




Song
of
Asia



*What will Asia be known for -
will it be for the blast of bombs?
the cry of suffering?*



*...or could it be
the still small voice
that speaks in every heart?*



Many forces have guided man and jolted history. Tyrants have suffocated freedom; reformers have sparked off cultural and social earthquakes; science and technology have enabled man to reach the stars and explore the depths of oceans; grinding poverty has made life miserable for millions and led to bloody revolutions. In the midst of the daily jostle and bustle, the hub-bub of city life and the solitude of the countryside there can be heard a voice, quiet but clear: the still small voice that speaks in every heart. A stable and reliable source, it can guide people and nations. It can not only tell us right from wrong, but also give us a guideline for the day and for our lives. The inspired plan for the settlement of a problem, personal or national, can be given to anyone. The power of the inner voice can give insight into motives and needs and transform character. Obedience to it has led men to make history. In silence are born the ideas that can remake men and nations.

Much of the world's anxious attention focusses on Asia
Ceasefire has been signed in Indochina. But fighting
continues.

American involvement has shrunk.

The Middle East flexes its muscles having discovered a
new weapon—oil.

Japan, Asia's foremost industrialised nation, feels insecure
and unsure of the years ahead.

Australasia is identifying itself with Asia.

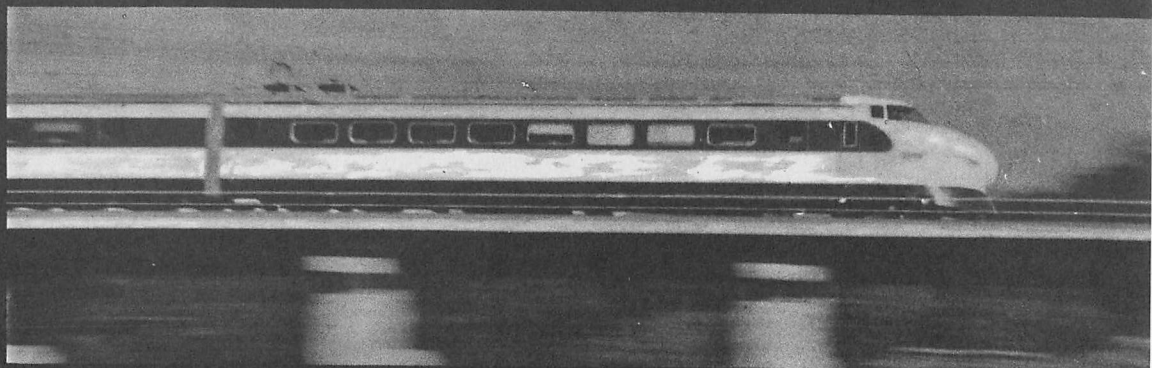
The first steps towards reconciliation on the Indian
subcontinent have been taken.

The world watches China. What does the future hold for
her 700 millions?

Russia has begun to exploit the vast mineral riches under
the frozen surface of Siberia.

But neither wealth nor power have brought security to Asia.
What will tomorrow's Asia bring?





In January 1973, many Asians were taking part in a conference at Asia Plateau, the Moral Re-Armament centre in India. The news of the ceasefire in Vietnam broke at the same time.

People asked, "Will the peace last?" A group of forty young men and women from a dozen Asian lands started to work on a musical revue putting their conviction and facts together and presenting them through dance, music and drama. That was the beginning of *Song of Asia*. It gives a glimpse of what Asia could be—a continent ready to learn and to teach, to forgive and to give. It highlights the hidden treasures of Asia—its faith, its colour, its basic unity amidst its diversity. It weaves a pattern of the history, the heritage and the culture of this vast continent. Profound truths alternate with fun and humour as the show unfolds and true stories are enacted on stage.

The Smile of the Apsara, a scene in *Song of Asia*, is written by a young Cambodian in the form of an epic poem about the aspirations of his people, in which he says that sincere apologies could be the fire that would consume hatred and suspicion in Indochina.

ALL KNOW THAT THIS CONTINENT of Asia is a paradox: a continent of rich truth and poor performance. We know serenity and noise; great ideals, great struggles. Can these paradoxes dissolve and in their place can we hear a symphony of real joy and satisfaction, material and moral?

Ages ago the ancient story of Asia caught the attention of the world. Perhaps there was no region unaffected by Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism and Christianity, which had their origin on this continent. But what was preached was not always practised. The result was division, weakness, poverty and harshness to man.

Today two great tasks await Asia.

One: To give a better life to the hundreds of millions living on her soil.

Two: To answer the search for something that satisfies the thirst in human hearts.

The cast of *Song of Asia* have been sparked by a vision of a new Asia and a new world. They are ready to work hard and at no pay to give practical shape to this vision.

Song of Asia is an attempt to throw light on what Asia's future can be.

RAJMOHAN GANDHI

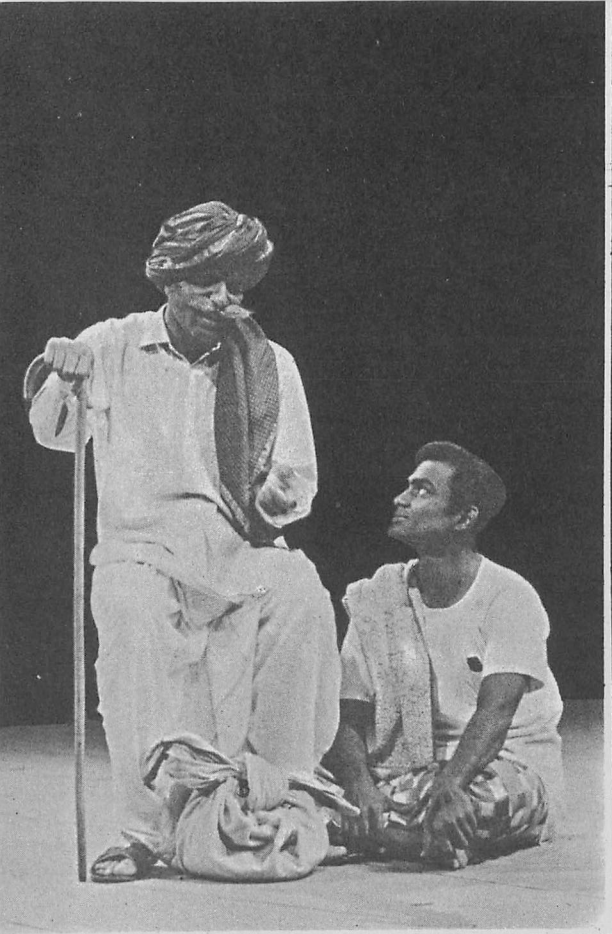
IN TWO AND A HALF HOURS, we have witnessed an Asia with her joy, happiness, suffering, sorrow and hope, an Asia whose destiny is unfolding and where neighbours can really rejoice in each other's greatness. It was not an ordinary entertainment. What we saw on the stage are practical solutions to many current problems with which individuals, families and even nations are faced. Many mothers are still crying over the loss of their sons in many conflicts and wars. We long to find men who would have the courage to put an end to the bitterness in their hearts, effectively avert more bloodshed and bring reconciliation.

You have given us a ray of hope—hope of resurrection of mankind, free from hate and fear. We have the conviction that one day your aspirations will become reality.

TIANETHONE CHANTHARASY
speaking at the premiere of 'Song of Asia' in
New Delhi where he was Ambassador of Laos.

Song of Asia





Mama, a wise old Indian peasant, knows the secret of settling fights. He tells about his experiences on an Asian Journey and thus takes the audience through many lands.

The Maoris are depicted crossing the Pacific before discovering New Zealand.

In twenty-two months *Song of Asia* has travelled by rail, road and air to twenty-three cities in India, Laos and South Vietnam. Performances have been seen by over 120,000 people.





A Turkish dance.

A guerrilla leader asks forgiveness from the man he had sought to destroy.

A Chinese family whose son was killed by Japanese soldiers helps a Japanese doctor overcome bitterness towards America for dropping the atom bomb.

The four dancers who weave a pattern of Asia's colour and diversity.



Laos



Vientiane, April 3, 1974: Prince Souvanna Phouma (right) and Prince Souphannouvong (waving) meet for the first time in ten years on the occasion of the new Coalition Government being formed.

THE KINGDOM OF LAOS is locked by land in the Indochinese peninsula. It has felt the ravages of war for over two decades. Its population of three million are looking hopefully and anxiously to the new Coalition Government, installed on April 9, 1974.

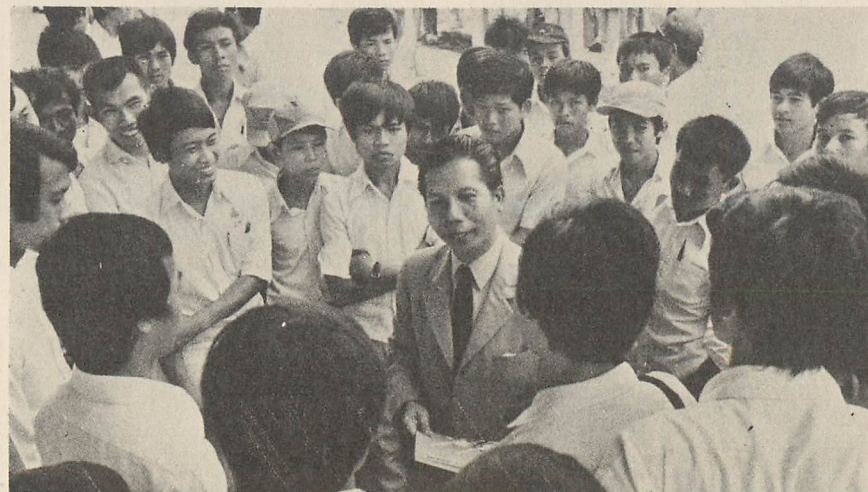
On April 3, 1974, the very day of the historic reconciliation between Prince Souphannouvong, Pathet Lao leader, and his half-brother, the Prime Minister Prince Souvanna Phouma, *Song of Asia* flew into Vientiane.

To the premiere performance on April 10 came the Prime Minister and members of the Coalition Cabinet from both sides; the diplomatic corps and generals of the armed forces were among those in the 1,200 strong audience. In a message to the Moral Re-Armament group, Prince Souvanna

Phouma wrote, "Laos being firmly attached to the great moral principles in all their forms and manifestations is very happy to welcome this artistic group on her soil."

Xat Lao, the leading Lao language daily, wrote, "What moved one most was the morality that instead of killing one another, men can reconcile." A journalist asked one of the party, "How is it that a play was created that is exactly relevant to Laos today?"

Invited by a Committee of Hosts headed by the Secretary General of Foreign Affairs, Phagna Leuam Rajasombat, the cast was hosted by many families. Among them was the family of Mr. Tianethone Chantharasy, now Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in the Government. Two of his daughters participate in the play.



Mr. Tianethone Chantharasy meets students after a presentation by the cast of *Song of Asia* at the Vientiane High School.



At the conclusion of the performance for the Royal family, His Majesty King Savang Vatthana presents flowers to the director of *Song of Asia*.

His Majesty the King, Her Majesty the Queen, with the Crown Prince and Princess watch the special performance of *Song of Asia*.

Laos

A command performance for His Majesty King Savang Vatthana, Her Majesty the Queen, the Crown Prince and Crown Princess, members of the Royal Family and the King's Council climaxed the six week visit. The performance was given in the Ho Kham (Golden Hall) of the Vientiane Palace. Both the King and the Queen then pinned medals individually onto each of the eighty-strong force.





Rajmohan Gandhi
addresses the student body
at Dong Dok Teachers
Training College, Vientiane.
These students come from
all parts of the country.

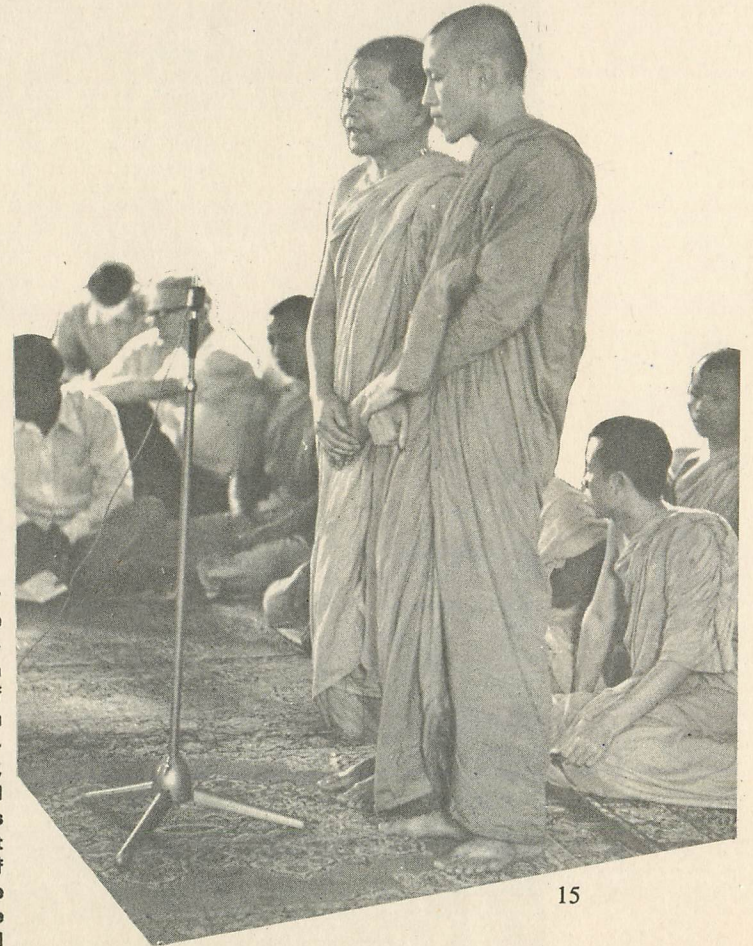


Interview with members
of the cast at the
Vientiane radio station.



Buddhist monks
watch an
outdoor
performance.

Inside the very pagoda where the Coalition Government was sworn in, the Abbot of the Wat Ong Tu welcomed a programme of singing, speaking and sketches for his monks. Speaking at the beginning of the occasion he said, "We have the same duties and responsibilities".





South Vietnam

FIERCE FIGHTING has been raging outside Saigon for weeks. The silence of the nights is broken by the crackle of gunfire. The wailing of the siren announces the beginning and the end of the curfew over Saigon from midnight to five in the morning.

Song of Asia arrived in Saigon on May 15, 1974, for two weeks at the invitation of the Minister of Culture Education and Youth, Mr. Ngo Khanh Tinh.

Students from fifteen universities of South Vietnam, attending an annual students' congress in Saigon, were invited to a showing. 900 came: Mr. Nguyen Cat who writes for *Song Than*, a leading independent daily, was in the audience. He observed in an article, "When the cast sang 'Vietnam! Vietnam' the young people were moved

to tears. What caused the most profound soul searching in the minds of the students was the statement by a guerrilla when he was going to avenge his two dead brothers: 'If I can have the courage to kill a man, why can't I love him enough to make him a different man?' A second-year student of bio-chemistry remarked: 'We were deeply moved and are giving serious thought to the truths expressed. We will attempt to direct our future activities in a similar direction.'

Mr. Cat is also a war photographer and came to the theatre directly from the battlefield.

Afterwards he said, "For the past twenty years I have been cynical because I have seen nothing but war. But now I have found a solution because I have found hope."

The front of the theatre in Saigon.



Mr. Ngo Khanh Tinh, Minister of Culture, Education and Youth, *Song of Asia's* host in South Vietnam, speaks at a reception for the cast.



The *Song Than* produced a full page on the show which included a review and interviews with members of the cast and audience. The reviewer wrote, "Never has the Vietnamese public been exposed to such a treat of beautiful and moving moments...It showed that from each heart can spring the beginning of a new world."

The cast met people of their own age group: young men and women who had never known peace—who had lost close relatives and friends. They met the people of Vietnam—after the shows, during visits to schools, colleges, homes and at press conferences, receptions and gatherings. They began to understand the cost of war and the longings of the Indochinese.

General Le Trung Truc, Vice-President of the Co-ordinating Agency for the application of the Paris Agreements, said, "Though Vietnam did not initiate the war, many countries have suffered because of it, including those of some of the members of the cast. For this I would like to apologise."

Mr. Cao Van Danh is President of the Confederation of Petrol Station Tenants. He employs a hundred men. Due to the economic recession in the wake of the American withdrawal, he had planned to halve his work force. He had asked his secretary to give the list of the names of men who were to lose their jobs. That night he came to *Song of Asia*. "Absolute love stuck in my mind. I felt I could not sack my

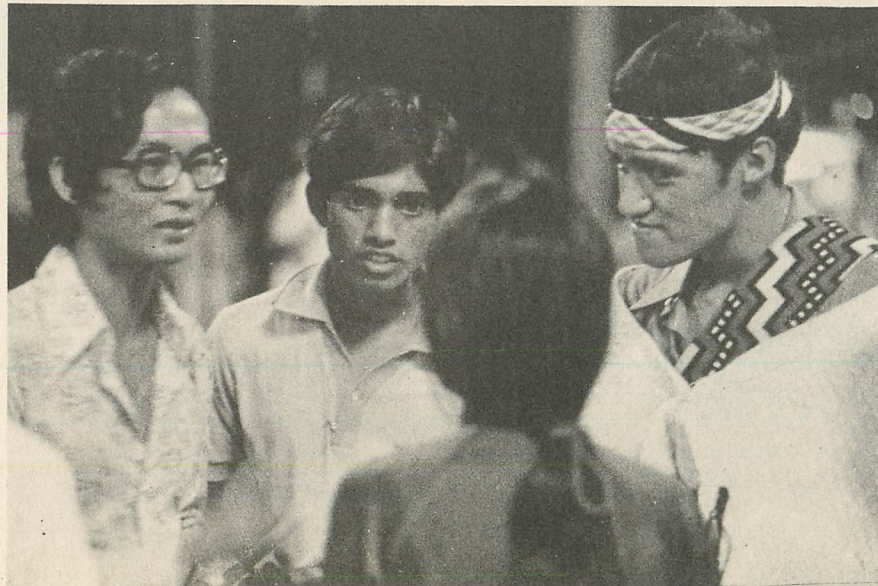
workers." He called a meeting of the 300 Saigon petrol station tenants. He told them of his decision. "I asked them to do likewise," he said. "The motion was accepted. So far no worker has been retrenched."

Voice of Freedom Radio broadcasts eighteen hours daily to the North. They carried a programme given by the cast six times every day for a week.

At a special occasion to welcome the cast, Dr. Phan Quang Dan, Deputy Prime Minister, said, "More than anybody else we know that our misfortunes have come, not so much from material causes as from moral causes. Much of our present difficulties come from hatred and misunderstanding rather than from economic difficulties proper. At present, though we are having to defend ourselves, we think



General Tran Thien Khiem, Prime Minister of the Republic of Vietnam, with other members of the Cabinet arrives at the theatre for the Saigon premiere.



Kishore Mukherjee, India, and Te Rangi Huata, Maori from New Zealand, meet students after a special performance for university students from the whole country.

South Vietnam



that the final solution will be a moral and spiritual and political solution.”

Since the visit of *Song of Asia*, a group of students as well as civil servants, officers of the armed forces and professional people meet regularly to plan for national unity and a transformation of society through their own

change. A girl student at the Faculty of Arts said, “I used to think there was nothing wrong with me. Then I saw *Song of Asia* and I realised I had done nothing constructive. The question we need to ask ourselves is not what the country has done for me, but what have I done for my country.”



A South Indian member of the cast speaking in a Tamil Temple in Saigon. The President of the Indian Association in Saigon said that as a result of *Song of Asia*, relations between the Vietnamese and the Indian community have been improved.

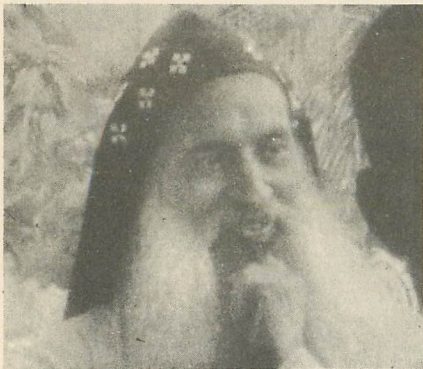
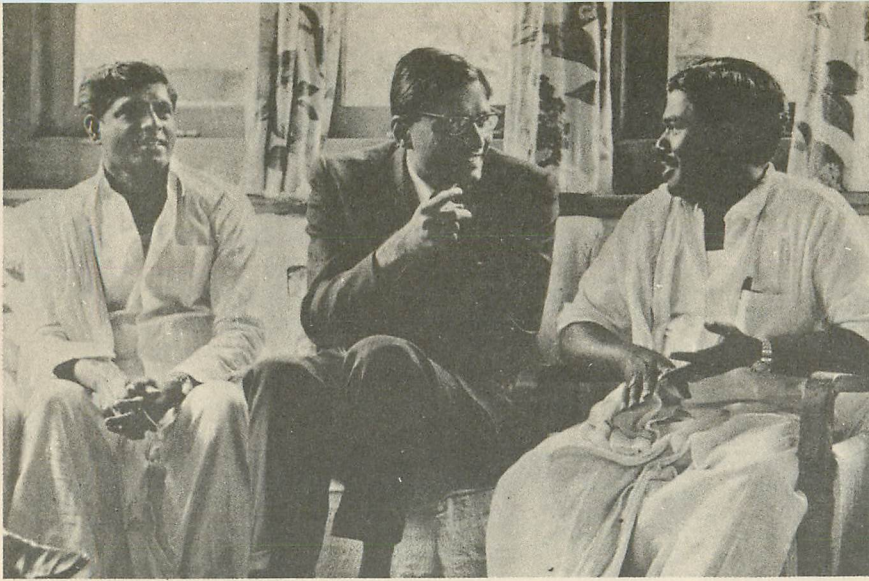
General Le Trung Truc, addressing the cast of *Song of Asia*.

The whole show was simultaneously translated by a team of Vietnamese artists.



India

from the southernmost tip to New Delhi

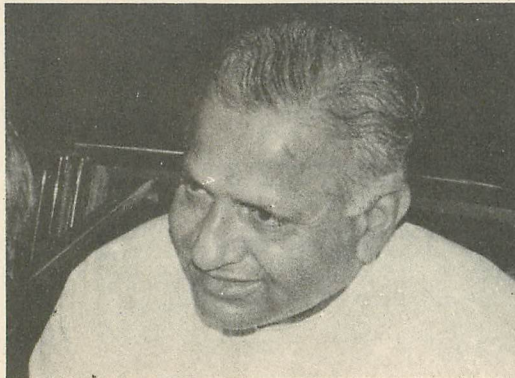


Rajmohan Gandhi talks with Coimbatore trade union leaders.

At Trivandrum, Catholic Archbishop Mar Gregorius receives the cast in his palace. "We must work, plan and go forward together," he told them.

The Mayor of Madras hosts a civic reception.

The Karnataka Chief Minister at the show.



SOUTH INDIA

Soon after its creation at Asia Plateau, *Song of Asia* moved to the tea and coffee growing Nilgiri Hills of Tamil Nadu. It was invited to present its premiere performance at the 1973 Ootacamund Summer Festival. *The Hindu* of Madras called it "a lively programme, handled with consummate skill."

One man present in the premiere audience was a trade union leader from the Hindustan Photo Film Factory. Moved by the play, he apologised to his former managing director and a rival trade union leader for past bitterness. Another trade unionist who controls 22,000 plantation workers said, "You have shown how we can be honest and in times of quiet, think of the mistakes we have made and correct them."

Union leaders and industrialists sponsored *Song of Asia* jointly in Coimbatore.

Brecks school in Ootacamund sent

many students to witness a special school matinee performance. A few days earlier some boys had broken into the Principal's office and mutilated the book in which a personal record was kept of the students. They were suspected, but refused to own up. After seeing the show and exchanging ideas with some of the cast, they apologised to the principal and later to the whole school for their action. Students began returning stolen library books. The Principal declared a "general amnesty" and also a "library book returning day"!

The group went to Kerala and Madras. At the last performance of the play in South India, Chief Minister Devraj Urs of Karnataka spoke: "The theme is beautifully conceived and executed. I have imbibed the moral of unity, peace and love... let us put all our efforts to make the still small voice heard louder and clearer in the world."

EASTERN INDIA

Meghalaya

The first show in the capital, Shillong was inaugurated by Mr. B. B. Lyngdoh, Finance Minister.

Assam

Performances were given to capacity audiences in Jorhat, Sibsagar and Gauhati. On the opening night in Gauhati, the Speaker of the Assam Legislative Assembly, Shri Ramesh Chandra Barooah said, "The problems of the world could be solved if we live the ideas of Moral Re-Armament."

Calcutta

A bustling city of eight million people. It has many faces: a rich history and culture; industrial centre; city of political struggles.

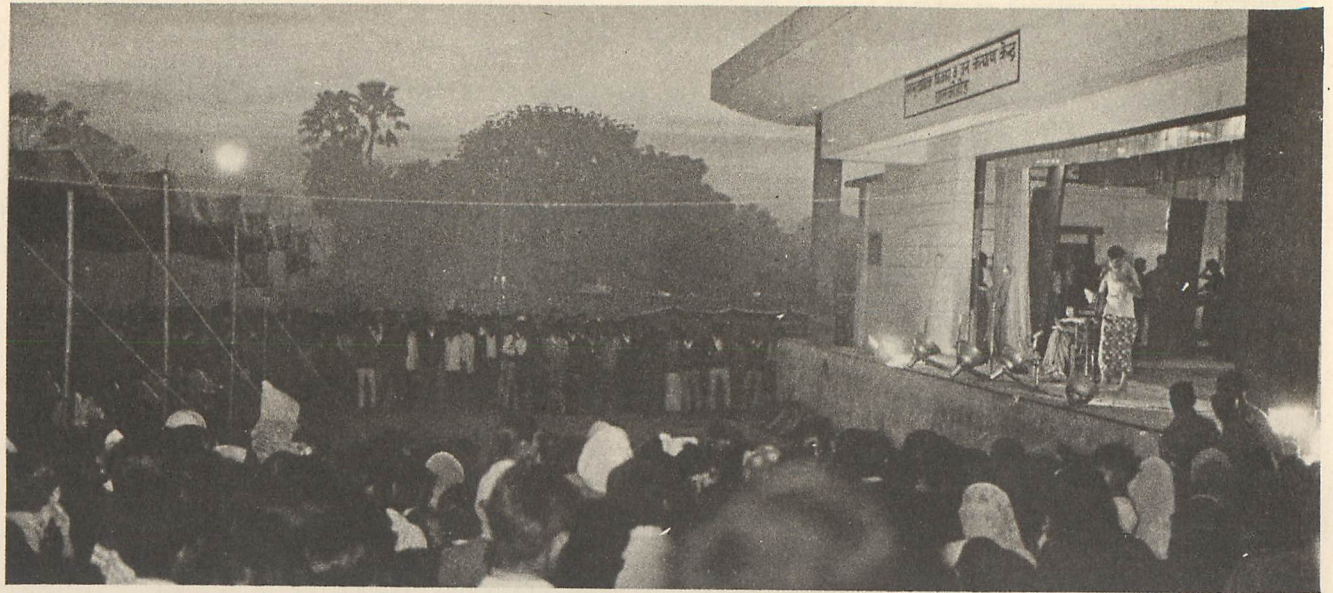
Mother Teresa's work with the lepers and orphans here has won her world recognition. She received the cast. "Thank God you have answered the call," she said. "Your work and our work complete each other."

Jamshedpur

Close to Calcutta lies Jamshedpur, India's first steel city, where *Song of Asia* was the guest of Tata Industries.

The show was presented to the management officers. Hindi versions were given for twelve thousand workers.

Mr. V. N. Prasad works in the melting-shop of TELCO. He saw the show and began to fight factionalism which had been causing serious disruption within the union and industry. His reconciliation with an enemy has resulted in no stoppages in 1974, when there were five in 1973.



Jamshedpur: Workers of the Tata Industries watch *Song of Asia* in their community centre.

Sankar Ghose, Minister of Finance of West Bengal, speaking after the performance in Calcutta.



Calcutta: Mother Teresa, founder of the order *Missionaries of Charity* received the cast of *Song of Asia*.



NEW DELHI

The premiere took place in the beautifully carpeted and chandeliered Ashoka Hotel Convention Hall. Ambassadors and heads of mission of 45 countries, the Chief Justice of India, Government Ministers, the Chief of the Army Staff, Supreme Court Judges, the Archbishop of Delhi and Government officials were among the 900 present.

An MP said, "Tonight fifty per cent of my hate has gone. By the time I reach home, the chain of hate will have been broken completely."

The Speaker of the Lok Sabha, Dr. G. S. Dhillon received a group and came to the show. He said, "Moral Re-Armament is doing a solid and steady work."

Forty-five Parliamentarians from different parties witnessed the play. Among them were Mr. C. Subramaniam, Finance Minister; Mr. T. A. Pai, Minister for Industry; Mr. R. K. Khadilkar, Minister for Supply; Mr. K. C. Pant, Minister for Irrigation and Power; Mr. Morarji Desai, former Deputy Prime Minister and Mr. G. L. Nanda, former acting Prime Minister.

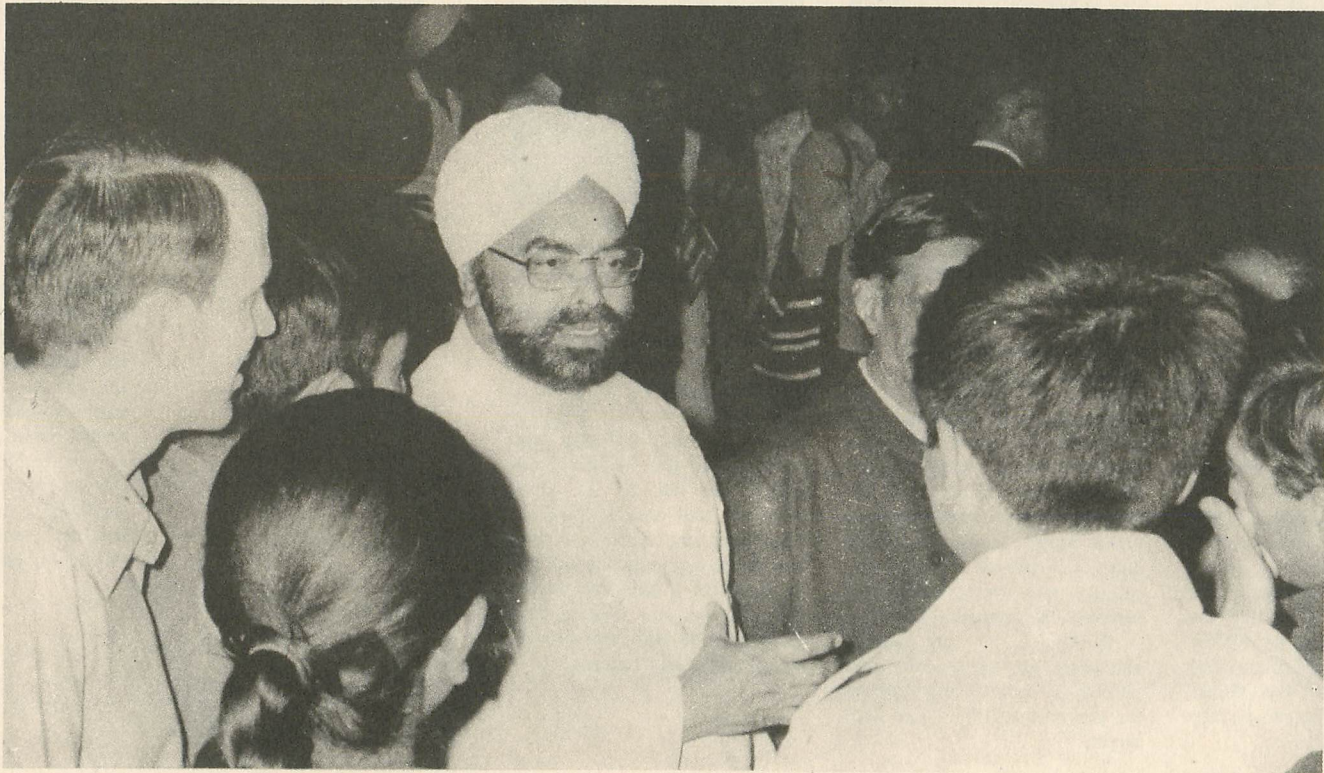
BOMBAY

Mr. P.T. Shastri, Manager of the Borivili unit of the Khatau Mills, organised eight shows in Hindi for 12,000 employees and their management from Bombay factories.

**Dr. G. S. Dhillon,
Speaker of the Lok Sabha,
talks to cast members
after a performance.**



Premiere audience in New Delhi's Ashoka Hotel Convention Hall.



Seeing it and listening to it, and deep inside, feeling the very texture of it, one is somehow elevated to another level.

Times of India

The polyglot crowd of actors from various countries showed how moral discipline could be combined with aesthetic discipline. There was nothing anti-communist or anti-anything about it except that it was anti-struggle and laid stress on moral conversion.

National Herald
(founded by Jawaharlal
Nehru.)



LEO LAITA, Papua New Guinea, was a student of economics at the University of Papua New Guinea.

My country is moving towards independence. I have decided to listen for God's direction for my life and for my country. There is deep division in Papua New Guinea between the thousand tribes. God told me to let go of my own hatred for people of other tribal, racial and language groups. The future will depend on whether we cure hate and division or not.



VIJAY REGE, India. With others he is responsible for the complex technical operations, making performances possible anywhere.

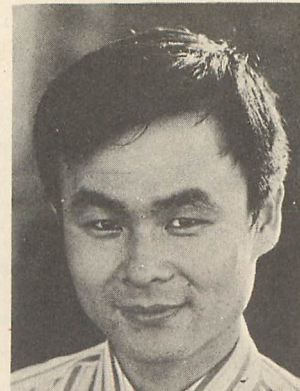
Arguments were a way of life in our family. I often felt at a disadvantage. In frustration I felt that domestic silence and not domestic science were necessary for a happy family life. One day I realised that my country was facing difficulties because of families like ours. I apologised to my parents and sister for my hostility and bitterness. I told them about the parts of my life I had kept secret.



CIGDEM BILGINER, Turkey, was a student at the Middle East Technical University, Ankara.

Frank Buchman, the initiator of Moral Re-Armament, had the vision for the Islamic countries that they could be a girder of unity for the world. Everyone knows of the suffering and injustice in the Middle East, which has led to so much bitterness and acts of violence. Can those who suffered forgive and the hating ones become free to fight for a hate-free world? We need men and women from these nations who will demonstrate that it can happen.

Meet the cast



HIDEKAZU FUJIMORI, comes from Japan. His father runs a chain of 127 barber shops in Tokyo.

After graduating from university I worked for four years in my father's hair-salon business. During that time I only thought of myself and how to enjoy life. I could never agree with my father on anything. I decided to make a start by sharing honestly with him. This resulted in a new spirit between us. Inflation and pollution are the results of materialism in people's hearts. If we could spread the answer we have found in our family through Japan, our country could give a new leadership. I want to see Japan use her resources to help the developing nations around her.



ROTHAY CHANTHARASY, Laos. At school she learnt classical Lao dancing, which she uses with effect in the show. She was in an Australian University and chose to take part in 'Song of Asia' instead of pursuing further studies for which she had been offered a scholarship.

My country has been war-torn for over two decades. Our people's sufferings have left many scars. My decision is not to cling to my plans and possessions, but to use my life to bring healing and lasting peace in Indochina.



INDIRA BANERJI, India, is the daughter of a trade union leader from Calcutta.

I have been proud of the way my father battled for justice. I wanted to become a doctor and advance my own career. Meeting Moral Re-Armament, I had to rethink what I was living for. Now I am learning to serve and to care for others. Poverty and misery can be removed when selfishness in our hearts is replaced by concern for others.



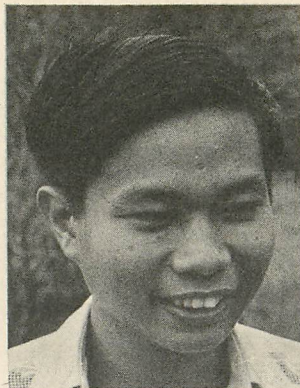
RAENUKADEVI KANAPATHIPILLAI is a nurse from Malaysia.

Malaysia is a multi-racial country. We have a flourishing economy. Yet there is unrest. I am of Indian origin. The different communities of Malaysia—the Malays, Chinese, Ibans, Sea Dayaks and Indians—could work alongside one another to build a country where there would be enough for everyone's need. I am working with Malaysians of all races to help realise this aim.

SURESH CHANDRA from Fiji directs the show.

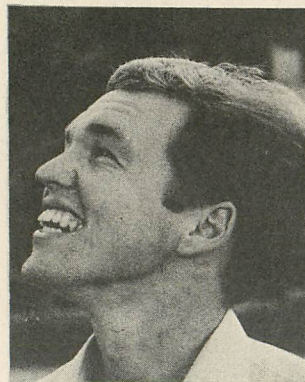
If hate can be melted, that is one of the most important discoveries in the world. If people with a compelling human reason to hate decide to forgive, that is more important than nuclear fission. *Song of Asia* portrays true stories of how hate has been answered.

Suresh Chandra is seen talking with SOUBERT SON from Cambodia who wrote the poem 'The Smile of the Apsara'.



GENIS IBOT, Philippines, is a first year medical student.

My father is Christian and my mother Muslim. I became cynical when I saw how the Christians exploited the Muslims who are a cultural minority and how the Muslims fought against them. Moral Re-Armament has given me the hope that the Muslim-Christian confrontation in my country can be answered. I found this hope when I apologised to those I had hated and blamed for the suffering of my people.



RONALD LAWLER, Australia, graduate of Queensland University.

Mine is a rich nation but many of my generation are searching for a purpose in life. As a student I took part in demonstrations and strikes. Our family of eleven was deeply divided. The answer to years of bitterness and cynicism came when each admitted his mistakes. I sold my car, cassette recorder and set career plans aside to work with *Song of Asia*.



LAM KIM PHUNG from Vietnam is 22. She is a student at the faculty of arts in Saigon University.

Vietnam has been in war for more than my lifetime. I wanted to do something constructive but I didn't know how. So I became hopeless. *Song of Asia* gave me the idea that if one individual starts he can change the atmosphere around him. I decided to try. I had quarreled with a friend because she criticised me. The inner voice told me to apologise to her. She was surprised. "I am sorry too," she said to me. Through this experience I began to find a faith.

I used to hate the Americans, because of the way they lived in my country. I am sorry for this. I hope that one day, together we can think for the needs of other nations.



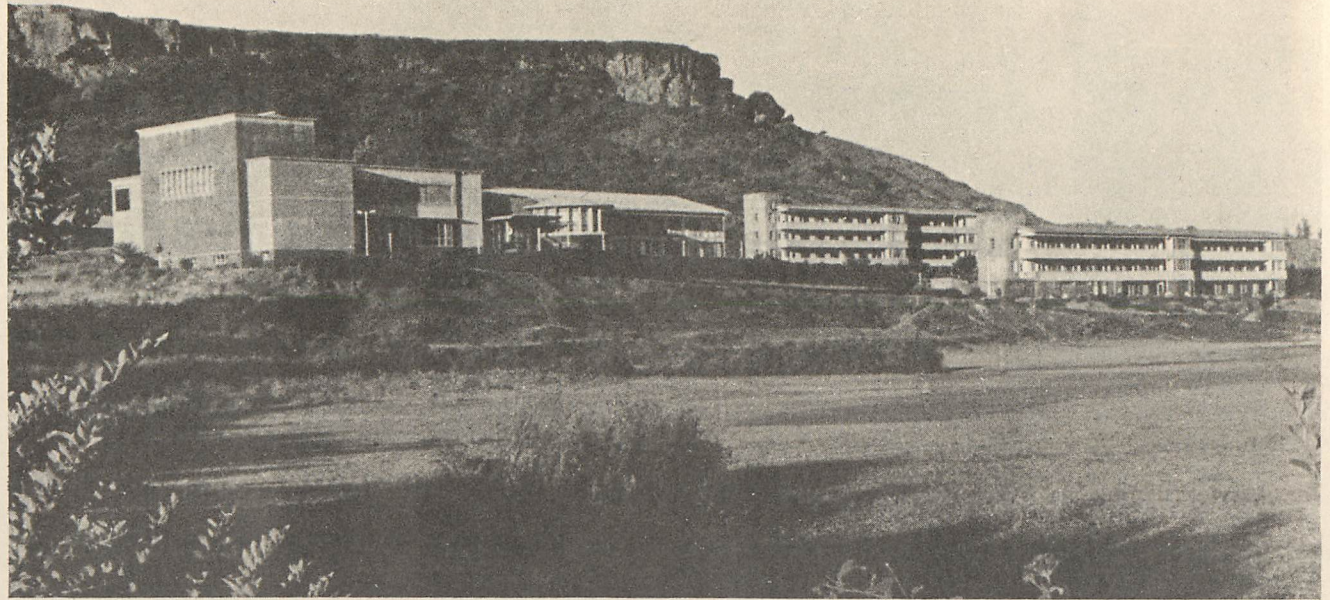
TE RANGI HUATA is a Maori from New Zealand. He was the head prefect of Te Aute College which has produced many distinguished Maori leaders. He has been given a scholarship by an educational trust board in New Zealand to help cover his expenses while he is with 'Song of Asia'.

Our people have fought and died in South East Asia during the recent conflict. I am also part of a fighting force of people who have dedicated their lives to a revolution which seeks to change human society by changing human nature.



Asia Plateau

where it all began



SONG OF ASIA WAS CONCEIVED and created at Asia Plateau in Panchgani. This modern centre for Moral Re-Armament, nestling in the western hills of India, aims to equip men to take to the corners of the earth an idea to remake the world. The largest Indian weekly *The Sunday Standard* called it a "beacon of hope". Since the first buildings were opened in 1968, ambassadors and ordinary men, rich and poor, professors and students, workers and farmers have been here from all over the world.

A group of extremists who believed violence was the only way to change society came to Asia Plateau. At the end of their stay they handed over their knives saying, "This was our weapon in our previous revolution. Now we have found a more effective weapon—the inner voice and obedience to it—

to change society."

An industrialist and a trade union leader were divided and fought each other for eight years in law courts at enormous expense to both. The workers were the ones who suffered most. When in three days unity came between the two, their problems were solved "in a jiffy" as *The Economic Times* put it. At their initiative the first industrial seminar was held at the centre in a bid to inject this new spirit into the nation's industry.

Divided farmers have found unity. Politicians have seen problems in perspective and prevented possible bloodshed. Families have learnt to live as one.

Over ten years ago a handful of Indians took some 50 people on a 4,000 mile "march on wheels" from the southern tip of India to New Delhi.

Their aim: a strong, clean and united India and a new world. Their challenge: "If you want to change what is wrong in the country, the place to start is with yourself. Give us a hand in forging an army across India of men who have the humility and courage to admit and put right their wrongs and to tackle the evils of society."

Thousands responded and came to the training camps held in different parts. The first of those camps, at Panchgani, led to the thought of a permanent centre which could be the meeting place for all those who longed in their hearts to see things different in the world. A widow from Poona gave Rs. 10,000 out of her savings; a leading Australian architect promised his services without charge and soon the idea was launched. Before long the construction started. Those who heard

of this plan and were inspired by the ideas began to contribute. Some of the workers on the site gave part of their earnings and others worked without salary. In January 1973 the main auditorium and conference complex, representing the third phase of the construction, were completed.

People throughout the world have sacrificed for this centre because they believe that this is a place from where history can be given a new direction. Their numbers run into thousands.

Six years ago as the buildings were rising from a barren and arid land an Indonesian youth leader said, "Panchgani may lie in India, but it belongs to Asia." Today, surrounded by beautiful gardens of lush green and colour, Asia Plateau is fulfilling that vision. *Song of Asia* is a leap forward in that direction.

The Pacific

Islands of opportunity

PAPUA NEW GUINEA—new nation in the making

ON DECEMBER 1, 1973, Papua New Guinea officially became self-governing. Full independence awaits us soon, when the flag of red, black and gold with the Bird of Paradise and the Southern Cross will find its place among those of other nations.

Papua New Guinea lies between Indonesia and Australia. Its 600 islands are peopled by 1000 tribes speaking 700 languages. This contrasts vividly with its population of only 2.6 million.

These islands contain some of the most rugged mountain ranges in the world. Some peaks rise to above 15,000 feet. But the shores washed by the blue, clear Pacific Ocean, fringed by white, sandy beaches and coconut groves are breathtakingly beautiful. The sea is rich with fish. In the deep cool green of the jungle, one glimpses the red and gold Bird of Paradise to be found only in New Guinea.

Papua New Guinea has been administered by Australia since the end of the Second World War. The western half of the island is part of Indonesia and is called Irian Jaya.

The Christian missionaries, in face of great danger and hardship, were responsible for nearly all the education and health work before the 1950s. They laid a foundation of faith where sorcery had held sway for centuries.

In 1964, for the first time, due to external pressures—especially the United Nations—free elections were

held to elect local representatives to the House of Assembly (the local Parliament). But it was not until 1967 that a group of thirteen men called for "Home Rule Now". One of them was Michael Somare, a journalist.

Today he is Chief Minister of the country. Along with his colleagues, he formed the Pangu Pati, the majority party in the Coalition Government.

As independence approaches, a burning issue faces us: will unity be achieved in a land of so many diversities? Already there are signs of trouble.

The Highlanders are fearful that they will be dominated by their better educated coastal brethren. On coastal Papua, there is a strong bid to create a separate state. In the bigger towns like Port Moresby, the capital, there are frequent brawls between different tribes who come to work there.

The press in Australia and as far away as America is full of prophecies of chaos and disaster. With the precedents of some of the newly independent Asian and African countries, this is an easy thing to say. We challenge this assumption; Papua New Guinea could disprove history and take a decisive step towards a just society.

Sir Paul Lapun, Minister for Mines and Energy, is the first Papua New Guinean knighted by the Queen. His statesmanship was responsible for solving an explosive land dispute between the people of Bougainville and the Australian mining company, Conzinc Rio-Tinto. He said, "We can achieve a peaceful settlement if we put our trust in God. If this land dispute can be solved by the people of Bougainville, it can be a real example to the world."

The MRA film *Freedom* has been shown to the villages of the whole country. It is made by Africans, showing how a nation moves towards independence in an entirely new way.

The Chief Minister recently expressed the hope that our country could be the bridge between Asia and the Pacific. Fulfilling this vision in an unofficial capacity, six of us from Papua New Guinea are in *Song of Asia*.

There are hopeful signs that Papua New Guinea need not go through the same travails which many Afro-Asian countries suffered after independence.

It may be that the smaller nations, with men and women of character, will give sanity to this confused world.

SOMERE JOGO
KUMALAU TAWALI



Where the money comes from

"NONE OF YOU GET ANY SALARY—yet, how do you live and where do you get your expenses from?" This is an understandable question and one which is asked everywhere. How do seventy people with three and a half tons of equipment manage to travel such distances?

It has been an adventure in faith for all concerned. When people hear about it, they also want to play their part.

From its very inception, *Song of Asia* has been equipped and financed not out of the surplus of the rich but by the sacrifice of the ordinary man. The concept of the play has caught the imagination of people right around the world. Many have contributed.

Suresh Chandra from Fiji is the director of *Song of Asia*. When he first heard about the idea of creating it, he was about to return home, having been away six years. He had raised his fare. He decided to stay on, produce the show and put all the money into a fund to launch it.

Ivia Evara, an industrial chemist

from Papua New Guinea and his wife Jane sold their Datsun car, their refrigerator, radjogram and furniture to come to India and participate in the show. They came with their four-month old baby. Jane says, "We would like to build a country for our daughter where she can walk on the streets without fear."

One girl sold her tape-recorder. Another gave her gold necklace. An Indian journalist and an Australian school teacher emptied their bank accounts.

Mr. Y. Paithankar is a primary school teacher in a village in India. He gave a month's salary to the fund. He also gave the silk turban he had worn at his wedding for "Mama" to use in the show. Two of his daughters travel with *Song of Asia*. His eldest daughter wrote the scene set around a village well.

Mr. M. L. Bright is the Principal of Kotagiri Public School in the Nilgiris, South India. He invited *Song of Asia* to his town. He and his wife shouldered the entire responsibility

of looking after the accommodation, meals and transport of the cast. His staff contributed regularly towards the expenses of members of the group.

Mr. A. S. Mani, a trade unionist, raised Rs. 6,000 for the expenses of the force in Coimbatore. He leads 75,000 workers in this district.

In North East India, the manager of a trucking firm gave free transport to carry the stage equipment 1,200 miles from Calcutta and back.

The manager of a Poona textile firm gave cloth for the costumes and donated money to buy the material he did not stock.

When the question arose of the cast going to Indochina, a group of Frenchmen felt it was an opportunity to begin restoration for the mistakes of the past towards these nations. A hundred of their compatriots, many of humble means, gave sacrificially and raised 65,000 French francs.

In Laos, a country whose economic growth has been retarded by war, the

cast were guests of Laotian families for six weeks. Much of the expenditure was met through the money-raising efforts of a group of Laotian ladies. The Indian community hosted fifteen of the cast at each meal.

In Vietnam, the President of the Hoteliers Association arranged for the stay of the cast in some of the best hotels of Saigon free of charge.

Throughout India the technical equipment for the show had been assembled by the stage crew at minimal costs. But as it was far too bulky to take abroad, funds were raised by friends in Britain (£940) and Australia (\$A 1,000) to buy or ship the new equipment needed. Different firms gave in kind. The shipping company did not charge for the freight from Melbourne to Bangkok. Toshiba in Japan gifted tape-recorders, microphones and a sound-mixer to equip the show.

One cannot measure in financial terms the hope that has come to thousands. All can have a part in seeing that this hope spreads further.

Everybody's chance

Things can be different. There is an explosive secret. It is yours to find. Take a notebook and pencil. Compare your life with absolute honesty, absolute purity, absolute unselfishness and absolute love.

Do not dismiss the smallest, seemingly inconsequential, the most uncomfortable thought that comes. Note it down. Act on it. You may need to make restitution, or an apology. These are important steps. The most complicated surgical operation starts with the surgeon washing his own hands.

Take time every morning, at least 15 minutes to begin with, to seek guidance from your inner voice. If you are a very busy person it would be advisable to take half an hour! You can start each day by asking yourself: "What needs to be done in my home, school, college or office, community, city?" Creative ideas will come to you.

They may seem trivial at first. But faithful obedience to thoughts that come will, over a period of time, release a chain reaction of change to take the place of the chain of wrong.

The way to check whether or not a thought is from the inner voice is to compare it with the four absolute standards given above.

As you are honest about your mistakes you will interest other people. If you have changed in your attitudes and motives, you will enlist them to work with you.

You may think that you have pretty exciting plans for your life. You may be dissatisfied with what you have lined up. But God's plan for your life will be the most satisfying of all.

This is your chance: an invitation to the biggest adventure of your life.



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