

Moral Rearmament dubbed "dictatorship movement" by trade union body

From Our Correspondent

London, Tuesday.

THE International Confederation of Free Trade Unions has published in London a long, critical report on the origins, aims, history and activities of the Rev. Frank N. Buchman's Moral Rearmament movement, once known as the Oxford Group. The report says that Dr. Buchman's followers are not recruited from the masses but from the "ranks of leaders," that they follow Dr. Buchman blindly and unconditionally, that they include many ex-Communists who are "an easy prey to mysticism," and that the achievements they claim in the industrial field are largely imaginary.

The sources of their wealth, the report says, are completely unknown but "must be very rich."

The confederation believes that "this certainly means that the movement has to make concessions."

The confederation's executive council, which has amended and approved the report, concludes that the movement's directives to factory workers "seldom correspond to the will of the majority and, in view of the sectarian character of Moral Rearmament, are hardly aimed at the welfare of mankind in general."

The executive declares that Moral Rearmament should be prevented from encroaching on trade union preserves.

FOUND FRIENDS

Dr. Buchman, says the report, was born in Pennsylvania in 1878. He founded his movement, which was then called the Oxford Group, in that city in 1921.

The report says he rapidly "found friends and followers, especially among undergraduates, who were attracted by his puritanical outlook and by the use he made of experience he had gained on his missionary trips to China, for example, holding house parties as a means of converting people."

In August, 1936, says the report, Dr. Buchman was not merely opposed to Communism but gave the following "pro-Fascist statement" to the "New York World Telegram": "Hitler or any Fascist leader controlled by God could cure all the ills of the world."

The Oxford Group's programme then consisted of what were known as four absolutes—absolute unselfishness, honesty, purity and love "on the personal and national plane."

WARTIME CRITICISM

The fourth absolute was extended to include the "personal, social, industrial, national and supernational" fields when the group changed its name to Moral Rearmament in 1938.

During the war, according to the report, the group's activities were criticized in the British and American Press, which complained about Moral Rearmament dis-

ciples being "nice young tennis players" who were touring the country, instead of defending it.

In 1946 Moral Rearmament bought three hotels at Caux, Switzerland, and turned itself into the Moral Rearmament Foundation.

Discussing the movement's methods the report says "Dr. Buchman does not build up his movement from below by recruitment from the masses — on the contrary.

"His is not the path of a democratic movement but that of a dictatorship since he builds up his movement from the ranks of leaders. People were trained as a team of keymen to win over converts who followed their leaders blindly and unconditionally."

"HALF TRUTHS"

Dr. Buchman, the report says, is now recruiting politicians, industrialists, trade unionists and former Communists as well as undergraduates. The confederation thinks it "noteworthy" that he should be anxious to recruit ex-Communists and thinks this is because they respond more readily to mysticism and will accept Dr. Buchman's appeal to the "blind herd instinct."

Having examined more closely some of the movement's own report of its "trade union achievements" the confederation concludes that "in all cases they were found to be half truths or fabricated 'successes.'"