

In the bush—hope for the future

NEW WORLD NEWS

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'DAWN IN ZIMBABWE'—NEW FILM RELEASED

Last Sunday, the new film *Dawn in Zimbabwe* had its first public showing at the MRA world assembly in Caux, Switzerland. Speaking next day, a Namibian nationalist, Dr Zedekiah Ngavirue, Vice-President of SWANU, referred to Zimbabwe's recent independence in a climate of reconciliation. 'There is a time for fighting and a time for negotiation,' he said. 'The mediation of men of God can help bring about mutual understanding'. This seemed to have been an element in Zimbabwe, and, he said, 'if in Zimbabwe, why not in Namibia?' Here MICHAEL HENDERSON reviews the film:

CONCEALED within the forms and aridities of constitutional behaviour, there is, according to Lord Soames, 'a subtle healing art'. In a lecture in Oxford, not long after his return from Zimbabwe, the former Governor said that recent events there had underlined this truth. He spoke of 'an art which closes wounds, which unites what has been divided, which subdues antagonisms and which brings people together.'

This art is in short supply as one surveys the world scene today. So the release this month of a new film, in which Zimbabweans speak for themselves about their experience of this healing, is particularly appropriate.

The 28-minute documentary, *Dawn in Zimbabwe*, begins in the bush of North East Zimbabwe where the seven year war started. Tens of thousands were killed and injured and more than a million made homeless. The film carries the viewer through to the jubilation of the independence celebrations attended by Prince Charles.

Perhaps the strongest moments, in a film which is always gripping, come when one listens to Arthur Kanodereka, a Methodist

minister who was at the heart of the national struggle. For as one hears him speaking fearlessly on TV, film and in church, one is aware of the fact that he was assassinated after returning from a peace initiative in Lusaka and Maputo.

'There is a battle being fought now in Zimbabwe, and all over the world, between the bridge builders and the bridge wreckers,' Kanodereka tells an audience in Germany in 1978. 'I went into politics to help my people

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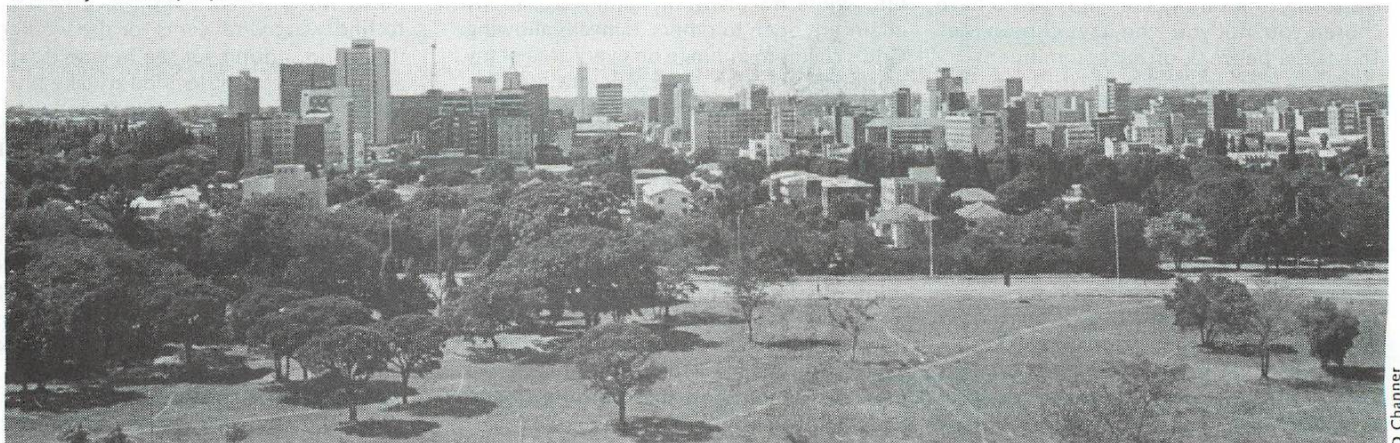
ON THE DAY that the first war heroes were honoured and buried in Heroes' Acre outside Salisbury, Zimbabwe, ZANLA guerillas from a rehabilitation farm outside Bulawayo attended a showing of the film 'Freedom'.

Introducing the film, which was the first full-length feature film written and acted by Africans and tells of the struggles of a country on the eve of independence, Dr Elliott Gabellah said, 'The problems of Zimbabwe are the same as you will see in this film and the divisions in the film are answered by reconciliation such as our leaders are calling for. "Freedom" portrays a strong ideology which is needed to answer jealousy and division in our nation.'

The showing was arranged by Mr Zemura, a Bulawayo businessman. 'We are now a free nation and we must develop spiritually, economically and socially,' he said after the film. 'This can only be done effectively if we approach the supernatural power of God or whatever we may call Him in our language.'

Mr Zemura introduced Basil Kew, the local farmer who projected the film, and Jim Trehane, a visitor from Britain, to the audience. Applause greeted Mr Trehane when he said, 'You have been through a hard and bitter war. Our white selfishness in Africa has been a cause of that war. I am very sorry for it.'

In the city—Salisbury skyline



D Channer

It is possible to have a personal faith in God and an experience of Jesus Christ without having any intention to point the world, its peoples, organisations and structures towards God.

It may seem easier to grapple with the personal needs of a few people than to take on the needs of a nation.

On the other hand, a deep personal faith holds the answer to the human passions on which so many projects for reform founder. Without it even those who are motivated by the highest ideals fall down and find their intentions marred by self-seeking.

If it is a world of God's design we seek, then the only way it can be achieved will be His. The listening ear and the serving hand will have to replace the cut and thrust of the world.

Some shun the discipline this task requires and in matters of faith and living seek an easier way. In these pages some of those who have chosen to tilt their faith on the field of the world's need, describe what this has meant.

Journey of a lifetime

by Gordon Wise

'THY KINGDOM COME on earth as it is in heaven' is a commitment as well as a prayer. If everyone on earth is to enjoy a decent standard of living, and find a purpose for existence, our way of doing things will have to change. All I have—life, resources, cherished hopes—is committed to this task.

My commitment has developed through several stages, and there will be many more. For it is not a destination but a journey, posted with the decisions that God has shown me to be necessary at different times. It has meant a continuing, deepening yielding of all that I am to the sovereign will of God, for His purposes; through which the inclination of my will towards His, will become more and more instinctive.

I took the first step on this journey at the age of 17, when I gave all I knew of myself to all I knew of God. That was 41 years ago. Then later, at the end of the Second World War, I had an experience of Christ's forgiveness and commissioning. I became aware of His total claim on my life: 'It is I who have chosen you, not you who have chosen Me.' This is the bedrock of my commitment.

Second leap

The next step was the discovery, and acceptance, of my calling from God. Each person's specific calling is different—but each is called to a life-work dedicated to glorifying God. For most, this is worked out in paid employment. Some, like me, are 'full-time' workers. All who have started on this journey of commitment are called to a life of total and unselfish service. For me it meant resigning my job in the Western Australian Civil Service. I gave the career I

could have expected to Jesus as His servant, with Him as my Friend, to work as His instrument in the framework of Moral Re-Armament.

Years later came a further step. This was the decision to accept personal, individual and full responsibility for the work of MRA—with those who had made a similar decision. Because of my many inadequacies, known to me and obvious to others, this was as big a leap into the unknown as my original choice to give my life to God.

Day by day over the years the implications of this decision have become clearer. Far from being a lonely trail, it has brought wider companionship with those who share the same independent commitment to God. Each is called in an individual way, but to an equal measure of total giving. This totality brings equality and comradeship, whatever the task each shoulders.

Hallmark

The paradox is that although each decision is between me and God, it is never my business alone. Cherishing my independence can mean reserving the right to do what suits me, when it suits me. The alternative is not dependence on other people, but a shared life, where my plans, my family life, all my affairs are open to others. It means allowing God's claims to impinge on every area of my existence, through the corporate life of a God-directed fellowship. Fundamental to all this is my promise to hang on to God and to keep my loyalty to the task of MRA, no matter what mistakes I or other people may make.

This is why, when I think of commitment, the first word that occurs to me is 'comradeship'—first with Christ, second with those who have also pledged their lives, possessions and abilities in a bid to remake the world. The hallmark of such a fellowship must be 'Behold how these brothers—and sisters—love each other.'

For better, for worse

by Bridget Elliott

THE WORDS in the marriage service say 'for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish till death do us part'. This is a vow, and one reason for the breakdown of our society is that we do not take our vows seriously.

I have made another vow, which is even more important. That is a commitment to God, to obey Him and to do with my life whatever He wants. I can find out His will at any moment by reference to the standards of absolute honesty, purity, unselfishness and love, which summarise Jesus's teaching in the Sermon on the Mount. This total commitment has more than a personal aim; it is a commitment to building the world that God wants.

There have been a number of occasions in my life when I have been asked to leave what I am doing, and enjoying, to do something quite different—like going to another

Talking of commitment, at Ca

Josephine Buhagiar
Malta

LAST YEAR I asked God to show me what my life calling was to be. After much prayer and thought, I had the clear conviction that I should take the workers of the world onto my heart.

For a long time I had been bitter that I had not had a chance to continue my studies. Now I understood the purpose of my three years' experience in a factory. Through it I know what it means to work in a factory—working from 7am to 4pm, always doing the same work. It can be very boring. You can never express your own feelings and you have to do the work you are given to do.

I want to help the thousands of other young people who have had no chance to study to find a vision and hope for their lives. Others need to live into the situation these workers face, and work with them to find what God wants for the workers of the world. I don't yet see how to do it, but this is what I have decided to take on.

Roddy Edwards
Jamaica

SOME YEARS AGO I learnt that God could speak to me, as I searched, deep in my heart, for the right thing to do with my life. One of the thoughts He gave to me was to spend some time in my homeland. I come from one of the most economically privileged families in Jamaica. We have not always used our privilege to help our country.

We live in a small village of some 3000 people. We decided to work out with others

ney of commitment are called to a life of total and unselfish service.'

country, for instance. My husband and I have spent many years in Nigeria and Ethiopia. When I have obeyed it has always proved immensely rewarding.

Now I face the greatest test of all. I have an illness which has incapacitated me for four and a half years and for which there seems to be no cure. I don't believe that God sends illnesses but I do believe He means me to use it. He has made it abundantly clear to me that this illness makes no difference whatever to my commitment.

I don't say that I am not often tempted to be depressed—I am. But I do say that if I turn to Christ, He can tell me in my heart what to do and how to do it.

Many times people have come to our home and on leaving have said, 'I feel something different here.' I am convinced that what they feel has nothing to do with me, but is the spirit of God, which He gives to anyone who means to keep the commitment to do His will.

So my commitment to God is simply: 'For better, for worse....' until death, if it pleases Him, unites me to Him.

ux, Switzerland, last week

in the community how this small area could be developed economically, socially and humanly. Together with the community council of the village, we embarked on a rural development programme.

Unemployment in Jamaica now stands at about 30 per cent. During the last six years we have started to tackle it by creating cottage industries—making soap, sweets, spinning wool. We have now finished a community centre with an auditorium, a health-aid clinic and a sports field, so that people do not have to go to the big, overcrowded cities if they want amenities. And recently we have got running water from a well—which makes a tremendous difference to life.

I believe this development points the way for the future, where our island and her neighbours will become more self-reliant, and will be able to experience multi-racial and multi-cultural co-operation.

Peter Rundell
Britain

HERE AT CAUX, I found a commitment to obey God rather than discussing Him. That commitment includes how I use my money.

When I finished my doctoral research a year ago, I felt my calling was to the struggle for justice in world development. There were two jobs going. One was the job I have now, in development statistics. The other was in financial computing—which paid about 50 per cent more.

My money, like my life, is at God's disposal all the time. And my calling is to world development. I took the lower paid job.

WHAT IS IT that makes people give up what seems safe, lucrative and solid for something that is uncertain, has no money in it and seems vague in the eyes of the world?

Something made a young man in 13th century Italy do it. And Francis of Assisi had many followers, still does.

But where do Calling, Vocation, Divine Purpose fit into 20th century materialistic thinking and living?

They don't. People who decide to follow their inmost sense of calling, come what may, get no more ovations than did the Little Friars in the Middle Ages.

But by their very stand, their freedom of spirit, they may affect history in some way. They may pass on values, cut through prejudices, walk across deserts of despair to come to someone's rescue—hardly realising themselves what they are doing.

They may never be thanked. And none of the results will show up on the board of the world's tennis tournaments or figure skating competitions.

A calling obeyed. A life lived. A form of service rendered. No titles. No medals. 'I will make you fishers of men.'

Gerd Jonzon

Blinding facade

by Bjorn Ole Austad

I WAS IN BRAZIL when Pope John Paul II visited the country last month. He called on the country's 120 million people 'to do everything to close the gap between those who are too rich and those who live in misery.' But he rejected class war 'because you cannot build a just society on the basis of injustice'.

When he spoke to several hundred thousand young people, many of them actively engaged in movements for social and economic change, he said 'A young person begins to grow dangerously old when he lets himself be fooled by the easy and comfortable idea that the end justifies the means.'

The Pope's visit to Brazil gave me a vision of Latin America, with her enormous diversity and sharp contrasts, showing the world the answer to class war. I have felt God calling me to a lifelong commitment with this aim. During the last 18 months, which I have spent mostly in Brazil, I have begun to learn something of what this means for me.

Imperialist?

First, I had to recognise my own class attitudes. I have always found it more difficult to love the rich than the poor. But each time I meet a rich Latin American I have to face my own selfishness and that of my nation. Norway is one of the richest countries in the world, but we still demand a higher standard of living. We are no different from the rich Brazilian who grabs for more while thousands live in slums next door to him.

I—and my countrymen—have often substituted sentimentality for a real love for the poor. This means we are unable to help them with their individual personal problems. We need to learn a classless compassion and straightness which makes us treat everyone alike.

Life in Latin America can be painful—you see agonising things, and you come up

against intense emotions and reactions. My habit had always been to avoid the difficulties of life and to try to escape from reality. This made me blind to other people's feelings. No Westerner can understand Latin America with all her conflicts and suffering if he protects himself from feeling pain.

I had imagined—or hoped—that I had none of the imperialist attitudes that the West has inflicted on developing countries. But the way my Brazilian friends reacted to me made me less sure. This hurt me. In the past when I was hurt I used to maintain a Christian facade, while burning with resentment inside. But now I began to discover that being honest about what hurt me made my heart sensitive to what other people were going through.

Long-term

Sometimes I felt I couldn't take any more. It was then I realised that God wanted me to learn to depend on Him alone. 'If you decided to follow Christ, why do you expect such different treatment from what He got?' a friend asked me. When I thought of the people who suffer for Christ's sake in different parts of the world, I felt humbled. And I began to get to know Christ as a friend.

In Bahia, I met a German professor of sociology who was visiting Brazil. 'Many young Westerners come to the Third World with high ideals and good intentions to work on aid projects,' he said. 'But they encounter so many problems, in human relations or otherwise, that they return home disillusioned—often having turned against aid all together. We must not let our personal desire for success and satisfaction in our good works interfere with the long-term process of change of which we are only a small part.'

He saw this long-term process of change in terms of the inevitable forces of history. I see it as God's continuing project to build His kingdom on earth. Wanting nothing for myself means serving that long-term project with a pure heart, without expecting any reward.

Goal-keeping

by Chris Channer

WATCHING the Olympics on television I learnt something about commitment. Athletes like Sebastian Coe and Steve Ovett have a single-minded dedication to go for gold which makes them subject themselves to years of self-discipline. There must have been heart-breaking disappointment and discouragement along the way, but this doesn't deter or deflect them from the goal to which they have committed themselves.

I am an actress not an athlete, but I have my goal too. I long to see the media, with its powerful influence and outreach, giving hope and the joy of living to people who have given up and settled for second best. I long to see it giving healing and forgiveness to people in parts of the world where passions have destroyed everything that was precious, and where the truths of God lived out could bring something new.

That is the goal for my life. The struggle will go on with every generation. I may catch a glimpse of my goal in my life time: I may not. A commitment that is conditional on success is not a commitment at all. But one thing is certain, I shall keep on striving and I shall not quit.

This poem by an unknown author has often helped me when the going has got a bit rough:

*When things go wrong, as they sometimes will,
When the road you are trudging seems all up hill,
When the funds are low and the debts are high,
And you want to smile, but you have to sigh,
When care is pressing you down a bit,
Rest, if you must—but don't you quit.*

*Life is queer, with its twists and turns,
As every one of us sometimes learns,
And many a failure turns about
When he might have won if he'd stuck it out.
Stick to your task, though the pace seems slow,
You may succeed with another blow.*

*Often the goal is nearer than
It seems to a faint and faltering man.
Often the struggler has given up
When he might have captured the victor's cup.
And he learned too late, when the night
slipped down,
How close he was to the golden crown.*

*Success is failure turned inside out,
The silver tints of the clouds of doubt,
And you never can tell how close you are—
It may be near when it seems afar.
So stick to the fight when you're hardest hit—
It's when things seem worst that you
mustn't quit.*

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but sometimes as a minister of the Gospel I used to wonder whether politics was coming before God. Now I can say I belong to no man's camp. For me Christ comes first.'

Alec Smith, son of the former Prime Minister, Ian Smith, was affected too. 'His change presented me with one of my first real challenges as a Christian. I understood the theory of what it was to be a reconciler of the nation, but he put my theory to the test.'

Prime Minister Robert Mugabe has called for Zimbabweans to build the new nation in a spirit of reconciliation. Through the frames of this film pass people who, in the same spirit as these two men, have committed themselves to this task.

There is Champion Chigwida, a senior factory foreman, who decided to stop regarding himself as a second class citizen and lost his fear: 'I became a new man and I'm equal to anybody. I find myself being responsible and standing up for the conditions of my men.' There's Kedmon Hungwe, a postgraduate student teacher, who faced up to his selfishness and has decided to use his education not for status but for service.

There's Stan O'Donnell, former Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who could have been bitter about the brain damage suffered by his son in the war, but says, 'We believe—and my son and my other children—that our future is here in Zimbabwe.'

And there is Steven Sibare, from the major tribe, the Shona, who apologises for having felt superior to other tribes, and has started to learn Ndebele. 'We have fought a war to eliminate racism and now we have got to fight against tribalism,' he says.

The ending of the war in Zimbabwe and transition to independence—against all the odds—confounded even the professional cynics. *Dawn in Zimbabwe* shows some of the ingredients which could deal cynicism a more permanent blow. One hopes that it will be seen by people in government and the media in every country, particularly those charged with resolving conflicts at all levels and those who report on them.

'*Dawn in Zimbabwe*' was filmed in Zimbabwe by David Channer and Ian Corcoran. The commentator is Nelson Samkange. The film is available from 12 Palace St, London SW1E 5JF, price £275, postage and VAT extra.

On the level

by Reg Martin

I WAS 60 and keeping the matter quiet. Retirement seemed a long way off. I intended to work until I was 65 and then consider what to do.

But my plans were forestalled. I was asked if I would help in the finance office of MRA in London. With some trepidation I decided to retire early in order to start this new—and unpaid—job. The years have gone by and I am still commuting, although in deference to my age I now do a four day week.

MRA's work is based on gifts—often quite small. The work of the finance office is to receive and acknowledge the gifts of money as they come in, and to spend the money with great care to advance MRA's aims. I was

able to take over some of this work, and thus free younger men to accept invitations to other parts of the world where their help was needed.

Before this I worked in local government, where we operated in 'grades'. You learnt to look up to some and down to others, rarely straight at them as equals. Prospects and promotion were endless topics of conversation. I had decided long ago to live for something larger than this and to make 'what is right' the guiding principle of my life. This often seemed a lonely battle.

It was a refreshing change to work with people with the same values on an equal footing in a place where neither promotion—nor discussion about pay—existed. But I have learnt that the fight for high standards never ends, nor does the battle to help your fellows become the best people they can be.

Jobs not money

A SWISS 15-year-old set the pattern for a morning of forthright speaking at the start of a 14-day summer programme in Tirley Garth, MRA's centre in the north of England last month. She told how her family had learned the power of humble apology in settling their rows.

At the end of the morning four trade union leaders talked about their concerns. 'Compassion has gone out of politics,' said one, while another spoke of 'the need to emphasise jobs rather than money'.

'I have learned more this morning than in all the talks we have had about industry at school,' commented one of the young people from nine countries attending the programme. On other days participants had a chance to question the local European

MP, Andrew Pearce, about the aims of the EEC and to talk to a headmaster visiting Britain from Kashmir.

One student wrote later, 'The time has revitalised my faith. I have decided to seek God's guidance every morning.' Gillian Plested from Cheshire said that because she was of mixed race, she had not known where she belonged. 'Now I believe God wants to use me to bring unity between the races in Britain and the world.'