



# THE POWER OF THE GROUP

Two groups confront each other without any apparent regard for the harm they are doing to society at large. The spokesmen of each side appear on TV. 'I'm sorry you are having to suffer,' they tell the country, 'but it's the other side's fault.'

It is rare in practice for one side to be totally right and the other wrong. Yet, once positions have become entrenched, it is difficult for either side to step back. The conflict, strike, lock-out or sit-in goes on. The public continues to suffer.

Sooner or later, in most conflicts, a compromise is reached. A 'face-saving' formula is agreed and the two sides start trying to re-establish a working relationship, rebuild shattered trust.

One reason why disputes often drag on unresolved is the difficulty for any member of either side to admit that his group is not 100 per cent right. It is not just fear of what the opposition will make of it, which may or may not be considerable, but the fear of how one's own crowd will react. 'The banana that leaves the bunch gets skinned,' says a proverb. Often it is the other bananas who do the skinning. The power of the group over its members is formidable.

Those of us who belong to groups might avoid much harmful action if we asked ourselves, 'Who is the keeper of my conscience? Is it me or the group to which I belong? Is the principle for which we are fighting so important that we must carry on at no matter what cost, or should we be willing to compromise?'

Paradoxically, some of those who muster the courage to stand up for their beliefs within a hostile group fall into another trap. They cannot work with others, even those who share their beliefs. Exiles and political dissidents sometimes become 'loners', using more energy in opposing each other than in restoring justice in their homelands.

'Dare to be a Daniel, dare to stand alone...' The ideal is probably a team of Daniels—a group of men and women who are never afraid of putting God's will before the good opinion of others, yet are willing to 'lay down their lives for their friends'.

In this issue we examine further the power of the group and the art of team-building. ■

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# Liberation theology—the missing dimension

by Laurie Vogel Brazil

THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL worshipped a golden calf; the Prussian militocracy worshipped 'blood and iron'; and some of our Victorian forbears worshipped prudery to such an extent that ladies draped the legs of their pianos with trousers.

What commands the worship of our day and age? Surely it is the group. The Marxist who sees each man only as one of 'the oppressors' or 'the oppressed'; the problem-drinker who knows that he should cut it out but fears it would lead to social ostracism; the young adult who would rather lose virginity than risk being thought 'a wierdo'—even primitive tribesmen who ward off the wrath of the rain-god with sacrifices might be astounded at the fear with which we regard the group today.

How does the group exercise such power? In my experience it does so when I want something for myself. In Brazil some years ago I was in touch with a group of workers' leaders. They were keen that a controversial national figure who had admired their work should attend an MRA

conference overseas. The man said that he could not afford the fare, so together we decided at considerable individual sacrifice to pay it ourselves. Some of the workers asked me to go with him to help translate. 'You do so much better than John,' they said. John, one of my colleagues, was in fact against subsidising the man's fare as he doubted the sincerity of his interest in MRA. However, I was flattered to be considered better than a colleague and wanted to keep the workers' good opinion. Thirty-six hours after arriving at the conference, the man left. We later learnt that he had simply used us as a way of leaving the country because he was facing threats of legal action and possible arrest. As I faced the lust within me to stick with the crowd at all costs, I found an experience of the Cross. I turned again to loving God above all else.

When the group becomes your chief loyalty, there are two main problems. Firstly, there are many conflicting groups around. How do you choose between them? I chose the workers rather than John on a basis of self-interest. That proved inadequate. You come up against the second problem when your group, like Nebuchadnezzar's immense idol, turns out to have feet of clay. Eudocio Ravines, who installed Latin America's first popular front government in Chile in the Thirties, faced this question when he later lost his faith in Communism. In his book, *La Gran Estafa*, he describes how he then gave token loyalty to his group for years because he feared walking into a total vacuum with nothing to live for.

## Wrong question

To break free from the hold of the group is both possible and fulfilling. Elena Sakharov, wife of the Russian nuclear scientist, tells how she once saw a well-known author in the street 'with the appearance of someone who had just fallen in love'. She discovered that he had just come from protesting publicly against Solzhenitsyn's expulsion from the Soviet Union.

A TV interviewer asked Andrei Sakharov what he expected to achieve by his own protests as one of a handful against all the power of the Soviet state. 'Do you expect people will follow you?' Sakharov replied, 'You journalists ask the wrong question.' It did not matter to him if five or 50 or a million followed them, he said, 'Our conscience would not permit us to do anything else.'

After his recent successful hunger-strike, Dr Sakharov commented, 'The strength of the fight for human rights does not lie in organisations or in the number of those participating. It is a moral force, that sense of discernment which is indisputable. Such a movement can never disappear without trace. Once uttered a word lives on.'

You can avoid being dominated by 'group think' by giving God your first loyalty. However, many make the mistake of limiting themselves to this 'vertical' relationship. In Latin America, the reaction against those who are so preoccupied has given rise to the theology of liberation.

Encouraged by the Second Vatican Council, Latin American bishops, first in Medellin, Colombia in 1969 and then in Puebla, Mexico in 1979, faced the fact that enormous social injustices continued while a tiny minority lived out a personal religion. 'Our priority is with the poor,' said the Bishops. Some have put the accent so heavily on the 'horizontal relationship'—concern for their fellow men—that one Cardinal could define his aim to us as 'to use the Marxist analysis for Christian ends', although he added that the Church was against violence.

Jesus of course refused to accept that man had to choose between a self-centred worship of God and concern for people. 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart... and thy neighbour as thyself.'

People who are ready to put God first, even at the risk of upsetting their own crowd, become freer to care for others.



Luiz Pereira

'The hardest decision I ever had to make was to stand out against violence in my own crowd,' says Luiz Pereira, who lived in one of Rio de Janeiro's *favelas* (slums) for 20 years. 'Leadership went to the tough guy and I was afraid of being called a coward.' However, when he did decide to follow what he felt God wanted, he began to look at the other *favelados* as people, rather than as units to be mobilised for his political ends. 'We sought out those who had any skill and set them to work training others,' he says. His new, caring leadership has been contagious. One of those he works with, Manolo, has recently helped to create a new deal whereby 250,000 people are being given decent houses (see NWN Vol29 No35). ■

## Team-builder's tips

The writer is a student physiotherapy teacher and was previously superintendent physiotherapist in a hospital outpatient department:

WHAT MOST HARMS patient-care in hospitals? Lack of money, shortage of staff, or friction between members of staff leading to a strained atmosphere?

Clearly, enough staff and money are needed. But large numbers of staff cannot make up for poor staff relations, however good their equipment is.

In the Health Service, as elsewhere, the people we work with may not be those we would have chosen. The question of how to weld a group of staff into an effective team arises frequently in a hospital where many jobs require a 'team approach'.

My experience of running a busy department showed me at least four factors are involved in building a team. The first is a sense of humour which helps to oil the wheels of communication when friction slows them down.

Secondly, I found it helpful to spend time with each of my team individually, not excluding those who seemed difficult, to hear their ideas and views.

It also helped to meet at intervals with the whole staff to discuss new methods of working, new ideas, or simply to do some job together. This gave us an *esprit de corps*.

The fourth factor was spending time together away from work without the deadlines and pressures. This helped real friendships to grow.

All this did seem to improve the working atmosphere

during the time I was in charge of the team. Of course, we also had the common aim of giving the best possible service to our patients. To shape workers into a team, a clearly-defined goal is essential. ■

PETER HANNON, now living in South Africa, reflects upon what it takes to build a team of people who are committed to following God's will:



Peter Hannon

## The pain and promise of an ordinary bunch

TEAMWORK IS NOT EASY. Man may be a social animal, but that does not seem to mean that unity comes naturally!

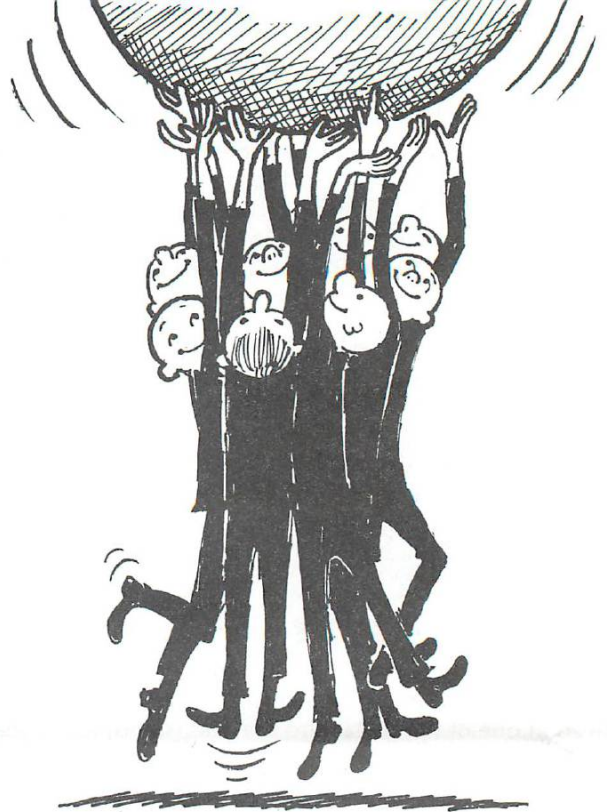
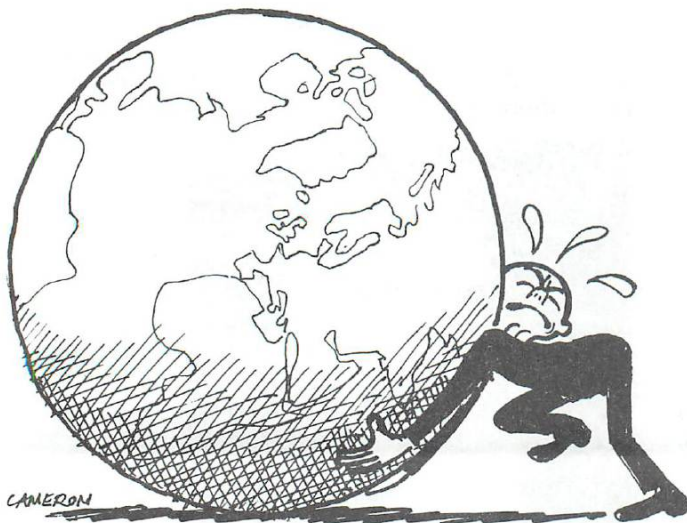
Many of the realities of our natures only surface when we have to work together—and many people run away at this point. Conflict amongst those who try to undertake God's work should not surprise us; it would only be surprising if it did not arise. We are not some particularly difficult bunch of people. We are just people.

Jesus set out to train a team of twelve men. He gave this task priority. Yet one betrayed Him, and the others kept squabbling about precedence, and in the end ran away. It is true that, when given a further chance, they became radically different and went on to upturn history, but it gives helpful perspective about the difficulty of building a force of people for God's use.

It strikes me that there are two distinct levels of commitment. The first is the individual, where I am concerned with finding, and giving to others, a personal faith. The second, quite distinct, level, is to build this united force. This demands a quite different degree of maturity and selflessness.

St Francis has come down in history as the singing saint, full of the joy of his relationship with his Maker. The other side of the picture, however, is his pain and suffering, caused in great part by the battle to hold his followers firm against their desire to live more comfortably than God was asking of them.

To think that if we have good intentions, and even a dedication to God, in common, we should therefore avoid these difficulties, would be naive. St Paul's letters describe his battles, in city after city, to create a united force. The pain is there; but also the promise of victory—for those who want it enough. ■



'Because they do not know how to build and work as part of a force many well-meaning individualists are stopped...'

*Man and Structures*, Jens Wilhelmsen's book about the changes needed in the social systems and in man himself, is being republished in a revised edition next month by Grosvenor Books. *Morgenbladet* of Oslo said that the first edition was 'a fireworks of sharp observations and revealing questions'. 'The author may well be attacked because he expresses truths that few want to hear,' was the comment of another Norwegian paper, *Agderposten*. We reprint below an extract from the book which deals with creating a team:

## CHECK THE RUDDER—THEN SWAB THE DECK

Because they do not know how to build and work as part of a force, many well-meaning individualists are stopped or silenced before they achieve any results. One more martyr, shrugs the world, and moves on in the same old direction.

A united group of people with a common aim is not so easily shrugged off. They stand the chance of breaking through. That is why opposition to them is even more determined. In fact, the absence of persecution is a sure sign that what you are working on is harmless.

Creating a team is difficult. 'We all believe in the same thing,' a member of a Marxist group once told me. 'But I don't know what to do about the rivalries and back-stabbing among us.' The same problems are well-known in other groups, including religious ones. It is one reason why so many avoid the challenge of having to work closely with difficult people. But society pays a price for this kind of escapism.

Learning to make the other person great is one key to creating a united group. It means being as concerned about

the growth and destiny of other people in the group as I am about my own.

Another key is to respect the independence and integrity of each person. In the effort to make a group march in step, it is easy to trample on diverging convictions. There is the temptation to manipulate men's fears and ambitions in order to secure a united front.

This may work, but it is not in the best interest of the work to be done. Of course marching in step makes you strong. But if it happens at the expense of the individual's integrity, the strength is more apparent than real. If each person is not firmly rooted in his or her sense of right and wrong, a vital source of direction is lost. The group's vulnerability to error increases.

To build an effective force involves being a shepherd as much as a leader. It means caring for the whole man, for spiritual as well as material needs. And it means being a real friend.

Most people quickly sense whether the care and attention given them are genuine or tactical. One test is faithfulness. If the care ceases when the person ceases to be of use, its genuineness is in doubt.

Genuine friendships are doubly important in groups tackling social evil. They take heavy punishment from ruthless men determined to run the world their way. Only a deeply united and committed group can stand up to it and break through.

The most dedicated and united group, however, is ineffective unless it works with a strategy, with a concept of how to achieve a breakthrough. This strategy must include reaching the centres of power. Too many are satisfied with doing a good job in their corner of the ship, while others are on the bridge and decide the overall direction. People who mean business fight for those on the bridge to share their ideas, or else to get elected to a position on the bridge themselves. St Paul had the passion to get his message to Rome, the capital of the super-power of his age. Lenin was not satisfied with forming revolutionary cells all over Russia. He wanted Russia to be run by Marxists. Frank Buchman, the initiator of Moral Re-Armament, had a similar passion. 'I

want the world to be governed by men who are governed by God,' were his last words.

In our polycentric world, defining and affecting the centres of power is a difficult task. The power of the establishments is not what it was. The potential of the grass-roots and committed minorities has been amply demonstrated. An ideologically motivated caretaker may have more power in a school than the headmaster. And Moscow and Washington are not as obviously the power centres of the world as they have been.

Pursuing a strategy usually means going where the stones are rough and tackling the thorny problems which most people shy away from. It may be corruption in places high or low, the infiltration of a subversive ideology, the social or racial prejudices of a community, the selfishness and bitterness at the root of an inflamed conflict, the exploitation of a group or an individual.

To find the nerve-centres we need a higher source of direction than the human brain, however well-informed. Today no one knows where we are heading. Many threats are on the horizon: the bomb, the population explosion, the shortage of food and resources, pollution, a society dehumanised through science. No leaders in Washington, Paris, Moscow or Peking have things under control. If anyone can stake a safe course it is the Creator of it all, who has a purpose and destiny for his creation. By listening we can discover what it is. When man listens, God speaks. When man obeys, God acts.

Anyone, a professor or an illiterate, a fisherman in the Arctic or a farmer in India, can receive instructions from the same source and become part of a coherent attack on the world's ills.

*'Man and Structures' by Jens Wilhelmsen, published by Grosvenor Books, paperback price £1.50, with postage £1.70. Available from Grosvenor Books, 54 Lyford Road, London SW18 3JJ.*

*The publishers are offering a special pre-publication price to readers of 'New World News' of £1.00, with postage £1.20, for orders received by 22 March.* ■

## Keep on caring

PHILIP BOOBBYER has just left school:

SOMETIMES IT IS EASY to be cowardly at school and make no stand for your faith. At other times you go to the other extreme and bore everyone by talking too much about your views. I have come to realise that you can only find the right balance when you care for and are sensitive to individuals. Seeking God's direction is a great help in this.

It is important to see people as individuals rather than members of an often hostile group. I discovered that many people are very lonely and need friendship. Some are different when you meet them in private from their public image. I learnt the importance of caring for people and taking the trouble to listen to them whatever they say or do. For example, some of my friends attacked me for my convictions about MRA but two of them told me privately that they agreed with it deep down, although they added that they could not be bothered to do anything about it.

Last year I faced a lot of opposition for my beliefs at school. I realised that I would never be at my best or have the will-power to go on caring for others without a growing friendship with God. It is a help to know that God always gives the strength and courage to do what He wants. ■

‘If the outer world obeys the inner forces of the human soul, then man's fate depends on himself; if vice versa, then the oppression of man cannot be removed by political reforms.

Faith alone, we are told makes it possible to obey that inner voice, of which, of course, there is no objective proof. It also makes it possible for us to influence events in the world, did we but know it, against and in spite of the mighty influence of Evil.

Whatever the apparent disadvantages of our 'free' society—and there are those who may easily think that it is sometimes illusory—they are still outweighed by the advantages. And one of the most important is that we do *not* live in a totalitarian state.

Our protection depends, I believe, on the mystical power which from time immemorial has been called God and whose relationship to man seems to depend on man's relationship to his inner voice.’

**Prince Charles addressing the London Press Club as reported in the 'Daily Mail'.**

## INDUSTRIAL RETHINK

SPEAKERS FROM A VARIETY of Zimbabwean industries last month described how new attitudes were helping them to build trust and understanding in their workplaces. They were addressing a seminar in Bulawayo organised by Moral Re-Armament which brought together 80 managers, chairmen, secretaries, trade union officials and members of Workers' Committees.

Moses Mazithulela, Vice-President of the Transport and General Workers' Union said that his attitude used to be one of revenge. The resulting tug-of-war with management had left everyone frustrated. But he had then decided to start facing where he needed to change. 'It brought an immediate response from the other side and we started to work things out,' he reported. 'We have got to listen to one another and work together for the benefit of Zimbabwe.'

Councillor Albert Chikuka of Gwelo, organiser of the Workers' Committee at a Bata's shoe factory employing 3,000, told of a similar experience. 'I used to walk into the manager's office with an attitude of hatred that made him react instantly,' he said. 'We got nowhere. We demanded an answer within 24 hours.' After attending an earlier MRA seminar his attitude had changed. 'We began to negotiate rather than confront one another. We submitted our problems seven days before our meetings so that there was plenty of time to enquire into them.

'Our Workers' Committee is now not only fighting for workers' rights, but also taking responsibility for factory problems,' Mr Chikuka went on. Hearing of customers' complaints about certain boots, the Committee had consulted the man on the machine where the boots were produced and worked out a way of dealing with the fault.

'All of us are people with problems, fears and hopes,' said W O'Brien, Group Personnel Manager of African Associated Mines. 'We will only make progress in the multitude of problems we face through real care about people's needs. I realise how often I have failed in this. A worker needs to feel part of the company and needs someone with whom he can identify who understands his problems.' ■



Picture courtesy of the City of Liverpool Public Relations Office

ABOUT 500 PEOPLE attended a public meeting on 'The Changing Face of Britain' in London's Westminster Theatre this month, shortly after the unemployed total passed three million.

Donald Simpson, the chairman, talked of the human cost when 'thousands of middle-aged people may never work again' and 'thousands of young people may never work at all'. Many faced 'the sheer, shattering shock of being thrown on the *scrap heap*, the loneliness of losing all ones working companions'.

'It has been said that moral recovery must come before economic recovery,' he went on. The British might benefit from ending 'the great national past-time of fiddling'. 'It seems to have become endemic—expense accounts, turning back the clocks in cars, fixing sports events, moonlighting, highly-insured oil tankers going down in a calm sea.'

Unemployment was only one aspect of the rapid change. Attitudes to families, abortion, violence, community relations and morals were all changing. 'These changes are most clearly seen in our great cities,' Mr Simpson said.

Unemployed people needed sympathy and love said Malcolm Jack, National Committee member of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers. 'If we show that we care that is a start.' Many young people had been brought up with pound notes instead of sympathy. New values were needed in society. Mr Jack had recently visited India where, he said, one person in each rural family could spend the whole day just finding water and firewood. The immediate objective of the Indian Government was to find a job for one member of each family. 'This is very salutary for someone from the western world.'

Alfred Stocks, Chief Executive of Liverpool City Council, said that, despite the sense of anger and despair caused by unemployment, cities like his still contained 'the most creative, forward-looking elements it is possible to find'.

We print here extracts from DR STOCKS' speech:

## SOMBRE, YET VIBRANT— the changing face of Liverpool

NOWHERE IS THE changing face of Britain more clearly seen than in the face of our great cities. Nowhere has that change been more marked or taken place more rapidly than on the face of Liverpool—the one I know best.

The whole fabric of society as we have known it is changing at an alarming pace, and becoming, *I believe*, dangerously unstable.

30 years ago the great social issue of the day was housing. We in local government were rightly exhorted to join a crusade to deal with the housing conditions which were the shame of the inner cities.

The bulldozer was put to work and houses were demolished by their tens of thousands. New estates on the outskirts of cities, new developments in the heart of cities took the place of the old slum dwellings. As we drove our way through them, we did not perhaps reflect sufficiently on what we were doing to the communities that were being dispersed.

It was a volcanic experience for our citizens—all those experiments with high-rise blocks, slab blocks with deck access and all the other architectural fads which were part of that great housing drive.

Somehow enthusiasm for concrete, for bricks and mortar, took over from the detailed care for the community.

In one seven-year stretch in Liverpool, we demolished

33,000 dwellings and moved 110,000 people into completely different environments from those they had known and in which their families had lived for generations.

On top of that the people of our cities now face a new volcanic experience, that of industrial change and recession.

Unemployment in Liverpool is 60,000—20 per cent of the total workforce. In one area it has reached 50 per cent. The news of closure after closure has filled the headlines of our local newspapers.

In a two and a half year period from the middle of 1978, 14,000 jobs were lost through plant closures. Two large British Leyland factories have closed. Dunlop has closed. Lucas has closed. Recently one of the oldest Liverpool industries, the Tate and Lyle sugar refinery, closed, with the further loss of 1,500 jobs—mostly middle-aged people who may never find work again.

This has produced anger and despair in my city. Anger, and a sense of rejection, a sense of being thrown on the scrap heap after years of steady work, years of knowing with confidence the place which a person, a workforce, a firm, a family or, indeed, a city had in the scheme of things. Despair about whether the scheme of things is interested in one's having a place at all.

Two sections of the population suffer most from this sense of alienation—the young, leaving school and unable to find jobs; and the black community, often a closely knit and intensely loyal one, and an integral part of the Liverpool scene.

Both these groups take the full brunt of unemployment. As a result, we are in danger of creating within our democratic society another, different society, alienated from the one we know, thinking it has no stake in the future. We need not feel too surprised if from these quarters there comes a sense of attack, of rejection of a society which they feel has rejected them.

## Discrimination?

In my own home, when we are all around the tea table, the main theme of the youngsters' conversation is the struggle among their contemporaries to find a job...how one friend has written 70 letters, another got a reply today but it was a rejection, and so on. Unemployment dominates the conversation. It dominates the emotions of families, of cities and of the political framework which seeks to run these cities.

Many in the black community share this sense of alienation. The city council that I work for employs 30,000 people. 8,000 are teachers, about 7,000 work in offices and 15,000 are manual workers. Recently, as a large employer, we began an urgent dialogue with leaders of the black community about its employment prospects. They put it to us that the council discriminated against blacks. We were horrified and said that wasn't true.

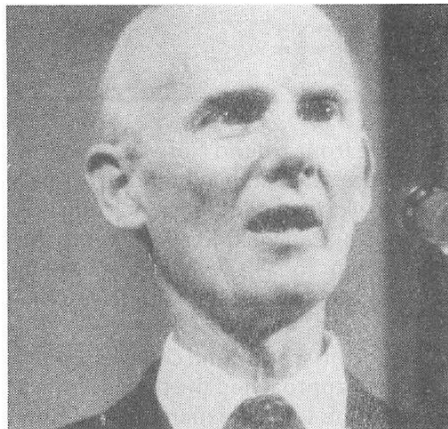
'Maybe you don't mean to,' they said, 'but how many blacks do you employ?'

'We don't know,' we said, 'we have no idea, doesn't that show we don't discriminate?'

'It doesn't show anything of the sort,' they said. 'How many blacks do you employ?'

So we found out and the answer was 169 people—out of 30,000, that is. Hardly any was the truth of the matter.

The Chairman of the Community Relations Council has taken the facts that we uncovered as a basis for further questions. He is asking many industrialists and heads of companies what their employment policies are. Perhaps



Dr Alfred Stocks,  
Chief Executive of  
Liverpool City  
Council

Cummock

when we face the truth, like the council did, people will get into action. We must bring justice back into society, or society will crumble and disintegrate.

These are sombre colours which I am using to paint a picture of urban life today. Necessarily sombre, because we need to understand in our bones how serious the situation is.

They are not however the only colours we must use to paint a true and rounded picture. I believe that within our cities we still retain the most creative, vibrant, forward-looking elements that it is possible to find.

The fame of Liverpool is worldwide. Any schoolboy can tell you where it is in the First Division.

The city is being rebuilt so fast that anyone leaving for ten minutes complains that they can't find their way around when they get back. We've built two cathedrals this century. We've put two road tunnels under the Mersey. We've produced a suburban railway system with an underground section in the city centre. In recent years we've deafened people with the sound of the Mersey beat. We've set the feet of the world tapping to that beat.

This is not a dead society, living in the past, this is not an atrophied way of life. This is a lively, hopeful, youthful, forward-looking society that goes on burning at the heart of the despair and anger.

In the last two and a half years it has been council policy to give every encouragement and to use every penny available to help small companies. Hundreds of small companies have established themselves and others have grown. About a third of the numbers made redundant by plant closures have been taken up by this expanding sector.

It is just a beginning but I think it demonstrates that, if a community will face up to its needs, that community can find a means of answering them.

I believe that we have to get on a war footing. It is no good expecting the government, the council, the CBI or the TUC to produce on the pages of *The Times*, a blueprint for an answer to our complex and far-gone situation. It is a crisis which demands the involvement in every community of everyone who cares.

I've spoken of Liverpool. I am devoted to Liverpool, I've lived there the last 30 years. Suppose Liverpool, or any city, became a pattern city. Suppose that the unemployment and community relations problems burned on the hearts of people across this country and they resolved that, under God, they were going to answer those needs. It might take years, it might take a lot of people. But it would save that place and through that, I believe, it would save this country from a dangerous slide away from parliamentary representative democracy towards urban confrontation and guerrilla-type activity from which we are not far removed at times. I believe it could be done. But it will take every one of us. ■

# NEWSBRIEF

**ABOUT 60 YOUNG** people from around Norway, as well as other countries, held a New Year camp at Brandbu, a small village known for its cold winters and skiing. Their aim was to discuss such questions as: 'Can we find an answer to the hopelessness we feel about today's events and within ourselves?' 'How do we connect personal faith to responsibility for society?'

Many participants were from schools and colleges, others from **different jobs**. So they approached the themes from a variety of backgrounds. Some told of experiences of how honesty and willingness to forgive had changed relationships within their families.

Birte Osttveit, who works with handicapped children, comments, 'It was good to start the New Year with friends who will work together and help each other to find Christ's friendship.'

**THIS SPRING**, 'A Day of London Theatre', the Westminster Theatre's programme for schools, will feature J B Priestley's mystery thriller, *An Inspector Calls*.

Hugh Steadman Williams, Artistic Director of the Westminster, writes, 'The March "A Day of London Theatre" is always in great demand as it is designed for the 13 to 15 year-olds. *An Inspector Calls* is full of suspense, a very important element for this age-group. But much more than that, it is about honesty, cover-up, guilt and hypocrisy. At the centre of the play is the Inspector who, through his questions, breaks through each of the character's wall of pretence.'

The public can see matinees at 2.15 from 2 to 27 March. Tickets cost £3.50 and £2.50. The Director will be John Blatchley.

**TWO HALF-HOUR PROGRAMMES** featuring the visit of TV hostess/producer Kay Currie to the MRA conference at Caux, Switzerland last year have been shown on Channel 7, WITN in New Bern, North Carolina, USA.

'At this centre for Moral Re-Armament,' says Kay Currie, 'one feels a strong sense of commitment to the larger world. It is as if you were sitting on the front row of history. One finds an atmosphere that is both liberating and challenging.'

**GEORGES LACROIX**, an industrialist from St Georges near Quebec City, Canada, was the guest speaker at the first of a series of 'brunches' initiated by MRA in Sorel last month.

The previous summer the Quebec government had asked M Lacroix to buy a carpet factory in Sorel which had been closed because of poor labour relations and lack of profit. 450 jobs were at stake. After talking the idea over with friends and 'meditating', he had agreed to buy the factory.

'It is a difficult task,' said M Lacroix. 'I said to the leaders of the union that their role is important because their vigilance forces us to keep alert vis a vis certain problems ahead. If there is hatred between us we will destroy each other. I don't believe that power struggles are necessary to force us

to dialogue. Fears are paralysing people; then love, as a creative force, must become a priority. I have spent too much time in the past on the material and the body, and on intellectual knowledge. Can I use my energy searching how to become closer to the essential, the absolute?'

**R M LALA'S** new book, *Encounters with the Eminent*, brings to life some of India's best-known and best-loved figures of recent years. 'In the 30 years since Independence though many a dream has faded, it is good to know that there has been much of decency and goodness among those who touched heights of distinction in their respective spheres,' writes the author.

Mr Lala, a former editor of *Himmat* news weekly, features those he has known personally. Among his subjects are political and religious figures, several of them disciples of Mahatma Gandhi, as well as cricketer Vijay Merchant, industrialist J R D Tata, singer M S Subbulakshmi and Mother Teresa of Calcutta.

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