



# NEW WORLD NEWS

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## HOW WILL IRAN AFFECT US?

OUR VARIED POLITICAL and economic interests colour most Western comment on the Shah and his would-be successors.

Lord Chalfont, who wrote frequently on Iran in *The Times*, maintained it was in the economic and defence interest of the West to support the Shah.

Fred Halliday, who contributes to *The Guardian*, has been consistently anti-Shah. His books suggest that he would like to see socialist revolution throughout the Gulf.

*Time* magazine suggests it would be in the West's interest if Islamic ferment in Iran spread to the Southern republics of the Soviet Union.

'Isn't it about time we talked about Iranian interests?' asked British MP Peter Temple-Morris on the BBC recently.

Since Vasco da Gama opened up the Indian Ocean, Europeans have competed for Iran's trade and strategic access, and most recently for its oil and oil money. In the twentieth century Iran's experience of European self-interest has included violation of her neutrality by Russia and Britain in both world wars.

Iran's continuing dilemma has been whether to renounce European influence in the name of Islam, or to join the Western nations and beat them at their own game.

In fact Iranians, who themselves lack none of the human instincts, have always been tempted to accept or extract bribes from the

highest bidder, while dreaming of the day when they can assert their own national interests.

In 1974 a European businessman in Tehran confided to a colleague that he was being asked by an Iranian official for an enormous bribe. His company in Europe were putting pressure on him to pay it. 'Why not ask the commercial section of your embassy to help?' said the colleague. 'They are there to tell me exactly who to bribe and how much,' came the reply.

He then decided to be guided by what he felt to be Iran's long-term interest. Risking his career, he refused to bribe and in fact lost the contract to another European who didn't. But next day he found an outlet for his product through an honest dealer.

### Common interest

If Iranian students have died in a sincere protest against corruption, their blood is partly on our hands. Many of us preferred the quick buck to the patient concern for a nation's integrity. Now most of our vast contracts are in peril. But with repentance our principles could be restored. And with new motives we could be worthy of trust.

A decision to stand for what we know is honest at home and abroad would free us from appeasement, and from self-righteous moralising on the Shah and his opponents.

We could appreciate the Iranians not for their oil or their strategic interest, but for themselves and for the happier destiny which could be theirs.

Also in 1974, an Iranian oil official arranged a dialogue between three Western visitors and a Muslim leader in South Iran. The Muslim leader started by confronting the visitors with every bad thing their civilisation had brought to Iran.

They agreed that Europe needed to change. They admitted the corruption. They told him how Moral Re-Armament had challenged them to apply their Christian faith, and that numerous Europeans were at work to give an unselfish motive to business and public life.

The dialogue continued several hours and was resumed the next day. Later, the Muslim leader invited the visitors to his home, and some weeks later paid a call on them in Tehran. He became very frank about his concern for his own people's shortcomings. Finally, he said he wanted to quote a verse from the Koran which for him expressed the co-operation they had talked about: 'If those who are believers practise what is honest, God who is merciful will give them an affection for one another.'

Somewhere in that practice lies our common interest, whatever Iran's future and whatever Europe's part.

PETER EVERINGTON

## From the Arab world

by WILLIAM CONNER, recently returned from a month in the Middle East

WESTERN PUNDITS and viewers watched recent events in Iran and contemplated the prospect of surge of 'Islamic republicanism' across the world. This trend in Iran is seen by some as a success for Communism.

It does not seem to occur to Western commentators that the demand for religious government may simply be a reaction to what comes from the West. For much of the world's population are unimpressed by what they see of our civilisation through films and through the statistics that reveal breakdown

of family life, of law and order and of mental tranquillity. Above all, they fear a demoralising effect upon their children who study in the West. Others have foreboding at the rate at which their basic natural resources are being exchanged for Westernisation—including its sophisticated war machinery.

The Arab world's distaste for Communism was underlined by many of those I met on a recent visit to the Middle East. But so was their growing disenchantment with the West.

Throughout the Arab universities there is a ferment of thought among the students, and much of it is constructive. Few of them look for a fanatical return to medieval religious practice; but many look for a new implementation of moral values.

In shattered Lebanon this is certainly the case. In the universities of Beirut, Christianity and Islam are being looked to again as a source of valid religious experience capable of curing hatred and creating trust. Many look for a way beyond the era they have known wherein 'might is right', injury justifies revenge, need dishonesty, injustice violence and opportunity lust.

This thinking among many of the young generation represents a great hope for the future. In a Beirut hotel, a leading figure from Afghanistan summed up my own conclusions when he said, 'The primary requirement for us all now is to find a way in which men of faith can contribute effectively in meeting their nations' needs.'



# WHAT IF WE CARE ABOUT BRITAIN?

by Conrad Hunte

who was chosen 'Man of the Series' for his play in the recent MCC tour of Bangladesh



J. Franzone

THE SITUATION IN BRITAIN is a cause for much alarm. The bloody-mindedness we see around us and on our TV screen is the ingenuity of a great people directed towards small aims.

If we who are not directly involved in the current industrial disputes look into our own hearts, I think we will find the seeds of the same nature there, if not the trees and the roots.

It is not enough to recognise this, and ask forgiveness, if we go on being the same people. We must each let that Mind that is in Christ be born in us afresh.

Most if not all of the great advances of the Spirit of God were wrought out of grave turmoil amongst men.

Only an impulse of God which comes out of much agitation on our part, a divine agitation which is beyond human concern, is adequate for this crisis in our country. We are facing the collapse of a false way. Could it be the rebirth of the new way forward for Britain and for Europe and for the world?

Perhaps people hope that someone will

come up with some blueprint for action that we could all get behind and carry out. There is no such action adequate for the needs of the moment except in the will of the Almighty. He alone knows the action each of us ought to take and which we hold back from taking. The key is obedience. Why not as an experiment aim at gaining the divine momentum of a life wholly given to God? It may start as each of us searches out a thought which God has given him and which he has not obeyed, and acts on it.

The spiritual power thus released is immeasurable. The insights that will come into focus will be precious and potential for the rebirth of Britain. In the words of Henry Drummond, 'What is needed is not more religious experience but a better direction of what already exists.'

## Poverty and cricket

This is a moment for which the instrument of Moral Re-Armament was brought into being. Our effectiveness is no more and no less than the degree to which we guard our inner life so that God can speak in the silence of our hearts, any time of night or day, because we are ready to obey, and because no one and nothing has a prior claim on our allegiance.

In the struggle between good and evil it is not so much the gross sins that stop God's master plan from flourishing as the self-will and selfishness we tolerate in ourselves, though we see so clearly in others that it is wrecking our country. I have every confidence that God has His plan for the

renaissance of this country and continent, and that He waits to pour out His blessings and miracles on those who are ready.

This is not a dream but reality. It is an insight culled from my recent experience with the MCC cricket team in Bangladesh. I had a bad start in my first match there. I thought about it. I remembered that on the plane going out to Bangladesh I had sat next to a young man returning home from Britain, and when he said he was a simple worker I did not want to talk more with him and spent the rest of my journey reading a book. I realised that I had forgotten the poor.

Then I realised that God had brought me to Bangladesh because it was in the setting of the realities of that country, with its poverty and the vast challenge facing its people of creating a viable new nation, that I might see again, and accept, my calling to a life of poverty, chastity and obedience. In the affluence that is Britain and Europe I was beginning to ignore and lose this reality. I saw, too, that I needed to accept the fact that I was born in poverty and had inherited the weakness of being a man, and then needed to claim His mercy and majesty and will for myself and for the world.

This miracle of grace happened, and evidence of this inner transformation was the new quality of my cricket.

If the Almighty is interested in cricket and can teach so much through it, He is as interested in the life and livelihood and the well-being of the 55 million people of Britain, and waits to do many things for the sake of the suffering millions beyond our shores.

## Trade unionist unrepentant

by Keith Standring

THE ISSUES behind the current industrial unrest are complex. But we have witnessed what happens when trade union leadership is ignored by some at grass roots level, and the indefensible action employed in some of the disputes.

Many trade unionists are beginning to ask, 'How should a trade union conduct itself in pursuit of a legitimate claim?' And, more importantly, 'What attitude should I adopt?'

The British trade union movement was formed to defend working people from the worst excesses of the industrial revolution. Its philosophy owes significantly more to the Christian faith held by many of its founders than to Marxism, which the movement eschewed.

The TUC now represents some 12 million employees out of Britain's working population of 26 million. The power and influence of trade unions makes them a target for every brand of extremist of the Right or Left who seeks to divert the movement from its original objectives and principles.

In the future the trade unions can be

organs of corporate selfishness, or they can be initiators of a new world society based on the Christian standards of love, honesty, purity and unselfishness.

Workers and employers can fight to satisfy their own greed and make industry a battleground, or they can co-operate to make their industry the generator of the wealth and resources so desperately needed to save the poor of our world.

## Dangerous

Many would say that a better world will only arise from a revolution. As a Christian I am an unrepentant revolutionary. My revolution does not use the coercion of violence, or feed on hate. My revolution draws its inspiration from the example of Jesus Christ and its power from the Holy Spirit.

I am a revolutionary because I see a world in rebellion against God and I want to change it. I see hunger, war, homelessness and unemployment crippling the lives of millions, and I want to change it.

I know it is possible for every hungry stomach to be filled with food. It is possible for every hand to be filled with work, for every heart to know that God loves the world and wants to remake it.

Trade unions, acting upon their original principles of brotherhood and unity, and identifying with the poor and oppressed, are

uniquely placed to create the new society.

There can be no compromise. We should aim for a standard of moral and spiritual excellence which will only be achieved by God's grace. I am convinced there is nothing more eloquent, persuasive or powerful than a life which reveals the quality of Christ-likeness. God provides the means for this. The love thus revealed is the only sufficient basis for human society.

Trade unionists are currently standing at the crossroads, and each of us has a decision to make for ourselves and for our world. Will we accept things as they are and only do those things with which we have become familiar? Or will we live dangerously and share a vision of a Spirit-filled, Spirit-led, body of God's people, constantly renewed with the power of the Holy Spirit in its endeavour to remake the world?

For myself, I say with humility that I have made my decision. I have accepted the way of the Cross. By God's grace, I will make the same promise that was made by Frank Buchman, 'I am not turning back. I am not turning back no matter who does, no matter what it costs.'

It was the Quaker, William Penn, who once said, 'Men must choose to be governed by God, or they condemn themselves to be ruled by tyrants.' The choice is ours.

Keith Standring is a national Executive Secretary of APEX. These are his personal views.

# Ambulancemen and the economic myth

by Paul Campbell

MY MOTHER-IN-LAW called us from the Continent two weeks ago to see if we needed food parcels. The picture abroad of what was happening here through lorry and train strikes was creating some concern.

But because of our troubles there is a development in Britain of profound significance for Europe and the world at large.

A long-held assumption on which nations have been basing their policies is being shown by events to be false. At the very time the nations have settled for the idea that the foundation of society is economic, the British are re-discovering that the basic foundation is not economic—it is ethical.

When the ambulancemen first decided on strike action, one of their leaders was headlined in the national press as saying, 'If it means lives are lost, so be it.' My first reaction was, 'How ruthlessly selfish can we get?' My wife asked, 'What brought the ambulancemen to this state of mind? They must be deeply frustrated to feel they have to go to this length to be heard.'

The ambulance leader's words sound anti-human. But the attitude is a reaction to attitudes to which he and his colleagues have been subjected, or at least feel they have. At root, the problem in the health service may lie deeper than just the wages question. It may actually be in how we regard and treat one another.

The reality of the British scene is that an industrialised society in the end depends not on productivity, buying and selling. But that productivity, buying and selling depend on the degree of honesty, unselfishness, teamwork and responsibility we practice.

## Steaks and strains

A former President of the United States, Teddy Roosevelt, spoke of the three essentials for freedom to flourish—'Honesty, courage and commonsense'—not a word about the economy. And on the cohesion needed among free men for a free society to function without breakdown, he observed, 'The nearer people get to the heart of Christ, the nearer they get to one another.' We have learned that the farther we get from the philosophy and practice of Christ, the farther we get from one another.

The deepest hunger in the human heart is not for larger steaks and fancier cars. But to be bigger and better than the strains and pressures of life seem to let us be. Man longs to be a factor in the fight for a better world—to see everyone in every country get a square deal economically, socially, politically. To seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness is not highminded unreality. Our British experience shows that with lesser aims society cannot function.

We do not need food parcels. We do need to replace a philosophy that has failed with a truth that works.

# WASHINGTON RIGHTS, RELIGION...

by Michael Henderson

THE STATUE OF LIBERTY—symbol of the rights of free men—standing on the East coast, should now be matched on the West coast by a statue of duty calling Americans back to their fundamental loyalty.

This was the passionate conviction of Archbishop Fulton Sheen, speaking this week at the twenty-seventh prayer breakfast in Washington DC.

'Why not put up a statue of duties and responsibilities, with the torch thrust out to her neighbours, the hand open to feed the poor, acknowledging as a nation that no one has a right unless he has a duty to God, country and neighbour,' thundered the 83-year-old Archbishop to the 3,000 people assembled from every state and over a hundred countries.

President Jimmy Carter, who was attending the breakfast along with members of his Government and Senators and Congressmen, was first on his feet to lead a standing ovation for the Roman Catholic prelate.

It was not in the power of Congress or even the Constitution to bestow on the people their rights, said the Archbishop. The founders of America recognised that the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness was endowed by God. The Declaration of Independence was fundamentally a declaration of dependence on God.

'If we wish to keep forests,' he said, 'then we must keep trees. If we wish to have perfume, we need flowers. And if we wish to

keep our rights, we must also keep our God.'

President Carter, attending his third national prayer breakfast, spoke of the 'profound significance' of religious people everywhere who were 'searching for compatibility with the modern world'.

'We have suffered severely in the past,' he said, 'because we who are Christians and others who are deeply religious in our own nation, have not been willing to accommodate those who have been deprived, who have suffered and still do as they struggle for a better life.'

The President warned against believing that this did not happen today. 'I grew up,' he said, 'in a region of the country which has seen in the past, and still, too often, sees, the Christian Churches as the last bastion for racial segregation and even discrimination.'

Referring to the Archbishop's statement that Americans needed to face their sins and not just talk of mistakes, the President said that there was a natural inclination for Americans to lower standards to accommodate the low achievements of their own lives.

'We must avoid a distortion or a rationalisation of our own religious faith and its beliefs, because of materialistic inclinations in our hearts,' said the President. 'When any religion impacts adversely on those whom Christ described as the least of these, it can have no firm foundation in God's sight.'

## ...AND THE CLASS WAR



J. Franzone

WILLIAM JAEGER, from Britain, who has worked for over 40 years with trade unionists from every part of the world, spoke at one of the seminars following the breakfast, on the need for Christian labour leadership.

Addressing several hundred people, he talked of the importance of filling the vacuum in the thinking of labour. 'In the beginning British labour was influenced by Wesley and by Christian truth more than by anything else,' he said. 'Much of that has been lost and many British labour leaders are now Marxist. Could it be that American labour is meant to find and give the Christian truth to British, European and world labour?'

In many countries labour was the most powerful organised force, he said, and the

ideas which gripped the leadership of labour could decide the way the world went. Organisation, legislation and political measures were all needed, said Jaeger. 'But without the miracle of God in a man's life, legislation too often creates more problems than it solves.'

The challenge before 'born again Christians', he went on, was to learn to express what had happened to them in language which even the committed class war man could grasp. 'We must offer an alternative to the Marxist way of life,' he said. 'We need to make Jesus Christ relevant to every home and factory, producing a new attitude in manager and worker.'

After giving examples of men who had done this in America and Europe, Jaeger concluded, 'I find that when any man gives his life to God, accepts His forgiveness and begins to put right what is wrong in his life, at that moment that man becomes a new man. That is why I believe in the inevitability of God's will for the world and in the hope, and the fact of the power of Jesus Christ to change any man.'



## Gift to my wife

**This is the story of an Ethiopian refugee. For security, we cannot give his name.**

WHEN MILITARY GOVERNMENT took over in 1974, a man was appointed to an administrative post. But he could not stomach what he saw happening, especially when his two brothers were killed. He decided to leave.

The 600-mile journey took him more than two months. There was nowhere to sleep except in the bush, and no change of clothes. 'I was strong and courageous and didn't feel humiliated. But I was full of hatred, bitterness and anger.' His escape has left traces of tiredness on his face even now.

He joined the struggle against the Government. But there, too, in the resistance group in which he had placed such hope, he found division. 'People were discriminating against each other. There was a lot of theft and dishonesty going on.'

Describing that year-and-a-half, he says, 'I was frustrated. I saw I was more or less in the same position as back home. I tried my best to tackle the bad practices I saw. But people began to make accusations and wanted to eliminate me. I discovered two of my friends were plotting to assassinate me.'

This created a fire of anger and bitterness in his heart. 'I was mad. I wanted to burn anything in front of me,' he remembers.

'But when you are in trouble and difficulty, you think of God and faith. Before I left, my father gave me his blessing. He said, "I don't pray that God will give you wealth but I pray that He will give you love of people."'

He left the group. At this stage he ran into the ideas of MRA. 'I began to see the relevance of absolute honesty, purity, unselfishness and love to my present situation and my country,' he says. 'There has been a long struggle for justice. But you don't often see people succeeding. Many of them die. The truth is that any struggle for justice is crippled and impractical without moral standards.'

### Treasure

'I started to realise that I was moving on a dark journey with blind eyes, lacking the qualities which could make me move effectively. These moral standards have to guide anything you want to do.'

These ideas affected his personal life. 'To begin with I had to drop all the ill-feelings in me. I was an extravagant and disorganised person. Drinking heavily, smoking and womanising were part of my life, but I

decided to quit them all.

'The practice of listening to the deepest voice in my heart helped to shape my daily life. One morning I decided to write to the friends who had plotted to assassinate me. I apologised for my anger and bitterness. I told them what I had found.'

'This experience brought a meaning into my life. It has developed a spiritual richness in me. You can just imagine how much hell or disaster you could see on my face before.'

As a father of five, he worries about his children. Recently he received a letter from his wife. 'She asked me not to worry about them and to always thank God for what He has done. This made a big impact on me. My wife is very faithful. The change in my way of life is the most valuable treasure I could give to her and our children.'

He longs to do something to affect the situation at home. Often he feels frustrated that he cannot do more.

But he has decided that if the problems of his country are to be answered, it can only be through men who accept the change in their lives that he has found. This has meant deciding to stay in cold and difficult conditions with fellow Ethiopians, when he could move to better accommodation.

'This experience of change has clarified my vision for an Ethiopia as truly free as I have started to be inside myself,' he says.



## New world moves

**Next month NWN's business office will be returning from Tonbridge to London. Alan Faunce, business manager since 1972, hopes to hand over his responsibility soon after. He writes:**

NWN reports what I believe to be the most significant news there is—the fact that men and women can change, and when this happens human jungles may be unsnarled and prophets of chaos disappointed. It's in the tradition of that revolutionary Christian, Paul, who through his letters fought to break down prejudice, strengthen commitment and nurture a new type of community rooted in spiritual, not material, power.

One fascination of the job lies in the contact with people all over the world—our

overseas subscriptions are steadily increasing.

A former teacher, a retired school secretary, a book-keeper, a shop-owner and an optician have helped carry the administration, backed by people who meet every week to send NWN to the world.

The experience of working together on NWN has built faith in many, including myself. And this faith has been passed on to our community through plays, local radio broadcasts and regional assemblies. Teachers, civic leaders and new British are just some of those who have participated in these ventures.

**From now on please address all correspondence about subscriptions to 12 Palace St, London SW1E 5JF. Alan Faunce would also appreciate hearing from anyone who is interested in taking on the business management in London.**

## Maltese festival

MALTA'S YOUNG PEOPLE organised a festival of peace on 6 January in which nearly a thousand took part. All Malta's youth organisations were represented from Catholic Action to the Progressive or Communist Party youth, from the Socialist youth with a brass band of 60, to the Nationalist Party youth with a dramatic sketch on war or peace in the family.

Young Maltese of Moral Re-Armament presented an item entitled 'Hating men have found a better way'. One of them told how peace in his heart had depended on change in his way of life—and of the affect this had had on the situation around him.

Mgr Victor Grech, Director of Caritas Internationalis in Malta, addressed the young people:

'You are not seeking the peace of the grave, but the peace which is the fruit of change in man and society.'

'To make a good start on the road towards peace, I have to make a start with myself. For this I have first to put things right with God. Today's man wants to change the world without wanting to change himself. Nobody can give away something he has not got. If I do not have peace in my own heart, I cannot give peace to others.'