



Japan Information Centre

The Ginza crossing in central Tokyo

JAPAN INTERNATIONAL ACTION FOR UNITY

ASIA, THOUGH ONE CONTINENT, is the most populous and varied area of the world. It reflects the problems and potential of the globe, and faces the challenge of developing its vast human resources. Japan is an integral part of Asia. A three-week Moral Re-Armament action was recently held there with a theme of significance for Asia and beyond: 'From conflict to reconciliation and unity'. Forty-two overseas delegates, two-thirds of them from Asia and the Pacific, took part in the programme. The urgency and relevance of the theme was underlined by the participation of six from Cambodia, all holding responsible positions in villages controlled by the Khmer Peoples National Liberation Front near the Thai border.

Starting with a three-day conference at the Asia Centre, Odawara, the overseas delegates met a wide range of Japanese as they travelled through the country, taking part in small and large meetings, being invited to stay in private homes, and visiting places of scientific and cultural importance.

The three-week action included a dialogue with management and labour leaders of the Toshiba Corporation; a luncheon given by employers of the Kansai Economic Federation in Osaka; and an interview with the two million circulation Sankei newspaper. In Tokyo they met 12 members of the Diet from four political parties and were received by senior industrialists including the President of Nissan Motors, the President of Japan National Railways and the Honorary President of the Japan Federation of Economic Organisations. They also held a dialogue with the Zenmin Rokyo, Japan's private sector trade union council representing six million members. In this special issue we report comments and impressions from those participating in the action.

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Amara

ASIAN LINKS

In January this year, an MRA group led by Yukika Sohma of Japan visited Sri Lanka, Thailand, and a village in Cambodia. In response, people from the three countries travelled to Japan to take part in the MRA action.

Six men came from villages in Cambodia built by the Khmer People's National Liberation Front, to find out how Moral Re-Armament could assist in the moral and spiritual reconstruction of their country. They included a Buddhist monk and people in charge of religious, humanitarian and political affairs. KIM BEAZLEY, former Australian Minister for Education, writes:

JAPAN HAS CERTAINLY worked to overcome physical barriers within the nation. The Seikan Tunnel, joining Honshu to Hokkaido, 33 miles in length under the sea, is under construction. Honshu is joined to Kyushu by the 14 mile long Kammon Tunnel. As well as a tunnel running under the bottom of the Kammon Straits there are mammoth bridge links over it. A pilot tunnel already exists between Honshu and Hokkaido. Now Japan proposes to join Honshu to Shikoku, crossing the Seto Inland Sea with a series of nine bridges joining a string of islands. Each of these bridges is a huge engineering project. A spiritual determination to unite the nation underlies this immense physical effort. The MRA conference of May-June sought to explore a spiritual determination to unite the world.

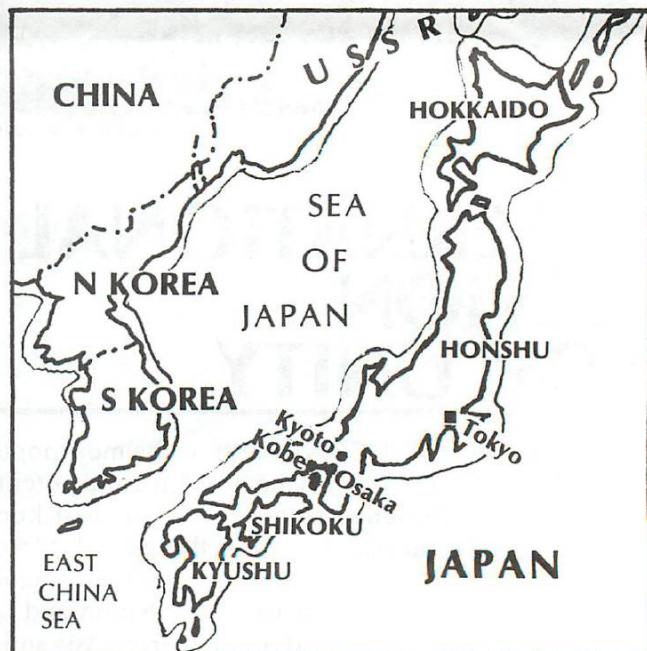
Delegations from divided nations—Korea, Cambodia and the Republic of China (Taiwan)—were among those that took part. Those from Cambodia came from a war zone, recently the sphere of conflict between Vietnam and the Heng Samrin government in Phnom Penh, on the one hand, and a coalition of Prince Norodom Sihanouk's forces and those of Son Sann and the Khmer Rouge on the other. Underlying this conflict are discord between China and the Soviet Union, between China and Vietnam, and Thailand's fear of a strategy on the part of Vietnam of dominating Indo-China.

Japanese diplomacy towards Cambodia recognises the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea and respects the various UN resolutions on Cambodia which aim to give Cambodians a free choice in the absence of the coercive presence of Vietnamese forces, and even to reconcile the Phnom Penh régime with the coalition. Prince Norodom Sihanouk was in Tokyo recently, and indicated that he would support such a policy, the one great essential being the withdrawal of Viet forces from Cambodia. In these complicated circumstances, the Cambodian delegation sought to explain both their recent and more distant terrible experiences, and moved towards a spiritual strategy

to further attitudes of forgiveness and, in the words of the Venerable Inthapanyo Bhikku, 'to purify our minds'. Bhikku, who is the deputy chief of the Prasat Seri Monastery in Nong Samet, added, 'With love we can open our hearts to everybody, then there will be honesty and unselfishness.'

A leading Japanese businessman told the MRA visitors how his great firm of Sumitomo had once desired simply to trade, but now it needed to take a bigger idea to the world. There was lethal religious division in many parts of the world, but his appreciation of MRA had begun when he had seen it unite people across religious divisions.

Japan has successfully established its democracy after a period of military dictatorship—a valid experience to be transmitted to Africa, Asia and Latin America as well as parts of Europe. It is the one country which has experienced nuclear attack. It can speak to the superpowers, perhaps to calm the world; and some leading Japanese thinkers showed at the Odawara conference that this was a basic objective of their thought. It was a watershed conference series, basic to bringing healing to areas of disaster. ■



MINORU SATO, THE PRESIDENT of the Toshiba Workers Union, took part in a dialogue at Toshiba with the MRA visitors. He said, 'I took part in the first delegation from Toshiba to the MRA conference at Caux, Switzerland. The four standards of honesty, purity, unselfishness and love registered in my mind, so that I can measure whatever I do by them. When you become honest people around don't dare to deceive you.... Through our association with MRA we can formulate ideas shared by both management and labour.'

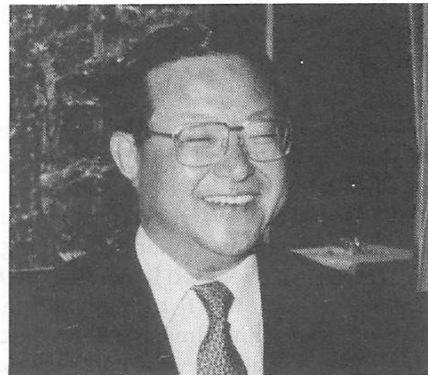
A former leader of the Toshiba Workers' Union is now on the Executive of the Zenmin Rokyo (Japan Private Sector Trade Union Council). He hosted a dialogue between the Council and some of the MRA delegates. The Council explained their aims—to encourage the trade union movement in Japan as a whole to contribute what they can to the country and to the world rather than only concentrating on the pay and conditions of their members. The Council was formed in December 1982 and its component unions have a total of 6 million members. Its formation is regarded as highly significant in Japan, as many previous attempts to unify the private sector unions have failed. ■



Korean delegates sing during the Odawara conference



ONE OF THE FUNCTIONS held in Kobe was a meeting sponsored by MRA and the Kobe Import Promotion Forum, on the initiative of the Forum's Executive Director, Mr K Tajima (sitting on right at centre table). At the same table are Mr T Sakai, Governor of Hyogo Prefecture, which has a population of 5 million (left), and Mr S Goto, President of the Kobe Import Promotion Forum.

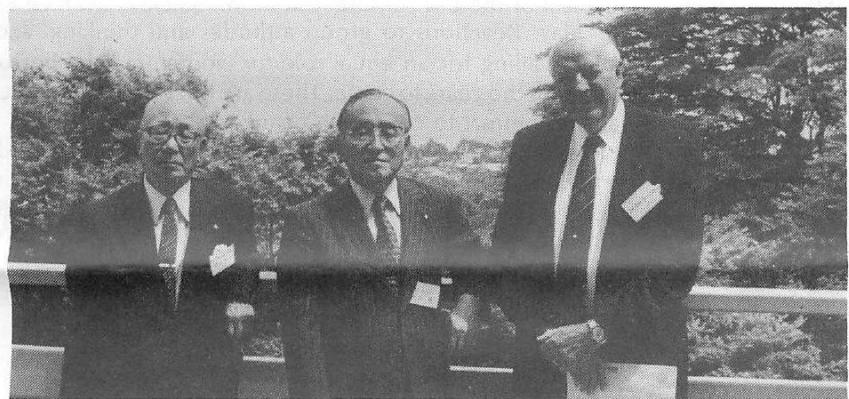


FORMER MINISTER of defence Kazuho Tanikawa (above), spoke at a luncheon given by Toshio Doko (below) who is Honorary President of the Japan Federation of Economic Organisations and also President of MRA's official body in Japan. Mr Tanikawa said, 'I have always felt it is important if one party to a conflict can offer a solution to the other. It is significant that you first discuss how you might raise the morality of society and the people, and then discuss how to achieve peace and the most important issue of freedom.'

Mr Doko said, 'There are many problems in the world but with the spirit of MRA they can be resolved.'



THE PARTICIPANTS in the MRA action confer with the Governor of Ibaraki Prefecture (extreme left).



POLITICIANS MEET at Asia Centre, Odawara. They are (l to r) Magoichi Takemoto, a former Diet Member who is now President of the Japan Economic Research Association, Katsu Kawamura, a Democratic Socialist Member of the House of Representatives, and Kim Beazley, who was an MP in the Australian Federal Parliament for 32 years.

Mr Takemoto and Dr Beazley took part in a meeting in Tokyo where 12 Japanese Diet Members from four parties met a number of the overseas delegates. Mr T Suzuki, former Ambassador of Japan to Australia, who was also present said, 'You cannot understand the reconciliation between Japan and Australia after the war unless you understand the work of MRA.' Later, at a public meeting in Tokyo, Dr Beazley expressed his conviction that 'Japan unhesitatingly scraps what is technically inferior, and adopts what is technically superior. I believe it will set a pattern for the world in unhesitatingly scrapping what is morally inferior, and adopting what is morally superior.'

SU TING TING, (below) a primary school teacher from Taiwan, addressed the MRA meeting in Kobe. 'My father had a hot temper, and I didn't like that,' she said. 'I felt I couldn't forgive him but last year he went to Hawaii, and I wrote and apologised to him. When my father returned, I found his temper was getting better, and he was trying to care for me.'



AN EXPERIENCE OF JAPAN

by Haridas and Tia Nair, Malaysia

'IT IS ANOTHER WORLD,' remarked the young camp administrator from Cambodia shaking his head in utter amazement. We realised Japan was opening his eyes to new realities—it was a far cry from his village in the countryside.

We shared many similar technological shocks. The machine which changed your currency notes into coins; the public telephones which refunded coins for unutilised time; the robot policeman signalling a diversion from the highway; the linear motor levitated car that would float along a track supported by 'superconducting magnets'; the robot-run home control system; and acoustic transmission by laser, just to mention a few.

In addition to the beauty of the country, we were particularly touched by the care and affection we received in the ordinary homes where we were privileged to stay or be invited for meals. In accordance with the Japanese tradition of gift giving, we were the recipients of beautifully packaged Japanese souvenirs. The Japanese devote time and care to the way things are artistically presented, be it gifts or meals. A young Japanese remarked, 'We eat first with our eyes. How the food is presented is just as important as how it tastes.'

We stayed with a Japanese family where the parents were Buddhists, the son was a free-thinker and the daughter-in-law a devout Catholic. They had been married following Shinto tradition and later at a church. The unifying factor seemed to be their Japanese—orthodoxy relating to tradition and culture—rather than their religious beliefs.

Many preconceived notions, gathered from magazines and comments, were shattered by the sheer experience of Japan. Needless to say paradoxes remain, but there is much truth in the notion that Japan has to be experienced to be understood.

From a war-ravaged nation which lacked natural resources in the Forties to a major economic power in the Eighties—Japan's scale of achievement provides an inspiration for many developing nations. We searched for clues as to what contributed towards this achievement.

Shichihei Yamamoto, addressing the MRA conference, drew examples from Japan's heritage and historical sources

in outlining his country's adherence to certain unchanging values while retaining awareness of changing situations. People could not cope with the changes that modernisation brought unless they retained their basic principles. 'If you lose a tradition you are left with a fashion,' he remarked.

Another clue was given by Masaaki Imai, a leading Japanese management consultant. He compared Western and Japanese management techniques, saying they emphasised short-term and long-term considerations respectively. The market place, quarterly reviews of profitability and short term benefits were not critical to Japanese, in contrast to Western, approaches.

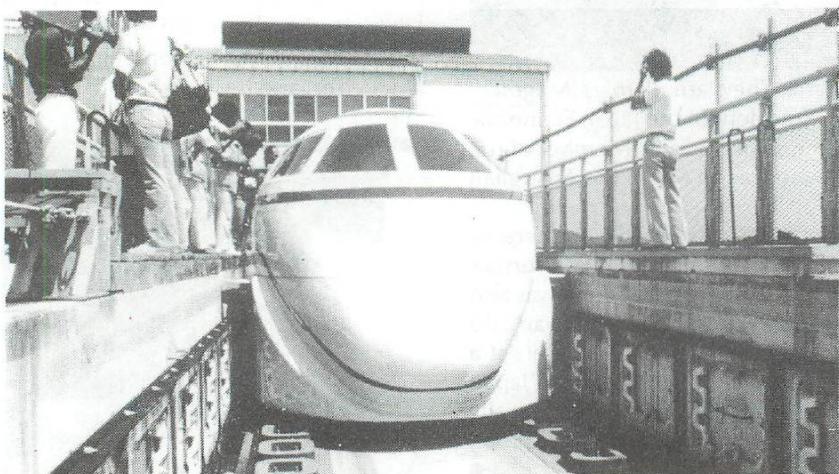
Explaining the *Kaizen* concept, Mr Imai spoke of the constant emphasis Japanese industry placed on small incremental improvements. This concentration on qualitative improvement covers all levels and sectors ranging from personnel to technical matters. This helps explain why nine out of every ten patents that are now registered originate from Japan. It reveals the sheer determination in the Japanese mentality to improve everything—and thus their openness to change.

With Japanese industry spreading world-wide, many Japanese are interested in the role their nation is meant to play. Labour leaders and executives often repeated this.

Ezra Vogel in his book, *Japan as No 1*, says that Japan developed into the world's most competitive industrial power by placing specialists in groups to work together to improve technological inventions developed by others. Kimpei Shiba, writing in the *Asahi Evening News*, says, 'The Japanese aren't just copy cats. They improve what they borrow.'

The next generation is being prepared to cope with and sustain the economic and technological advance of Japan. The challenges are real. Divorces are increasing mainly in the 35 to 40 age group and these are mostly initiated by women reacting to their husbands' untiring effort at work at the expense of their families and homes. This is quite a reversal of the old Samurai tradition. Suicides average 69 per day. Reactions to group attitudes and thinking, and voices calling for an equal role for women may be heard louder in the years to come. These are but symptoms of the Japanese effort to cope with change.

We left Japan with the sense of having learnt and experienced much. The Japanese, with their ability to adapt to change while retaining basic values, have a crucial contribution to make to a world bedeviled by a loss of values amidst modernisation and materialism.



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The rail-less train, powered by linear propulsion



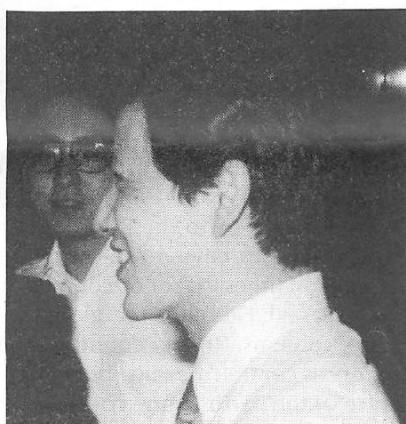
MR G HIROSE (above), Chairman of Nippon Life Insurance Company, said he had first encountered MRA 30 years ago. 'It changed my view of the world at that time... I felt keenly that I should do something to contribute to the world.' He was speaking at a luncheon given by Kankeiren, the Kansai Economic Federation. 'My renewed contact with MRA and what I heard today at the luncheon have given me great encouragement,' he concluded.

The luncheon was chaired by Isamu Sakamoto (speaking below), a Senior Advisor in Sumitomo Electric Industries. Mr Sakamoto said, 'We see many tragedies in the world due to political reasons, and I wondered whether a movement such as MRA could solve such political matters. I found out that my fears were groundless... MRA is effective. I hope MRA will do more to solve political and economic problems, and in this sense I am determined to continue my support.'



WATANA KEVIMOL, CHAIRMAN of the Pracha Seri Party of Thailand (right), and Australian politician Dr Beazley, were among those who met Takashi Ishihara (left), the President of Nissan Motors. 'Japan is known as an economic giant,' said Dr Watana, 'but Japan has also been giving her heart and concern for suffering people.' He was referring to the help that Japan has given to poor people and refugees in Thailand.

Dr Watana said that on previous trips to Japan he had not felt a particular intimacy with the people but, this time, meeting people through MRA, he felt a warm and caring attitude which made him want to return.



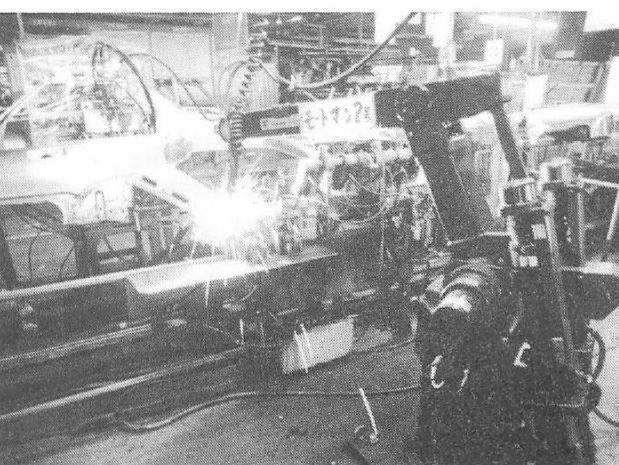
AT A CONFERENCE in Osaka, Kiyoshi Nagano spoke of meeting Moral Re-Armament as 'enrolling in the MRA University'. But there were not teachers and students, for everyone could be both. The classroom was the world, he said and therefore all could learn from each other.

He then said that with the four absolute standards of honesty, purity, unselfishness and love you could see clearly the way that you had lived and where you must put wrong things right. He described how he had ridden on trains without tickets, told lies and not returned things he had borrowed. He also recalled a quarrel that he had had with an old school friend. After listening to the voice of truth deep inside his heart, he had apologised to the friend and then his heart had become free.

'Though I'm an ordinary person myself, through entering the "MRA University" the world has come in to my heart. What I can do may be quite small, but I'd like to do my best, especially for Asia, concerning refugees, exchange students and relations between Japanese and Koreans as well as Japanese and Chinese,' Mr Nagano concluded.



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...and modern

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Japan, traditional...

DIALOGUE FOR GLOBAL THINKING

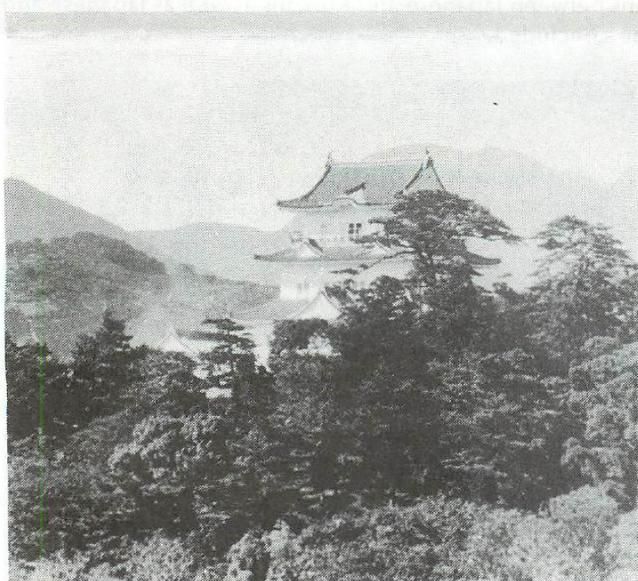
THE CONFERENCE AT ODAWARA ended with an 'international dialogue' on reconciliation and unity.

Nobutane Kiuchi, President of the Japan Institute of World Economy, was the first of the five panelists to speak. Western civilisation had put too much emphasis on competition and technology at the expense of human and social values, he said. This was one factor leading to increasing conflict and violence. A new approach was needed to avoid global nuclear warfare, he said. He felt that there was increasing religious and spiritual awareness in the world. A religious and spiritual attitude meant realising the existence of things which could not be proved by mere natural scientific methods, and seeking aims and basic values beyond material profit, prosperity and secular desires.

Masaki Nakajima, President of the Mitsubishi Research Institute, referred to the East-West and North-South conflicts. The destructive power of nuclear weapons was now one million times that of the bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. He called for 'global thinking' in response to these problems. 'In any country, the maps used show that country as central,' he said, 'but in fact the distance from the centre of the earth to any country is the same.' People had already moved from narrow nationalism to more internationalist thinking, he went on, but truly global thinking had not yet been reached. His institute had launched a 'Global Infrastructure Fund' calling for massive public and private investment in major international projects. This was first made public at a MRA conference at Caux, Switzerland in 1978.

'We as a nation have not dialogued with other nations in the way we should,' said John Van de Water, a management consultant from California. Americans needed to learn not to tell other people the answer but to talk with other peoples and work out answers unitedly. 'I feel we should talk openly together on what Japan and the US can do

Odawara castle



The panel at the dialogue on 'from conflict to reconciliation and unity' held at Asia Centre, Odawara. They are (l to r) Iqbal Alimohamed, UNHCR Representative in Japan, John Van de Water, USA, management consultant, Kim Beazley, Australian politician, Yukika Sohma, President of the Japan Association to Aid Indo-chinese Refugees, Masaki Nakajima, President of the Mitsubishi Research Institute, and Nobutane Kiuchi, President of the Japan Institute of World Economy.

jointly for the underdeveloped countries.' He spoke of the value of informal diplomacy 'where we can talk privately, off the record, and be honest with each other, not taking official stands. This will help answer the conflict that arises when people set themselves apart on an official basis, and find it hard to dialogue.'

He recalled an incident when he was starting work as Chairman of the US National Labor Relations Board in Washington, DC 'where there is often bitterness and hatred between liberals and conservatives'. He said, 'I called in a man who had been contrary to my point of view for years—a man in my own organisation with whom I might have had confrontation and conflict.' Mr Van de Water said to him, 'If you and I can have a motive of only finding out what is right, with absolutely no motive of trying to prove who is right, then we can dialogue. And if neither of us is the least concerned with getting credit for a good idea, then we can be very effective.' Mr Van de Water told the Dialogue, 'I believe we need to build that kind of relationship.'

Iqbal Alimohamed, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in Tokyo, spoke in his personal capacity. The fact that there were now 15 million refugees in the world attested to a very high political fever, he said. 'There has been a proliferation of international decades and years. Perhaps there could be a UN international decade for moral reconstruction. I think it's important to get the message across to the world at large that the moral forces have permanence.... and that is where in the ultimate analysis we should try and find solutions to all conflicts.'

After a lively question and answer session between the audience and the panelists, Mrs Sohma summed up, 'In a dialogue such as this we are sincerely seeking answers for the world crisis. We need to increase the number of people who are doing this. We need courage, passion and conviction to take time to listen for direction from the "inner voice" with others. Each of us needs to be sure we are truly sincere, if we want to avoid the crises which may take place in the near future.'

PRESIDENT MONGE'S APPROACH TO PEACE

THE PRESIDENT OF COSTA RICA, Luis Alberto Monge, came to the MRA centre at Caux in Switzerland, last month. He was visiting Switzerland as part of a tour of European capitals. He was accompanied by a party of 30, including five cabinet ministers—Foreign Affairs, Labour, Justice, Planning and Information—as well as diplomats and journalists.

Many Swiss, including diplomats and politicians, came to Caux to demonstrate their support for this genuinely democratic Central American country which could play a vital part in solving the problems of a troubled part of the world.

Thanking his Swiss hosts, the President recalled his long links with Caux. 'Many of the principles of Moral Re-Armament have been present in my spirit at the great turning points of my life,' he said. 'For example, a faith in the perfectibility of man which reminds us that we can help others and bring greater justice to our countries if we change ourselves first. Also the idea, so vital in Central America where blood is being shed, that we can only fight for peace if we have peace in ourselves and if we do all that we can to pass it on to others.'

Speaking two days later at the ILO in Geneva, President Monge noted 'that the peoples of Central America are economically exploited, socially despoiled and deprived of political freedom'. He continued, 'They have risen in arms



President Monge of Costa Rica

to win their freedom, but this legitimate struggle has been influenced by extraneous factors which mean that our countries are now the seat of a struggle for world domination. The peoples of Central America,' he declared, 'refuse to play the wretched part of toy soldiers in an infernal game of chess by those who have no respect for the sufferings and aspirations of our people.'

The destiny of Central America, he stressed, would not be settled on the battlefield, but in the way of peace. 'We are vain enough to believe that the basic battle for Central America will take place in Costa Rica, and without arms.' He concluded, 'We are called upon to demonstrate that our system of freedom is possible in our part of the world, that democracy works as a means of settling problems of production and in winning battles in the struggle against underdevelopment and poverty.'

SOUTH AFRICA WESTERN CAPE SYNOD'S NEW STANCE

Three Scottish churchmen recently visited South Africa at the invitation of a group of Dutch Reformed Church ministers, following the encouragement of their own General Assembly to make personal contacts in South Africa. They were W F Moir, an elder of his church from Aberdeen, the Rev R S Macnicol and the Rev W D Laird both from Lothian. During a month's study tour they met people of all races from churches and communities, education, the press and politics. They write:

A STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY professor told us, 'Scotland can be a catalyst.' He was referring to the historical links of our two countries through the involvement of the Rev Andrew Murray from Aberdeenshire and others in the development of the Dutch Reformed Church over a century ago. Today, there are still Scottish names as well as Dutch among the Afrikaaners.

To our minds, there is another link as well—that of Britain's part in creating resentment and defensiveness in the Afrikaaner. We tend to take pride in the achievements

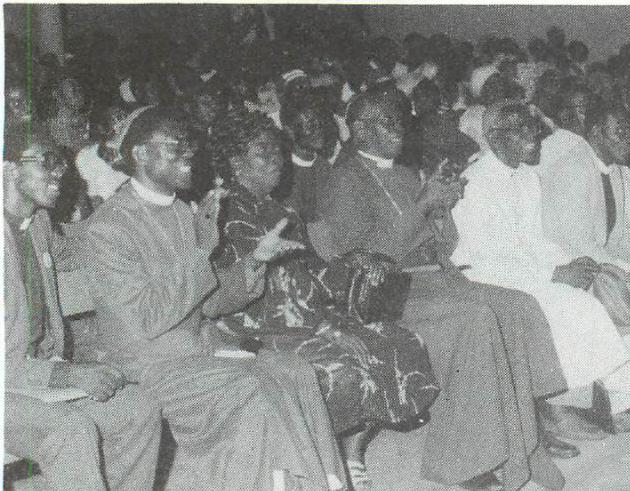
of our past. We must also face the truth about the hurts we have inflicted on others—such as the British invention of the concentration camp for women and children during the Anglo-Boer War, and the attempts of English-speaking people to destroy and then ignore the language and identity of the Afrikaaner people.

Our most valuable experiences were the deep talks we had with some on how to find God's will personally in the most difficult situations. We found a crisis of conscience and a deep heart-searching on the part of many in the Dutch Reformed Church. Political change comes slowly. There is deep disappointment in many—including whites—at the failure of the Dutch Reformed Church authorities really to hear the 'cry from the heart' of the black and coloured churches for changed attitudes.

Yet we also saw signs of hope. These spring from the decisions of the Western Cape Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church last year that apartheid cannot be justified by scripture and that all church services and membership should be open to all races with immediate effect. This, remarkably, came from the very Synod that in 1936 asked the then government to forbid mixed marriages and introduce apartheid. The Synod is now admitting it had been wrong, and has called on the General Synod of their church, due to meet in 1986, to adopt similar changes.

Meanwhile a group of 148 ministers and theologians in other parts of the country had written an Open Letter to their church authorities, calling for reconciliation and unity

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I Amata
teachers who make up the cast. Some of them had driven about 500 km from Ibadan on the day of the performance while others had to drive back 150 km that night in order to prepare for college examinations in Abraka. They spoke about the changes that have come into their lives as a result of committing themselves to bring a spirit of moral re-armament to the country.

A judge of the Federal Court of Appeal of Nigeria moved the vote of thanks. Justice Uche Omo, who is also Deputy Chancellor of the Diocese of Asaba, said, 'There is a lot ahead for us to achieve. We cannot expect the job to be an easy one. It will definitely be difficult, as what the play says is the greatest battle in the country today.' He implored the members of the audience to join hands with the force of MRA and to give whatever help they could, either financially, morally or otherwise.

The Synod of Asaba gave a cash donation of 400 naira (£375) to help the cast with their campaign.

The cast had earlier performed the play in the ancient walled city of Benin for delegates to the 1984 Synod of the Anglican Diocese of Benin. The Venerable Archdeacon T O Uwoghiren of Benin City told the Synod delegates, 'If Christians truly seek to be ruled by the standards of Christ, then Moral Re-Armament is a weapon in their hands. That is the challenge of the play. *The next phase* should be taken to every institution and through every street to give our people the right orientation.'

The play has also been performed at the universities of Jos and Ibadan, and at the Ibadan Polytechnic. ■

THE NEXT PHASE IN NIGERIA

FLANKED BY THE BISHOP, archdeacons, pastors and Synod delegates of the Anglican Diocese of Asaba, on the western bank of the River Niger, the Anglican Archbishop of Nigeria, the Most Rev T O Olufosoye, was the guest of honour last month at a performance of the MRA play, *The next phase*.

The play shows how a poor washerman who finds an answer to dishonesty spreads a new spirit which eventually leads to a transformation of motives in his country's cabinet. In a full-page article in Nigeria's *Daily Times* of 7 June, Teegy Ofasah says that *The next phase* was written by a group of African statesmen at the birth of political independence for *African nations in the mid twentieth century*. 'Although the play was written in 1957, the present cast feel that its analysis of the difficulties facing Africa and of their human roots is still valid,' says the article, which was headlined, 'Nigerians need moral re-armament.'

The play was produced by Ifoghale Amata, a lecturer at the College of Education, Abraka. There was prolonged applause as Mr Amata introduced the students and trainee



I Amata

Archdeacon Uwoghiren speaking after a performance of '*The next phase*' in Benin City: 'If Christians truly seek to be ruled by the standards of Christ, then MRA is a weapon in their hands.'

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and 'open doors' to all races; for a recognition of the prophetic role of the church in seeking justice for all; and confessing their 'deepest guilt before God that we ourselves have also failed to manifest adequately the unity of the church of Christ in our lives, and have contributed to the social evils which we have identified'.

We can certainly understand the impatience of the black people, and many others as well, with the slowness of the pace of change. We in Scotland need much help in

solving the problems in our own country, and in its relations with Europe and Ireland for instance. But we know in our own experience that the power of Jesus Christ can bring about radical change, when we put His power first and want it passionately enough.

Scotland perhaps can be a catalyst. But we came back convinced that South Africans of all races, with the commitment and compassion of the Cross of Christ, and a vision for the whole of Africa, have a vital role to play in reconciling and unifying the world. ■