

# NEW WORLD NEWS

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A constant feature of MRA assemblies, large and small, is the meeting of opposites—different races, cultures, classes and nations. The aim is the honesty out of which can grow a readiness to reconsider one's values, and to seek the values of faith. And faith is the launching-pad for many creative initiatives, as this issue shows:

## Better than best

ZIMBABWE WAS TEACHING Britain a lesson in Kent last weekend—at the request of local government councillors and other Kent residents.

They had called a Moral Re-Armament conference which focused on Zimbabwe, because they wanted people to study the way that men and women obedient to God's leading helped bring about the headlines of the past year. As County Councillor Lester Betts said, 'The problems in Zimbabwe have their parallel here, and these Zimbabweans

have shown how God uses people who let Him guide them.'

Nearly 100 people attended the conference, several as a result of a newspaper article in the *Kent Messenger*. They heard black and white Zimbabweans speak, and saw the new film *Dawn in Zimbabwe*. The film features the work of Arthur Kanodereka who was assassinated in the course of a courageous peace mission. 'I am going to take on the work my father was doing', his eldest son, Teurai, told the conference. 'It is still needed.'

Desmond Reader, Professor of Social and Psychological Studies at the University of London, described how, when he was

Dean of Social Studies at the University of Rhodesia, he had held a series of occasions in his home for black and white students, and had begun to understand the depth of discrimination in the country.

'When I returned to Britain, I thought I had escaped from this oppressive feeling of riding on the backs of another people', he went on. 'But here I saw people treating others with the same attitudes as those I had conveyed to black people and others I regarded as inferior.'

**BETTER** contd on p2

## When the chips are down



Bridge over the Tyne, Newcastle upon Tyne

LOCAL COUNCILLORS, community leaders and two senior police officers sent by the Chief Constable were among those attending a one-day conference in Newcastle upon Tyne last Saturday on the theme 'Hope in a divided world'. Speakers included West Indian cricketer Conrad Hunte, Methodist peace prize winner Saidie Patterson from Belfast, Les Dennison, a trade unionist from Coventry, and Eric Priestley, a past president of the Sheffield Chamber of Trade.

'I attribute part of the success of the last Notting Hill carnival to the grace and sensitivity with which the police operated,' said Miguel Richards, a young builder from South London who spoke at the conference.

'We black people have been the victims of exploitation and slavery which has not been of our choosing,' he went on. 'We have

responded with hate and violence. At some point all of us who are searching for an identity and freedom have got to face the wrong of those destructive forces that lie at our door.

'We need to be ready in spirit to receive an apology from those who seek to put the past right, and we must apologise for our reaction to it. Too many of us carry a chip on our shoulder which makes us unreachable.

'There came a moment when the needs I saw made me kneel and commit my life to God completely. I want to help cure the bitterness that has erupted into violence this year in Bristol and Miami. I have taken the decision recently to organise my life so that I have time at the beginning of each day for thought and a search for direction for myself and the community.'

## Guerrillas rapt

AS THE SUN WENT DOWN under the clear blue sky of Zimbabwe, 400 disabled guerrilla fighters stood and sat in rapt attention watching 'Freedom', the MRA film made by Africans about the issues facing a nation on the eve of independence.

The showing, at a camp at Ntabazinduna in Matabeleland, had been arranged by Aaron Ndahambi, Welfare Secretary of the Patriotic Front. After the film Stephen Chigorimbo, an insurance training manager, thanked the guerrillas for the sacrifices they had made for the sake of independence.

'Every individual must now fight for a united, unselfish Zimbabwe where everyone is cared for and all work together to build the future,' he went on. Ultimately, he said, 'what we need is to put our lives right with God, following the absolute moral standards of the film'. The guerrillas applauded and many asked when he could come again with another film.

## St Paul's requests

ONE OF THE FIRST public screenings of the new film, 'Dawn in Zimbabwe', took place in St Paul's, the area of Bristol which saw race riots earlier this year.

The film was shown at the Trinity Community Centre, on the invitation of Roy de Freitas, leader of the centre. Among the audience was Dr AS Eliwa, National President of the Union of Muslim Organisations of Britain and Ireland. Both Mr de Freitas and Dr Eliwa asked for further screenings to be arranged.

## Plan for tractors

WHAT CAN YOU DO with hundreds of new tractors that nobody will buy? This was the problem worrying a manager from a tractor-making company when he took part in an informal meeting at the MRA centre in Tirley Garth, Cheshire, last weekend.

His firm were considering destroying the tractors because no use could be found for them. As he listened to a speaker on the need for reconstruction in Zimbabwe, the idea struck him that the tractors could be sold for use there at a fraction of their normal market price. Even though it was not his immediate responsibility, by the end of the weekend he had a plan for how this might be brought about.

The problems of recession were on the minds of many present. Gwilym Jenkins, a union branch secretary from a South Wales steelworks, described how he had decided not to blame others for the state of his industry, but accept that he was also to blame. This decision had led him with some colleagues to fight to make the plant viable. Although its future was not assured, over recent months production records had been broken repeatedly and customers who had decided to buy elsewhere were returning to the plant.

John Vickers, chairman of a Leeds company which makes specialised lubricants, described the measures he is taking in response to a sharp drop in business which is expected to continue next year. 'Moral recovery is the essential forerunner of economic recovery,' he said. 'The board has decided that no-one will be made redundant this year and other cuts are being made to make this possible.'

The invitation to the weekend described Tirley Garth as 'a setting where new attitudes and thus new economic possibilities can emerge'. The last session, chaired by journalist Graham Turner and his wife Jean, explored the subject of creating new attitudes. 'It begins when a man or woman hands their life to God to be used in the remaking of His world,' said Mr Turner.

### BETTER contd from p1

'Many of us are educated to be the best. This determination gets bred into our attitudes, and comes out in everything we do. Was this why, trying to do our best in Rhodesia, people still intensely disliked us? Was it because we were saying—not in words, but in attitudes and deeds—"We are better than you. We are prepared to help you get a good education—you can have a few crumbs from the rich man's table—if you are good."?'

'It suddenly seemed to me that there was a big difference between being the best, and trying to do one's best. When I realised that, a few days ago, it brought a great sense of relaxation. The tension of trying to be the best all these years began to slip from my shoulders. Trying to be the best only cuts me off from other people. Why not simply do my best?'

What animates you?

**My religious faith. It is the source of my strength. People may think otherwise, but that does not worry me. I know that without faith I am nothing.**

**It is dishonesty that makes me impossible to live with. We Poles have got to react against habits formed 35 years ago. A regime that is not founded on truth must disappear.**

**LECH WALES,**

**leader of the unofficial Polish workers' committee, Gdansk**

*Le Monde*

## 20th century's gift to Britain

**Bob Normington**  
London

I HAVE JUST SPENT TWO YEARS in Bombay. While I was there, I felt completely accepted into many Indian families; accepted into a way of life very different from my own, without any demand that I become like them. This experience has helped me to see how hurt many people from different countries and cultures must feel when they settle in Britain. Rather than respecting their way of life, we demand that they become like us.

I grew up near Birmingham when many West Indians and Asians were coming to live in Britain. There was colour prejudice amongst the white community, and although I didn't agree with it in my head, the feelings none the less grew in my heart. Some years later a number of West Indians became good friends of mine, but I found I could not really look them in the eye or trust them as much as my white friends. There was an invisible barrier between us, and the more we were together the more intolerable it became.

In desperation I asked God what to do. He showed me some very uncomfortable things

about myself. Because I was white and English I felt that I was somehow just a little better than anybody else. I realised that it was this kind of unspoken attitude that caused racial tension and discrimination. I felt extremely ashamed and went and apologised to my West Indian friends. The barrier vanished and a much deeper trust grew.

### Multiracial society

We English are often critical of our colonial history without realising that we still hold the attitudes that made our predecessors behave as they did. I feel ashamed of the way my country has treated others but I want the future to be different. So I have to accept responsibility for mistakes which were committed before I was born, and use my life to correct them.

It may be because of our history that God has given the great gift of a multiracial society to Britain. Its success will require people like myself to face up to our true natures—from which we often hide—and ask forgiveness from those we have hurt. We must do this not just for Britain, but for the sake of other parts of the world where diversity and tensions exist.

## Source of liberation

**A man returned to his country recently after a visit to the MRA centre at Caux, Switzerland. Of his visit he said:**

I AM PLAYING a part in the fight to liberate my country from a situation in no way different from Afghanistan. We cannot

fight effectively unless our own hands are clean, and our leaders are united. This is what God has shown me here—and He has given me a vision of how to work for this. I am going to take time daily to seek His will. It is the only way I have found to keep straight.

Here too I have had the chance to think with many others how to improve the terrible conditions under which the refugees from my country live.

Does faith always guide you?

**Each man has to fulfil the mission which God entrusts him with.... We may like to think that morality and politics do not mix. But they are indivisible.**

How would you like history to remember you?

**As a man of God—because everything is included in that answer.**

**PRESIDENT SADAT of Egypt**

*Figaro*

# NORTHERN TERRITORY DRIVE TO BRIDGE CULTURAL GAPS

FOUR YOUNG MEN recently drove 4,000 miles from the south to the north of Australia in response to the urging of Aborigines and whites in Australia's north who had seen in MRA a concept and a practice that their area needed.

The four—Ron Lawler and Bruce Green from Australia, Alfred Kaniniba of Papua-New Guinea and Thomas Braeckle from Germany—set out from Melbourne, where they had been attending the MRA course, 'Studies in Effective Living'. Participating in the course had been Aboriginal and white Australians, Asians, Europeans and Pacific Islanders. Together they had explored how the different cultures could collaborate, and what the purpose of such a collaboration could be.

Nowhere is this issue more in the forefront than in Australia's north. Here have been discovered sources of energy much prized by the Western world—uranium, shale oil and natural gas. Attempts to exploit these resources have led to clashes with the Aboriginal community, and recently representatives of the Aboriginal people appealed to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights about this.

## Consent and understanding

With the purpose of learning more about the issues, and with the conviction that they had a contribution to make, the team drove north. It was a venture of faith. Gifts from across Australia made it possible—\$50 a week from a school-teacher, the gold sovereign given to a couple on their golden wedding, and camping equipment.

They took four weeks on their journey north, stopping often to meet the people of the area. By night they pitched their tent, or bedded down in a wool-shed, or sometimes in the home of someone they had met on the way—such as the Aboriginal leader in Queensland who told them, 'What we have, you can have.'

In each place their ideas aroused interest. In north Queensland they were asked to speak to the executive of one branch of the Waterside Workers' Federation. In the town of Katherine they sang and spoke at the Aboriginal Inland Mission Church, the Member of Parliament in Rockhampton asked for an article in his weekly paper, and in several places they were interviewed by the local press. 'Four head north to bridge cultural gaps' headlined the Toowoomba Chronicle.

In these interviews they spoke of their experience of working as a multiracial team, and their individual experiences. As a German, Thomas Braeckle said, all his energy had gone into justifying his country's past. Others of his countrymen tried to close their minds to the wrongs that Germany had committed. Neither attitude freed people. Now he was living to cure the attitudes that had caused the wrong. 'I must carry on my heart my nation's past mistakes so as to lighten the load for my fellow countrymen.'



In the Northern Territory

Australian Information Service

'But how far back can you go in putting right the wrongs of the past?' asked the interviewer. 'For me the challenge is to do all I can to put right wrongs as I see them—and that starts with the wrong way I have treated someone in the past hour!' Thomas replied.

In Darwin they met leaders of government and opposition, the trade unions and the Aboriginal community. The Northern Territory achieved statehood only two years ago, and its leaders are mostly under 40. They face difficult problems in trying to mediate between the drive of the whites to get things done, and the growing determination of the Aborigines not to be pushed around. The Northern Territory has gone further than any other State in granting Aboriginal land rights; but as one Aboriginal leader told the team, important as these policies are, 'they will only work with the

consent and understanding of the white community'.

A white family offered the loan of their home for a month. Aborigines invited them to their areas, and asked for the films of MRA to be shown to their people.

When the African film *Freedom* was shown on Croker Island, home of five Aboriginal tribes, several said that the racial and tribal tensions it depicted could have been set on their island. 'To find a new life we have to find God's direction and power,' commented Paul Milaidjaidj, a councillor of his tribe, who had invited them. 'This is what our people are really looking for.'

People of all communities asked them to return. 'I feel the need for a dose of MRA,' said one civil servant. 'In my job the temptation to cut corners is strong, to say that the end justifies the means. I lose a bit of dignity each time I give in.'

## While visiting Darwin RON LAWLER, who comes from Brisbane, wrote:

I BLAMED MY PARENTS for what had gone wrong in our family. When I was honest with them about where I had been wrong, cynicism and despair fell away. This experience of freedom and victory gave me hope that far-reaching change is possible in the world.

Then six years ago I was given a book about an Aboriginal woman who has given her life to reconciling black and white Australians. I looked at her picture on the cover. Her face reflected no trace of bitterness though her background was such that she had every reason to be so. I felt my heart stirring and God saying to me, "What have you done to My people, the Aboriginal people?"

## Unbreakable connection

For the first time I had to identify with the sins of my forebears and of my people, and look at the roots in my nature of the massacres, the intolerance and indifference which have been part of our treatment, as

whites, of Aborigines—the same self-centredness and arrogance that I had displayed towards my parents.

Then the thought came that if I was obedient God would use me to help rebuild the relationship between black and white.

We white Australians have demanded so much of the Aborigine people. We have demanded their land, and that they accept a new and strange way of life. We have demanded what they ought not give and ignored what they have to contribute. Some carry on unjust discrimination and others treat them like children, then wonder why they do not love us. Sometimes our wrong attitudes are unconscious. It is our turn to be great-hearted, and play our part in healing the wounds.

A man who has worked beside Aboriginal people for many years said to me recently, "They cherish an unbreakable connection between law, truth and eternity." In their tradition leaders are chosen for their respect of the absolute, not for their ability to change laws to suit a short term whim rooted in the pursuit of money, pleasure or power. There is no wisdom more needed in our society.

## Two of a kind

**Rosa Jones**  
Birmingham

AFTER I RETIRED, Birmingham Education Authority asked me if I would return to teaching, to a tough city school where they could not get enough teachers. I agreed. I had been working on a study course on how to create the new society, and I was given permission to try it out in this school.

My first class hardly bothered to come into the room. They just strolled in and some just stood about. Afterwards I discovered that every one of those 14 and 15 year-olds came from a broken home; many had been in trouble with the police; they simply did not want to learn.

When I said 'Good afternoon', there was no response. I said 'Sit down'—again no response. So I looked around for the ring-leader and found a very large, tall, powerful girl. I walked up to her and said 'Sit down', but she just stood.

So I tried the freezing manner which had always reduced my pupils to jelly in the past. 'You make me very angry,' I said. 'And you make me angry,' she said, raising her fist

above my head. 'Well that makes two of us,' I said. 'Suppose we both stop.' She smiled broadly and said to the rest of the class, 'Sit down when Miss tells you.' I had not known I was going to say that—those words came to me out of the blue.

Before the next lesson I spent a long time trying to find out what God wanted me to do. He said to me, 'You must tell those boys and girls what you were like at their age. You must tell them the things in your life you are most ashamed of.' I thought I could never say those things to that coughing, jeering class.

All day I kept thinking, 'Perhaps I could get them to copy out a page of the book we are studying.' But I was not very happy about the idea. So when the time came I told them what God had told me to. I felt ashamed and humiliated. But they listened—you could have heard a pin drop.

Afterwards they said, 'We want to work.' I found to my great surprise that they could write and read quite well. They were not illiterate, as I had been told. But they just needed to feel that someone needed them and that they had something to give.

## Accept or say yes

**Edith Wolfer**  
Switzerland

I HAVE cancer. The illness is progressing.

I have learnt several things through this experience. One is that you can only take one step at a time. You have to find out what is right and trust that when you have done it, God will be there to show you the next step.

Secondly, I have learnt to be open with other people about my fears. This built new relationships with my family and friends,

and it meant that I made many new friends.

The third point is not just to accept, but to say yes to the path God leads me along. There is a difference—accepting is passive, saying yes is active. If you say yes to the path you are led onto, then it becomes fascinating. I found I could use all the riches God gave me.

When you face death, values change. You realise what matters, what is lasting. And you want to use every minute and opportunity for God's plan. The fourth thing I have decided is always to be available to God, whatever the circumstances.

## Sunshine student

**PAULA FELDERER, a young Austrian, visited Caux for the first time this summer. Before she left, she said that she would like to tell the conference about the decisions she had made. She did this in the form of a prayer.**

LORD, I thank you for this morning, for the people in this hall, that we can all be here together, like a big family.

I have learnt many things in this time. You have shown me that it is my own fault if I feel insecure. You have shown me another way, that I will not be alone if I go to others and care for them. And I know that now, when I

go home on Sunday, I must begin first in my family. Help me to stand by my decision to be honest with my parents and ask their forgiveness for demanding that they should give me a note excusing me from school, when I have been playing truant.

Help me to keep to my decision not to cheat at school, as I have done in every test—this is the only way I have got good marks. And help me, too, to go to school every day, however enticing the weather is, however much I want to go swimming!

You can give us all the strength to change things around us. I want to thank you for the love you give us. If we were just ready to receive your love, we could scatter it all over the world. And the whole world could be a net of love.

## Sensitive story



T. Buhler

**ANN LONE UHRENHOLDT writes for one of Denmark's national newspapers:**

WHEN JOURNALISTS REPORT what has happened in the world objectively and truthfully, it gives people a fair chance to participate in democracy. That is my aim. I also try to find stories that give people the hope and inspiration that there is a different way of doing things.

Journalism is a competitive world. There is a temptation to be ambitious. I have decided that I do not want to exploit the people whom I interview or telephone. I often have to pray that God will give me love for these people so that I am sensitive to their needs, as well as to getting a story.

One subject I cover is that of refugees in Denmark. I interviewed some Vietnamese refugees. Immediately afterwards 16 came to my flat to meet some of my friends, 12 celebrated Christmas dinner with my family and four are now staying on my family's farm. It has been the same with the Greenlanders living in Denmark whom I write about. At first they were very suspicious of me as a journalist, but now they phone me whenever they have problems.

## Fibreglass cobweb

FINDING GOD'S GUIDANCE is not only a portion of the timetable of one's day, it is like a framework which holds life together, a cobweb made of invisible fibreglass—you can't see it, but it forms the whole shape of life.

It is there 24 hours a day—it means that you are held up at home so you get the essential phone call you didn't know was coming, and then you catch the right tube train so you reach your next date on time after all; you find some opening of heart or mind while you are doing the dishes, so that you are ready for what the next person on the phone or at the door needs; you are stopped from doing conscientiously today what is better done and more needed tomorrow.

And it is more than what you do or don't each day. It is a sense of calling; a growing understanding of why you have been put on earth and the discovery that it is for God's purposes and not your own. That makes it a dangerous and endlessly interesting way to live.

**Ailsa Hamilton**