

Trade Unionist Looks At Moral Re-Armament

MORAL Re-armament is a way of life which can help labour towards its fulfilment of its highest hopes. Moral Re-armament is not a political movement, but it can greatly assist the function of labour. Rather than being an intrusion into labour's affairs it offers a helping hand. A top trade unionist in Asian Assembly of MRA at Colombo, said in conversation about MRA, "I am beginning to feel that something more is needed than I now possess." Labour must face the fact that it has moved away from its spiritual beginnings, and accepts a materialistic attitude to most problems.

WE must also fight to see that Management generally speaking need to see that the refusal to change and the patronising hand-out to Labour feeds Communism and helps it in its march.

Our aim is to re-establish classless society. Let us not be afraid to positively state this. It is a high ideal of which Labour should not be ashamed to proclaim from the treetops always and as often as opportunity permits. This entails neither the elimination of private property, nor complete equality of incomes, nor a police State. Planning by democratic methods aims at stability of employment while preserving economic progress, at reducing inequality and poverty while maintaining individual incentive; at orderly development while upholding individual liberties.

The essence of welfare state is the belief that social planning for general welfare can, by increasing opportunity, enlarge individual freedom, by reducing waste, exploitation and inefficiency, increase economic progress. This system will have its own problems, but the advantage is unquestionably on the side of clear policy.

Not Greed

While keeping in mind what labour says, read what Moral Re-armament says, "There's enough in the world for everyone's needs, but not for everyone's greed, and if everyone cared enough and everyone shared enough then everyone would have enough". There is no difference in the aims of labour and the sentiments of Moral Re-armament.

M. R. A. requires everyone to apply absolute honesty in the course of their everyday lives. It does not mean that people should be door mats, for it teaches how to fight on the basis of what is right. Moral Re-armament supplies a platform where men of all religions and men of the labour movement can fight together for one great cause. Labour led by God can lead the world.

The test of our progress is not whether we add to the abundance of those who have much, it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little. The most serious threat to our way

and economic change in life. But there is another factor. We are living in an ideological age, and that is something a lot of us have not caught up with yet. Today's question is, "Which idea is going to win the millions of workers in the world?" That is the issue, and there is not much time to decide.

Mighty militant ideas are on the march, and labour needs ideological fighters, men who know how to change other men who know how to unite different groups. A lot of us need to learn to be honest. All we do is disagree with the other fellow. There is an answer—it is the dynamic ideology of Moral Re-armament.

With the ideology of M.R.A. Labour's programme would swing into action much easier and smoother. A programme based into absolute honesty, unselfishness and love for our fellow men will bring happiness and prosperity to all the nations.

Dr. Martin of Oxford University said, "We have been building on a shaky foundation of a great building called modern civilisation. We have built it with our business, our politics, our education. We are preparing to de-

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AN ORISSA STORY

(Continued from page V)

ment and labour were able to get together and plan creatively how to raise the standard of living of the workers. Production went up 15 per cent and wages were raised as much as 50 per cent in some cases. Management made it their policy to consult the union in every issue involving the men.

Then Pretap Singh, took the initiative with the union men to improve conditions at every

send it with our armies and navies."

The danger is that it will collapse in a heap of unemployment, hunger, political chaos and economic disaster.

Most people are trying hard to keep this great building standing by patching the walls and fixing the reef, but the foundations are the trouble. The building was run up too fast and it won't stand against the storms of an ideological age.

M. R. A. is concerned with these foundations. Capitalist foundations or Marxist foundations are not adequate to support a world structure in which all men everywhere can find their place to live. There must be moral foundation for a new world on which all can build.

Party politics, nationalism, political ideologies divide men from each other. Only a moral ideology that meets the needs of the human heart and of the human stomach can unite all men everywhere.

The moral basis of the new world is the four absolute moral standards. A former communist said in the docks of Liverpool, "No idea is as great as the four

standards ever came out of the Kremlin". They are the road to change. Most of the world wants a change. Only the very selfish or the very stupid are quite content with things as they are.

M. R. A. is not a framework of ideas to discuss while the world gets worse around us.

It is a way of life to lead which leads to change in us and in our circumstances. Hans Bockler, the chairman of the trade unions of Germany said: "When men change, the structure of society changes, and when the structure of society changes, men change. Both go together and both are necessary".

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By
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of life comes from those who refuse to face the need to change. M. R. A. can teach everyone to change.

Unless Management accepts responsibility for creating an economy that does not burn crops and does not tolerate starvation in the midst of plenty, it need not be surprised to find its function taken over by others who believe in a programme of abundance for all, however obnoxious to management, and however defective that programme may be.

Our Destiny

Let us think of the workers first. Their most rudimentary need is for the chance to make a living and secure a living. But they have other vital needs that clamour for satisfaction. These include the need to be treated as a man and respected as a person; to have an equal voice in matters that affect them as people; to know that they are wanted and belong; to know that those in positions of power care what happens to them; to have an opportunity to develop their highest skills and capacities and a fair chance to give their highest service; to be assured of justice and openness and honesty at the hands of those who supervise and manage.

Have we in labour a big enough idea of labour's destiny? Is not labour's destiny as follows:

To make the wealth and the work of the world available to all and for the exploitation of none;

To find abundance in the economics of unselfishness;

To make the motive of Industry the passion to build a new world;

To find again the fire and conviction of labour's pioneers, that labour, led by God, can re-make the world.

The ideals of M. R. A. could be of great help in putting men in labour back on the right road. Labour can be united and obtain its ideals when all in labour get the issues clear in their minds.

We in the labour and the trade union movement have never been so much divided as we are now. Although, we think too much in terms of economics and politics, we will always fight for social

(Continued from page V)

ment and labour were able to get together and plan creatively how to raise the standard of living of the workers. Production went up 15 per cent and wages were raised as much as 50 per cent in some cases. Management made it their policy to consult the union in every issue involving the men.

Then Pretap Singh, took the initiative with the union men to improve conditions at every level. A pair of shoes, two shirts and shorts were issued free to every worker and free laundry was provided twice a week. Free haircutting and shaving was given to the men twice a month and sixteen barbers were taken on to handle this. With government assistance six hundred houses were built. Free medicine was provided and a maternity centre constructed. The workers began to produce two dramas a month in their new hall.

A scheme was started where groups of workers travelled to the big cities, like Delhi and Cawnpore. There they visited factories and told of their experience and learned from other workers how they could still further improve their conditions. Small wonder that the Minister of Planning sent for a report. He said, "News of this must reach every industry in India."

This is not just an idea in industrial relations, says Chittha Sen. "It is a new quality of life, an ideology, which can be applied in the home and in the factory and between the nations."

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