



# NEW WORLD NEWS

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**'I DO NOT BELIEVE a new society is possible without a change in people. There are a lot of trade unionists who stand for the fact that Christ can change the hearts of men, and thus change society as a whole. We must come out in the open with that kind of statement. That is the challenge of tonight.'**

REV WILLIAM GOWLAND, Principal of the Luton Industrial College and President-Designate of the Methodist Conference of Great Britain, speaking after a performance of *Keir Hardie*.

## BIRMINGHAM TURBANS, TRADE UNIONS AND KEIR HARDIE

**The play *Keir Hardie*—the man they could not buy by Henry Macnicol has been presented seven times in the English Midlands during the past month (see map). Here JOHN LESTER, a doctor from Birmingham, writes about the campaign:**

MOST OF OUR ISLANDERS avoid Birmingham because its one-way system of roads traps the unwary motorist so that he never emerges again—or so they say.

So for those who do not know the 'Brummie', let me introduce him.

Approaching the city centre from the south, we pass first the Bank of Ireland, then the Bank of Pakistan, then the Bank of India. You can tell the Brummie, they say, by the shamrock that peeps out of his turban. Yet for all the self-disparagement, this cosmopolitan city services a good deal of the industrial muscle of Britain.

In its Science Museum stands a bewildering array of the steam engines that pioneered the industrial revolution. The coal which fired them is still dug from the pits around.

If we travel south-west we can watch the five o'clock shifts disgorging themselves from the car plants—19,000 are employed in just one of these factories. A young lad from Jamaica laughingly seeks my help in understanding another youngster whose forebears came from Barbados. As a second generation black Britisher he had a Midlands accent too strong for the Jamaican to comprehend.

In the political kaleidoscope of the Mid-

lands lies similar misunderstanding.

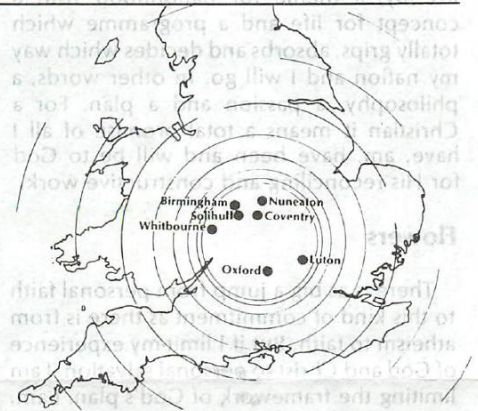
After the 'Action '75' meeting, 'A Year for Sanity'—part of the *Keir Hardie* campaign—a Marxist accused one of the speakers, a nationally-known trade unionist, of 'betraying the labour movement', and added, 'Your policies preserve the capitalist system.'

'Don't you realise,' replied the trade unionist, 'that we in the unions are simply tearing ourselves apart?'

The Midlands lie at the heart of an ideological struggle being played out day after day between those, like the Marxist, who want to destroy the system, those like the trade unionist who want to see change within the system, and those who do not want to see change at all.

Take British Leyland. It is not long since a convenor there said his aim was to 'bring the factory to its bloody knees.' At the same time, a manager at director level admitted privately to me that many of the most serious mistakes in recent years had been made by management. New attitudes are needed on all sides.

If we think of health, we should not forget Birmingham either, for it was one of her distinguished physicians, William Withering, whose discovery of digitalis has saved large



numbers of the world's citizens ever since.

Yet just now the health service itself is withering. Here again lies a mixture of conflicts and interests. An official of NUPE (National Union of Public Employees) responsible for some of the disruption in the hospitals told me that money was not so much the issue as status. His men felt they didn't count.

Mind you, there are signs of sanity. Some of the medical consultants, for example, recognise now that they were wrong two years ago to 'work to contract'—to go slow. This harmed the patients, lengthened the waiting lists and paved the way for the greater disruption of the present. They are now prepared to say so publicly rather than blame the unions for copying them.

The President-Designate of the Methodist Conference of Britain said after a showing of *Keir Hardie* in his industrial college last week, 'Keir Hardie had the ingredient missing from the labour movement today.' What did he mean? Perhaps that men of all political persuasions realise that not much is achieved by simply arguing the merits of Marxism, capitalism, Toryism, and social democracy. An alternative is needed to materialism in all its forms.

As the father of the British Labour movement, Keir Hardie's passion for social change sprang from his Christian convictions. This is the missing ingredient and why the play has something to say to everyone.

**BIRMINGHAM contd p2**

*One of the most urgent functions of the Church today is to proclaim that it is possible for a nation, as for an individual, to progress materially and regress spiritually; to gain the world and lose the soul; to reach the moon and have hell on earth; to know a great deal, and be very foolish; to feed, clothe, and educate our children, yet so neglect their spiritual welfare as to set their feet on the path to destruction; to be so broad-minded as to be utterly shallow; to be so 'with it' as to be without Him; to refuse the absolutes of God's law, and land in the sands of moral chaos.*

*The cross and resurrection of Jesus assure us that God has in mind for us something infinitely better than this. Listen to St Paul: 'Be rooted in Christ; be built in him; be consolidated in the faith you were taught; let your heart overflow with thankfulness.' The Easter message speaks of fullness of life in Christ. Let us lay hold on it.*

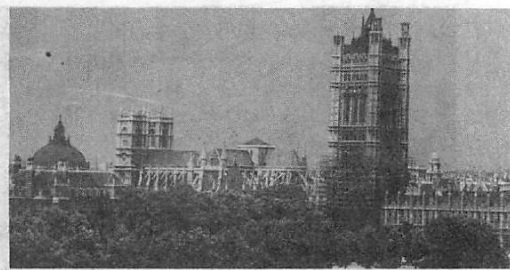
**DR DONALD COGGAN, Archbishop of Canterbury, writing in the 'Canterbury Diocesan Notes'**



'There is as big a jump from personal faith to this kind of commitment as there is from atheism to faith.'

## BRITAIN—THE STRUGGLE FOR CONTROL

by Gordon Wise



The Houses of

CHOICE IS IN THE AIR as election day approaches. But a deeper choice is always with us—what idea will dominate our lives?

This is the recurring theme of the Old and New Testaments. 'Choose ye this day whom ye shall serve.' Still it is the basic ideological struggle. And, like it or not, we are all involved. Refusing to fight it—or even ignorance of this struggle—can lead to slavery and death.

Every nation needs an ideology, an idea to live by, a theme for nationhood with a concept for life and a programme which totally grips, absorbs and decides which way my nation and I will go. In other words, a philosophy, a passion and a plan. For a Christian it means a total promise of all I have, am, have been and will be to God for His reconciling and constructive work.

### Flowers

There is as big a jump from personal faith to this kind of commitment as there is from atheism to faith. But if I limit my experience of God and Christ to personal salvation, I am limiting the framework of God's plan. I am, after an initial change, using God's grace to suit my situation instead of allowing God to use me to change these situations.

Some people equate the word ideology with communism. True, communism is an ideology. But it is only one form of the materialism which is rampant in the democracies too. 'Think of America destroying herself,' Frank Buchman would often say, 'with the very materialism which she con-

demns in others.'

'Communism,' says Arthur Koestler, 'lies on the neglected conscience of the West.' Bernard Hallward, the Canadian industrialist, used to say that communism was a reflection of the face of capitalism. 'If you look in the mirror,' he would say, 'and don't like what you see, it is no use blaming the mirror.' Patching up the old order was not good enough. Management often did the right thing for the wrong motive, he said, and it fooled people no more than the businessman, pursuing his own ploys, who suddenly brings his wife home a bunch of flowers. She wants to know what he has been up to.

### Atomic

In Iran we Westerners were determined to get oil, to sell our arms and other products—and to bribe where necessary. One result of our lack of care and genuine interest in Iran's people has been the destruction of our trade prospects there.

If we don't help America find an answer to her materialism, her open door into China will be soon shut as was the door into Iran. And if America's touchstone was Vietnam, ours is how to handle Rhodesia, Northern Ireland and British Leyland, and how we arrest the decay of the inner cities.

Britain is relevant for America and for other nations not because of our defence capability or the strength of our economy, but because our institutions are long developed and respected. These institutions are

under stress both here and in America. At the core of our industrial turmoil in Britain is the struggle for control, the struggle over what idea will dominate the country.

Many of the workers' grievances are valid, especially the lower paid. But if they pursue a cause without regard to the national interest, their grievances can be exploited by demolitionists whose interest in the dispute is to use it to whip up confrontation. Their aim is to see that the task of government becomes impossible, in the hope of bringing in an extreme government some years hence.

To be resigned to this would be to contribute to it. Those who fight the class war have a thought-out strategy. Those who seek to replace the class war with the eternal struggle between good and evil need a similarly thought-out strategy. Those who begin to glimpse God's idea will reject class war as being too small and dangerous in an atomic age.

### Dustmen

We need to be realistic. Investors seeking to maximise dividends or employers bent on maximising profits cannot be surprised if workers constantly seek to maximise wages. The employer who gets around the pay guidelines by increasing fringe benefits, or by changing the executives' titles so they come into a different pay bracket, cannot point a finger at the union which does it through brute strength or phoney productivity deals.

## Right for rigs

IN THE LAST WEEKS showings of *Britain Works—OK!* have been taking place up and down the country. In Norwich the Lord Mayor, Peter English, chaired an occasion when 100 people gathered to see the film and to meet some of those from management and trade unions who appear in it.

'It is refreshing to see a film that has obviously been made by people in industry,' said William McGraith, Chairman of the Board of an engineering firm, opening discussion afterwards. The *Eastern Daily Press* and the *Eastern Evening News* quoted trade unionist Bert Reynolds, who said, 'Change will not come about through legislation or change of government, but through people who take moral decisions.'

In Liverpool, Keith Standing, a national

trade union leader, and Ralph Stoddard, a quarry owner, led a lively discussion after a showing. A clergyman immediately asked for the film in his industrial area.

A janitor in a Scottish school, a member of NUPE, had a showing in the school, while in Aberdeen the Secretary of the Seamen's Union commented, 'This should be shown on the oil-rigs.'

Thames Region National Health Service have hired the film for the third time for use during shop steward courses, and requests are coming in from schools and technical colleges. Jack Carroll, former Chairman of the Bristol docks branch of the Transport and General Workers' Union spoke and answered questions after a showing at the Bath Technical College.

'I suppose every shop steward would like to be like those men in the film,' said a Birmingham shop steward. 'We reckon to be honest, but taking back things that have been stolen is a new dimension of honesty.'

### BIRMINGHAM contd from p1

In the audiences have been a kaleidoscope of the Midlands:

- the man who had picked up an invitation that was blowing around the Bull Ring shopping precinct
- the anti-communist British Leyland worker who left the company out of frustration
- the AUEW (Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers) convenor who is proud to work for British Leyland
- the former strike leader of a skilled band of men in the same union, who opposes the union's policy, yet wants to avoid the damage another stoppage could cause.
- a director from the same firm who can perhaps prevent this collision
- the student of Marxist theatre who was thrilled by the theatre of MRA
- the electronics student who said on his way home that he needed to rethink his whole philosophy
- the moderate leader of the mine-workers



Parliament, London

Fox Photos Ltd

What do the people of Britain want of their representatives? A hundred men and women from Shetland to the Isle of Wight have signed this open letter to candidates in the General Election.

## Dear Candidate

May we put before you a few thoughts from some ordinary voters? We care for Britain. We have our grumbles. But we are grateful to live in a free society. And we want to keep it.

We appreciate the hard work and commitment of our politicians. If elected, we know that you will face long hours and complex issues. There will be genuine differences of opinion, and plain speaking will be necessary. But we are saddened by the spectacle, underlined by Parliamentary broadcasts, of able men and women delighting in each other's mistakes and belittling each other's successes.

Why do so many politicians expect us to believe that their party can do no wrong and the other party can do no right? The 'Us and Them' game may seem all right at Westminster. But in industrial relations, in race relations, or in the National Health Service it is disastrous. Could the new Parliament end the blame game? We would then be in a better position to help with the grave problems in Africa and in the Middle East.

The election will decide which party is to be in control at Westminster. But what attitudes and spirit will control us as a people? In our hearts most of us know that—

- if we do not tackle greed, then unemployment and inflation will rise;
- if we tolerate dishonesty and dirt, family and community life will continue to break up;
- if we allow hatred of another party, race, class or creed to spread, violence will grow;
- if we fail to re-establish Christian conscience as the regulator of private and public action, democracy with its freedoms will be destroyed.

To tackle these deeper issues will require our united determination and the help and direction of Almighty God. Thus strengthened, Britain will be able to carry out her wider tasks. Two of these are to show that a multi-racial society can work; and to help make sure that men, women and children throughout the world have food, homes and hope.

With this in mind, we have decided to treat everyone, of whatever background, as we would like to be treated, to be completely honest in all our dealings and to practise, at home and on the job, the teamwork we want in our national life.

We invite you to take this stand with us.

But our realism must include faith because faith is real and faith brings change. And it is contagious as gloom. We can shift the balance of right and wrong onto the side of right by the way we live, and the way we stimulate others to make the right choices.

Recently I was at a trade union meeting in Birmingham. A union leader in a car component factory said to his colleagues, with management present, 'We in industry, together with the farmers, are the ones who create the wealth out of which the nurses, the teachers, the dustmen and the doctors are paid. Workers and management are responsible for creating wealth for the nation, not just for ourselves.'

### Bloodstream

If we can secure our economic stability without inflation and without coercion, if we can deal with unemployment and introduce new technology at the same time, if we can develop a fair society without loss of liberty, we will have a secret of great value for other nations. They will want to know how we did it.

The strategy of MRA offers everyone the chance to play a part because it is rooted in individual initiative. It means beginning with yourself. Change means I am responsible to take action to put things right.

Nothing that God leads us to do is ever wasted. It goes into the bloodstream of the nation. God can use all that happens to us and to our nations. This is the fascinating prospect ahead of us.

whose action, he believes, has prevented a miners' strike this year.

—the Labour MP who said how refreshed he was to see the ideological issues which face him every day on the floor of the House, and in the National Executive of the Labour Party, so skilfully presented

—the Conservative director who wants the play to come to his church in the heart of the management belt.

Without the alternative which Keir Hardie presents, Birmingham will go to the wall while we argue about who is right. With it, it could pioneer a second industrial revolution.

A challenge to materialism always provokes clash. Yet it is a ground on which men and women of all persuasions can meet—which brings me to a conversation I had with a Marxist friend after the play.

'We need a revolution,' he said. 'Is MRA for that or is it trying to get people together to water down the class war?'



'Action '75' meeting at the Digbeth Civic Institute, Birmingham, on April 1

'MRA,' I said, 'is out to fight the fundamental struggle between good and evil. It owes its allegiance neither to the bitterness of Marx nor to the philosophy of Keynes, but to the Sermon on the Mount.'

'I understand that,' said my friend, 'and accept it. But no one lives that. I have just been reading about the monks on Iona centuries ago. They had the right idea.

'There is temptation, you know, for any-

one in public life nowadays. I was offered money by someone to do something for him. We were hard up, so I accepted the gift. But two days later I returned the money. My wife and I knew it was wrong.

'You see, without honesty, we will be left with anarchy.

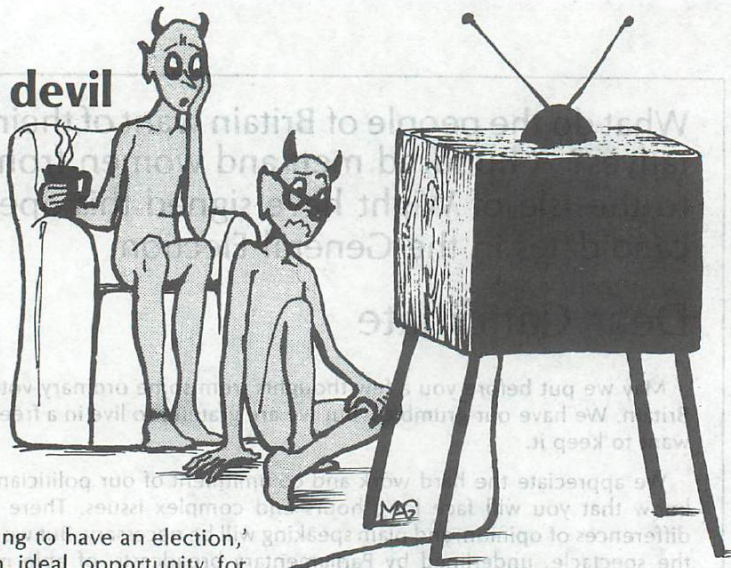
'Tell me,' he concluded, 'will you get me the speeches of Keir Hardie. I want to study them.'

E Peters



# Hot cross devil

by Janet Mace



'I HEAR they're going to have an election,' said the devil. 'An ideal opportunity for building up false hopes.'

'On which side?' asked Stinker.

'On every side, you fool,' snarled the devil. 'Make them think a new government will solve all their problems. But I've brought you here today to talk about a much more serious matter.'

He was addressing his henchmen, Stinker and Stonker, who were responsible for the execution of diabolical strategy on earth. They were meeting beside the furnaces of hell to consider the situation in the United Kingdom.

'It is appalling to see how some of them are becoming aware of the struggle between Him,' the devil pointed upward, trembling with hatred, 'and me. He has implanted in them all a sense of wrong and right.' He spat contemptuously. 'For centuries I have toiled to bury it under layers of expediency and lust for power, greed and bitterness. Now, they're beginning to talk about this eternal struggle.'

'That blasted Archbishop of Canterbury is always on about it. That's to be expected. But now the politicians are saying it too. That man Jim who's been in charge of things for the last few years said on television that legislation alone wouldn't answer the problems of the country—it was a moral issue.'

'Suppose the Adversary whispers to him, "That was well said, Jim. Now is there some way you could give a lead along these lines?" He might do so. We could find people on all sides becoming more concerned to answer the problems than to boost their party; we could find them re-thinking their biased trade agreements with the Third World. We must look every horror firmly in the face. If something like that happened at Westminster all heaven would be let loose in a very short time.'

'We've got all our battalions working on the election campaign,' whined Stonker, 'dishing out blame and venom.'

'I should hope so,' shrieked the devil. 'Because that woman's been saying similar things. We must make sure that none of them take any of this talk seriously. If they

realise they are the cause of the toothsome mess they've got themselves into (with our help, of course), they might repent. Think what might happen then.'

The heat of the furnace was making Stinker feel sleepy. He closed his eyes. The devil turned on him. 'I don't think you fully grasp the seriousness of the situation,' he hissed. 'Perhaps you'll tell me your method for tackling incipient repentance?'

'Well, said Stinker nervously, 'sometimes I whisper "so-and-so was equally to blame".'

'It's even more efficacious,' said Stonker smugly, 'to say "so-and-so was more to blame".'

'And what if these elementary methods fail,' demanded the devil. 'When they are gripped by a feeling of despair and loneliness, self-hatred and longing for comfort, what do you do then?' Knowing that their master preferred the sound of his own voice, his listeners were silent. The devil grated on, 'Prolong that state and you can imprison them in a lifetime of looking backwards. Let them slip through your fingers and they may move so close to the Adversary that you will never prise them loose.'

'Look at that upstart Galilean fisherman who pretended he didn't know the Adversary's son when he needed him most. That was a moment! An injection of fear, a quiet whisper, "What will your friends think?" and we'd got him. And then what? He went

outside and wept bitterly and from that moment became one of our greatest stumbling blocks. He didn't just crawl forward, weighed down by sorrow and remorse at what he had done. He stood up and marched forward and drew thousands of people after him. That's where the danger of repentance lies—in what follows it.

'Apply that to the present situation. For years we have fostered self-love in a thousand forms. Suppose they recognise it? Suppose they have an experience like Peter? The motive power in a million lives could be transformed. They would consider and consult one another. The endless chain of blame and recrimination—in industry, in the health service, in parliament—snapped in an instant.'

A moan came from Stinker. 'Stop it, stop it,' he howled. 'I can't bear it.'

'It is a gruesome picture,' said the devil. 'But all is not lost. I've been clever. The first step to repentance is a sense of guilt and I've managed to sow quite a bit of confusion there. Many of their intellectuals assure them that feeling guilty is something to be avoided at all costs.'

'Many think they have nothing to repent about. Just as well—because nothing is more of a threat to my 100 Year Plan for total control than repentance.'

'But there have been some nasty moments recently. You need to watch their television. I hear that many felt a distinct twinge of repentance after that idiot Dimpleby spoke about the British treatment of the Boers at the beginning of the century, one of our notable victories in Africa. And as for that series on one of our failures in America, the life of Martin Luther King, be sure you make use of the opportunity to stir up their self-righteousness towards America—that'll stop them thinking about how it applies to them. Just think what might happen if some of them faced the centuries of heartlessness towards Ireland.'

He looked at his subordinate gloomily. 'Well, you'd better get back to it,' he said. 'Incompetent as you are, you're all I've got.'

Without a word, Stinker and Stonker turned and slunk away, up the slippery slope to their battle stations on earth.

## Saturday

*Peter was broken. Treachery and pride  
Were killed by honesty. But, deep inside,  
Judas still thought that he had known  
the best.*

*His plan still seemed far better than the  
rest.*

*So, darkly, chose his secret, wilful way.*

*His debts, pride told him, he himself could  
pay.*

*Pride ruled his will and led him to his end.  
He twice betrayed his Friend.*

## Sunday

*Christ broke the tomb. He set all prisoners  
free.*

*They stood together humbly, hopefully,  
Knowing themselves as nothing, Him as all,  
Their whole will wholly given beyond recall.*

*Within their heart the heart of heaven beat.*

*Upon the eternal road they set their feet,*

*Destined through Christ and Calvary to find*

*A common heart and mind.*

**From 'Christ and His Friends in Holy Week'**

**by Peter Howard**

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