: 200 French Francs per day per person.

**Frédéric and Nathalie Chavanne, Amina Dikedi,  
Philippe and Lisbeth Lasserre, Thomas Bräckle,  
Tom Jones, Kumar Raval,  
Christoph and Marianne Spreng**

### FACTS ON FAXES, PHONES AND ADDRESSES

**Switzerland:** Caux Edition (Caux Books) has a new e-mail address and a new phone and fax number: e-mail: bookch@caux.ch

Tel: +41 21 962 9469 Fax: +41 21 962 9465

**Australia:** the area code for Canberra has changed to 02 and existing numbers have a 6 added to the front; e.g. the fax number for MRA, previously +61 6 285 3616, is now +61 2 6285 3616.

## Calendar of Events

SEP '97	<u>Tirley Garth Britain</u>	FFF International Course	Sep	4 - 23
OCT '97	<u>Kobe Japan</u>	Asia: Dialogue with neighbours	Oct	4 - 5
OCT '97	<u>Paris France</u>	'From one Caux to the next': Evaluation of Caux '97, planning for Caux '98	Oct	22 - 26
JAN '98	<u>Asia Plateau India</u>	Asia/Pacific Regional Consultation	Jan	12 - 17
FEB '98	<u>Armagh Melbourne</u>	Effective Living training course begins	Feb	1 - Apr 4

*The deadline for the next Bulletin is Wednesday, 15 October 1997*

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Those named below have been asked to distribute this in their area: Asia: South - C Iralu; Malaysia - Santa Maria; Philippines - Calma; Japan, Rest - Nagano; Australia - A Lancaster; Pacific - Annette Porteous; Africa: East - Patel; South - Euvrard; Zimbabwe - Sibare; Nigeria, Rest - Agbihi; N. America: Canada - Weeks; USA - Ruffin; Latin America: Brazil, Rest - Puig; Caribbean - Fiona Edwards; Europe: France - Lasserre; Germany - Bräckle; Denmark - Jørgensen; Finland - Koponen; Norway - Eskeland; Sweden - Söderlund; Switzerland - Mottu; UK - C Evans; Austria - Vock; Netherlands, Belgium - J de Pous; Rest of Europe - E Peters;  
Middle East: - Christodoulides