

# M.R.A. -- WEAPON OF THE "COLD WAR"

By DAN TLOOME

**R**ECENTLY we have become aware of a new movement which aims to attract Africans. It invites them for free visits to conferences in Rhodesia (passports fixed without questions, all expenses paid), and even to Switzerland (again, all expenses paid, including luxury accommodation in a first-class hotel). Some African leaders accept these invitations without thinking very much about it. The movement seems harmless, of a vaguely religious character. It calls itself "Moral Rearmament." It claims to be based on the principles of "Absolute Honesty, Purity, Unselfishness and Love." Smooth-spoken emissaries come to see these African leaders. They flatter them with a show of respect and consideration. It all sounds so attractive and harmless. The rewards are tempting.

Fortunately, most of our non-European leaders have developed a sharp sense of suspicion against innocent-seeming advances of this type. They want to know what it is all about. One or two, however, are not so vigilant. They accept invitations to Lusaka in Rhodesia and Caux in Switzerland. They send fulsome birthday greetings to the M.R.A. fuhrer, Dr. Frank Buchman. They fail to ask the key questions: What is the M.R.A.? What is its background? How is it organised and financed? What are its real aims?

## The Background.

In the 1930's there emerged in Britain a movement known as the Oxford Group, lead by an American, Dr. Frank Buchman. While it claimed to be religious in character, it showed a marked political bias. Its main political feature at that time was its sympathy for Germany Nazism. In 1936, Dr. Buchman paid a visit to Germany and met Himmler who was, of course, the head of the Gestapo, responsible during his career for the slaughter and torture of millions of innocent people in concentration camp. According to the German steel millionaire Fritz Thyssen (in his book "I Paid Hitler") Himmler was actually a member of the Oxford Group. A few weeks later after his return from Nazi Germany, Buchman made the following declaration:

*"I thank Heaven for a man like Adolph Hitler who built a front line of defence against the anti-Christ of Communism."* ("New York World-Telegram," August 26th, 1936.)

When the war broke out against Germany, leading British members of Buchman's organisation went to America to carry out a campaign for American neutrality. They said that the role of the U.S.A. should be limited to "Moral Rearmament." This was made the main slogan of the movement, and from then on the Oxford Group changed its name to that of Moral Rearmament.

By April, 1941, Hitler had already overrun Europe and the pro-Nazi line had become impossible for Buchman to put across outside Germany. M.R.A. publications, however, continued to be published in German under the Nazi regime.

Sir Alan Herbert, Conservative M.P., said about the Moral Rearmament Group:

"I know what I am up against with this vast, wealthy and ruthless organisation ... The language and technique of the Oxford Group Co., Ltd., is strikingly and sadly similar to that of the Nazis."

In January, 1943, the American Draft Appeals Board (a body set up to consider applications for exemption from military service) rejected appeals from M.R.A. members, saying:

"Such declarations (by Dr. Buchman) seem to us to be expressing the aims and philosophy of the Axis power."

M.R.A. leaders from foreign countries act as agencies of the American intelligence (spy) service. Delegates attending international M.R.A. conferences in America hold "international security conferences" with representatives of the U.S. Congress and State Department. Gen. Lucius D. Clay, the American Military Commander in Germany helped to pick 150 German leaders to attend the M.R.A. meeting in Caux in 1947, and in 1950 the Japanese M.R.A. delegation came to Europe and America "with the support and approval of Gen. MacArthur" (Congressional Record, July 24th, 1950).

## Humble Gratitude.

The leaders of this Japanese delegation were received by the U.S. Congress, and their spokesman said:

We realize that the precious blood of the sons of America is now being shed to protect freedom of the world and the Far East, and if we might be permitted as Japanese to bow our heads in deepest and humble gratitude and appreciation for this great sacrifice the United States is making, it will indeed be an honour and a privilege for us."

If such servile lickspittling is required of non-white M.R.A. members, African leaders may well think twice if it is not too high a price to pay for a free holiday abroad.

Both in the United States and Britain, M.R.A. is supported by the most reactionary and fascist sections of the ruling class. Henry Ford and Harry Truman have backed this outfit for many years. In Britain Lord Nuffield, the Morris motor-car king, Lord Courthope, President of the National Union of Conservative and Unionist Associations, and former President of the Landowners Association, and many other Tory leaders and top capitalists are among M.R.A.'s backers.

A list of the Movement's chief supporters in other countries sounds like a register of the worst enemies of the working class throughout the world. Chiang Kai-shek and his Formosa clique back M.R.A. Its Japanese supporters include Hisuro Ichimido the Director of the Bank of Japan and other leaders of Japanese Industry who gave their full support to Japanese aggression in Asia. Other Japanese supporters include America's puppet Premier of Japan, Yoshida, and the Chiefs of Police in Tokyo and Osaka.

The biggest monopoly in India is Tata Industries. Its Chairman, Shri J.R.D. Tata backs M.R.A.

Singman Rhee is an M.R.A. man.

Karl Adenauer West German Chancellor ("the Butcher of Bonn") is an M.R.A. man.



Robert Schumann, former French Prime Minister, who was kicked out by the French Parliament because they could not stomach his plan for a new Nazi army in Germany and German control of French coal and steel resources, is an M.R.A. man.

What sort of company is this, for Africans who claim to be interested in the emancipation of their people?

## In South Africa.

It is only recently that M.R.A. has been trying to penetrate among non-European leaders in this country. But it has for some time been seeking support among the Europeans. Where did it get the support?

As we should expect, from the sort of international connections described above, the Buchmanites sought and found a ready response among big business circles in the Union. And, in the first place, from the historic enemy of the workers and oppressed people of South Africa, the big mining interests who dominate our country

"The Chamber of Mines, which undertook the cost of sending a delegation of its own representatives to Caux, reports that there is 100 per cent. change in relationships between itself and the men (the white miners' union) as a result of M.R.A. influence. Personalities such as Mr. Paul Visser, President of the Union, and Mr. R. P. Erasmus declare that they have found a new way whereby disputes can be settled amicably in the light of the M.R.A. ideology."

("The Star," 23rd April, 1951)

Nationalist members of Parliament and leaders of the Nationalist dominated S.A. Mine Workers' Union availed themselves of the invitations to holidays in Switzerland. Mr. D. F. Ellis former Secretary of the Mine Workers' Union, was also connected with the movement for "Moral Rearmament," although his devotion to the principles of "absolute honesty, purity etc." would appear to be somewhat questionable.

To sum up:

"Moral Rearmament" is not, as it pretends to be, a quasi-religious body restricted to preaching high-sounding moral platitudes. It is an enormously wealthy international conspiracy devoted to undermining movements of the workers and oppressed people for emancipation in all countries. Its "message" of collaboration between workers and employers, between oppressors and the oppressed turns out to be a formula for getting the oppressed to submit to their fate, without struggle. By allowing a few leaders to sit down socially with their masters, they hope to emasculate the trade unions and national liberation movements.

They will not succeed in these objectives. The great majority of trade unionists and democratic leaders will refuse to be side-tracked by the soft soap of the Buchmanites. They will ask why M.R.A. members are not allowed to elect officials of the movement, and why its finances are kept a closely-guarded secret from the members themselves. They will ask why M.R.A. has no answers to any of the problems of poverty, misery, unemployment and war, but restricts itself to acting as a weapon in American Capitalism's "cold war" against so-called "communism."

And they will reject the M.R.A. with contempt, just as they rejected the "Bantu National Congress" of Mr. Bhengu, the so-called "Non-European Unity Movement" and all other agencies of the ruling class.