

Asia Center Odawara
**Postwar Japan and the Work of
Moral Re-Armament**
40th Anniversary Publication



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Editorial note: Japanese names in this publication are given in customary order, surname first.

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*Asia Center Odawara: Postwar Japan and the Work of Moral Re-Armament
(40th Anniversary Publication)*

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MRA Asia Center Opens in Odawara

The MRA Asia Center opened its doors on October 22, 1962, in an impressive ceremony attended by Prime Minister Ikeda Hayato and numerous dignitaries from Japan and abroad.

Efforts to find a site for the center had been underway since early 1960, when MRA supporters in Japan first agreed on building a facility that could serve as a headquarters for their work in Asia. Several scenic locations were considered, including one on the Asagiri highlands on the slope of Mt. Fuji, but ultimately decided against because of difficulties of access and affordability. In May, protesters opposing the amendment of the Japan-U.S. security treaty thronged the Diet building so thickly that not even members of the Diet could find their way in. This being the case, Chiba Saburo, a Diet member from the Liberal Democratic Party who was actively involved in plans for the center, suggested that the group involved in the search take advantage of his unexpected “holiday” to go to Odawara to take a look at the villa owned by former imperial prince Kan'in Sumihito that had been recommended as a possible site by Japan National Railways President Sogo Shinji. Accordingly, a party took the Shonan Railway—the Shinkansen was not yet in operation at the time—to Odawara and the villa. Once there, all were enthusiastic about



Guests at the opening ceremony, Odawara Mayor Suzuki Juro standing at center

the marvelous panorama from the garden extending far out over Sagami Bay to the Izu Islands and the Boso Peninsula. Adding to this the knowledge that in two years a new station on the Shinkansen, Sogo's brainchild, would open in Odawara, the idea of building the center on the villa property began to look quite attractive and realistic.

Once the organizers met the owner and confirmed his willingness to sell the villa on the condition that it would be used for the public good, things moved forward rapidly. In



View from the former Kan'in villa looking out over Sagami Bay

April 1961, a sponsor group for construction of the MRA Asia Center was established with Kudo Shoshiro, president of Tokyo Tomin Bank, as its head. The members of the board included Sogo, Chiba, Bank of Japan Governor Yamagiwa Masamichi, former finance minister Shibusawa Keizo, and Railway Welfare Association Chairman Hayakawa Shin'ichi. The 100 million yen settled on as the price for the 8,000-*tsubo* (26,400 square meter) property

was financed for the time being by a loan from the Tokyo Tomin Bank, and preparations for the actual construction began in earnest. The basic design was entrusted to Charles Rudolf, an architect also involved with the MRA center at Caux in Switzerland; architect Yoshimura Junzo was taken on as a consultant, while Shimizu Corporation was tentatively set as the builder.

The city of Odawara also gave its full support to the undertaking. Mayor Suzuki Juro attended numerous project events, including the groundbreaking ceremony performed by Burmese high cleric U Narada, in addition to providing for property-tax exemptions and other forms of assistance both large and small. Construction commenced in January 1962, and roughly ten months later, in October, the building, composed of five stories above ground and two below altogether encompassing a floor area of 7,500 square meters, was ready.



Burmese high cleric U Narada presiding over the groundbreaking ceremony; Mayor Suzuki at far right

Numerous corporations, organizations, and individuals from around the country generously donated funds toward the 400 million yen required for construction and 100 million yen required for facilities and equipment. Donations came in from other countries as well, for example:

- ✦ Blankets and furniture (from Australia and New Zealand)
- ✦ Dishwasher (from Germany)
- ✦ Kitchen and bath equipment (from Switzerland)
- ✦ 36-mm projector and related equipment (from the Dutch company Philips)



Suzuki (front) and chief architect Charles Rudolf



View from the west side



View from the southeast side



Prime Minister Ikeda Hayato at the opening ceremony

Among the guests at the October 22 opening ceremony was Korean Central Intelligence Agency Director Kim Jong-pil, who made his way from South Korea expressly to be on hand for the event. At the time, diplomatic relations had not yet been established between Japan and South Korea, added to which exchange be-

tween the two countries had nearly come to a halt following the recent South Korean coup d'état led by General Park Chung-hee. Given such a climate, this surprise unofficial visit by Kim—a former cadet of the Imperial Japanese Army Academy and Park's close aide—to participate in the MRA movement in which he had long expressed interest sparked much attention both in Japan and abroad. Kim remained in Tokyo for several days after the Odawara ceremony, meeting with various persons in what would lay the foundations for the famed “Kim-Ohira memorandum” and normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and his country three years later.

Kim was one of many foreign dignitaries to attend the opening. President Chiang Kai-shek of Taiwan made a gift of his own calligraphy, which was brought and presented by his aide General Ho Ying-chin, while President Ngo Dinh Diem of the Republic of Vietnam presented the center with an attractive lacquered cabinet.

Taking place a mere 17 years after the conclusion of World War II when Japan's rapid economic growth had yet to take off, the successful construction of the MRA Asia Center was a momentous event. It represented the fruit of both far-reaching material and moral assistance extended to Japan by the international MRA movement in its initiative to promote postwar reconstruction and cooperation from among those inspired by MRA goodwill.



Former prime minister Yoshida Shigeru (center), flanked by Bank of Japan Governor Yamagiwa Masamichi (left) and Diet member Kondo Tsuruyo



Former prime minister Kishi Nobusuke (left) with Korean Central Intelligence Agency Director Kim Jong-pil

The Postwar World and MRA

In May 1945 Nazi Germany surrendered to the Allies, ending six years of war in western Europe. No sooner had the fighting ceased than MRA, buttressed by the strong dedication and leadership of founder Frank Buchman, embarked on its mission of promoting postwar reconstruction. In 1946, the Swiss supporters of MRA, inspired by gratitude and a desire to give back something to the world in exchange for having been able to main-



Caux Mountain House



German chancellor Konrad Adenauer (left)
at Caux

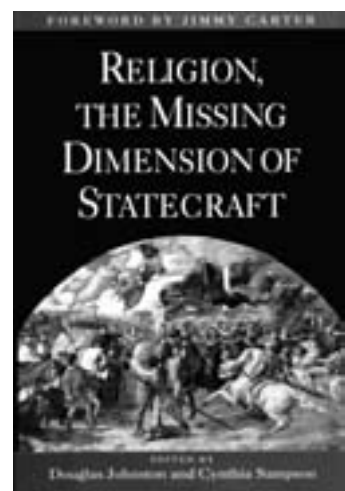


French foreign minister Robert Schuman (left)
at Caux

tain neutrality and thereby escape the ravages of war, acquired and remodeled the former Caux Palace Hotel in the village of Caux in the mountains above Montreux in the Swiss canton of Vaud, donating it to Buchman as headquarters for his movement. Here German chancellor Konrad Adenauer, French foreign minister Robert Schuman, and numerous others from throughout Europe gathered to take part in MRA meetings, work toward easing hatred and fear of Germany, and promote reconciliation. These efforts helped pave the way for unification of Europe starting with the establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community and continuing through the formation of the European Community. (The history of this aspect of the movement is detailed in “Franco-German Reconciliation: The Overlooked Role of the Moral Re-Armament Movement,” chapter 4 of *Religion, the Missing Dimension of Statecraft*, Douglas Johnston and Cynthia Sampson, eds., Oxford University Press, 1994, pp. 37–57.)

Following the end of fighting in Europe, Japan also accepted surrender on August 15, 1945. On August 30 General Douglas MacArthur arrived in Atsugi to serve as supreme commander of the Occupation forces.

Unlike with western Europe, MRA had a lesser degree of geographical and cultural familiarity with Japan, so MRA activities there had to start from the ground up by taking stock of the overall situation and seeking out personnel fit to lead the task of postwar reconstruction. Thus began sustained efforts, on one hand, to bring the people of Japan, long isolated by war, up to date with the realities of the postwar world, and on the other to promote better awareness and understanding of Japan among other countries. As a first step, the movement sought to send abroad groups of Japanese with ties to MRA from before the war along with others of prominence in their respective fields. Of course, given that Japan was under the complete authority of the Occupation forces at the time, and that foreign travel was still restricted for Japanese citizens, MRA connections with U.S. senators and others of influence among Occupation officials, including MacArthur himself, proved instrumental in obtaining the necessary documents, much in the way that such contacts had served similar efforts involving Germany.



In 1948, a delegation of some ten Japanese set out for an MRA gathering in Los Angeles, among them former ambassador to the United States and vice foreign minister Horinouchi Kensuke as well as Mitsui Takasumi, Sohma Yasutane, and their wives, all affiliated with MRA since before World War II.

In 1949, former prime minister Katayama Tetsu and his wife attended an MRA meeting in Caux, following up with a tour of the Ruhr area, Paris, London, and other European locales before coming back to Japan via the United States. Katayama's comment that he was "going in search of the blue bird," spoken at a press conference prior to his departure, became the object of much public attention as echoing the hopeful sentiments of many Japanese of the time.

Based on the knowledge of Japan gained through these and other preliminary projects, in 1950 MRA began organizing a large-scale delegation composed of Japanese leaders in various fields from all around the country. Kenaston Twitchell of the United States and Basil Entwistle of the United Kingdom arrived in Japan on February 3 under instructions from Frank Buchman to help facilitate matters, and, following talks with Prime Minister



Former prime minister Katayama Tetsu (far left) with his wife at Caux

Frank Buchman (right) welcoming former Japanese ambassador to the United States Horinouchi Kensuke (left) at Los Angeles International Airport with George Eastman (standing at center)



Yoshida Shigeru and other leaders arranged by the Occupation authorities as well as visits to such areas as Nagano, the Kansai region, Hiroshima, and Kyushu, the two met with MacArthur in late April to secure his approval for the undertaking. It was after roughly two more months of preparations that the delegation set out on June 12 on a flight chartered from Philippine Airlines.

For more on MRA activities in Japan in these and following years, see Basil Entwistle, *Japan's Decisive Decade: How a Determined Minority Changed the Nation's Course in the 1950s* (London: Grosvenor Books, 1985).



The Katayamas (center) and their entourage during their European tour



The 1950 Delegation

For the members of the Japanese delegation to the 1950 MRA world assembly in Switzerland, June 12 began with a bon voyage luncheon hosted by Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru. The delegation, the first large-scale group of Japanese to travel abroad privately after the war, found itself the focus of not only media but widespread public attention. The group departed Haneda Airport that evening on board a Philippine Airlines plane, stopping at Manila, Calcutta, Karachi, Tel Aviv, Rome, and other airports before landing at Geneva. From there the members traveled overland along the north shore of Lake Lemman through Lausanne to Montreux, where their vehicle turned left up the steep road climbing 1,000 meters above sea level to the MRA center, formerly the Caux Palace Hotel but by then already familiar by the name “Mountain House.”

A group of MRA supporters including Frank Buchman was waiting outside the front entrance of the building, where the visitors were welcomed by an international chorus singing the Japanese anthem. It is all too easy to imagine how moving this warm reception by Buchman and his fellows must have been for the delegates, still disheartened by their



The delegation upon arrival in Geneva

country's responsibility for World War II as well as by the international outcry over wartime brutalities in the territories it had occupied.

The sessions and mealtime gatherings in the following days gave the delegates stimulating glimpses into a postwar world they had long not even been able to imagine might come to pass. The serenely beautiful setting of Caux, with the snowbound peak of Dent du Midi towering above and Lake Lemman spread out below, offered them an unparalleled environment in which to reflect on the tumult of their lives in the years surrounding World War II and to think about the future of their country, now destined to live in harmony with the rest of the world. Such reflections prompted some to remember and humbly express repentance over the conflicts and rivalries that had absorbed their energies for various reasons not only during the war but even after it, while leading many a younger participant to speak buoyantly of aspirations for the future, among them Diet member Nakasone Yasuhiro, who declared his determination to become prime minister in ten more years (a goal that was realized in 1982).

On June 25, while the delegates were still discussing from their various perspectives the place of Japan in the world, came the shocking news of the invasion of North Korea into South Korea, a confrontation that immediately developed into a full-scale war between U.N. forces on one side versus the Soviet Union and China on the other. As a result of the ensuing conflict Occupation policy toward Japan reversed course, focusing on eco-



Chancellor Adenauer (seated at right) with (from left) Diet members Kitamura Tokutarō and Fukuda Tokuyasu (third from left), Mie prefectural governor Aoki Osamu, Nakajima Katsuji, and Diet member Nakasone Yasuhiro

From left: Fukuda, Diet member Kuriyama Chojiro, and John Foster Dulles, consultant to the U.S. secretary of state



conomic aid and rearmament and utterly transforming the international climate surrounding the country.

Following two weeks in Caux, the delegation met the president of Switzerland in Bern and the president of the International Red Cross in Geneva before moving on to West Germany to pay a visit arranged through MRA to Chancellor Konrad Adenauer in Bonn, also making stops in such cities as Düsseldorf, Bremen, and Hamburg. After these and other rewarding experiences, including being especially invited by French President Vincent Auriol to view the parades celebrating Bastille Day (July 14) in Paris and attending a traditional reception hosted by the mayor of London, the group crossed the Atlantic to the United States.

The delegation visited U.N. secretary general Trygve Lie in New York, and took part in a Senate reception and House luncheon in Washington, D.C. Subsequently, Kuriyama Chojiro and other Diet members were invited to the Senate floor where they, representing Prime Minister Yoshida and speaking through interpreter Nishiyama Sen, conveyed feelings of regret and apology for the events of World War II. Diet member Kitamura Tokutaro delivered a similar message in the House. Their words, the first to be given by Japanese in the central halls of U.S. government since the war's end, were widely covered through newspapers and radios.



The delegation in Berlin



The delegation at the U.S. Capitol

The trip concluded with the group heading back home via San Francisco and Los Angeles. Upon its return, Kitamura reported on the delegation's activities in an audience with the emperor, in addition to which hundreds of presentations and lectures on the tour were held throughout the country by various of the participants including Nakasone, other Diet members, and labor leaders.

The success of MRA's postwar activities in Japan in such a short period may be attributed to the following factors:

1. Presence of a moral vacuum. In contrast to the Occupation forces, the MRA and its future-oriented message of fairness for all humanity were able to arouse strong interest and hope among Japanese in the moral vacuum that had been created when defeat left the nation bereft of a vision.
2. Message of harmony. MRA emphasis on resuscitating such moral values as harmony, selflessness, and love throughout the world was magnetic in a society rapidly splintering in reaction to the excessive strictures of the war years, where familiar traditions of marriage, the family, and labor-management relationships seemed to be crumbling everywhere one looked.
3. Japanese contrition over the war; international isolation. MRA calls for victor and defeated alike to engage in moral self-reflection were comforting to Japanese, then faced with a growing storm of international criticism over the atrocities conducted by its military during World War II.
4. New approach to labor-management relations. The dramatic reconciliation effected between the metropolitan police chief and radical labor leaders in Osaka during the 1950 delegation's Swiss stay helped draw attention to MRA as a possible new approach to solving the growingly pressing labor issues of the time. Indeed, throughout the 1950s MRA was able to accomplish a great deal in Japan on this front, helping to bring viable settlements to labor disputes at such companies as Toshiba, Ishikawajima Heavy Industries, and Nippon Telegraph and Telephone in addition to prompting talks between rival political factions including the left and right wings of the Socialist Party. Threatened by the spread of communism and worn out by endless factionalization and infighting, many labor leaders and leftist politicians were to see in MRA the key to solving their problems.
5. New directions for Japan's future. Many Japanese, discouraged by the Occupation's control over Japanese foreign relations from trying to envision where their country should head in the future, saw MRA as suggesting attractive new goals for postwar Japan to pursue in its dealings with the outside world.

(To compare the case of Japan to that of Germany, see *Religion, the Missing Dimension of Statecraft*.)

The Time of the San Francisco Peace Treaty

Following the 1950 delegation, Japanese leaders were invited every year to MRA world assemblies held in Caux in Switzerland or on Mackinac Island in the United States. Frank Buchman spared no effort in assisting the smooth progress of the San Francisco Peace Conference once it came time for the treaty with Japan to be signed in 1951. In September, when the conference was to start, Buchman took out long-term reservations for a banquet table at the top-floor restaurant of the Mark Hopkins Hotel, inviting delegates and other important figures from the different countries there every night to encourage them to proceed with negotiations. After the meal, the guests were taken to the Geary Theater to see the MRA musical *Jotham Valley*. This play about a feud brought to reconciliation at a farm in the American West succeeded in greatly moving everyone from the delegates to Japanese anti-treaty Diet members from the left wing of the Socialist Party.

At the peace conference Yoshida Shigeru, Ikeda Hayato, Hoshijima Niro, Tomabechi Gizo, Tokugawa Muneyoshi, and Ichimada Hisato served as plenipotentiaries on the Japanese side, with Katayama Tetsu, Yamada Setsuo, and several others participating as deputies and advisors and Kato Shidzue, Togano Satoko, and other Socialist Diet members as official observers.



A scene from *Jotham Valley*

Shortly after the conclusion of the treaty on September 8, French foreign minister Robert Schuman commended Buchman for his contribution, remarking on how Buchman had already succeeded in achieving peace with Japan from as early as two years before that day's signing. Buchman's activism also left a powerful impression on Bank of Japan director Ichimada, Diet member Hoshijima, and other Japanese envoys and attendees of the conference, inspiring efforts toward securing a base for MRA activities in Japan that would, in the following year, lead to the acquisition of the MRA House in Tokyo and the establishment of the MRA Foundation.



May 1952: The 1952 Japanese delegation en route to the MRA world assembly



July 1951: The 1951 Japanese MRA delegation at San Francisco City Hall following a visit with the mayor

Establishment of MRA House and the MRA Foundation

MRA gained increasing public recognition in Japan in the years following the return of the 1950 delegation, prompting numerous related gatherings and activities to be held throughout the country. The time was one of growing ideological conflict in Japan, with strife worsening not only between reformists and conservatives but also between leftist and rightist factions of such organizations as labor unions and the Socialist Party. In this environment, the MRA message of harmony and reconciliation through spiritual betterment drew attention from many fields, indeed contributing to improved relations between management and labor of several corporations.

Meanwhile, desire to establish a base for MRA activities in Japan was growing among people familiar with the operations of MRA through similar centers in other countries. As discussed earlier, the first direct steps toward the realization of this goal came in the wake of Frank Buchman's dedicated campaign to facilitate the negotiation of the San Francisco Peace Treaty. Inspired by Buchman, several Japanese attending the conference, including Ichimada Hisato and Hoshijima Niro, began actively seeking to create an MRA Tokyo headquarters in an effort also joined by Supreme Court judge Tanaka Kotaro, education minister Amano Teiyu, Keidanren chairman Ishikawa Ichiro, Toshiba president Ishizaka Taizo, Mainichi Newspapers president Honda Chikao, and others already affiliated with MRA. It was believed that once this headquarters opened, it would provide a venue where people could set aside differences in political affiliations and beliefs to gather in a rational and sincere environment devoted to discussing the outlines of domestic and foreign policy in Japan following the eventual return of sovereignty.

In December 1951, Republican U.S. senator Alexander Smith and Democratic House



MRA House

representative Sparkman arrived on a visit to Japan, where they were invited to a dinner attended by Ichimada, Honda, Kato Kanju and his wife Shidzue, Kuriyama Chojiro, Japan Telecommunications Workers' Union chairman Kubo Hitoshi, Horinouchi Kensuke, Mitsui Takasumi and his wife, Sohma Yasutane, and Sohma's wife Yukika, who also acted as interpreter. The congressmen found themselves greatly impressed by the earnest and sincere views expressed by their Japanese hosts regarding the future of Japan and the world, while the Japanese attendees, for their part struck anew by the need for an established venue for holding more international dialogues of this kind, resolved to take immediate action toward making the MRA headquarters a reality.

A luncheon to discuss the matter was accordingly hosted by Ichimada at his official residence on December 25, attended by Ishikawa, Mitsubishi Bank president Chigira Sozaburo, Taisho Marine and Fire Insurance president Yamane, and Imperial Hotel president Inumaru Tetsuzo, among others.

Another meeting of 25 influential leaders—including Ichimada, Ishizaka, Kuriyama, Kato, Tashiro Shigeki, Kurata Chikara, Yuasa Yuichi, and Togano Satoko—followed in early January, at which time the participants agreed on a plan to purchase a house and surrounding property located in central Tokyo in Azabu, Minato ward, for 16 million yen, financed for the time being (as according to Ichimada's proposal) through donations and loans.

The necessary funds were readied by the end of March, and on April 2 Basil Entwistle, Sohma Toyotane, and their wives took up residence at MRA House, now open for activities. Measures had been taken concurrently to set up a parent body for the MRA House that would manage donations, loans, and other financial matters as well as support future activities. The MRA Foundation was thus established. It received official approval of its legal status by the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture in March 1952. The voluntary Association of MRA Supporters was also established to help raise funds for MRA activities, thereby providing an apparatus through which to accept regular donations from the many corporations that had signed on as members.



The MRA House verandah

Tour of MRA Musical and Buchman's Visit to Japan

In June 1955, the MRA musical *The Vanishing Island* arrived on a tour of Japan. The entourage that landed at Haneda Airport was made up of 180 individuals from 25 countries, including not only lighting and stage crews and the more than 100 members of the cast but also such dignitaries as Danish Conservative People's Party leader and former NATO chairman Ole Bjørn Kraft, Tunisian minister of state (later foreign minister) Mohamed Masmoudi, British member of Parliament John McGovern of the Labour Party, former Swiss chancellor Oskar Leimgrüber, Eastern Nigerian member of Parliament Basil Charles Okwu, and Majid Movaghar, representative of Shah Pahlavi of Iran.

Following World War II, MRA frequently turned to theater, film, and other audio-visual media to help disseminate its ideals among the public. Such media offered a means to dramatize subtle feelings and moral truths that could not be captured in words alone while also drawing on visual images to appeal directly to people's sensibilities. Compared to dialogue sessions or lectures, they also enabled contact with wider and more general audiences, who, touched by the messages conveyed, often responded in ways greater than expected.



Members of the *Vanishing Island* delegation in front of their U.S. Air Force transport plane

The Vanishing Island Musical

Written by Peter Howard in three acts, *The Vanishing Island* portrayed two allegorical countries, the capitalistic Eiluph'mei (I Love Me) and the communistic Weiheit'tiu (We Hate You), describing the political, economic, and moral weaknesses of each while also setting out the possibility of a new order that overcomes these faults and urging individuals, families, and organizations alike to take action toward this goal. In the real-life Eiluph'mei of the time, McCarthyism and other excesses were exposing the vulnerabilities and faults of the Western camp at the same time that anxiety and apprehension ran rife over the powerful spread of Communism, which seemed to prove (to borrow from Mao Zedong's famous 1957 declaration) that the east wind was indeed prevailing over the west wind. Thus the play represented an attempt by MRA to effectively respond to this crisis by indicating a third and better path.



Scene from the play



Scene from the play: The Land of We Hate You



Scene from the play: The Land of I Love Me

On June 15, representatives from all the political parties of the Diet put aside their usual rivalries to welcome the *Vanishing Island* delegation at a reception hosted by Prime Minister Hatoyama Ichiro at his official residence. Members of the Lower House from the conservative Liberal and Japan Democratic parties as well as the left and right wings of the Socialist Party sat together for the four-and-a-half-hour reception, where Upper House President Kawai Yahachi gave a speech in which he assigned highest priority to the task of rebuilding Japan according to MRA principles.

The performances given at Tokyo Theater and Osaka's Kitano Theater during the tour's ten-day stay were attended by members of the imperial family, the prime minister and his wife, and ambassadors and envoys from 20 countries along with others from varied segments of the general public. A 45-minute program of highlights from the play was also broadcast nationwide on NHK.

This large-scale musical featuring over 100 characters brought with it specialized stage and sound sets designed to be easily transportable by airplane over long distances yet capable of quickly accommodating performances whether in a formal urban theater or outdoors. Indeed, the production did go on to perform in such open-air settings as palace courtyards and city squares during the Asian and Middle Eastern stops that it made in the months following its stay in Japan, drawing surprisingly large crowds. That the production was so well equipped was testimony to the human and material resources MRA poured into the project as a vital part of its worldwide strategy.

Other MRA plays performed in Japan in the early 1950s included *The Forgotten Factor*, written by Alan Thornhill, and *Boss*, also by Peter Howard. In 1951, a group of some ten influential leaders including Ichimada Hisato, Ichimura Kiyoshi, Ishizaka



Prime Minister and Mrs. Hatoyama Ichiro (second row) at the Tokyo Theater performance



Hatoyama (left) with Tunisian minister of state Mohamed Masmoudi, one of the members of the delegation

Taizo, and Hoshijima Niro arranged a performance of *The Forgotten Factor* from September 25 to 27 at the Teikoku Theater in Tokyo. *Boss*, meanwhile, was performed from March to April 1955 at Tokyo's Dai-ichi Seimei Hall and Marunouchi Hall in a production sponsored by Ishizaka, Yamagiwa Masamichi, Moroi Kan'ichi, and Domen Toyonobu among others and attended by Princess Chichibu, Hatoyama Kaoru (wife of the prime minister), and other political notables on one hand and labor activists including members of unions at such companies as Nissan Motors and shipbuilder Hitachi Zosen on the other. On April 26, the play was given again in a performance organized by Hatoyama at his official residence for an audience of about 30 Diet members.

Visit to Japan by Frank Buchman

At 5 p.m. on April 26, 1956, Frank Buchman landed at Haneda Airport in what would be his first visit to Japan since World War II. The airport was thronged with those gathered to welcome him, including Finance Minister Ichimada Hisato, Diet members from the different political parties, labor leaders, and officers of the Japan Seinendan [Youth Association] Council. Buchman returned the favor with a message in which he called Japan "a lighthouse and powerhouse for Asia." The scene of the welcome was broadcast nationwide on radio and television.

In addition to being entertained by Prime Minister Hatoyama Ichiro and his wife, who invited Buchman to their home in the Tokyo district of Otowa on April 29 (the Emperor's Birthday) in gratitude for his warm-hearted and consistent assistance of post-war Japan, Buchman visited the Diet, the governor of Tokyo, the director of the Bank of



Finance Minister Ichimada (center) greeting Buchman at Haneda Airport

Japan, and labor leaders including Chairman Takita Minoru of the Japan Trade Union Congress and Chairman Yanagisawa Renzo of the Ishikawajima chapter of the All-Japan Shipbuilding and Engineering Union, receiving a warm welcome wherever he went. He also received the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Star.

After staying in Japan for six days, Buchman left on May 2 for Taipei, where he met with President Chiang Kai-shek before continuing on to visit President Ramon Magsaysay in the Philippines, Prime Minister Plaek Phibunsongkhram in Thailand, and President Ngo Dinh Diem in Vietnam, making his way south around Asia to Europe. He was honored in each country for his contributions.



Prime Minister Hatoyama (left) welcoming Buchman into his home



Foreign Minister Shigemitsu Mamoru (left) presenting Buchman with the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Star



Governor of Tokyo Yasui Seiichiro (right) presenting Buchman with keys to the city

Reconciliation with Asia

In June 1955, *The Vanishing Island* wrapped up its ten-day tour of Japan to leave for Taiwan and the Philippines. At this time, Diet members Hoshijima Niro (Liberal Democratic Party) and Kato Kanju (Socialist Party), together with Sohma Yukika and Nakajima Katsuji, joined the delegation to accompany it as far as Manila. Anger against brutal Japanese actions during wartime still ran strong in the Philippines, and it was only thanks to special negotiations with government officials conducted by MRA on their behalf that the four were able to gain entry into the country.

Following a performance of the play, Hoshijima went before an audience noisy with disapproval at seeing a Japanese addressing them from on stage for the first time since World War II. Through interpreter Sohma Yukika, he earnestly conveyed words of apology for the war. Prompted by this gesture, President Ramon Magsaysay agreed to receive the four along with other members of the delegation and thereafter lent active support to MRA-mediated contact with Japan, for example through granting special permission for a Japanese delegation to attend the MRA world assembly held in the Filipino town of Baguio in spring 1957. Magsaysay unfortunately died in a plane crash shortly before this time, and the event was attended instead by his successor Carlos Garcia.

Aside from Garcia, participants in the Baguio assembly included, from the Philippines, Senator Ross Lim, labor leader Roberto Oca, and the president of Far Eastern University with his wife; from Taiwan, General Ho Ying-chin; from South Korea, National Assembly members Park Hyun-sook (formerly a cabinet minister), Chung Chun, and Yoon Sung-soon, chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee; and from Japan, a delegation of ten-plus members including Hoshijima, Kato Shidzue, Sohma Yukika, and Yanagisawa Renzo. Anger and hatred toward Japan remained deep-seated on the Filipino side, adding much tension to the atmosphere, but toward the end the Japanese



Diet member Hoshijima Niro speaking at the Baguio world assembly while Sohma Yukika interprets for him at left



President Carlos Garcia of the Philippines (left) sitting alongside Senator Ross Lim

delegation's sincere expressions of repentance and apology led both private and group attitudes to soften, turning the air into one more conducive to candid dialogue.

Even more delicate was the question of how to deal with the members of the Korean delegation, who carried the raw hurt not only of 36 years of colonial rule by the Empire of Japan but also of the postwar division of their country into north and

south and the Korean War shortly following. The Korean members were cold toward the Japanese delegates, and at first efforts to approach them were entirely rebuffed. Recognizing that such might be the case from even before they set out, the Japanese attendees had prepared for the encounter by conferring with Prime Minister Kishi Nobusuke and others responsible for Japanese foreign policy so as to be able to offer some substantive gesture toward breaking the deadlock in relations between the two countries.

In addition to making personal apologies for the war, the delegates thus formally conveyed to their Korean counterparts the Japanese government's willingness to rescind the so-called "Kubota statement" (a 1953 comment by diplomat Kubota Kan'ichiro asserting that Japanese



Delegates to Baguio: from left, Hoshijima, Korean National Assembly members Park Hyun-sook (former cabinet minister) and Yoon Sung-soon (chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee), and Japanese Diet member Kato Shidzue

colonization had been beneficial to Korea; normalization talks had been halted by Korean anger over the comment) as well as to renounce all claims over Japanese property lost in Korea at the end of the war. Such overtures helped slowly foster personal trust between the two sides, particularly between the women of both parties, paving the way for the resumption of diplomatic negotiations a few years later.

In Europe, as discussed earlier, successful postwar reconstruction had hinged on being able to reconcile formerly belligerent countries including Germany and France, a task into which MRA poured tremendous effort from its headquarters in Caux. Gradually the feelings of hatred, enmity, and remorse swirling within the two nations gave way to German contrition on one side and French forgiveness and repentance over past animosity on the other, at the same time that Germany almost immediately launched into a policy of offering apology and atonement toward its former enemies and Israel as a crucial part of its goals, indeed its mission, as a nation. In this way, reconciliation proceeded from a personal level to the point where it began to be reflected in diplomatic attitudes and national policy. Visits to Caux by such leaders as Konrad Adenauer and Robert Schuman also contributed to this process, eventually leading to the German- and French-led European Coal and Steel Community and other frameworks that would define the political and economic structure of western Europe in the years following World War II.

In the case of Japan, by contrast, whereas the members of the 1950 MRA delegation did express regret and apology over World War II, these declarations were made in Europe and the United States in the absence of representatives of the Asian countries that most needed to hear them. Thus concrete efforts toward apologizing for and redressing wartime wrongs were slow to begin, both on the private and the public level. This lack sprang in part from conditions within Asia itself: all of Southeast Asia except Thailand remained under colonial rule and so had yet to be recognized internationally as sovereign entities in their own right, while China was embroiled in civil strife and the Korean peninsula, too, would plunge into the Korean War from 1951 onwards. None of these regions was therefore in a position either to seek wartime reparations or to attend relevant international conferences held in the West. And so it was a long time before the issues involving Asia's past with Japan, although certainly kept in mind by both sides, were brought into open debate. As time passed, moreover, the keenness of the responsibility to atone for wartime actions in Asia eroded in the minds of many Japanese, complicating the matter even further when it did finally start to come under discussion.

The Cold War and MRA

As Cold War tensions heightened from around 1955 onward, many overseas MRA activists began to profess great concern over Japan's future. Kishi Nobusuke had just succeeded Hatoyama Ichiro and Ishibashi Tanzan as prime minister, and the political atmosphere of the country was growing ever more uncertain, with public opinion polarized and student-, labor-, and leftist-orchestrated protests taking place nationwide against everything from the police duties law to job evaluations for teachers and amendment of the Japan-U.S. security treaty.

Alarmed by what it saw as a strategic campaign by international (particularly Chinese) communists to approach and sway Japanese leaders in different fields, MRA resolved to counteract this influence by spreading awareness of a better alternative to communism.



Frank Buchman with officers of the Japan Seinendan Council

Japan Seinendan Visit to the United States

While similar programs for inviting and winning over foreign opinion leaders already existed in many organs of the free-world camp including the U.S. Department of State, to MRA these attempts seemed on the whole much too formulaic and bureaucratically run to be effective. Buchman therefore launched his own large-scale project to invite 100 officers

from the Japan Seinendan [Youth Association] Council (Nihon Seinendan Kyogikai) to the MRA world assembly held on Mackinac Island in summer 1957.

Influencing Buchman's decision may have been his knowledge of the warm reception given in China to Japan Seinendan Council vice president Sagae Yoshiaki during his visit the year before on the express invitation of Premier Zhou Enlai. While it remained unclear just how much power the Seinendan Council actually wielded over Japanese public opinion, Buchman apparently decided that no more time could be lost in raising awareness of MRA in Japan and disseminating MRA ideals through grassroots leaders. Of course, given that at the time the MRA Foundation hardly possessed the wherewithal to pay for overseas travel for 100 people, the project was, in the end, financed largely through the generosity of Buchman and other associated donors.

The news that over 100 Japan Seinendan Council officers, including those from the headquarters as well as two from each of the prefectural branches, would travel en masse



Bird's-eye view of the MRA headquarters on Mackinac Island



Scenes from the play *Asu e no michi* [The Road to Tomorrow]

to the United States for several months astonished Japanese, sparking wide local media coverage and succeeding at least in the goal of making MRA better known in Japan. Yet at the same time, the task of opening up the Mackinac center to a whole host of local Japanese young people and preparing the delegates linguistically and otherwise for such an experience abroad proved tremendous even in terms of interpretation services, for example. Whether the various activities enjoyed by the delegates—interaction with young people of other countries during mealtimes, sports, meeting sessions, and other events; trips to the theater and the movies; study and sightseeing tours around Michigan—were able to accomplish all that Buchman hoped for or intended, we will never know; but whatever the case, the opportunity afforded to the young Japanese leaders to directly come into contact with overseas lifestyles and ways of thinking could have had no small lasting impact.



Exposure to MRA songs, films, and plays during the stay inspired several in the delegation to try their own hand at creating a Japanese play for disseminating MRA ideals, and thus the four-act *Asu e no michi* [The Road to Tomorrow] was written, staged, and performed at Mackinac by a group led by a participant from Toyoma prefecture named Yamamoto Yoshinori. Closely reflecting Japanese mores, this story about the earnest efforts of MRA-influenced volunteers to preserve harmony and prosperity in a farming village embroiled in a bitter dispute with another over irrigation rights garnered much applause from the international audience. After the delegation's return, the play was performed not only throughout Japan but also in the Philippines. The first MRA play to be created by Japanese, *Asu e no michi* became a precursor of the many MRA-inspired works that would be written, performed, and filmed in the country in years to come.

Interaction with Western European Socialist Parties

In summer 1959, a group of Japan Socialist Party members headed by Diet representatives Kato Shidzue from the Upper House and Tsukamoto Saburo from the Lower House attended an MRA assembly in Caux, following which they traveled around western Europe, visiting leaders of Socialist parties in Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Finland, the Netherlands, France, and Great Britain.

At the time in Japan confrontation was escalating between the left and right over proposed revisions in the Japan-U.S. security treaty, with those opposed supported by student, women's, labor, and other citizen's groups attacking the legitimacy of Kishi

Nobusuke's cabinet and speaking out against the policies of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party. In the opposition camp were many who had caved in to majority pressure and acquiesced in the anti-treaty campaign, while the governing party, too, was plagued by politically motivated infighting. In this tense atmosphere, easily susceptible to control by violence, there was a danger that what under ordinary circumstances might have been merely another political disagreement could flare up into something entirely unexpected.

The side-trips of the Japan Socialist Party group visiting Caux to meet leaders in Europe were planned to give them a chance to learn firsthand the outlook and thinking of Socialist politicians active in their respective countries. The group left Switzerland on August 31, drawing on support from local MRA organizations and sometimes traveling



West Berlin Mayor Willy Brandt (second from left) flanked by Diet members Tsukamoto Saburo (left) and Kato Shidzue



Kato (left) and Tsukamoto (right) conversing with Guy Mollet, SFIO (French Section of the Workers' International) head and former prime minister



The group upon arrival in Berlin

on chartered planes to accomplish their tight schedule of visiting seven countries in two weeks.

The trip was an extremely fruitful one for the participants, who met such top European political leaders as West Berlin Mayor Willy Brandt, SFIO (French Section of the Workers' International) leader and former prime minister Guy Mollet, and Väinö Tanner, regarded as the father of the Finnish Social Democratic Party. Mollet recounted how in 1958 he had sided with the conservative De Gaulle regime after becoming convinced that the strong-arm tactics of the Communist-led Popular Front that was gaining momentum at the time would only lead to the disintegration of freedom and democracy in western Europe. Brandt asserted that whether fascism or communism, Germany had already had enough experience with totalitarianism.

Later writing about the experience in an essay contributed to the *Yomiuri Shimbun*, Kato Shidzue stated that the Socialist leaders of the world already regarded the concept of class struggle as outdated and as an objective that could, in the era of the atomic bomb, lead to nuclear war. She argued that whereas Socialists like herself were prepared to fight to achieve a better social order, even the best institutions would result in yet more exploitation if the human beings running them did not change as well. She concluded that her true duty as a Socialist lay in "living for an all-encompassing ideology capable of changing capitalists and communists alike."

Despite its brief two weeks, the tour was of great significance in that it helped inject new perspectives into the Japanese opposition camp's thinking and eventually led to the Kato Letter to be taken up below.

The Miike Strike and Japan Tour of *Hoffnung*

Foremost among the many ideologically based confrontations polarizing Japan during this period were those involving labor and management, of which the 1959–1960 Miike coal-mine strike in Kyushu was one of the most violent and protracted. Hoping to contribute to a resolution of the situation, MRA arranged a Japanese tour of *Hoffnung* [Hope], a play written and performed by a group of coal workers from Germany's Ruhr region. The group arrived at Haneda Airport on March 14, 1960, for a seven-week stay, traveling mainly aboard the trains offered by the Japan National Railways from Tokyo via the Kansai region to Kyushu, then back again through Tokyo and north to Hokkaido before leaving on May 4 for the United States. During the tour, the troupe staged the play before a total of 49,000 people in 42 performances including special sessions for Japan National Railways employees and members of the police, the Self-Defense Forces, and



Scene from the play *Hoffnung*

The German theater group
visiting Lower House Speaker
Kiyose Ichiro (right)



the Korean Residents' Union as well as Miike mine workers and citizens from the neighboring city of Omuta.

The German theater group reached Omuta, Fukuoka prefecture, on April 13, scarcely two weeks after a bloody showdown between the striking union and the new union that had split from it in favor of ending the strike. Amid the clamor of headband-wearing members of the old union picketing on one hand versus adherents of the new union loudly appealing for support from the people of Omuta on the other, the play was performed at the civic center once in the afternoon in front of the unionists and their families and again in the evening for the general public. A request then came for a third performance that was given the next morning at nine for workers and management from the different sections of the mine. A video recording of the performance together with interviews of cast members was also broadcast through northern Kyushu by KBC (Kyushu Asahi Broadcasting) for the one million viewers in its coverage area.

For those in Japanese coal mining, thrust by the growing substitution of oil for coal into a struggle that even produced some incidents of bloodshed as the industry sought to restructure and revitalize, the chance to hear German coal workers directly relate their attempts at solving the exact same problems through courageous technological innovation and labor-management cooperation proved significant. Covered widely by mass media including the *Mainichi*, *Nishinippon*, *Hokkaido*, *Kobe*, and *Jiji Shimpō* newspapers, the event afforded many constructive hints about dealing with the coal-mine issue, one of the major areas of contention between leftists and rightists in Japan at the time.

Japan-U.S. Security Treaty Protests

As the protest over proposed revisions to the Japan-U.S. security treaty swelled through spring and summer 1960, Tokyo MRA House fell into the curious role of being nearly the sole venue where people embroiled in the complicated confrontation could put aside their differences to talk frankly with one another.

Considering the realities of the balance of power among the United States, Soviet Union, and China, whose spheres of influence then effectively divided the world, there perhaps was never any possibility that Japan would leave the U.S. umbrella for the communist camp no matter how strident domestic ideological clashes might become. Yet seeing the Diet Building overrun day in and day out by protesters waving red flags outside and contending Diet members resorting to force to drive proceedings and resolutions into cancellation or postponement inside, many people could not help but fear that the political system that had somehow kept the country running for 15 years since the end of World War II was ready to fall apart at any moment.

Not only were members of the ruling and opposition parties divided, but even Diet members and labor leaders supposedly in the same opposition camp were prevented by their entanglement in the popular demonstrations taking place outside from being able to talk straightforwardly and rationally about their differences in views about Japan's future. Even so, many gathered regularly at MRA House to attempt to openly discuss the current state of events and unite under common goals to contemplate measures for the future. Almost daily these influential ruling-party leaders, Socialist Party Diet members, head Nishio Suehiro and other leaders of the Democratic Socialist Party, and labor activists were to be found around the same table, deep in serious discussion over breakfast or dinner.

Despite such efforts the situation continued to escalate, and as the public was confronted with such shocking news as the sudden cancellation of a planned visit by U.S. president Dwight D. Eisenhower to Japan and the death of a female student protester in a clash with police, a foreboding mood began to take hold even among those who had until then kept to the sidelines. Then, amid this crisis on June 17, Upper House representative Kato Shidzue published the open letter shown below addressed to her Socialist Party in the morning editions of the three major nationwide newspapers *Asahi Shimbun*, *Yomiuri Shimbun*, and *Mainichi Shimbun*.

The missive generated considerable nationwide response, much of it from readers from all political viewpoints agreeing with Kato and expressing praise and respect for her extraordinary courage at stating her views. Discomfited by Kato's departure from the party line, the Socialist Party contemplated disciplinary measures, but eventually shifted its stance quietly as the ripples of public opinion spread.

The overall climate was changing, too. The popular energy that had fueled the demonstrations dwindled, particularly once Kishi Nobusuke stepped down as prime minister. Wearied by prolonged conflict and hoping for change, the public began to adopt new attitudes, thanks in part to the Kato message. And thus, along with the start of the Ikeda Hayato cabinet with its soft-spoken stance and promise to double incomes for all Japanese, Japan began to move out of its season of protest into a new era of rapid economic growth.

Text of Kato Letter (*MRA News*, July 1, 1960)

Stand Up and Have Courage

by Kato Shidzue



The violence of the Zengakuren offensive on June 15 came as a shock for many Japanese. As I witnessed the succession of events on television, I was deeply pained as I considered the future of our country. We must understand that it is outrageous to claim that the police have gone too far or that the government is at fault. This shocking act, carried out by a few motivated by a destructive ideology, was done with the intent to overthrow the government by brute force. As a member of the Socialist Party who has been in the Diet for over a decade, I am deeply ashamed that the democracy of Japan is under the threat of destruction from such violence. Also, for the past few weeks, I have been unable to speak out for what I believe is a just cause due to my lack of courage, for which I apologize to the people of this country. Even after the joint plenary meeting of party members of both houses of the Diet passed a mistaken resolution, I was silent, letting it go by. Even when someone with courage spoke out, I did not stand up and lend my support. This was all due to my fear of criticism from my colleagues. But today, I swear that I will fight against communism and establish a true democracy in this nation.



Since May 19, Japan has become the battleground between communism and democracy. Communists, with their “people’s front” backed by various supporters such as the People’s Republic of China, are endeavoring to bring down the Cabinet, trigger anti-American riots, and tear this country apart. The debate over the decision made by Prime Minister Kishi concerning the security treaty revision is far off the focus of our problem. The question we need to ask is, upon what kind of ideology do we wish to build this country for ourselves and for our children? By no means should Japan be a nation that only follows the lead of the United States, but neither shall it be under the dominion of China or the Soviet Union. If we but stand up and have courage, speak out for what we think is right, and fight for it, I believe we can save Japan and the rest of Asia.

(from the “Koe” [Voice] column,
Asahi shimbun, June 17, 1960)

Tiger Takes on the World

In July 1960, a delegation of 60 Japanese departed Haneda Airport en route to Caux, among them Lower House member Tanikawa Kazuo of Hiroshima, Upper House member Kondo Tsuruyo, Chairman Ota Sueo of the Kyushu branch of the National Railway Workers' Union, former secretary general Kanbe Hideo of the Tokyo Teachers' Union, and officers from the labor unions of such companies as Mitsui Zosen and Toyo Kogyo (present-day Mazda Corporation). Also among this group were the students who would later become the core force behind the creation of the play *Tiger*.



March 1961: Visiting former U.S. president Dwight D. Eisenhower (right)

When the entourage departed, the conflict over the 1960 revisions to the Japan-U.S. security treaty was calming down following the change in prime ministers from Kishi Nobusuke to Ikeda Hayato, leaving Japan in a sort of lull out of which it was just beginning to emerge into a nonideologically oriented phase of rapid economic growth. Even so, given how much worldwide attention the Japanese political scene had commanded as recently as a few weeks previously, the delegates found themselves each in their own way



The delegation with Marshal Juarez Tavora of Brazil

peppered with questions from their international colleagues. The students on the delegation included both those who had taken part in anti-treaty demonstrations and those who had not; but as they grew to realize the enormity of the impact that the Zengakuren (National Federation of Students' Self-government Associations; one of the prominent bodies behind the demonstrations) had had on the world,

all began to reflect anew on the meaning of the unrest that had suddenly swept through Japan in its fifteenth year since the end of World War II.

The outcome of these reflections was the play *Tiger*, written and produced in the serenity of Caux by a group of student-led Japanese assisted by theater professionals. At first the group, which included Diet members from the Liberal Democratic Party and labor activists with no affiliation to Zengakuren, staged the play at Caux Mountain House, intending it to serve as no more than a primer on the background to the 1960 demonstrations for the international audience gathered there. Yet the play evoked a much greater-than-expected response, and before anyone knew it the project had grown into a tour of unprecedented scale that left Caux in August, going quite literally around the world, from Europe to North and South America, Cyprus, India, Vietnam, and Taiwan, and performing in 13 countries and regions in front of an estimated 20 million people before returning to Japan two years later toward the end of June 1962. For more details on these developments, hardly believable even to the participants themselves, see Sohma Fujiko, *Tora sekai o yuku* [*Tiger Goes around the World*], Bunkyo Shoin, 1962.



Performance given in the local language of Quechua before 40,000 native Peruvians at the ruins of the Incan fortress of Sacsaywaman



An audience at Iquitos, near the upper reaches of the Amazon River in eastern Peru

Tour Itinerary (from *Tora sekai o yuku* [*Tiger Goes around the World*])

Itinerary

Year/month/date	Destination	Major stops
1960 July 7		Departure from Haneda Airport (Tokyo)
July 7	Switzerland	Arrival at Caux
July 28		Departure from Caux
Aug. 28	Germany	Arrival at Essen; to Gelsenkirchen, Rheinhausen, Dortmund, Bochum, Augsburg, Berlin, Düsseldorf, Wuppertal, Mannheim, Stuttgart, Weinheim, Koblenz, Maria-laach, Bad Godesberg, and Bonn
Dec. 21	Switzerland	Arrival at Caux
1961 Jan. 25		Departure from Caux
Jan. 25	France	Arrival at Paris
Feb. 14		Departure from Paris
Feb. 14	USA	Arrival at New York; to Washington, Detroit, Los Angeles, and Miami
Apr. 27		Departure from Miami
Apr. 27	Brazil	Arrival at São Paulo; to Rio de Janeiro, Brasília, Niteroi, Petropolis, Recife, Campina Grande, João Pessoa, Natal, Fortaleza, Belem, and Manaus
July 28	Peru	Iquitos, Piura, Talara, Chiclayo, Trujillo, Lima, Cusco, and Puno
Oct. 8	Bolivia	La Paz, Altiplano, Tihuanaku, Catavi, and Oruro
Oct. 28	Chile	Maria Helena, Antofagasta, and Santiago
Nov. 30	Brazil	Rio de Janeiro, Petropolis, São Paulo, and Santos
1962 Feb. 1		Departure from São Paulo
Feb. 1	Switzerland	Arrival at Caux
Feb. 17		Departure from Caux
Feb. 17	Cyprus	Nicosia, Larnaca, Lefke, Paphos, Famagusta, Salamis, and Limassol
Mar. 2	India	Arrival at Calcutta
Mar. 29		Departure from Calcutta
Mar. 29	East Pakistan	Arrival at Dacca; to Chittagong
May 8	Vietnam	Saigon, Nha Trang, Qui Nohon, Hue, Da Lat, Saigon, Bien Hoa, Vinh Long, and Saigon
June 8	Taiwan	Kaohsiung, Taipei, Kinmen Island, and Taipei
June 26		Arrival at Haneda Airport



Performance at the National Stadium in Lima



President Makarios III (second from right) of Cyprus greeting the *Tiger* delegation



Visiting President Ngo Dinh Diem of South Vietnam



The delegation heading for Vinh Long, one of the battlefields of the Vietnam War



Performance before South Vietnamese soldiers



Scene depicting Zengakuren students leading a demonstration near the Diet Building

Activities since the Opening of the MRA Asia Center

First Odawara World Assembly and the Musical *Space Is So Startling*

The October 22, 1962, opening ceremonies of the MRA Asia Center were followed by another commemorative event, the first Odawara MRA world assembly, which brought together hundreds of participants in what proved to be a resounding success. The 100-plus cast members of the musical *Space Is So Startling*, created and produced by Peter Howard expressly for the occasion, arrived in Japan at this time to stage a special performance at the Tokyo Bunka Kaikan before going on to stops in Sapporo, Osaka, and other cities. Also given at the Odawara Civic Auditorium was *Tiger*, just returned from its over two-year-long world tour.



Scene from *Space Is So Startling*: “Dreams that may yet come true”



Scene from *Space Is So Startling*: “The simple master plan ending the fear of war and strife and re-uniting man”



Scene from *Space Is So Startling*: “We’ve got to be first. We’ll get to the Moon this time—or burst!”

Second Odawara World Assembly and Play *Beyond Communism to Revolution*

In April 1963, the second Odawara MRA world assembly was held with numerous delegates participating from both Japan and abroad. On this occasion, Peter Howard, who had assumed leadership of the international MRA movement upon the death of founder Frank Buchman in 1961, came to Japan to lecture at Waseda University's Ono Azusa Memorial Hall on the theme "beyond communism to revolution."



Peter Howard

Given at a time when the aftereffects of the 1960 anti-Security Treaty demonstrations were still being felt, this prescient speech setting forth ideas for remaking the world through moral betterment became the basis of a musical by the same name (written by Kimura Yoshinori) created using the Asia Center facilities by student participants of the Odawara assembly.

Following its debut at Daiwa Securities Hall in Tokyo in June, *Beyond Communism to Revolution* toured theaters, universities, and Self-defense Force outposts all over the country including in the Kyushu, Shikoku, San'in, Kinki, Tokai, Kanto, and Hokkaido regions. An SDF transport was provided for the trip from Tokyo to Hokkaido, where, in the depths of winter, the company made the rounds of the majority of the SDF bases on the island. Between these domestic performances, the play also traveled to India in a two-month tour starting in November.



Scene from the play *Beyond Communism to Revolution*

Growth of High School Student Activities

The Sapporo performance of *Beyond Communism to Revolution* inspired a group led by students from the Sapporo Koran Girls' High School to draw on their personal experiences to create the musical *Hikari wa hoppo kara* [Light Springs from the North] in 1964 and *Hokkyokusei* [The North Star] in the following year, both performed not only throughout Hokkaido but also in Odawara and Tokyo. These works, together with the play *Asu dewa ososugiru* [Tomorrow Is Too Late] written by Hokkaido University student and former radical aspirant



Parade in Hokkaido

Kimoto Tsukasa, became part of the growing use of drama and film to promote Japanese MRA activities. *Hokkyokusei* was broadcast throughout Hokkaido by Sapporo Television. Closer to the MRA Asia Center, meanwhile, the play *Judai no bakuhatsu* [Teen Explosion] was staged by high school students from Odawara.

In summer 1965, the youth involved in the above plays traveled to the Mackinac MRA world assembly as part of a 100-member delegation that included 18 high school and 25 university students accompanied by eight university students from South Korea. *Hokkyokusei* was performed at Mackinac, Charleston, Santa Fe, and elsewhere, all to great acclaim. *Asu dewa ososugiru* was adapted for film at Mackinac.



Odawara high school members of the play *Judai no bakuhatsu* [Teen Explosion]



Summer 1965: The youth delegation in the United States



Summer 1965: The youth delegation visiting the West Virginia State Capitol



Residents of a Native American reservation in New Mexico attending a performance of *Hokkyokusei* [The North Star]

“Sing-Out ’65” Japan Tour

One outcome of the summer 1965 Mackinac world assembly was “Sing-Out ’65,” a new type of show given by young performers mostly from the United States. Incorporating elements of the hoo-tenanny and other music styles popular at the time, the show featured a large ensemble of youth coming together onstage for a rousing performance of songs straightforwardly addressing U.S. social issues, among them “What Color is God’s Skin?” “The Ballad of Joan of Arc,” “Freedom Isn’t Free,” and “Which Way America?” The program was of promisingly high quality, with folk ballads such as “Bring Back Willie to Me” singing of the pain of the Vietnam War on one hand and “Up with People,” a full-chorus number in praise of humanity, rounding out the finale on the other. Created at a time when entirely new modes of musical expression as represented by Woodstock were gaining fans all over the world, “Sing-Out ’65” drew flocks of young people eager to participate, succeeding far beyond expectations.

The Japanese present at the assembly, including Odawara Mayor Suzuki Juro, Electric Power Development Company president Fujii Takaharu, and the abovementioned high school and university student members of the delegation, were also greatly excited by this show alive with the spirit of a new age, and arrangements were immediately made to bring it to Japan. Thus in September the over 150 members of “Sing-Out” arrived aboard a



Prime Minister Sato Eisaku (second from left) with cast members



Lower House Speaker Funada Naka (right) with cast members



Concert at Tokyo Metropolitan Gymnasium



Concert at Sophia University



Concert at Waseda University Okuma Auditorium guest-starring Sakamoto Kyu

chartered flight, taking the quite unusual route of entering Japan from Hokkaido's Chitose Airport (instead of from Tokyo) and launching their tour at the Nakajima Sports Center in Sapporo. From there the company moved to Tokyo, performing before receptive audiences at such venues as the Kabuki-za, Tokyo Metropolitan Gymnasium, Waseda University Okuma Auditorium, and Nihon University Hall (formerly the Kokugikan). The Tokyo Metropolitan Gymnasium concert attracted 7,500 listeners including Prime Minister Sato Eisaku and his wife, who visited the cast backstage after the performance. The Okuma Auditorium concert guest-starred popular singer Sakamoto Kyu. Incidentally, the grand piano donated by Sato on the occasion of the tour is, thanks to regular maintenance, still functioning in good condition at the Asia Center to this day.

Third Odawara World Assembly and "Sing-Out '65" Korean Tour

The next stop for "Sing-Out '65" was the third Odawara MRA world assembly, held at the MRA Asia Center from October 10 to 17 and attended by over 2,000 delegates from 25 countries including the United States, South Korea, Vietnam, Great Britain, France, Canada, India, Ceylon, and Australia. During the event the company gave several concerts including at the Odawara Civic Auditorium and the Ground Self-Defense Force

Fuji School in Gotenba, Shizuoka prefecture, moving on after the close of sessions to the Kansai region to perform at Kobe Central Gymnasium before an audience of 5,000. Next the cast boarded a ferry from Kokura in Fukuoka prefecture to South Korea, where they had been invited by Prime Minister Jeong Il-gwon. At this time the world assembly, too, switched venues from Odawara to Seoul, reconvening for an additional session



Korean prime minister Jeong Il-gwon (second from right) and family applauding "Sing-Out '65" at the world assembly in Seoul, accompanied by U.S. ambassador Winthrop G. Brown (left)

from October 20 to 24 that was attended by 1,450 representatives from around Korea. The Seoul performance of "Sing-Out '65" drew 2,100 listeners including Jeong, while another 500 had to be turned away from the packed auditorium.

"Let's Go '66" and Budokan Concert

The pioneering format and forward-looking messages of "Sing-Out '65" were enthusiastically embraced by Japanese and Korean youth, and in Japan a parallel show entitled "Let's Go" was created that traveled around the country before embarking on a 1966



Members of "Let's Go '66" performing on the *Yoshinaga Sayuri Show* (Nippon Television)

tour of South Korea, Hong Kong, and seven Southeast Asian countries including the Philippines. Not only were the concerts popular in themselves, but they also inspired local young people to create their own sing-outs tailored to their own countries, giving rise to a new form of MRA activity reaching out widely to the general public. In December 1966, a joint group of Japanese "Let's Go" and U.S. "Sing-Out" performers visited Indonesia on

invitation from the Indonesian Student Action Front (KAMI), involved since September 1965 alongside the military in heading the movement to overthrow President Sukarno, for a three-week concert tour of Jakarta, Bandung, and elsewhere before tens of thousands made up mostly of students and members of the military. The tour proved memorable, conducted as it was amid the national unrest over the transfer of presidency from Sukarno to Suharto.



Visiting President Ferdinand Marcos of the Philippines



Concert in Manila



The company upon their arrival in Bandung aboard an Indonesian Air Force transport



Concert in Jakarta

Back in Tokyo, "Let's Go" performed at the Kosei Nenkin Hall in Shinjuku and Shibuya Public Hall in addition to appearing on television and at high school and university festivals, capturing the hearts of young people and drawing new participants wherever it went.

In November 1966, more than 500 cast members came together for a "Let's Go '66" extravaganza held at the Budokan before a much-talked-about crowd of over 10,000.



Concert at the Budokan



LP jacket

MRA Travelling School

As “Let’s Go”-type productions rose in popularity and demand, so did the number of high school students desiring long-term involvement, and thus in April 1967 the MRA Travelling School was established at the MRA Asia Center with the cooperation of the NHK Academy of Distance Learning in order to enable student performers to balance both stage and study. Over the four years that the school was in existence, 67 students received education through video and audiotape classes that could be taken even while touring in Japan and abroad. Student performance activities during this time included a several-month-long appearance on *Ongaku no hana hiraku* [The Flowers of Music Abloom], a television program developed by NHK in response to the growing popularity of ensemble singing. (For more details, see the “Official History of the MRA International Travelling School” CD-ROM covering the school’s activities from April 1967 to March 1970.)



Director General Hiratsuka Masunori of the National Institute for Educational Research extending his congratulations at the school opening ceremonies



Performing on the NHK program *Ongaku no hana hiraku* [The Flowers of Music Abloom]



The students while traveling in Japan



Catalog for the MRA Travelling School (renamed the MRA International Travelling School in 1968)



Video lecture

“Sing-Out Asia” U.S. Tour

In July 1968, students from the MRA International Travelling School joined young people from South Korea, Thailand, Hong Kong, and the Philippines to form the 150-member troupe “Sing-Out Asia,” using the auditorium of the MRA Asia Center to put together a program that they then took with them by chartered Pan American DC8 plane to the United States. For roughly three months before heading home in October the group toured the United States, starting from San Diego on the West Coast and traveling through the Midwest to the Atlantic to visit and perform in 35 cities in 22 states along the way. Acclaimed wherever they went, the members traveled across the continent and back aboard four tour buses and two trucks and stayed with private families at each stop, managing to cover most of their plane, luggage, and other expenses by selling out the approximately 40,000 LPs they made from a master recording prepared while in Japan. Contributing to the tour’s success from behind the scenes, meanwhile, were U.S. MRA supporters, who helped arrange for everything from transportation, performance venues, and stage and lighting setup to accommodations for the performers.



The “Sing-Out Asia” company onstage



Members of “Sing-Out Asia” visiting the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C.

Song “Namida o Koete” and NHK Program Stage 101

As the fame of “Sing-Out” rose, a semiprofessional singing group composed of Japanese and non-Japanese of university age and older was formed to accommodate requests for performances pouring in from all around the country.

On July 25, 1969, the group won the grand prize at the first Yamaha Nemu Popular Festival held at Nemu no Sato in Mie prefecture with the song “Namida o koete” [Beyond Tears], composed by Nakamura Hachidai and turned into an LP released nationwide by RCA in November. From January 1970 the group also appeared on the NHK music program *Stage 101*, successor to *Ongaku no hana hiraku*.



LP jacket

Language Institute of Japan (LIOJ)

In 1968, the Language Institute of Japan (LIOJ) was established using the boarding facilities of the MRA Asia Center. The school initially concentrated on programs to give Japanese students planning to study abroad English proficiency through intensive live-in sessions of several weeks to several months. The instructors were young men and women (many students of MRA-sponsored Mackinac College) invited from the United States and Canada.



LIOJ founder and first director Rowland Harker, a supporter of MRA activities in Japan through the pre- and post-World War II years, with his wife Terttu

Rising interest in similar workshops among businesspeople and teachers of English soon led the institute to begin offering more advanced and focused programs overseen by Director Rowland Harker, his wife Terttu, and American, British, Australian, and other staff professionally trained in language education.

LIOJ opened an annual summer workshop for teachers of English in Japan in 1969, followed in 1970 by an intensive English-language course for businesspeople that included a month-long stay at the center. Offered at a time when Japanese companies were just beginning to branch out abroad, this hugely successful latter course was besieged by applicants from top-ranking corporations who filled up the waiting list. A total of 4,771 trainees took part over the years, contributing greatly to the income of the MRA Asia Center.

The summer teachers' workshop, too, reached its thirty-fourth session in 2002 in a program more successful than ever, drawing 71 participants from all over Japan as well as from South Korea, Russia, Thailand, Vietnam, Myanmar, and elsewhere. These formed the latest in the list of 4,052 educators, including 165 from abroad and participants returning over multiple years, to attend the workshop since its start.

A total of 336 instructors from countries as diverse as the United States, Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, South Korea, Ireland, Hungary, and Germany taught at LIOJ over the years, not to mention the numerous first-class linguists and educators from all over the world invited especially for the summer workshops. From 1993 to 1999, LIOJ



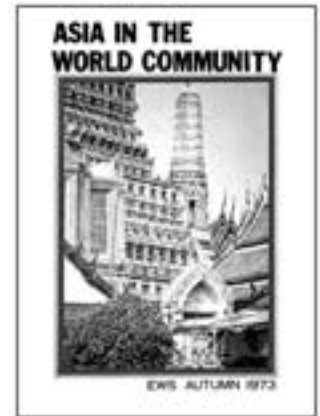
LIOJ 2002 summer workshop

collaborated with Srinakharinwirot University in Thailand to organize a series of team-teaching exchange programs for English-language educators held in both countries that altogether trained 36 participants. Meanwhile, the English day classes also offered by LIOJ for nearby residents since 1971 were attended by a total of 18,510 students ranging from school-age children to adults as of 2002. Other recent LIOJ projects included camps for high school students and team-teaching programs at public schools in Hakone-cho and other neighboring areas.

Intellectual Exchange with Southeast Asian Countries

Once its financial circumstances improved from 1970 onward, the MRA Asia Center began focusing on strengthening interaction with Asia. In 1971 it initiated the East West Seminar (EWS) aimed to promote intellectual exchange with Southeast Asia, responding in 1973 to the spread of boycotts against Japanese goods in Thailand and elsewhere in the region by sponsoring an international seminar on “Asia in the World Community” held jointly with Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok and later turned into the book *Tonan Ajia no Nihon hihan* [Southeast Asian Criticism of Japan] (Simul Shuppankai, 1974). In 1975, an EWS symposium on “The ASEAN: Problems and Prospects in a Changing World” was held again at Chulalongkorn University, the proceedings of which were published by the University of Texas Press.

Deepening EWS involvement with Southeast Asia resulted over the years in such additional publications as *Nihon o mitsumeru Tonan Ajia* [Southeast Asian Eyes on Japan] (1977), *Shinjitsu no Indonesia* [The True Indonesia] (1979), and *Tonan Ajia itsutsu no kuni: Sono seizon senryaku* [Strategies of Survival: The Foreign Policy Dilemmas of Smaller Asian States] (1981), all from Simul Shuppankai. From 1978 EWS hosted a series of Asian Dialogue symposiums jointly with the Japan Center for International Exchange (JCIE), also cooperating with JCIE again to hold another series of Japan-Thai seminars from the following year.



International seminar at Chulalongkorn University

Sponsored Programs

From 1975, the MRA Foundation began doing its part to support programs related to Southeast Asia, for example helping to establish the Japan-North Sumatra Friendship Fund and Asian Community Trust (ACT), sponsoring projects in Indonesia run by the Kyoto University Primate Research Institute, and providing graduate course scholarships in economics at Thammasat University in Thailand. Despite cutbacks forced by post-bubble low interest rates, involvement in several of these projects continues to this day. As for sponsorship activities in Japan, the MRA Foundation set up a fund for the International MRA Association of Japan (now Initiatives of Change Japan) upon the NGO's founding in 1984 and has supported its operating costs ever since. Other grant recipients included the Japan Center for International Exchange (JCIE), the Japan NGO Center for International Cooperation (JANIC), Foundation Arc-en-Ciel, the Japan Return

Programme, the Hokkaido International Agri-exchange Association, the Asian Youth Forum, the International Symposium on Environmental Biogeochemistry, and Global Youth United (GYU), an exchange program with Myanmar youth.

Off Campus Activities (OCA)

Of the various programs sponsored by the center, among the most significant in terms of both content and scope was Off Campus Activities (OCA; Sohma Toyotane, representative), begun in 1972 to promote exchange between Thai and Japanese youth. OCA ran a wide variety of interacademic and interstudent exchange and training programs primarily between the Chulalongkorn University Faculty of Economics (among other bases in Thailand) and such Japanese academic centers as the Saitama University Faculty of Economics, Nagoya University Graduate School of International Development, Kanazawa University, Gakushuin University Faculty of Economics, Keio University Faculty of Business and Commerce, and the Faculty of Administration of the Prefectural University of Kumamoto. One long-running project involved veterinary students from Chulalongkorn University coming to Japan to visit the Japanese Society of Veterinary Science, the Nihon University College of Agriculture, and other relevant institutions in Tokyo prior to taking part in a roughly 20-day training program at the agriculture faculty of Miyazaki University. Altogether, 950 Thai youth have visited Japan under the auspices of OCA in the over 30 years since its inception.

OCA efforts also proved instrumental in 2001 in realizing the long-planned presentation of an honorary doctorate in management from Gakushuin University to Princess



September 19, 2001: Her Royal Highness Maha Chakri Sirindhorn of Thailand is presented an honorary doctorate in management from Gakushuin University by President Ogura Yoshihiko

October 1993: Students from Nagoya University on a visit to Chulalongkorn University in Thailand



Maha Chakri Sirindhorn of Thailand, known worldwide for her extraordinary popularity among the Thai people as a royal figure of outstanding intelligence and grace. Arriving in Japan on September 17, her highness attended a dinner with the emperor and empress of Japan the following evening and visited Gakushuin University on the 19th, taking part in a luncheon hosted by the president of the university followed by the degree-awarding ceremony and delivery of a special address, before returning home from Narita Airport.

Refurbishment and Reopening of Asia Center Odawara

In 1993, the MRA Asia Center underwent refurbishments totaling nearly 1 billion yen to deal with the wear and tear of the 30 years since its opening in 1962. Following extensive work including complete overhaul of the lodging accommodations, construction of new Cafe Alcantara and Akebono dining rooms, and remodeling of the office, kitchen, and other facilities, the building, now renamed Asia Center Odawara, reopened as a community guest and seminar house in an April ceremony attended by Odawara Mayor Ozawa Yoshiaki among others. To further commemorate the opening, in June the center held a major international symposium entitled “Grassroots Initiative to Bring Asia and Japan Closer Together” that invited 36 Japanese and foreign panelists from a wide range of specialties for stimulating debate on the present and future of NGO and other forms of international cooperation.



Open symposium “Grassroots Initiative to Bring Asia and Japan Closer Together”



Journalist Shima Nobuhiko delivering a keynote speech



New Asia Center: Seminar room



New Asia Center: Akebono ("dawn") dining room



New Asia Center: Lobby



New Asia Center: Room accommodations



New Asia Center: Cafe Alcantara

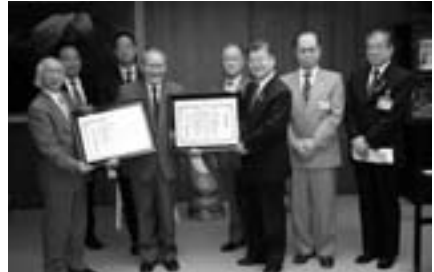
Epilogue

The Great Hanshin Earthquake of 1995 and other serious earthquakes that subsequently occurred around the country raised public awareness about the safety of buildings. A new law was enacted requiring improvements in buildings constructed under old regulations prior to 1981. Considering that the Asia Center is what is known as a “high public use structure” under the new earthquake measures law, steps were taken to conduct a detailed inspection of its structure.

The inspection revealed that the building, constructed according to earthquake-resistance standards set in 1962, could not be declared safe under the new regulations. The results presented a difficult choice: either to undertake major refurbishment of the building, including thorough reinforcements of the walls, windows, and pillars, or to completely rebuild.

The board of directors and trustees decided, for the safety of visitors and the employees, to close the center in late June of 2006. They then began investigating the options for use for the land and building. In October 2006, the city of Odawara proposed that, with the support from the Agency for Cultural Affairs and Kanagawa prefecture, and on condition that the building be demolished, they would purchase the land in order to build a national historical park. The MRA Foundation decided to accept this proposal.

In October 2007, by curious coincidence just 45 years after the MRA Asia Center had held its opening ceremonies on October 22, 1962, the ceremony was held transferring the property between executive director of the Foundation Shibusawa Masahide and



Ceremony commemorating the transfer of the Asia Center property to the city of Odawara in 2007.

mayor of the city of Odawara Ozawa Yoshiaki, and with this the operations of the Asia Center were officially discontinued.

The current plan of MRA House is to continue promoting international exchange programs from its base in Azabu, Tokyo.



Commemorative photograph taken at the farewell gathering held March 30, 2007.

Chronology

- 1921 Frank Buchman begins his movement based at Oxford University (and hence known as the Oxford Group)
- 1938 May Buchman voices his call for moral re-armament (MRA) in a speech given in London
- 1948 June MRA conference in Los Angeles attended by Horinouchi Kensuke, Mitsui Takasumi and wife, Sohma Yasutane and wife, and three other Japanese
- 1949 June MRA world assembly in Caux attended by former prime minister Katayama Tetsu, his wife, *Mainichi Shimbun* editor in chief Takahashi, and *Mainichi* foreign desk chief Fujimoto
- 1950 June Sixty Japanese delegates attend an MRA world assembly in Caux followed by a tour of Europe and the United States
- 1951 June MRA world assembly on Mackinac Island, Michigan, attended by 47 Japanese delegates
- 1952 March MRA Foundation (Zaidan Hojin MRA House) established with Mitsui Takasumi as organization representative
- April Headquarters for foundation set up in Azabu Fujimi-cho (present-day Minami Azabu) in Minato ward, Tokyo
- June Mackinac world assembly attended by 24 Japanese delegates
- 1953 August Sixteen Japanese delegates attend an MRA world assembly in Caux followed by a tour of Europe
- 1955 June Japanese tour of the musical *The Vanishing Island* and accompanying international delegation
- 1956 May MRA founder Buchman awarded the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Star, upon visiting Japan
- 1957 March Baguio world assembly held in the Philippines
- May Mackinac world assembly attended by 100 representatives of the Japan Seinendan Council
- 1958 May Mackinac world assembly attended by 70 Japanese delegates including members of second Japan Seinendan Council mission
- 1959 May MRA Asia conference held in Otsu, Shiga prefecture
- September Visit to Europe by members and others associated with the Japan Socialist Party
- 1960 March Japanese tour of the play *Hoffnung* [Hope], written and performed by German coalminers from the Ruhr region
- August Japanese student-led play *Tiger* embarks on a two-year tour of 13 countries in Europe, North and South America, and Asia

1961	April	Sponsor group for the construction of the MRA Asia Center established with Kudo Shoshiro as board chairman
1962	October	MRA Asia Center opens in Odawara, Kanagawa prefecture
1963	November	Indian tour of musical <i>Beyond Communism to Revolution</i>
1964	October	Tokyo Olympics begin; athletes invited to MRA House and MRA Asia Center
1965	July	Visit to the United States by 100 Japanese youths including participants in the musical <i>Hokkyokusei</i> [The North Star]
	September	Japanese tour of "Sing-Out '65" featuring 150 young performers mostly from the United States
1966	December	Southeast Asian tour of "Let's Go '66" featuring youths from Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, the Philippines, Hong Kong, Vietnam, and Thailand
1967	April	MRA Travelling School established
1968	March	Language Institute of Japan (LIOJ) established
	July	"Sing-Out Asia" troupe made up of 150 performers from five Asian countries tour 35 U.S. cities in 22 states
1969	April	New headquarters building for the MRA Foundation constructed in Minami Azabu
	August	LIOJ begins offering annual summer workshops for educators of English
1970	March	LIOJ begins offering intensive camps in business English
1971	October	East West Seminar (EWS) established to promote cultural exchange between East and West
1973	June	"Asia in the World Community" symposium held in Bangkok
1974	February	<i>Tonan Ajia no Nihon hihan</i> [Southeast Asian Criticism of Japan] published from Simul Shuppankai
1975	December	"The ASEAN: Problems and Prospects in a Changing World" symposium held in Bangkok
1977	February	<i>Nihon o mitsumeru Tonan Ajia</i> [Southeast Asian Eyes on Japan] published by Simul Shuppankai
	November	First Asian Dialogue symposium held at the MRA Asia Center
1978	March	Japan-North Sumatra Friendship Fund established with assistance of MRA Foundation
	September	Second Asian Dialogue symposium held in Bangkok
1979	March	Third Asian Dialogue symposium held at the MRA Asia Center

	May	<i>Shinjitsu no Indonesia</i> [The True Indonesia] (Japanese translation from the Indonesian) published by Simul Shuppankai
	November	Asian Community Trust (ACT) established with assistance of MRA Foundation
	December	Japan-Thai seminar held at the International House of Japan
1981	June	<i>Tonan Ajia itsutsu no kuni: Sono seizon senryaku</i> (Japanese translation of <i>Strategies of Survival: The Foreign Policy Dilemmas of Smaller Asian States</i> by Charles E. Morrison) published by Simul Shuppankai
1982	May	Remodeling of Asia Center dining facilities and kitchen
1984	September	<i>Japan and the Asian Pacific Region</i> published by Croom Helm
1985	January	<i>Nihon wa Ajia ka</i> [Is Japan Part of Asia?] (Japanese translation of above) published by Simul Shuppankai
1986	December	Guest house added to Asia Center
1989	March	Remodeling of Asia Center Hakone building Shibusawa Keizo Memorial Fund established
	September	East annex added to Asia Center
1991	March	Remodeling of fourth and fifth floors of Asia Center
	September	<i>Pacific Asia in the 1990s</i> published by Routledge
1993	March	Remodeling of the Asia Center main building (B1 to third floors)
	April	MRA Asia Center renamed Asia Center Odawara
	July	International symposium on "Grassroots Initiative to Bring Asia and Japan Closer Together" held at Asia Center Odawara jointly with the Japan Center for International Exchange (JCIE)
1994	October	International dialogue session on "From a Beneficiary to a Creator of Peace" held at Asia Center Odawara jointly with International MRA Association of Japan and the National Institute for Research Advancement
1998	August	Holding of LIOJ "EFL Education in Japan and Asia" symposium and publication of book <i>Perspectives on Secondary School EFL Education</i> , both to commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of LIOJ
2001	April	New large-scale bathing facilities added to Asia Center
2002	October	Creation of <i>Asia Center Odawara 40th Anniversary Publication: Postwar Japan and the Work of Moral Re-Armament</i> booklet and CD-ROM (in Japanese)
2006	June	Operations of the Asia Center Odawara discontinued.

Appendix 1: The Pre-World War II MRA Movement and Activities in Japan

MRA founder Frank N. D. Buchman spent his early years in Allentown, Pennsylvania, home to generations of Pennsylvania Dutch, descendants of European immigrants known for their deeply religious character. Himself one of their members (his ancestors were said to be Swiss, from near Sankt Gallen in the eastern part of the country), Buchman became a Lutheran minister and ran an orphanage among other charitable works until 1908 when troubles over the management of one of his institutions drove him, deeply hurt, to leave for Great Britain. There, at Keswick in the scenic Lake District in the north of England, he had a spiritual experience that inspired him to begin missionary work. Assisted by youthful followers, he preached moral reform through adherence to the “four absolutes” (honesty, purity, unselfishness, and love), and soon the circle of those seeking to create better communities and a better world based on these values had spread from Great Britain through western Europe as far as South Africa. Many of the movement’s early supporters were students and faculty of Oxford University, as a result of which it acquired the name the Oxford Group.

Following World War I, the Oxford Group organized many programs seeking to counter the moral vacuum and despair plaguing western Europe since the end of fighting.



Mitsui Takasumi, who encountered Buchman while at Oxford University before World War II and led the establishment of the MRA House and other Japanese MRA activities in the postwar years, with his wife

Once faced in the 1930s with the rise of Nazi Germany and spread of Communist revolutions in Russia and elsewhere, the movement began extending its scope beyond Europe toward “remaking the world” according to principles set out by Buchman (and later compiled in the 1947 book of the same title), a shift that culminated in Buchman’s 1938 speech at East Ham Town Hall in East London in which he called for “moral re-arming” (MRA). This term encapsulated Buchman’s belief in the need to create a new world by arming people not militarily, but spiritually and morally. In this way, MRA was transformed from the fairly Christian-oriented movement that it had been during its time as the Oxford Group into one pursuing worldwide activities based on unique spiritual and ideological principles.

Meanwhile, the Oxford Group had also found a foothold in Japan, where followers issued the periodical *Kaihen seikatsu* [Life of Reform], held regular conferences in various parts of the country, and otherwise carried out activities that proved successful mostly in promoting religious living. Frequent contributors to *Kaihen seikatsu* included such Christian activists as Kagawa Toyohiko, Yamane Yoshiichi, and Takahara Yoshio.

After 1938, as details of the transformation of the Oxford Group into MRA and other developments reached Japan, Japanese adherents, too, began to follow Buchman in his far-reaching quest to remake the world, and the tone of *Kaihen seikatsu* changed accordingly.

In 1939, American Rowland Harker was sent to Japan by Buchman to assist MRA activities in the country while also teaching at such educational institutions as Aoyama Gakuin and First High School. With the attack on Pearl Harbor and the outbreak of war between Japan and the United States in 1941, however, he was deported, effectively putting a stop to the MRA movement in Japan until after World War II.



Cover of October 1938 issue of *Kaihen seikatsu* [Life of Reform]



August 24, 1928: Conference of Japanese Oxford Group participants in Gifu

Appendix 2

Frank Buchman: His Life and Work

Profile

His eyes, smiling behind the glasses, were warm, but they had the power to penetrate right through you. Whomever he met, Frank Buchman (1878–1961) would hold out his hand for a heartfelt handshake, a hand surprisingly soft.

For many people, Buchman must have been the type of person they had never known before. He was warm-hearted but mysterious. Those who were in his company had a tendency to feel vaguely uneasy, as if made somehow acutely aware that they were not doing enough of what they were supposed to do. That he had committed his life to something very special, something very big and important, was in many ways evident as he spoke and in his ordinary demeanor and actions. His bearing and aura were such that those who might be doing things in a perfunctory or careless way became all the more self-conscious and uneasy.

Unlike politicians, industrialists, artists, or other so-called great people, there was something about him that was not quite of this world. The strength of his beliefs and commitment was hard to doubt. When you looked him in the eye, you were forced to confront the integrity of your own conscience.

Many people found their whole lives changed as a result of meeting Buchman. Encounter with him suddenly exposed their ways of living, their relationships with their families and society, etc., in a new light, making them look completely different than before. These people found themselves forced to review the fundamental conditions of their lives—their jobs, their countries, and the world, which they had felt complacent about or accepted with resignation as unchangeable. Their confidence in the ordinary, which they had taken for granted and been satisfied with, wavered, and they were awakened from deep within to a new sensibility, consciousness and way of thinking.



Dr. Frank Buchman

Many Africans and Asians said they did not feel Buchman to be an American. Many Japanese remarked that while in his presence they were never made to feel self-conscious of themselves as being Japanese, adding it was the first time they had felt that way in dealing with Americans since the Pacific War. He seems to have had the power to gently embrace the pride of Japanese wounded from having lost the war. It may be a cliché to say that all people are equal before God, but Buchman embodied that fact. He taught post-war Japanese the importance of modesty and love of humankind. Prime Minister Hatoyama Ichiro repeatedly invited him to the official residence and his private home, sought his advice, and presented him a medal for his contributions to postwar Japan.

Expansion in Scale and Scope of the MRA Movement

When Frank Buchman died at the age of 84 at Freudenstadt, a small town in southern Germany, in the summer of 1961, the work of Moral Re-Armament was literally sweeping the world. In addition to the centers of activities in Caux, Switzerland and on Mackinac Island, Michigan, with lodging accommodations for hundreds of guests and complete with theater and other facilities, it had already been decided that a facility would be constructed in Odawara, near Tokyo, scheduled to open in October of the following year as Asia's first MRA center.

Like the MRA House in Tokyo, stately houses had been donated to MRA or purchased by it in many major cities across the world, and with these places as bases various activities were under way. In London, for example, all sorts of conferences and publication projects were conducted and a worldwide network maintained from the historic mansion at 45 Berkeley Square where Clive of India had once lived and seven other fine residences in the vicinity.

In Washington D.C. at the mansion of the Ely family on the vast grounds of a prime downtown location diagonally opposite the Japanese ambassador's official residence on Massachusetts Avenue, close contacts were made day and night among people involved in decision making in world affairs, including American members of Congress and high-ranking government officials and leaders of other countries visiting the United States. Seven Arches in Tucson, Arizona, where Buchman frequently stayed after turning 80, was a dreamlike house filled with sunshine and surrounded by huge cactuses. Other mansions included the Armah in Melbourne, Tirley Garth in western England, and Dellwood on spacious grounds in the suburbs of New York. All these houses had been donated to the cause by those inspired by their encounter with Buchman.

Hundreds of promising and talented people left their jobs to engage in MRA activities in other countries virtually without remuneration. Influential politicians and business-people, intellectuals, union leaders, and many others in various fields provided tangible

and intangible support in order to realize Buchman's ideals. Looking at the large scale and luxuriousness of the MRA houses and Buchman's personal connections extending over the entire world, many did fear the presence of some enormous power behind MRA and harbored suspicions and doubts, criticizing the movement. Buchman had great influence through his connections, it is true, but that influence was not a political one and the assets owned and managed in various countries were of a type that could not be measured in terms of economic logic.

Buchman's achievements, whatever vicissitudes were involved, were tremendous for a clergyman born 84 years before in Allentown, a small town in Pennsylvania. Almost all the driving force behind these accomplishments came from the spiritual energy injected into people by their encounter with Buchman. Through contact with him, they felt deep-rooted hatreds, disappointments, sorrows, and fears dissolve, and a new life set in motion. Buchman knew from his own experience that changes in individuals' lives could release the energy to change institutions and power relations surrounding them. Their souls, once free from the small shell of the self or the ego, opened up to the broader world and the search for self-realization. They were willingly mobilized to achieve Buchman's dream, which was to remake the world. For many people, regardless of age or gender, it was an extremely exciting experience to participate in world-level activities transcending the constraints of their places of work and home countries.

Challenge to History

The twentieth-century world produced many people of genius who participated in the making of its history, including Lenin, Mao Zedong, Churchill, and Gandhi. Frank Buchman was of the same type as these in that he took up the challenge of shaping world history, relying only on his unswerving conviction.

The nineteenth century, it is said, was the era of the discovery and establishment of the power and dignity of the individual. Rule by the privileged classes—kings, the church, and the aristocracy—weakened, and individual rights and interests were given priority, leading to the birth of democratic ideas and the beginning of efforts to devise apparatuses for realizing those ideas. The twentieth century is said to be one in which society became aware of itself. National socialism, rallying all the resources of society, i.e., the state, brought about great wars that shook the world. Communism, under the banner of working class interests, launched widespread campaigns in various countries and completely altered the landscape of the world.

Humankind had discovered the enormous power that could be wielded by rallying groups of individuals. It had also been demonstrated, on the other hand, that if that

power, great as it might be, took the wrong path, grave dangers would arise. Buchman instinctively sensed the contradiction and resolved to challenge it by proposing a better alternative. National socialism had mobilized a nation (Germany in this case) but accomplished little other than to oppress other nations or make them its enemies. A specific social class, with a support base transcending national borders, could find solidarity worldwide, but inevitably came into conflict with people outside that class. As it turned out, the twentieth century was swayed by conflicts set in motion by national socialism and communism and witnessed massive tragedies.

Fearing that the idea of giving preference to a specific nation or class would lead to the destruction of the world, Buchman advocated a philosophy embracing all countries, nations, and classes for the sake of the survival and prosperity of the human race. Upholding the ideology of unity and harmony against conflict and struggle, he made a brave attempt to shape the history of the twentieth century. That challenge consumed his life and gave him extraordinary charisma. His strategies and tactics proved extremely effective, moreover, and contributed to the solution of many disputes throughout the world.

In areas that were the targets of powerful Soviet ideological offensives after World War II, such as Britain's ports and harbors and the Ruhr industrial district of Germany, a crisis was often avoided because some leaders involved in a labor dispute changed their views of life under the influence of MRA. Buchman's role in an agreement between Germany and France to establish the European Coal and Steel Community is remembered in diplomatic history. (See *Religion, the Missing Dimension of Statecraft*.) Diet member Kato Shidzue's letter calling for harmony at the height of the mass protest over revision of the U.S.-Japan security treaty in 1960 changed the course of postwar Japanese history. It is difficult to demonstrate specific processes and assess quantitative effects, but there are numerous cases in which Buchman took effective measures at crucial junctures, thereby changing the course of a dispute.

For those who had witnessed the power of communism in those days, its decline and collapse starting in the 1990s were hard to believe. Even Buchman must not have imagined that a huge ideological force that could mobilize all the resources and people of continental states like the Soviet Union and China would lose its energy so precipitously. In a sense, however, the outcome was what he had predicted. He believed that no matter how wonderful and future-oriented a system might be, if it was run by people of poor caliber whose purposes in life are small-minded, that system would not function properly.

Communism, an ideology based on the protest and hatred of those who suffered unreasonable exploitation by "capitalists" and despotic rulers, attracted many people throughout the world. This ideology, which gained momentum by taking advantage of disunity and conflict, can be said to have sown the seeds of disintegration within itself.

The amoral formula that condoned anything to serve the purposes of the organization must have led communism to its own destruction. Any system that cannot overcome the moral weaknesses of those who administer it is bound to become ensnared in bureaucratic inefficiency. However coolheaded and rational a system may look, it can eventually fall due to human weaknesses, and this is exactly what Buchman predicted. For communism to function, it would have had to adopt the all-encompassing ideas that Buchman advocated.

Charisma: Light and Shadow

As a Lutheran minister, Buchman's starting point was his embrace of Christian faith, but he did not attempt to convert to Christianity those who offered to cooperate with MRA. Regardless of their religious denomination, however, he wanted them to consider things in terms of conscience. Because following one's conscience is a universal truth, it was hard not to cooperate with his endeavors.

For many, Buchman's outlook and attitudes were reminiscent of Eastern thinking. One day a young man went to see Buchman and, after having confessed that he was depressed for some reason and had succumbed to sexual temptation, he tearfully begged to be allowed to leave MRA. Buchman gently reminded him that those who have fallen as far as they can fall, no matter how besmirched they might have become, will, once they awaken to the error of their ways, become able to work even more effectively than before. This advice had the ring of the Buddhist tale that the deeper the muddy waters, the more beautiful the flowers of the lotus that thrives there. Buchman held that one could achieve effective results not just when a shining model of morality; even while agonizing over sinful acts—as long as one was honest—one could change things for the better and have a positive impact on people.

On one of those days when he was absorbed in meditation at his Arizona house, Buchman talked about the millions in the people's communes in China. He said that he believed their sufferings would continue for many more years, and that made him sad. That was five years before the storm of the Cultural Revolution began raging. Buchman cared about people all over the globe and had a god-like air about him as if he was watching over the whole world; perhaps because of that, he had a complexity that was difficult to comprehend by ordinary logic. He grasped, as if under one single theme, the variety of topics like religion, politics, economics, and the family. This vastness of his perspective was both the source and limit of his extraordinary charisma.

Buchman preferred not to create organizations or systems by which to control the MRA activities that were expanding worldwide. He knew too many cases in which existing religious or political groups had lost their original vigor as their organizations grew

bureaucratic and their personnel succumbed to inertia. Instead of establishing organizations, he tried to leave everything to individual conscience. This approach proved effective in keeping the “organization disease” at bay, but when opinion was divided within a group there were no mechanisms to resolve the divide. After Buchman passed away, MRA activities with the participation of various countries and individuals began dispersing, quickly losing the centripetal force that had prevailed until right before his death.

Buchman’s followers respected him deeply, but at the same time they sometimes had different dreams for the work he led, depending on their personalities and environments. Some of them were attracted by his religious magnetism while others were absorbed in trying to materialize his ideals on the scene of world politics. While Buchman was alive, all of them believed they were conducting activities in line with his values and principles and worked together secure in that conviction. Once he was gone, however, they began giving priority to their own favored fields, whether the youth movement, religious activism, or politics. They became divided over the strategy of the whole movement. Individual people’s beliefs and convictions had been the driving force of the movement, so that it became difficult to artificially organize and unify these people after the loss of their central figure.

That may have been a natural outcome for a movement that had been driven solely by individual conscience. Even from before World War II there had arisen a number of smaller groups of movement activists that had branched off to pursue separate causes. Some, like the Alcoholics Anonymous, bore rich fruit. The Caux Round Table (CRT), headquartered in Caux, Switzerland, has held a conference every year, advocating implementation of the CRT Principles for Business targeted at business leaders around the world. The American youth movement “Up with People,” begun in the United States in the fourth year after Buchman’s death, produced notable results worldwide until its discontinuation in 2000. Individual endeavors making the most of the spirit each person inherited from MRA, in whatever form, may be the best ways of carrying on Buchman’s legacy.

After Buchman’s death, MRA activists in various parts of the world realized anew how great his charisma had been. Encounter with him had fundamentally changed the course and content of countless people’s lives. Some had left a political party or an organization with which they had worked for decades in order to devote themselves to the Buchman movement. Others, determined to serve its cause, had donated all their assets to it, keeping for themselves only a suitcase of clothing. Buchman had had the confidence and charisma enough to receive such dedication and donations as gifts from God.

Fund-raising meetings in Buchman’s presence always had an extraordinary and tense atmosphere as the conflict between self-interest and ideals unfolded. It was not rare that

a meeting lasting but a few hours would net nearly 100 million yen for the movement. Buchman would have said that it was the work of God and that he was only a humble medium of God's will. As a matter of fact, though, without that medium such a remarkable phenomenon would never have occurred.

The construction of the MRA Asia Center was completed in October 1962, one and a half years after Buchman passed away. His charisma continued to inspire people, and a splendid building was completed even after his death. The fund-raising magic that he had been able to wield, however, finally dissipated, and by the time the center opened, it had a huge debt of 200 million yen in the monetary value at that time. Later, it became difficult even to raise funds for the building's operating expenses, but thanks to strenuous and persistent efforts, the center's mortgage was finally paid off in full 30 years later, in 1990. For

the MRA Foundation, freedom from debt was a great joy, but the previous three decades had also forced it to realize that it had no choice but to rely on its own capacity and ability to carry on after Buchman's death.

Forty-one years have passed since Buchman passed away. Efforts are now underway to integrate and revitalize activities in various countries, but it is no longer possible or feasible to conduct programs in the same form and content as during the time Buchman was active. All that can be done is to carry on the best of Buchman's spirit within our means and capabilities and in a manner satisfactory to ourselves.

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