

# NEW WORLD NEWS

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## CAUX 1985

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### INDUSTRIAL SESSION

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Photos: C Spreng

## PATTERN FOR INDUSTRY

*PETER VICKERS, a young British businessman, assesses the Caux industrial conference:*

THE ELEVENTH ANNUAL INDUSTRIAL conference opened in Caux, Switzerland, on 27 August. Men and women of industry responded to the invitation offering 'Growth points of hope in a world of tensions'. Concerned about the unrest and upheavals in different parts, there were managers and trades unionists present who were also involved in the survival of their companies.

The significance of the conference was underlined by the participation, at their Government's request, of the two Japanese Ambassadors in Switzerland. The 125 participants came from 24 nations, including Colombia, Cyprus, Finland, India, Turkey, Tanzania and most OECD (Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development) member countries.

Japan's ninth successive industrial delegation representing Toshiba attended. Addressing the conference, Masaru Nishioka, a managing director of Toshiba, spoke of the importance of Caux for industrial relations in Toshiba, and expressed his gratitude. Dr Buchman's principle, 'What is right, not who is right' was now axiomatic thinking at Toshiba

for both management and labour, he said.

The Malaysian Prime Minister had recently expressed fears about a trading 'cold war' between America and Japan, saying that when two elephants fight, it is the grass that gets trampled. The industrial conference gave the opportunity for informal conversations between representatives of Japan, North America and Europe which could help create the climate for a new trading relationship.

Mountain House, the Moral Re-Armament centre in Caux, offers a surprising juxtaposition of people—Latin American trades unionists and New Zealand farmers, African businessmen and European politicians, Indian entrepreneurs and American financiers. Over dinner a Swedish truck factory manager exchanges ideas on stock control with Japanese trades unionists; Sri Lankans hear of recent developments in Zimbabwe; Americans and Namibians exchange views; French economics students consult German and Scandinavian businessmen and women.

Yet within the conference there is the extraordinary peace of Caux. A French parliamentarian says how much he values the space to listen and reflect. An Austrian MP describes Caux as his 'moral filling station'. A young American is searching for his career. At Caux he finds clarity—not yet about his whole future but about the next step to take. His decision to be thoroughly honest with his father may open the way to an undreamt of calling.

Olivier Giscard d'Estaing, President of the International Group for Economic and Commercial Co-operation, Paris, addressed the question 'How can the needs of the world's

poor be met?' It is necessary, he said, that social generosity (as reflected in the heartfelt response to Banaid and Liveaid) and economic competence be aligned with a spiritual vision. He called on those present to mobilise the spirit of Caux in a crusade against poverty, changing attitudes that inflict misery and answering tension between men. He cited the example, among others, of São Paulo where 600,000 children aged 8 to 14 are living alone without families and resources.

Unemployment was a focus of much attention. Bernard Rosenberg, Business Representative of Local 3 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers in New York, spoke of the 25 million people in the USA affected by unemployment. His union has initiated a training and education programme for 1,800 apprentices. Believing that unemployment and work should be shared, Mr Rosenberg's union proposed that an employee should work 26 weeks and then go on unpaid furlough for nine weeks before returning for the following 26 weeks. In this way 10 per cent extra jobs were created.

Albert Benbow, senior convenor at SU Fuel Systems in Birmingham, UK, outlined the change that had come in attitudes and performance at his plant which is part of the Austin Rover car group. Taking responsibility with senior management for the future of the factory threatened with closure, those on the shop floor had drastically increased productivity, consistently achieving above-budget results. As a result 300 jobs were saved and later 80 new full-time jobs were created.

## Meaning and fulfilment

Gerrit Doeksen, director of Internatio-Mueller Shipping, Rotterdam, addressed the theme, 'How can everybody find a suitable occupation?' Speaking in his personal capacity, he argued that lack of employment undermines society—particularly for the young. He suggested that the acceptance of sabbatical years (where an employee takes a year, unpaid, away from work for training or other academic purposes while another person fills his position) could be introduced without increasing overall costs.

Responding to Dr Doeksen, a young Australian graduate told how she had been unemployed for eight months. Eventually she found a job, but only in another country, and not in the profession for which she had been trained. Her bitterness about this experience was cured, not by finding work, but only when she found a faith in God. 'I have learnt,' she said, 'that my life can have meaning and fulfilment regardless of what type of work I am doing.'

The crisis in the world's sugar industry was analysed.

Australian sugar growers outlined the protectionist policies of other nations that are forcing the most efficient sugar growers (in Australia, Brazil and Fiji) out of business. The current world market sugar price is about 4 cents per pound, probably the lowest in history. However, the EEC pays its farmers 20 cents per pound to produce sugar. As a result EEC production has increased by 23 per cent in eight years and European taxpayers lose approximately \$350 per tonne sold. America pays its sugar farmers 17.75 cents per pound, while Colombia pays 21 cents. The over-supply on the world market, exacerbated by monopoly national markets, has depressed prices to the extent that economies, such as Fiji, which depend on sugar as a main source of income are jeopardised. Some at the conference committed themselves to working for a just settlement which would aid those most in need.

Early morning sessions entitled 'The Heart of the Matter' gave inspiration and perspective relevant to individuals and families. But these sessions had a wider relevance since economies are managed by individuals; if their own house is in order, then they are free to manage greater responsibilities.

The themes—motives and decisions; the home, a new inspiration or an added burden?; freedom from pressure; how to handle success and failure—provided insights into the unpredictable human element of industrial life.

Gottfried Anliker, chairman of Anliker Construction of Luzern, Switzerland, explained how he had found in MRA an effective and positive philosophy for industry, which had been encompassed in a code of practice for his company. The code includes the following principles:

- We build in order to satisfy the needs of people.
- Our work should be perfect down to the last detail.
- Every business deal should be fair and should benefit all concerned.
- We commit ourselves to offer the best possible value for the right price.
- The works family is the heart of our enterprise. Loyalty, discipline and honesty are the basis for our teamwork. The site and the office should become places where everyone feels he or she belongs and can develop fully.
- An adequate company profit is necessary to do our job properly. Profit should not, however, be the main motive, but the logical result of sound economic work.

The final meeting showed how individual decisions pattern together and can be used far beyond expectations. A British participant concluded, 'We are looking for a guiding hand—the plan of God for his world. It is not a theory, not an addition to what we are already doing, but the one realistic hope to solve the problems we face.' ■



Toshiba delegation with Bernie Rosenberg, USA (right), and Dick Cosens, UK (centre)

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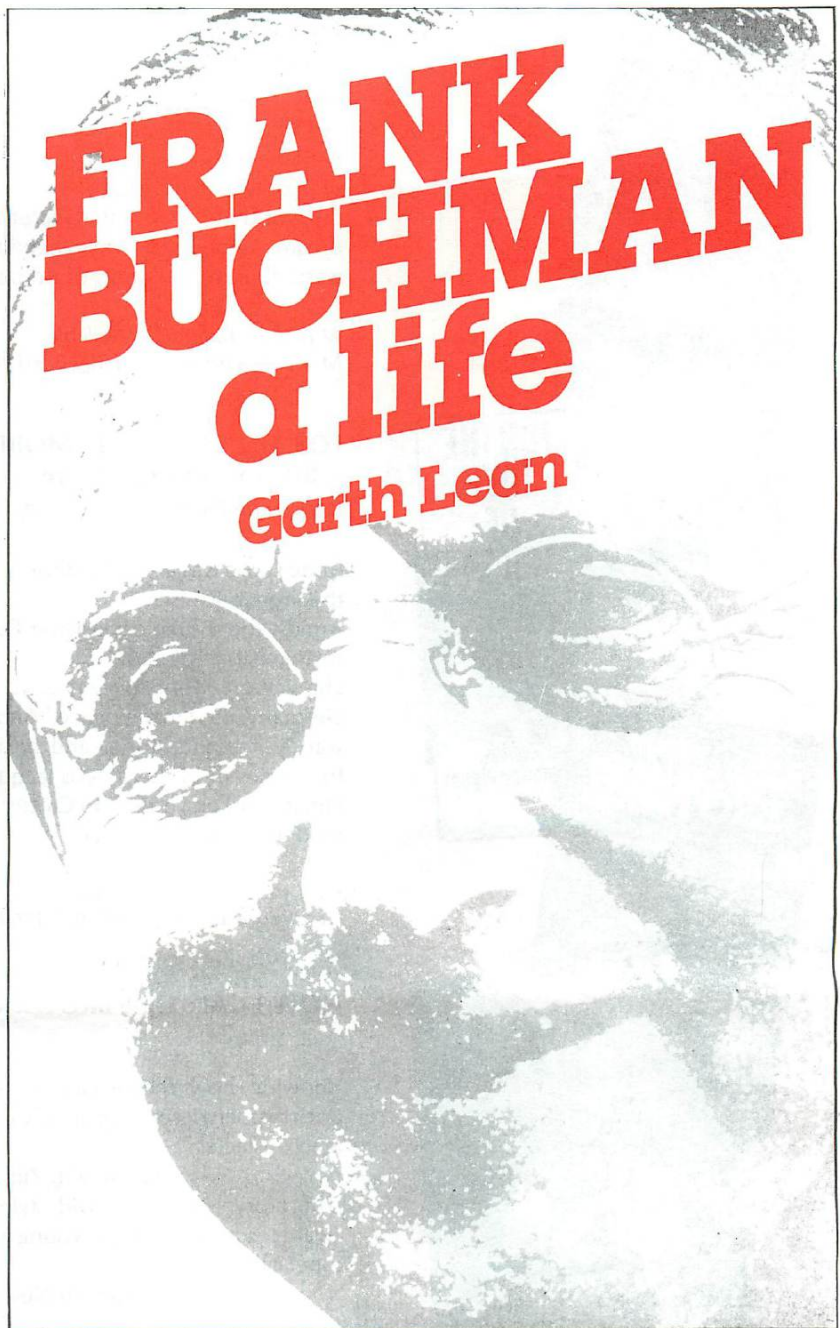
## FRANK BUCHMAN: A life

by Garth Lean

Constable, London 608 pages 88 photographs 234 x 156mm  
Publication Nov 1985 ISBN 0 09 466650 4 hardback £15.00

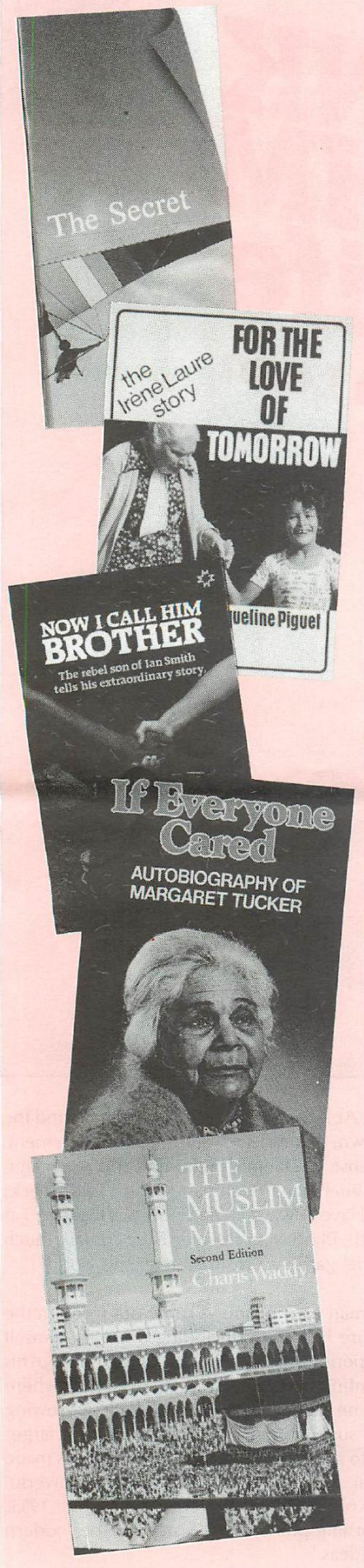
This first full-length biography of the initiator of the Oxford Group and Moral Re-Armament is the story of a man who set out to remake the world, an aim which conditioned where and how he lived, how he approached people and situations and what he did from hour to hour. Its publishers describe it as 'an attempt to present the man with the greatest degree of objectivity and to analyse the fascination he had for people of such varied backgrounds and countries'.

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The book shows a man whose elbows came out through the edge of any structure he was in, including those he himself initiated. Having experienced the power of God to change his nature, he had an infinite expectation that anyone anywhere could find the same liberation. He also had a growing perception of how such change could be applied to larger situations and lead to social and structural changes. This made him a controversial man, often in conflict with powerful forces. Cardinal König of Vienna commented in 1985: 'Buchman was a turning point in the history of the modern world through his ideas.'



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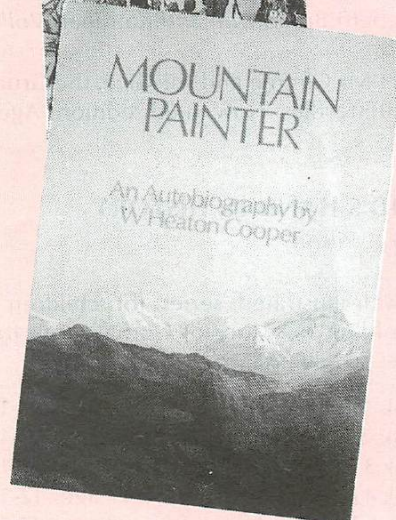
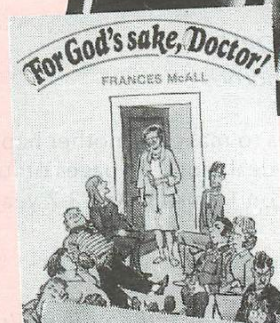
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# CRUSADE TO END POVERTY

OLIVIER GISCARD D'ESTAING (France), Co-founder of INSEAD, Fontainebleau; President, International Group of Economic and Commercial Co-operation, Paris.

I BELIEVE WE CAN do a great deal to overcome poverty and suffering in the world. I do not accept a fatalistic approach because we can make a spectacular impact if we choose.

I can see three aspects that need to be tackled: a proper understanding of the problem, the need to combine generosity towards the needy with economic competence and a larger vision. And thirdly, the need for a crusade to end poverty which is where Caux has a particular capacity to help.

There is the poverty of the rich world. In France it is calculated that one in five has less than three times the minimum needed to keep alive and so should be described as 'poor'.

In poor countries the problem has a totally different scale and the statistics are terrifying. Two-thirds of humanity are said to be under-nourished and this is a fundamental problem. As a result, life expectancy is less than 50 years. In India it is said that only one in eight children reaches adult life in good health.

## Housed, fed and educated

So what are the causes? First, there are the natural disasters, droughts and other catastrophes. I think of the small farmer from North India who, ruined by two years of drought in his region, migrated with his family to Calcutta. There they settled on the pavement in complete destitution beside tens of thousands of small farmers until they could get work and survive by pulling rickshaws.

Secondly, there is the poverty which results from human actions. For example, wars, such as the tragedy of Cambodia. Thirdly, there is the huge expenditure on defence. I do not say that this is unnecessary in the world as it is, but it has no bearing on the standard of living of people. A missionary in Africa wrote to the USSR and the President of the United States saying: 'Please would each of you give me the equivalent of one bomber to help in the work that I am doing. It will not cost you much and if you both do it your strength will still be the same. With the money that you give me I shall cure the world of leprosy.'

There are also the rich who abuse their power, are incompetent and lack generosity. Among the poor there are some who are fatalistic, discouraged and unable to struggle. We have to motivate people to help them reach a certain minimum level of prosperity.

Urbanisation is another cause of poverty. There is the case of São Paulo. The city is growing at the rate of half a million people each year, who have to be housed, fed and educated.

Most important, what are the remedies? In rich countries like ours social benefits amount to more than the state budget. They are made possible because we are able to create sufficient wealth to share with those in need.

Then there is aid given to the Third World. In my view it has reached a new dimension. It is possible to complain of



M Olivier Giscard d'Estaing (left) with Chief Adolphus Mbah from Nigeria

lack of aid, of wastage and misuse but I am convinced that this aid and these efforts are essential, though still largely insufficient. We have to see it as a common effort of both sides working together for the same end—not as generous givers on the one hand reaping a good conscience and, on the other, receivers who often suffer from wounded pride. I do emphasise that the expenditure is not enough for the enormous tasks to be undertaken in agriculture, transport, electricity, hospitals, housing and the whole process of industrialisation. The target of 0.75 per cent of GNP set by the OECD still needs to be attained.

Another remedy is private investment. This is linked with the profit motive often through multinational companies. They have contributed to the transfer of technology and the creation of jobs and are not necessarily a symbol of exploitation. At the same time regulation may be needed to make sure that they contribute to development in the countries where they operate.

The third remedy is to make international trading conditions favourable to the poor countries. In particular, barriers to trade in their products must be removed and minimum prices fixed for their raw materials. The speculative variations of price are shocking—sugar moving from one price to another three times higher and copper which fluctuates purely on speculation of supply and demand. In the same way as unacceptably high interest rates in the past have been outlawed, a minimum price must be fixed below which buying is regarded as theft. In the various Lomé agreements Europe has made an effort with funds to stabilise prices by adjusting payments when prices fall below a certain level.

Finally, there is the change of attitudes in individuals by which we can best reach solutions. When a problem is globalised it takes on a scale that seems completely crushing. When I am told there are 300 million children dying of hunger, what can I do to save their lives? It is beyond me. But if a problem is brought to the scale of individual effort, a multiplication of such efforts leads to solutions.

The next point is to reject certain old ideas, such as the Marxist belief that the world will grow rich through the class struggle. I believe that it is by working together that the classes will be more productive. The class struggle has brought improvements in wages and conditions, but as president of an undertaking of 120 employees I know that it is when the employees and I work together that the enterprise is successful.

*Contd back page*

# FREEDOM FROM PRESSURE

ANDREW WEBSTER (Canada), President, Webster and Sons Limited (suppliers for the construction industry in Montreal).

IT IS IMPORTANT to talk about communications not only between management and labour but between families because that is where the pressure is born in my life. I have four children. The eldest is 16 and the youngest is eight. My wife and I have been married 19 years.

The thought came to me that we ought to meet as a family on a weekly basis and we have been doing this now for about six months. I keep the minutes of the meeting and post them on the refrigerator so that everyone can see them. We talk about what we like and what we don't like in the family, what we are going to do in the weeks ahead and about the friends we happen to have.

In the beginning the eight-year-old was not interested but he would interrupt as he disagreed from the next room with what was being said. Now, if we miss a week, when I come home the kids say, 'Let's have our meeting.' They see it as an important part of their lives because they can exteriorise and say what's bothering them and it is completely free.

To make this work I felt we had to do it on a basis of trust. The thought came that it wasn't fair for me to see my wife's expenses on her Visa card—all the charges came to my office—when she didn't see mine. That was easily done. I gave her a photocopy of my expenses.

Then the thought came to me, 'What about that camera lens?' I was feeling generous and gave my wife my Christmas bonus. I said, 'Here, you go and buy something you like. Anything you like.' She did and I didn't like it. So I felt sorry for myself and went and bought something for myself. It was a Leica 21mm M4 camera lens—not a cheap lens. But I was afraid to use it because if the kids saw it they'd say, 'Where did you get that, Daddy, how much did it cost?' So there it sat in the camera room in the basement. At one of our meetings I said to my wife and kids, 'Look this is what I've done. I'm willing to take the lens back if that is what you want me to do.' I gave the lens to my wife and said, 'Here, you decide,' and it sat on her dressing-table for a month and gathered dust. Every morning when I got up I could see this thing. Then it disappeared, and I thought, 'It's gone'. The day just before my 50th birthday my wife said to me, 'Would you like a camera lens for your birthday?' Of course I said I would love one.

Next we talked about the Mercedes. I have a 6.3 Mercedes. A very fast car. When I am driving that car I want to race everything else on the road—especially a Corvette which thinks it's the fastest. It brings out the wrong things in me. It affects how I arrive at the office. The thought which came to me in quiet was that I should sell this car. My wife agreed. She does not like to drive fast. My eight-year-old son had a bit of a problem with that one as he likes to drive fast. We

have agreed that we should sell the car and it is presently up for sale.

God has a plan for handling pressure. We may not have answers for every issue but at least they are out on the table. Then I can deal with the pile of pressures that are in the office. The first thing I do when I arrive at the office is to make a list of priorities and try and find God's leading on what, in a business sense, I should tackle. ■



Industrialists and trades unionists from France, UK, Italy, Sweden USA and Zimbabwe

Contd from page 3

The other old concept to reject is that sharing wealth will solve the problem. Even if the rich countries distributed all their wealth to the poor countries of the present world, the world would be poor in five years. We must beware of the onesidedness expressed in the oft-quoted Chinese proverb: 'If you want to help the poor, don't give them a fish, teach them to fish.' I believe we must do both: give and teach.

Our aid can make people more dependent unless it is accompanied by actions aimed at removing the causes of poverty. The will to act is my final point. The attitude of the wealthy and people's view of wealth has often been wrong—wanting either to blame it or seize it. An Islamic ruler made a big impression on me. He said, 'I am not the owner of my wealth. I am only God's steward of the resources entrusted to me.' The wealthy have a part to play and a responsibility.

The effectiveness of a crusade against poverty can be seen in what Bob Geldof has done and the impact that the media can have. If we can give the right steer to the capacity for efficiency and for generosity we can change the world. This is the role of Caux. This crusade against poverty will take hope, care, clearheadedness and the determination to act. ■

## 1985 CAUX INDUSTRIAL REPORT

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