



**BRIDGES
FOR THE
1980s**
— the girders,
nuts and bolts of
human relationships

AUSTRALIA
**'Don't freeze out
Asia'**
—Opposition
spokesman

NEW WORLD NEWS

Vol 28 No 10 2 February 1980 9p

Zimbabwe—no revenge

AS THE RHODESIAN ELECTIONS approach, politicians hurl accusations at each other. But a different note is struck in an interview with Byron Hove in *The Herald*, Salisbury's main newspaper. Mr Hove was sacked from the 1978 Rhodesian Transitional Government, in which he was a Cabinet Minister, over his demands for a faster rate of change to black rule. He is now a member of Robert Mugabe's ZANU (PF).

The article begins with his conviction that 'Rhodesia must now unite to create a "colour-blind, free and fair society" without bitterness or revenge', and goes on to quote him:

'We have to rearm ourselves morally and physically for the reconstruction of this country. Bitterness and revenge are, in my view, millstones around our necks which can only drown us in the sea of chaos.'

THE AUSTRALIAN Labour Party spokesman for minerals and energy, Paul Keating, last week challenged Australia to share its natural wealth with Asia.

Australia had neglected Asian countries, he said, addressing an international conference for Moral Re-Armament in Sydney. 'If we take the sleazy road by subsidising protective industries and freezing out Asia, we will become a nation of hated people.'

The rich-poor gap is one of the issues that the conference is dealing with. Called by a joint committee of Aboriginal and white Australians, it will also deal with resources and energy, the role of the Aborigines and Australia's task in the world.

'In a decade when greed, fear and indifference maintain separate worlds of affluence and poverty,' states the invitation, 'when millions suffer the results of "I am right" and "Me first" in conflicts, wars and oppressive

government; and when new economic conditions, unemployment and energy problems demand that we work together to find solutions, we must learn how to build bridges.'

'All these issues,' said Allan Griffith, a special advisor to the Australian Government on foreign affairs, who chaired the opening session, 'hinge on whether men can change.' The conference will hear about such changes in attitudes.

The Chairman for the Council of Aboriginal Development, Bill Bird, who is also a member of the National Aboriginal Conference, welcomed the 300 participants from 21 countries. He spoke of the need to give the Aboriginal people their rightful place in Australian society, and challenged everyone to 'look deep within'. 'If you don't know God you cannot show the right attitude and tolerance towards other people,' he said.

Controversy in steel town

KEIR HARDIE was at the heart of steel country last month, when a play about him, *The man they could not buy*, was performed in Rotherham and Sheffield. Thirty-two thousand steelworkers were taking industrial action in the two towns.

The play was invited to Rotherham by the Constituency Labour Party and the performances, on 18 and 19 January, were sponsored by the Mayor, Councillor Eric Manns. It tells the story of the father of the British Labour movement, whose struggle for social justice was fuelled by his Christian faith.

As the play has toured Britain, it has provoked controversy. Rotherham was no exception. The Conservative minority on the council objected to an official buffet being given for the cast, while a speaker at the Trades Council attacked the play's association with MRA.

Those who had arranged the performances were undeterred. 'Perhaps it's because I wore a cloth cap myself at one time that I feel for what you're doing,' the Mayor told the cast at the reception. Introducing the play next night, he said, 'Society today requires a message.'

The president of the Trades Council and of the Constituency Labour Party, Councillor

T R Sharman, introduced the second performance at Rotherham's Brian O'Malley Arts Centre. The night before, he had left the mayor's reception early to take his turn on the picket line.

The *Yorkshire Post* described the play as 'grassroots drama to match Keir Hardie's grassroots politics'. 'Every line rings with fighting passion,' wrote the reviewer, who described the way in which the cast had left their work to travel with the play as 'a remarkable venture'. 'The Rotherham performance was enthusiastically applauded by an audience including some Labour councillors,' he reported.

The Mayor was interviewed twice about the play on the local station Radio Hallam. The station also reviewed the play on its

Sunday night 'Mainly Marvin' programme. 'It came across as a very sincere and moving piece' commented presenter Ernest Marvin. He talked to Don Simpson, whose performance as Keir Hardie was described by the programme's theatre critic Philip Nash as 'delightful and sometimes rather awe-inspiring'.

The performance in Sheffield's Memorial Hall on 23 January followed an earlier visit to Sheffield in October. The city's head of religious education had sent information about the play to every school with a sixth form. As a result several schools sent parties to the performance. The Provost, three City Councillors and the Vice Chairman of the South Yorkshire County Council signed a statement of welcome to the cast.



The Mayor of Rotherham (right) receives the cast of *Keir Hardie—the man they could not buy*. On the left stands Councillor T R Sharman.



Polish pilgrimage, Polish pledge

A LARGE CHRISTMAS STAR hung in the bow window of the conference hall at Mountain House, Caux, looking out across the lake of Geneva towards the snow-covered mountains. Four hundred people gathered at the MRA centre there over Christmas and the New Year.

The theme of their meetings was 'Bridging the gaps'. Many spoke of what this had meant in their experience. 'Once hatred has taken possession of us,' said a Tunisian studying in Paris, 'we are powerless and move unavoidably towards a catastrophe. The only thing which can rescue us is forgiveness.'

'For a long time hate was eating into my heart,' he continued. 'I hated the Jews for what they had done to the Palestinians. I had only one goal in my life—to repay.' This had led him to study nuclear physics, 'because I wanted to help the Arabs by exterminating the Jews.'

Three years ago, he had begun to question whether as a Muslim, this could really be his destiny. 'In the Koran God says, "We shall create men and women and different peoples, so that you may get to know one another," not "so that you may destroy one another." On the contrary, He also says that the worst enemy can become the best friend.'

'The question' of how yesterday's enemies

can become today's and tomorrow's friends, began to interest me intensely. I have begun to find my future in building bridges rather than destroying them.'

He had changed his studies. 'I do not hate the Jews any more.'

'It is my great hope,' he concluded, 'that the Islamic world will choose the way of God and not that of hatred. I for my part have decided for the former.'

A Polish woman told how during the conference she had lost her hatred of the Germans. Twenty-five years before she had made a pilgrimage to Auschwitz. 'As we walked through the camp,' she remembered, 'we saw a group of young Germans working near the huts. They were praying. One of our party remarked bitterly, "They

want to purge the atrocities of their fellow countrymen with these prayers." Our reaction was hatred; such crimes can never be forgiven, we thought.'

When Cardinal Wyszynski and the Polish bishops sent a message to the German bishops saying, 'We forgive you and we ask your forgiveness', she had tried to carry it out, as a loyal church member. 'But deep down the bitterness remained and went on gnawing at our hearts.'

'For the first time here in Caux I found myself among Germans,' she went on. 'I met them everywhere, in the kitchen, at meals, in the living rooms, during times of quiet and prayer together. I listened to their experiences. In the light of the Star of Bethlehem I understood what reconciliation means. I felt love. A bridge of understanding was built as the message of the Gospel was lived out in the company of people of many nations.'

'I thank all who have contributed to this gift—that German group in Auschwitz played their part too. It is a pledge of a better world.' Until now, she had been speaking in French. She stopped, and said in German, 'I ask all Germans present for forgiveness for my hatred, which has now gone.'



I. Corcoran

Come the summer

PETER VICKERS, an Oxford student, PETER RUNDELL, a development statistician, and EDWARD PETERS are among those responsible for a special session of the Caux assembly this summer. They write:

A NEW KIND OF SOCIETY, where people truly care for each other, is nearer than we think. It is inside each one of us, like a seed waiting to burst into colourful life. It is our cynicism which often stops it flowering.

We believe that the tasks of the next two decades include:

Ensuring that the poor two-thirds of the world has a just standard of living, even if it means sacrificing some of the comforts of our own.

Building a new relationship between West and East, so that permanent peace is secure for the next generation.

Finding a new reverence for the world's resources and developing an internationally agreed long-term approach to their use.

Seeking new approaches to the problem

of unemployment, and formulating a new concept of 'work'. What is work? For what purpose?

Inspiring a new quality of honest and selfless leadership at all levels, so that the Power of God and not the god of power controls us.

Finding and living a philosophy and faith that fill the emptiness in people's hearts.

It is because we want to work towards these objectives that many of us from around the world are undertaking a conference on 'Our task and responsibility for the future'. It will take place at Caux, Switzerland, from 5-17 August. With young people as hosts, the conference is for all ages and backgrounds. Groups in different areas are preparing sections of the session. They will particularly concern themselves with four areas of thought and action:

LIBERATION We will always have to struggle to be fully free—externally from dictatorship, pressures to conform, injustice and deprivation; internally from fear, stress, hatred, lust and selfish ambition.

RESOURCES There is enough for everybody's need. Problems are caused not only by scarcity but also by reckless consumption and unfair distribution. There is much to learn about how to draw on the resources of generosity, care and imagination of mankind.

POVERTY We must have a practical concern for the millions who do not have enough to feed, house and educate themselves. But we often forget that it will take equal dedication and compassion to cure the spiritual poverty—loneliness, indifference, aimlessness and boredom—of those who have plenty.

POWER The right kind of leadership emerges when lust for power is replaced by a willingness to serve. Our human efforts to solve increasing world problems seem desperately inadequate. We must rediscover the power of God to transform and inspire people.

Invitations are available from 12 Palace Street, London SW1E 5JF.

MOSCOW OLYMPICS Boycott not enough

by Paul Campbell

THE NAZIS tried to use the 1936 Berlin Olympics to spread their belief in the superior race. Hitler jumped up and down in rage when a black American out-sprinted the finest Aryans.

Frank Buchman was deeply disturbed by what he saw happening in Germany. He was in Berlin during the Games and worked tirelessly to shift the thinking of the German leadership—to little avail. To the editor of a newspaper he said, 'Germany has come under the domination of a terrible demonic force. We must ask God for guidance and strength to start a counter action under the sign of the Cross of Christ in the democratic countries bordering on Germany.'

Nationwide, highly publicised mass meetings were held in Switzerland, Holland, Denmark, Sweden and Britain. Their message

was, 'We must have a world-wide Christian front against the oncoming forces of materialism.'

The Earl of Athlone, writing in *The Times* of London, added his voice: 'We need not only inspired statesmanship but daily inspiration in every business, every workshop, every home. Moral re-armament must be the foundation of national life as it must be of every world settlement. The miracle of God's living spirit can break the power of pride and selfishness, of lust and fear and hatred; for spiritual power is the greatest power in the world.'

The invasion of Afghanistan has jolted the West. Once-again firm decision and decisive action are needed. The security of many countries is threatened.

To boycott the Olympics would certainly assure those under oppression that the West is not wholly blind and deaf.

But if the extent of our response is a boycott of the Olympics and trade cuts, we are doomed to failure.

To take a moral stand is essential. But a moral stand without a morally shaped con-

cept that challenges all of us to change smacks of self-righteousness and will simply intensify antagonisms.

We need an overall theme for the nations with which to help Russia find the idea for the future. We need to live for, work for, fight for the material welfare of the world; but also the development and expansion of the human spirit which alone enables us to control prosperity and technology, and makes peace possible.

The urgency is such that ordinary people cannot wait for governments to do what is necessary. Everyone must begin with himself.

We can begin by discarding double standards, and leave moral compromise to those whose philosophy is that the end justifies the means. We can demonstrate, through our homes, industries, politics and media, that moral standards exist and when lived produce strength and cohesion.

If we commit ourselves, under God, to live thus, and to make it normal in our nations, we will generate a renaissance for the earth. What we win will be more valuable than Olympic medals.

Postcards from a capitalist

Rarely do industrialists spell out the kind of society they want to see. Here JOHN CRAIG, a former financial director of British Steel, does so:

I AM the grandson of a steel heater. My father's background was therefore pure working class. He took us from the proletariat into the upper middle class, which today is thought by many to be a most undesirable background.

I never felt conscious of this class complication until somebody looked at me and I realised he was not looking at John S. Craig, but at a model in his mind of a capitalist exploiter of society.

I had to ask myself then, did I actually look at the person in front of me and deal with him always as an individual?

When I was growing up I tried to excuse certain things which were wrong by saying that it was human not to achieve the best. I liked to think it was the things in society that made it difficult for me to be the perfect man I thought I could be. I did not see that it was the evil in me that produces evil results in society.

It is not an evil society that makes me bad. It is a great liberating thought when you recognise that. If circumstances make me evil there is no hope. If circumstances cause division there is no hope. But I can do something about the remnants of my animal instincts, when I recognise them. And that makes me a free man.

I can easily be absorbed in what interests me to the exclusion of everybody around me, and readily believe that I really do know the right answers. Self-concern, self-righteousness—these seem to me the two most destructive forces in the world today. Some see them in the Communist manifesto. Some see them in the Conservative Party.

When they are removed, differences are

not a source of division, but the way to a complete picture of the truth. Everyone has a unique view of life. A different point of view only becomes divisive when I decide that come hell or high water you are going to see things the way I see them and that you must accept my answer.

I would like to see a society in which we listen to each other—really listen. My wife has complained often that I greet her suggestions or questions with a strong silence. She has been driven to say on occasions, 'It would be nice if you at least sent me a postcard to say that my communication had been received and was receiving attention.' My silence sometimes arises from thinking about what she has said without getting any answer. More often, though, I am thinking about something else. I know now that this 'switching off' is hurtful and I do listen—not just keep quiet until she stops talking.

Some weeks before the steel strike started I was talking to a trade unionist involved in the negotiations about the Corby closure. It was clear that in his mind the management were not prepared to listen to any alternative suggestions. He was desperate, desperate enough to consider striking.

Finally, we need to recognise that the world has shrunk to the size of one family. I long for us to think of what promotes the interests of the world, family, not just of our own nation, class or those who share our beliefs.

When we treat each other as individuals regardless of the colour of our skins, our backgrounds, our histories, or our class affiliations, we will begin to think in terms of the basic needs of humanity, and how we solve the problems of meeting them.

Training for India

ARUNASALEM is from Vietnam. His smile is like the sun breaking through the clouds, in spite of his sorrows. He is one of 17 young people who took part in a three week training course over the New Year at the MRA centre at Panchgani, India.

Other participants came from the hills of Nagaland, from New Delhi, Bombay and Madras. Five students and a teacher came from St Peter's College, Agra. A Gandhian education institution in Gujarat sent four of their students, wearing traditional homespun khadi cloth. Simultaneous translation made it possible for them to take part in the seminars and lectures.

Seminars dealt with such subjects as the ideological struggle in Asia, the origins of the conflict in the Middle East, and events in Zimbabwe Rhodesia.

On the sports field and stage, students' talents came to light. A play in Hindi, written by the students, depicted the division between Hindus and Muslims, and ended triumphantly with a Hindu family drinking tea in a Muslim home. A play in English told the all too familiar story of a poor farmer, cheated first by a doctor and then by a money lender. Both plays, with musical items, were presented for guests from the town of Panchgani.

But there was time for quiet contemplation too. Out of this came decisions to live differently. One of those from Agra was hoping to study medicine. He had wanted to live in the USA and had had many arguments with his father about this. During the course he decided to use his training to help the people of India, and said he was going to apologise to his father for his attitude. Another student was going home to Gujarat to get reconciled with his brother, to whom he had not spoken for over a year.

Jackie Firth

HE AROUSED THE DEAD HEART OF BRITAIN

British author Garth Lean went to visit a leading American Christian. 'I've used 500 copies of your biography of John Wesley,' said the host, 'many of them with politicians in Washington. Can I have 200 more?'

Mr Lean told him that the book was out of print. 'Then we must print it in America,' replied the host.

The result of this conversation has just appeared, an American edition of Garth Lean's biography of the founder of Methodism, with the title, 'Strangely Warmed'. The publishers, Tyndale House, Illinois, describe it as a 'fast-paced biography', which 'reveals a side of John Wesley you may never have seen'.

In these extracts, Garth Lean looks at Wesley's impact on the society of his day.

WESLEY WAS a mighty force in his own lifetime. As the Englishman who spoke to more of his countrymen face to face than any other man of his century, as one of the widest read pamphleteers of his age, and, above all, as the undisputed head of a compact body of militant people, his opinions were greatly regarded. 'For universality of influence,' writes the *Cambridge Modern History*, 'he had no rival.'

He tackled certain social evils direct. His pamphlets against the slave trade—'that execrable sum of all the villainies'—issued in 1774, was one of the first denunciations to reach a wide public; and his last letter, written on his deathbed, was to Wilberforce, urging the young liberator on in his battle against the trade. He set his face against smuggling—4,500 horses were engaged in this occupation in Suffolk alone—and against gin stills which Lecky called the 'master curse of the age'. He was against the abuse of the under-privileged and for the relief and education of the poor. He also denounced corruption both in India and in British political life, with his usual straightforward pithiness.

His life and work presaged a coming revolution in social relationships. It is said that he gave working people a satisfaction which drew their minds away from physical revolution—and Charles' quelling of the riots of Kingswood colliers is quoted in support. More accurately it could be said that he provided a moral equivalent of revolution. He said that social change could only come through personal change, but that personal change was no change unless it resulted in social change. Today, people wanting to avoid the cost of personal change try to gather the fruit of change without planting the root experience. And the result is 'a materialism which defeats their best endeavours.'

Tens of thousands of workers accepted

change for themselves through Wesley and his friends. This restored to them their self-respect, for he taught them that spiritually they were the equals of 'their betters'. He gave them education and stimulated them to want it. Many learned their public speaking as lay preachers and learned to read through his Christian library.

It was from such men, as Halevy has stressed, that the British Labour Movement sprang. Of the six Tolpuddle martyrs, for example, five were Methodists, while the sixth caught a Methodist faith from them in prison. These men were ejected from their homes by parson and magistrates for their Methodist belief before they were arrested for their trade unionism. And the official historian of the agricultural worker writes, 'They were honoured—perhaps too much as trade unionists, too little as men, men superior in every way to their persecutors.'



Commentators from Halevy to the Webbs stress that it was such men who led the labour movement throughout the 19th century, a fact that was once more illustrated in the person of Keir Hardie himself who said, 'I myself have found in the Christianity of Christ the inspiration which first drove me into the movement and which carried me on in it.'

But if the change that Wesley advocated began first among the labouring classes, it took hold no less surely at the other end of society. It worked in Wilberforce, the friend of Pitt, and the others who abolished both slavery and the slave trade. It worked through Lord Shaftesbury and the other factory reformers; and Marx himself called the Factory Act of 1847 a turning-point in the workers' fight, while the Marxist historian, Rothstein,

said that Lord Shaftesbury's movement 'may be said to have saved the country from a revolution which seemed likely to break out at any moment.' From men like Wilberforce and Shaftesbury a new spirit spread to their whole class. According to John Marlowe they 'made heartlessness unfashionable'.

These profound social results were not achieved through a self-conscious social programme, like that which sections of various denominations cultivate today. Wesley was not a political priest who, having lost the power to change men, set out to denounce others or alter some secular programme. Yet his social aim was a conscious one. It was the natural result of his passionately experienced faith—of what, today, we might call his ideology. For it is not true that ideologies are always materialistic or opposed to Christian faith. The materialistic ideologies of this and every age are the substitutes men find when they cease to live their faith with the passion, discipline, and thoughtful strategy which Jesus demonstrated and which the greatest of his followers have exemplified ever since. Wesley lived his Christianity in such a way that it possessed him totally and permeated every part of life, first for himself and then for thousands of others.

What pay?

Few would pretend that Britain is less lost in materialism today than it was in the 18th century: indeed, this evil now seems dominant not just in a ruling class, but in the whole nation.

Wesley's secret was that he sought and found God's fresh ways of bringing reality to his generation. He did not pretend that nothing new was needed, nor did he water down Christ's commands into a 'new morality' in an attempt to appeal to intellectuals or to court the young. He found reality for himself—and gave up ease, friends, and cherished opinions to take it to the whole nation. He forgot himself and worked at God's pace, not his own, until the very day he died: and he enjoyed every day of it.

What is the equivalent for Christians in our day and generation? One thing is certain: the right way will need efforts as arduous, and will bring opposition as bitter, as any that Wesley had to face. But the strong spirits of youth will rally to such a venture, so that men will say with Wesley: 'For what pay would you procure men to do this service, to be always ready to go to prison or to death?'

'Strangely Warmed' by Garth Lean, Tyndale House Publishers, distributed in England by the Kingswood Press and available from Grosvenor Books, 54 Lyford Road, London SW18 3JJ, price £1.95, with postage £2.25.