



Conrad Hunte and Elijah Musekiwa at Coolmoreen

ZIMBABWE

Winning the war within ourselves

by John Burrell

FOR ZIMBABWE the last weeks of 1979 saw the end of 14 years of sanctions and the signing of a ceasefire agreement after a war which has cost over 20,000 lives.

I witnessed these events from Coolmoreen Farm, Gwelo, the MRA centre in the midlands of Zimbabwe, where 22 young people from all over Southern Africa were taking part in a ten days' camp. Less than a kilometre away from a curfew area, the farm also borders an airforce base. The coming and going of planes was a constant reminder of the war.

The Coolmoreen conference centre is still being planned and developed. So, in spite of heavy rain, the camp took place under canvas, using equipment lent by people in Johannesburg and Gwelo.

'Independence will come next year,' said Salisbury student Nobert Njazi. 'Are we going to be free in our hearts? Will bitterness between black and white remain? I have decided to restore God to leadership in my country and will give the rest of my life to do it. Here, I have learnt to live alongside and care for everyone. I only used to forgive the whites who apologised to me. Now I realise it is the injured person who should

take the first step in reconciliation.'
Coolmoreen Farm lies on the border between Matebeleland and Mashonaland, homes of the two tribal groups of Zimbabwe. An Ndebele student, Lynette Sigola, spoke of the historic warfare between her tribe and the Shona tribe, and said, 'We need to see the quality of character in all people. I commit myself to God's battle for the world.'

'I grew up on a farm, with a strict father and all our customs,' said Elijah Musekiwa from Mount Darwin. 'I was full of hate because of the way my father was treated. I did not want to see any white man. I also hated the Ndebeles. We Shones are very selfish. We don't want the Ndebeles to rule. I wish to apologise for my hatred of the Ndebeles. I have decided to put Christ first in my life.'

'We are dealing with the war outside, because we are dealing with the war inside ourselves,' commented West Indian cricketer, Conrad Hunte, on his fourth visit to Southern Africa since 1975. 'This is the only way to permanent peace.'

Each morning started with one of the group talking about the part from the Bible which meant most to them. After one morning, a Soweto student remarked, 'I have found a new understanding of prayer. Before, I was just dictating to God terms of what He should do for the black nation.'

The mother of violence

Besides those from Soweto, the South African group included students from Atteridgeville, a Coloured salesman, an Afrikaans theology student from Stellenbosch and many others.

'You cannot learn about absolute love,' said Thompson Ramanala, a student from Atteridgeville, Pretoria. 'You have got to get that power from God. Love and forgiveness go hand in hand. When I apologised to white Southern Africans for my hatred, I realised that I also had to ask God for His forgiveness and I had to willingly open my heart and receive the love that He then gave me for white people. I have also realised that I must love my enemies because the light of love is the only force that will conquer the darkness of hate.'



Conference participants

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'You cannot challenge violence unless you challenge the hopelessness which breeds violence,' Conrad Hunte said. 'Hopelessness is the mother of violence.'

Two of the students from Soweto had been detained after the 1976 riots. As men committed to bringing change in their country, they see the need for a spiritual 'revolution'. 'I have been given new motives,' said one. 'I commit myself solidly to this revolution. Till now I have been working on my own. I need God.' The other said, 'I have at last found my lost spirit at Coolmoreen.'

We talked honestly about our different customs, traditions and attitudes and the misunderstandings that often arise from ignorance. 'But,' said Suzan Burrell, an Afrikaner living in Salisbury, 'our sin is that we choose to remain ignorant.'

Reg Barry, an economist working with the Transkei government, spoke of his commitment to help improve conditions in the Transkei. 'In order to achieve this end,' he said, 'my energies must be directed to doing the things God tells me to do and not to criticising others.'

Work for nothing

Everyone helped with the practical work at the camp, cooking food that had been donated by local shop keepers over an open fire and working on the farm. 'It is the first time I have worked for nothing,' commented one of those from Soweto. 'Before I have always worked to get something.'

On one of the last days of the conference, fasting and silence were observed to provide an opportunity for meditation and reflection. In the evening, the fast was broken and all the farm workers, their families, the farm manager and other friends from Gwelo came to a Christmas evening. Adults and children sat on logs around the crib and Christmas tree whilst the Nativity story was read in Shona and English. Candles were lit on the tree to mark a prayer for different individuals and situations.

'This conference has been the birth place of many new ideas and insights,' said Mark Swilling, a student from Johannesburg. 'The spark of faith has come alive again in me at Coolmoreen.'

When the muddling has to stop

by Christopher Evans

I WAS BORN in the early 1950s as the last wartime restrictions were being relaxed in Britain. In the '60s, when I left school, the question for most people was not so much finding a job as choosing which one to take. During the '70s I got married, and now, in 1980 my wife and I are expecting our first child.

For most of my life I have heard dire predictions about the future. In 1972, when I returned to Britain from abroad I was struck by the ferment of new, pessimistic thinking about the future at a time of economic boom. A senior EEC official told me that he and his colleagues had lost confidence in their ability to manage their countries' economies. Then there was the 'oil shock'. It was all very fascinating, almost exhilarating, and presumably at some future time our day to day living would be affected.

With the arrival of the '80s, I believe we have reached that time. I do not mean that one morning we will wake up and find everything different. I mean that whereas we now have, say, a year or two to get used to new ways of doing things, by the end of the 1980s we will have only months. No one can say for sure what changes we should expect. But they will be more than just the disappearance of the corner shop or large cars. They will involve our incomes, our daily routines, where we live and many of our accepted customs.

Overspending

Already rival political and economic theories of the planned economy and the 'free market' are inadequate. Policy-makers in the '80s and '90s will deal with situations that have never occurred before. They cannot be bound by dogma. But they will need boundaries within which to shape adequate policies.

One such boundary is the line that divides a free and open society from a dictatorship. Not just because we prefer freedom, but because it is necessary if we are to solve our problems. Of course free men and women sometimes act in direct contradiction to the interests of their community. But only an open society has the flexibility and ability to innovate that rapidly changing circumstances will demand.

Economic management will be more than ever like blind navigation. Even now orthodox measures to control the economy have unpredictable effects. Some problems may require centralised planning, others the movement of a free market. Economists will have to consider factors so far almost completely ignored in peace time, such as the will and unity of the nation, and the extent

of its involvement with the government's aims.

The only permanent economic rights and wrongs will be those based on objective morality. Greed as the fuel for economic growth can never be a long term success. Measures undertaken out of a desire for power or revenge will always be destructive. Families and countries that spend what they don't have will continue to end up in trouble.

The same is true of international relations. It is often said that the aim of foreign policy must be to defend the national interest. This is dangerously limited, and will increasingly involve embarrassing changes as the perceived national interest demands first one policy then another. The debate about what is morally right will of course continue, but it must be given far higher priority.

There are signs of movement in this direction. The best of political and economic thought is converging with the best of religious teaching. We are told, in effect, that what Christians have believed for 2000 years about the way we ought to live is now a precondition of our survival. The 1980s could be the Church's greatest decade as the tide of scientific thinking turns once more in its direction.

Untenable

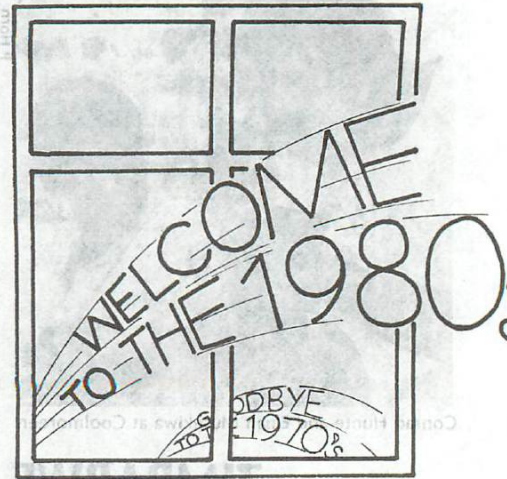
We are already embarked on a period of social and economic upheaval as great as that of the industrial revolution. The industrial revolution ushered in a new era of prosperity, but also brought dislocation and suffering to millions of families. We still feel the effects. This dislocation is expected to be just as severe. Add to this the international turmoil and our inability to manage even today's economy, let alone tomorrow's, and it is possible to paint a dark picture of the future. But every prediction contains a large question mark: how will people react?

Most of us, I would guess, expect to muddle through the '80s and '90s in much the way we have the '60s and '70s. Inconvenience here and there; more unemployment; but if we are lucky most of us will get away with it. During the '80s this belief will become untenable. Even if we are prepared to carry on as before, we cannot avoid structural changes, vulnerability and insecurity. But we can be creative in our response to them.

Rediscovery

From the failure of old structures in East and West we could plunge into chaos, or we could fashion new ones together. The growing vulnerability of our economies could lead to breakdown, or it could force us to co-operate—this is the choice the EEC countries are facing. We could be turned by material insecurity to more brutal competition. Or could we rediscover the complete relevance of a God who can guide not only individual lives but also national policies?

The right choices will never be made by force of circumstances alone. They will have to be fought for.



NO ONE EXPECTS the next ten years to be easy.

Materialism, whether philosophical and Marxist or pragmatic and capitalist, gets mankind nowhere—except into a world of massive inflation, unbridled greed and, in the end, the prospect of collapse or the concentration camp.

But if men can change there is a new factor in every calculation, an unpredictable element. If man is central and the full range of his potentialities as well as his needs—mental, moral, spiritual, material—are borne in mind, if he is capable of finding a new road, then there is hope.

The trouble with materialists is that they are baffled and engulfed by material things. You really can't trust materialists with the material world.

The people who can keep material things in their place, as servants, not as masters, are those who have renounced materialism.

It is they who can be trusted with the material world—to cherish it, not ransack and pillage it; to steward its resources justly for all men. It is the men of faith who know how to be the reconcilers of nations, the reconcilers of races. Can we move into a decade where the spiritual in man, the element which makes him man—increasingly has right of way?

KEN BELDEN

COULD THE EEC in the 1980s be a community at the service of the world, rather than a rich man's club?

Could industrialised countries face the changes in their traditional ways of working, willingly rather than reluctantly?

A new international economic order will only come out of courageous choices like these made by company directors, trade union executives, members of governments and countless individuals.

The French farmer who last year conceded a large piece of his best land for the erection of a car factory for the sake of helping the unemployed find work is the model of how it will happen. The same man has started a scheme in his region to help needy villagers in West Africa by giving the proceeds of one day's work each month. Many farmers have joined him in this.

RUSSELL CARPENTER

Latin America— continent of the decade?

by Anthony Craig

who has lived in Brazil for 2½ years

'IRAN IS a new kind of Waterloo for us,' wrote an American on a card sent to Europe this Christmas. Well, does it have to be a 'defeat' for the USA and the West, or could it mean that we enter the 1980s with a new awareness of what other nations feel and have to offer in the world? For those of us born into a world of European and United States dominance the last three decades have shaken fundamental assumptions. In terms of power politics, the West has suffered set-backs. In terms of spiritual power, it may be that the world is growing richer with the aspirations and experiences of many more nations coming to the fore.

Oil

In the '60s, the West faced brutal conflict in South-East Asia, in the '70s we have seen the conflagration spread to Africa. One could easily predict that in the '80s more violence may erupt in Latin America. But could that continent be where the tide of hate and war is turned?

For the industrial West, North America has often led the way in thought and action. We do not always realise the ferment of ideas that the New World south of the Rio Grande produces for the developing nations. We may forget that Venezuela was a founder and motivating force in OPEC and that Mexico now has oil reserves at least equal to those of Saudi Arabia; that the 'theology of liberation', which some churchmen feel justifies military action in defence of human rights, was developed in South America. The very word 'guerrilla', is a Spanish word not meaning, as in English, a single fighter, but 'a little war'—a whole strategy of conflict that has up-turned national defence policies.

Gunman

Latin America, the continent of revolution, has pioneered too what one Brazilian leader called 'the final revolution'—a revolution of character. This has been a movement of ordinary men doing the extraordinary thing. In recent years, crane drivers have fought against corruption in the port of Montevideo, men and women in Rio de Janeiro's shanty towns have wrested the leadership of their residence associations from crooks and gunmen and so made possible the rehousing of hundreds of thousands in solid buildings; and all over the continent ordinary trade unionists have taken up the struggle to form democratic unions, free from political, military or monetary control. In every case the focal point of these social advances has been the moral

decision of one or more individuals.

The peace and progress we all desire for the 1980s depend on such personal decisions, but there is one further element, the liberating power of God's forgiveness for all the hate and hurt of the past. For me the vibrant example of that essential power lives in South America, in a poor suburb of Rio de Janeiro. Francisco is an old man now, but when he was a boy of nine he saw his parents brutally murdered in one of the frequent feuds of the Brazilian interior. He turned wild, became a gunman, an illiterate killer for hire burning to wreak revenge on the society he held responsible for his misery. Through the devotion of his wife and of fellow dockers active with Moral Re-Armament, he found freedom from hatred. He has suffered and caused suffering, but now he feels fully forgiven by God. In place of hate he radiates love; not sentimentality, but a creative force. God has become for him as real as his next-door neighbour, and speaks to him as clearly.

Francisco is a herald. His experience is the only kind of progress worth striving for in the 1980s. Whether in British industry, Afghanistan, Ireland or Rhodesia, the world must learn about reconciliation and forgiveness in the next decade.

The Eighties—no fear!

by John Bond

WHO FEARS the 1980s? Not me.

I have often been afraid. Sometimes I have felt such a miserable sinner as to be no possible use to God—and the best thing to do was to try and stay out of trouble. Or, as a voluntary religious worker without a salary I have thought, 'Should I get a professional training as a security for the future?'

In March last year I got engaged to an Australian girl. There came a time in our engagement when I feared. How would it work out? How would we care for our families at opposite ends of the earth? Would we quarrel over where we should live?

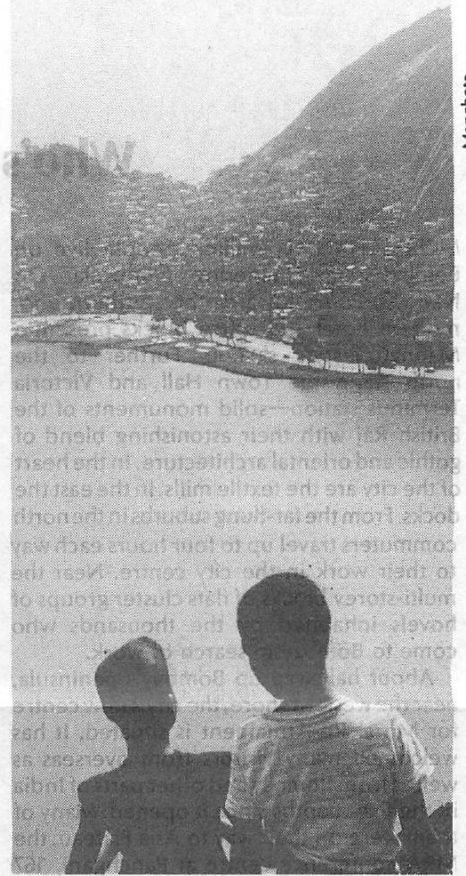
Then I read in the Bible about fear. I saw that the choice for me was to live by faith or by fear. They could not co-exist.

If I accepted that God loved me, and could guide me, I could not seriously doubt that this step was His will for me. I knew then that I had to turn my back on fear for ever, and be ready to go anywhere, do anything, that God showed.

With that, a deeper love was born for my fiancée, for her country, for her concerns.

Since then I have many times had to stop, at a point of decision, and ask myself whether fear or faith controls me—and decide on the basis of faith.

It has transformed my life. I know that there is no training more needed than that of learning to be, and help others become, Christ-like. And that God has a far bigger task in mind for me than my fear-filled ways have allowed me to grasp.



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Blazing Eighties

WHAT QUALITY do we most need for the '80s?

We have been promised a decade of shortages and recession, of violence and anarchy.

It will take more than logic and sweet reasonableness to answer the frenzy of the mob, more than cleverness to meet the cold hate of the gunmen. It takes a passion to cure a passion. And it takes the fire of love to rouse the affluent from their complacency.

The prophets had fire. It is the hall-mark of the pioneers of the spirit—Francis and Shaftesbury, Wesley and Buchman, Hardie and Columba. The steady, unwavering, undying flame from a generous God.

How does it come, this 'fire from heaven'? It often comes when we decide afresh to put God's new world first and break with our self-centred ways or with that relationship that has stunted our growth. It comes when we shift from the prison-cage of conformism, or turn from our dearest idol—for ever.

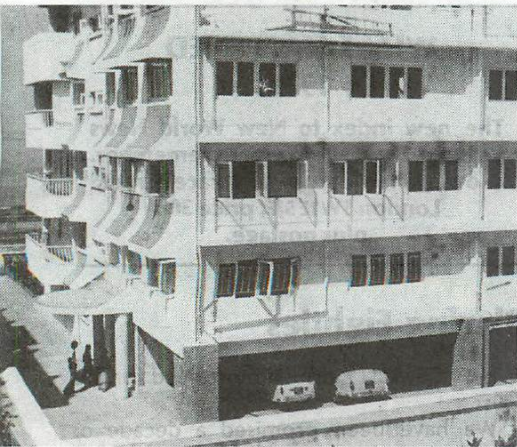
It is God's gift. But the choice is ours.
O for a passionate passion for souls,
O for a pity that yearns,
O for a love that loves unto death,
O for a fire that burns.

DON SIMPSON

New Bombay centre Who's ringing the doorbell?

MORE THAN six million people live on Bombay's long tapering peninsula. On Nariman Point, towards the southern end, modern hotel and office blocks present a Manhattan-style skyline. Further to the north stand the Town Hall and Victoria Terminus station—solid monuments of the British Raj with their astonishing blend of gothic and oriental architecture. In the heart of the city are the textile mills, in the east the docks. From the far-flung suburbs in the north commuters travel up to four hours each way to their work in the city centre. Near the multi-storey blocks of flats cluster groups of hovels inhabited by the thousands who come to Bombay in search of work.

About half way up Bombay's peninsula, near the western shore, the city's new centre for Moral Re-Armament is situated. It has welcomed many visitors from overseas as well as from Bombay and other parts of India in the five months since it opened. Many of them were on their way to Asia Plateau, the MRA conference centre at Panchgani, 167 miles away in the Western Ghats.



The new Bombay centre is on the first and second floor of this building. Behind is the Arabian Sea.

'The centre exists as a place where people may learn the truth about themselves and about God who can heal, discipline and use their lives,' says Niketu Iralu, who lives there with his wife Christine. 'We want everyone who comes here, starting with all who live here, to find a sustaining faith that enables them to care for others and to take responsibility.'

One group often at the centre come from the nearby Worli chawls, municipal housing blocks where an estimated 200,000 industrial workers and their families live, often two or three families to a room. Forty-two from these chawls recently went to Asia Plateau for a training programme on family relationships organised by a Bombay social worker,

Usha Shah, who had found that welfare schemes alone did not meet all the chawls-dwellers' needs. On their return, some of them told a gathering in the centre that they had decided to stop drinking, to help their wives (one man had never given his wife money since they married) and to pay back debts.

Two office clerks, Jagtap and Kamble lead another group from the chawls, who are harijans. At a recent meeting both described how, in obedience to the 'inner voice' in their hearts, they had started schemes to help the children of the chawls. On Jagtap's initiative 5000 children had been inoculated, with the aid of over 100 volunteers. Kamble had started a programme to teach the children moral and spiritual values. For some of these sessions he brings them to the centre to see MRA films and have discussions.

A P Mehta, spinning master in Khatau Textile Mills, plans to bring all the 300 men in his department to the centre in batches of 35. So far two groups have come, most of whom contributed five rupees each to the building fund. Coming straight from their morning shift they see documentary films and discuss how they can play a part in changing India. Ever since Mehta returned from a conference at Asia Plateau his men have noted that he does not lose his temper as he used to, and has asked them one by one how he could help with their personal problems.

Steamy heat

Another group who use the centre frequently are students, some of whom have attended training courses at Asia Plateau. One of these is Asheesh Khaneja who now stays at the centre and comes from a Punjabi business family now living in Madras. 'Six months ago,' he says, 'I was convinced that there was no unseen supernatural entity. I had long arguments about God's existence, and often left the talks with more evidence to support my conclusions. I was iconoclastic and agnostic about everything and everybody. I was an inveterate smoker and occasionally took drugs.'

'Six months hence, I have developed a firm faith in my inner voice. I am convinced of God's supremacy and intend to devote my life to doing His will. My faith encouraged me to write to my parents about drugs and to my university about cheating in the examinations.'

Some other students from Bombay went to see the state education minister and



Carpenters at work on the staircase.

admitted that they too had cheated. The minister asked them to help reduce the practice by telling their fellow-students what they had decided.

Recent overseas visitors to the Bombay centre have included Frederick Philips from Holland, former head of Philips electrical industries, and Irène Laure, a veteran Socialist leader from France, who was for many years head of three million Socialist women. Both had packed programmes. Asked how she coped with four appointments a day in Bombay's steamy heat, 81-year-old Mme Laure replied, 'When God says, "Rest", you rest, and when God says "Go", you go.'

The new Bombay centre can accommodate eleven; up to 100 can gather in the main reception room. A Burmah-teak staircase, intricately carved by Muslim craftsmen from Delhi, links it two floors.

Contributions toward buying and equipping the centre have come from many people, both in money and in materials. So far Rs1,050,000 have been raised, and Rs 200,000 are still needed. 'Ladies from around the world and all parts of India have given generously on hearing the need to equip the kitchen,' says Christine Iralu. Others have given linen and light fittings.

'Our daily requirements have been met—but not always without a struggle,' Christine Iralu continues. 'One day our finances for food had run very low. I didn't know where the next meal was coming from. Then the doorbell rang. There was a basket with food—with the compliments of one of our friends!'

'Democracy's roots will find a firmer and deeper grip if we can keep raising people who will give leadership according to the dictates of the still small voice that guided Gandhiji,' concludes Niketu Iralu. 'That is what the new centre is for. If democracy does succeed in India, dictatorship of left and right will become less attractive in Asian nations.'