

## What can we do?

THE PUBLICATION in June of Garth Lean's *Rebirth of a Nation?* (almost concurrently with John Poulton's *Dear Archbishop*) seems to have anticipated a mood of gathering resolution to do something about the crisis in Britain. Indeed the very theme 'Rebirth of a Nation' echoes in the headlines.

The greater realism is largely the work of world events, but some credit for it can be attributed to the Call which the Archbishops of Canterbury and York made in October 1975 with such widespread response. The idea that 'every man and woman counts' was first expressed by them and has sunk into people.

The Call, which was also supported by the Queen and by the leaders of all the other churches, is part of a two-year programme which the Archbishops are developing. The hundreds, perhaps thousands, of groups, studying the Call, are in many cases only just getting under way — or are beginning in Lent, and the fact that Gerald Priestland reviewed both books on October 3 on BBC Radio 4, emphasises the on-going interest.

### Hearty chord

The Archbishop of York, in his Diocesan Leaflet, suggested that 'the two books could well be read together'. 'Both,' he said, 'are highly readable.' The *Church of England Newspaper*, while noting that the letters to Lambeth had shown that a chord had been struck in many, many hearts, said they provided only 'a few, a very few, signs of hope'.

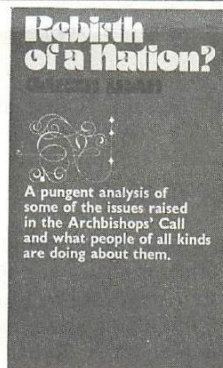
"'Rebirth of a Nation?'," writes John Poulton on 27 September, 'begins where "Dear Archbishop" had to leave off. I was reporting responses to the "Call" by letter. Garth Lean has done the more important job of telling us how people began to act. It is therefore a book for the many who are now saying, "Yes, but what can we do?"'

'For many,' adds the *Methodist Recorder*, 'this will be the book of the hour and for the hour. Beyond that it could well be used as a provocative class or group launching pad.'

In his review in *The Sunday Times* Peter Harland comments on Mr Lean's 'fervent task of explaining the revolutionary relevance of Christianity, as he sees it, to Britain's present malaise.... There is much impact in the empirical evidence that Lean delivers that a Christian revolution is capable of changing society dramatically.' He observes that the book is 'firmly rooted in action'.

'Garth Lean is a lively and gripping author,' writes the Rev Chancellor J H Williams in the *Caernarvon Herald*. 'I cannot in this short space do justice to his new book, but some of his chapter headings — The Two Atheisms, When the Talking has to Stop, Enemies at the Gates, Attitudes Matter — will give you an idea. I firmly recommend this good and very readable book. It will well and truly repay the reading — and its modest cost.'

'What Wilberforce did for his generation other people are doing for ours,' wrote the *Festival of Light Broadsheet*. 'This is the story told in Garth Lean's book. Aborigines and asbestosis, trade unionists and tycoons,

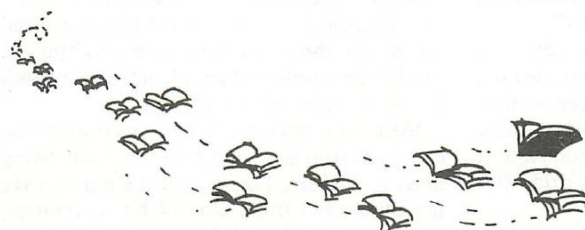


Archbishops and anarchists, all figure in this punch-filled account.... Perhaps one remarkable thing about his present book is its up-to-dateness. It spells out how a number of people have actually used their jobs to make life better for others and more pleasing to God. It shows what being a disciple to Christ can mean in 1976.... If you want to hear how Yorkshire rivers got cleaned up or why a man trained in the use of arms and explosives ended up by not using them but becoming an agent of reconciliation instead, Garth Lean is your man.'

An outline for study and discussion on *Rebirth of a Nation?*, *Dear Archbishop* and the Archbishop of York's pamphlet *Land of Hope and Glory* is being prepared. It will be a guide for Church Lenten courses, house groups, study circles and those who wish to discover what the ordinary man can do to make effective the two year programme which the Archbishops are developing. We will print full details later.

**REBIRTH OF A NATION?**

by Garth Lean 90p paper. £1.95 hard.



They have a way of....

# NEW WORLD NEWS

FOR MORAL RE-ARMAMENT

## Frankfurter Buchmesse

'GUTENBERG changed the World', declare the posters at the Mecca of printing and publishing, the Gutenberg Museum in Mainz, West Germany. For it was in 1455 — 21 years before Caxton introduced printing into England — that Johann Gutenberg invented movable type for printing, and so ushered in a revolution in communications that was to be the basis of education and literacy for future generations. Today, you can still see the place where Gutenberg printed his famous 42-line Bible in the heavy, black Gothic type that he cut in metal for his edition of 180 copies, 40 of which are known to be still in existence.

### Bread and butter

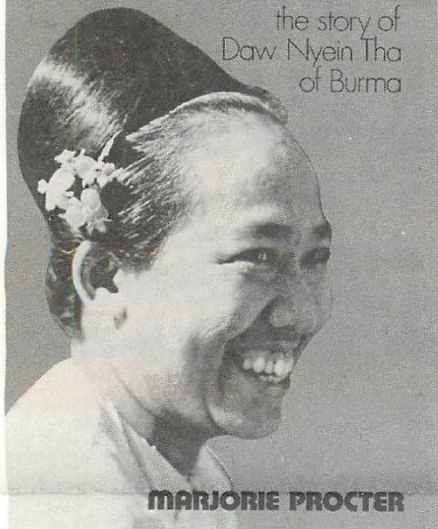
Just down the autobahn from Mainz lies the city of Frankfurt where last month publishers made their annual pilgrimage to the Frankfurter Buchmesse — the International Book Fair which has taken place over the last 28 years. There, the representatives of 4,139 of the world's publishing houses, from the free world and the Communist world, the industrialised nations and the developing nations, meet in a vast trading bonanza of language rights on books, which are the bread and butter of a publisher's business. These books, for better or worse, influence and shape the thinking and living of nations.

FRANKFURT contd p4



## THE WORLD MY COUNTRY

the story of  
Daw Nyein Tha  
of Burma



MARJORIE PROCTER

THE WORLD MY COUNTRY

by Marjorie Procter £1.25 paper. £4.50 hard.

# Visit to Gandhiji

We print here an extract from the new book by MARJORIE PROCTER.

EARLY IN THE SUMMER of 1941 there came to Ma Nyein Tha one of those experiences which she described as 'adventures in obedience'. This, in her own words, is how it began:

'I was working with the Bishop of Rangoon. One morning as I sat on the big veranda at Bishops Court the thought came to me, "Go and see Gandhiji." I said, "How ridiculous! Who am I to go and see this uncrowned king of India?"

'I mentioned it to John Tyndale-Biscoe, the Bishop's chaplain. "Don't brush it aside," he said. "Maybe God really wants you to go and see him."

'We thought we would take the first step and find out if there was a plane going. We telephoned the travel agency. "Yes," they said. "There is a plane going tomorrow morning early, and there is a seat."

It was a day and a night's journey by train from Calcutta. Ma Nyein Tha spent the long hot hours in prayer, as she travelled on into the heart of India across the dusty plains. The monsoon was not due until June and it was now April. India looked very arid after her own green country.

They arrived just before evening prayers and took their place on the ground among

the worshippers. Gandhiji and his wife sat together at one end of a hollow square, with the men on the right and the music-makers opposite them. Ma Nyein Tha sat praying among the women on the left. She stole a glance at the man she had come so far to see. In the darkness she could hardly make out his face; only a white figure sitting alone with people grouped around.

Presently the silence was broken by a fine voice chanting prayers; then the musicians gave the lead and the whole group joined in the singing. A further prayer, quiet, and it was over.

'At the end of the prayers Gandhiji came towards us, and as he shook hands, he said, "Hullo, stranger! And now you are in my house — hullo, friend!"

"Mr Gandhi," I said, "I don't feel like a stranger any more. I feel very much at home here."

'So he said, "You have come to see me?"

"Yes. God sent me to you."

"Have you had any supper?" he next asked.

"Not yet."

"All right," he said. "Come along with me."

### Hard for one man

He took her along to his single-roomed hut, bare of table or chair, with only a thin mattress in the corner. He had nothing he called his own but his stick and his spinning wheel, his watch and a few other items.

'You never saw Gandhiji by himself, but with everybody. His doctor, his secretary, everybody was sitting there. He gave me my supper of mush and milk (a kind of corn meal boiled in water) and dates. Then he said, "Now tell me what God said to you."

'I said, "Mr Gandhi, God told me to tell you to call all India to return to Him." This was 1940, so Pakistan and India were not divided.

'He was very quiet for a moment, then he said, "That is a very difficult thing for one man to do. I don't know how to do it."

'That gave me my chance to tell him that it was not what one man could do, but what God could do through one man. I told him what God had done through Frank Buchman and many other people. I told him about the villages in Burma and what God was doing everywhere.

'In the morning when the gong went at four-twenty, I got up also and sat there for prayers with them, and prayed too. It was then that I saw the secret of his leadership. He lives close to God. He gives God first place in his life. Therein lies his greatness. He was not too busy, nor too sleepy, nor too occupied with things, to give time to God. The greatness of a leader is to be measured not by the thousands he attaches to himself, but by the number of people he inspires with his own source of inspiration.

'After the prayers, people massaged him every morning. So while he was being massaged there, I went into the hut to have my own quiet time. One of his secretaries, the daughter of a Maharajah, came in and said to me, "You said God sent you. Don't

you think your desire to see the great man brought you here?"

'I said, "I don't know but I came because my conviction is that God wanted me to come and give Gandhiji a message."

"But how do you know that God guides you?"

"By listening and obeying, I learn to distinguish God's voice."

Then Gandhiji came in. "What are you doing?" he said.

"I am listening to God." "What did God tell you this morning?" So I read out to him what I had written, and then we had breakfast of oranges and dates together.

### Back to Burma

'Then he said, "I am going for a walk. Would you like to come along with me? Are you packed?"

'I hadn't unpacked. I was to stay just for the night. I said, "Yes, I would love to go with you." So I trotted after him. He walked very fast. He took me into the village and introduced me to people. When we came back it was about seven o'clock, and the was there to take me back to the train.

"Can you stay longer with us?" he asked.

"No," I said. "God sent me to give you this message, and now I must go back."

"If ever you come to India again," he said, "you must come and stay with me." So we said goodbye, and I left.

'Very soon after I got back to Burma, the thought came to me one morning, "Gandhiji and the Viceroy listening to God together. God has a much bigger plan for India than either Gandhiji or the Viceroy dreams of."

'So I wrote that quickly, and sent it to Gandhiji by airmail. Shortly after, a card came, written by his own hand: "Shri Ma Nyein Tha, I do try to listen to God and to obey Him with all my heart."

### His source of power

'So I think of him as a man who has God as his Guru, his Teacher. Very often I forget the source of Gandhiji's power — God. We only see the results. Somehow when you look at him you see him as if he is waiting on God, waiting for the Lord to tell him something, and that he really makes God his Teacher. We can't all be Gandhiji, but together we can give to India, and India give to the world what Gandhiji has given, making God our Guru.

'Soon after, I found in the papers that Gandhiji had gone to see the Viceroy. But of course I don't know what they talked about. That's not my business, but God's. That was just before the war, and I never saw him again.'

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When I want my way and you want your way, there is tension between us'



Before we know it, there is a break and we grow further apart'



But when we both get back to God and want only what is right in we are united'

Photos: Woolford

## Dinkum song

'IT SPARKLES with a rare zest and good humour,' said Georgie Wood in his *Stage Man's Diary in The Stage and Television Today*. The *Methodist Recorder* described the leading character as 'a pioneer in Christian theatre through his work in Moral Re-Armament'. Much appreciated in Britain, in the antipodes it's been going a bomb. 'The leading character' being Ivan Menzies and 'it' being his story, *The Song of a Merryman*, told by Cliff and Edna Magor.

*The Times* of Dunedin, New Zealand, headlined 'Life renewed', and went on to say, 'Menzies, one of the all-time "greats" of Gilbert and Sullivan opera, was really "living it up". He rode rough-shod over everyone, including his wife, Elsie Griffin. He thought himself one hell of a guy.'

'But,' the reviewer added, 'God touched Ivan and he responded.'

'The biography is not so much a record of the rise to fame of an extraordinary man, but of the transformation of a character,' said the *Toowoomba Chronicle*, Queensland, Australia, under the title, 'Story of how a man was re-made'.

After an interview with the authors on Adelaide's 5 DN Radio, the presenter, Rev Neil Adcock, spoke with a former Minister of the Navy, Rev Malcolm Mackay:

**Interviewer:** Malcolm, one gets the impression that people who are in the public eye and have got tremendous responsibility on their shoulders, often these sorts of people are desperately lonely, because they only get things thrust at them, political opinions, this kind of thing. And yet sometimes, there's a deep hunger, a personal need within their lives, and apparently Ivan tapped this when he was speaking to people.

**Mackay:** Yes. There was absolutely no cant about it. There was no nonsense. He called a spade a spade, in good Australian language at times. It was the very fact that this man had discovered something that was utterly real to him — through the Oxford Group — he came out, and was a challenge to people in every walk of life to be 'dinkum'.

### THE SONG OF A MERRYMAN

by Cliff and Edna Magor £1.

## New season

THE CRICKET SEASON ended with England still searching vainly for the recipe for success. And the two commentators in the TV box during the last West Indies Test were not alone in harking back to the days of a dashing Essex opening bat. Maybe the lessons of Dickie Dodds' autobiography, *Hit Hard and Enjoy It*, will take another season to sink in.

The BBC-TV programme *Nationwide* — *Look East* featured the book, and Bob Trevor brought Dodds' autobiography to the attention of thousands of sports fans round the world in his *Sports Round-up* on the BBC radio World Service. Trevor said, 'So many sports books these days simply chronicle facts and figures or describe a competitor's performances. So therefore it's a welcome change to come across a book which rolls back the years and paints a picture of summers not too long ago. It is essentially a book about a man's attitudes. Attitudes that were reflected in his approach to sport... and the sporting way he leads his life. Here is the story of a man who believes in fair play and who, quite obviously, enjoyed every minute on the cricket field as much as he enjoys the fulfilment of everyday living. He has nice touches with his pen.'

But this is more than a book for cricket fanatics. A large Bedford comprehensive school had a series of three school assemblies, taken by the children themselves, using Dodds' book to illustrate 1. The story of a man who asked God how to do his job 2. What to do about fear 3. Enjoying life.

The *Essex Countryside* reviewer pointed to the wider appeal of this book, an appeal that has taken the author into radio stations, pulpits and 'sign-ins': 'Unfortunately, few, if any, batsmen can say they have experienced the revelation which led Dodds to change his outlook towards the game. Dodds is a man of God, and most of his life, and that includes the years that spanned his sporting career, has been ruled by his Creator.'

'How many of us,' the reviewer asks, 'can claim to have given ourselves up so fully and completely in this fashion? Even if we do live vigilantly by the Christian tenets, how many of us will openly acknowledge it — in print and with such conviction?'

There could be a new season on and off the field for those who try Dodd's formula.

### HIT HARD AND ENJOY IT

by T C Dickie Dodds £1.95 paper. £4 hard.



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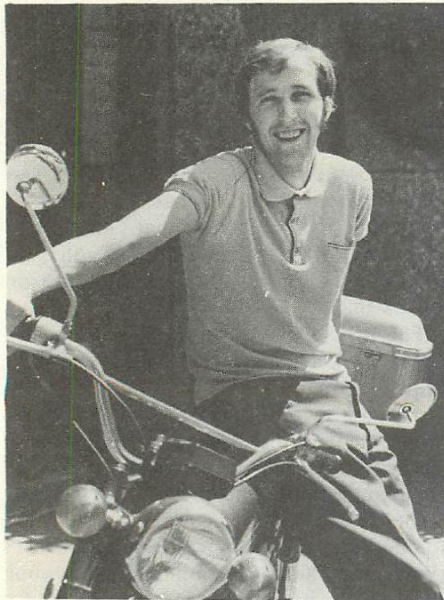
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David Down

Photo: Shah

## Down with books

MY NAME is David Down and I have been living and working at the MRA book centre at Lyford Road for one month. For the last year my home has been at the Cheshire MRA centre, Tirley Garth, following my decision to resign my administrative post with Portsmouth City Council. I would like to tell you how the move to Lyford Road came about.

Last spring I broke my right leg whilst playing football for a local team, and consequently my usefulness around the centre became rather limited! Some weeks earlier, however, I had accepted joint responsibility for book sales and promotion, so, during the Sunday afternoons in May and June when the gardens and grounds were opened to the public, I manned a stand.

As time went on I became more aware of the important part books have in God's plan to help people find a faith and feed our spirit, and I began to get a sense that He wanted me to be fully available to be involved with MRA literature. I told this to friends at Tirley, thinking I might visit libraries and bookshops in the area. But on that same day, more than 200 miles away, a letter was being typed inviting me to work at Lyford Road, to learn all that is involved in the publishing, administration and distribution of MRA literature.

What happens when sex books and magazines are what we go after? I know. Before I accepted a faith in God I read them regularly. Self-interest was my byword. I cared little for anyone. Now I have accepted God's invitation to enter the publishing world. We're all needed in the task of giving people the books that feed the spirit, and enlist them in God's army.

## FRANKFURT cont from p1

The theme of this year's Book Fair was 'Latin America—the Unknown Continent', and Grosvenor Books, the London-based publishing house of MRA literature, made its contribution to the Latin American theme of the Fair with a large colour photo of the children of the Favelados (slum dwellers) of Rio de Janeiro, together with a display of Portuguese and Spanish literature for the South American continent which caught the attention of many people.

The Grosvenor stand was situated in Hall 5, the main hall of the Book Fair where the bulk of the big publishers participate, a huge building of something over a quarter of a mile square. Publishers come provided with a full list and details of their forward programme of books, with a view to offering them for publication in other countries.

A feature of the Grosvenor stand was the educational books suitable for both developed and developing countries aimed at character-training. The primary school series, *I want to know*, particularly interested an African publishing house and a leading Portuguese publisher attending the Book Fair for the first time.

## Indian arrival

Special interest surrounded the arrival from India, by the hand of Aroon Purie, export director of the Thomson Press, of the latest three editions of *Happy Families*, the popular children's book, in English, Portuguese and Welsh. Eight publishers in five countries have expressed interest in obtaining their language rights on this title. The high quality of the Thomson Press productions has opened up the possibility of a multi-language co-production of a new children's series.

In all, 47 options were given for rights on a wide range of current and the forthcoming books.

The Frankfurt International Book Fair provides the opportunity to reach millions in a world market, which is the objective of the expanding publishing programme of MRA, through Grosvenor Books.



Japanese publisher Mr Yoshizaki, with Ronald Plumstead at the Grosvenor Books stand.

Photo: Smith

## Author's tribute

THE TIMES last month carried the following tribute to Phyllis Konstam (see NWN Vol 24 No 44) by the famous author Dame Daphne du Maurier.

She wrote:

Gladys Cooper, a few years before her death, when on holiday here in Cornwall, and discussing friends in the profession, said to me, 'What's happened to Phyll Konstam? She used to be such fun?' 'She still is,' I told her, and reassured Gladys that despite the 40 years of selfless dedication to the cause of MRA which Phyll and her husband 'Bunny' Austin passionately supported, the bubbling sense of humour never deserted her, indeed religious fervour may be said to have increased it. Sometimes to the discomfiture of her associates!...

We strolled through the shrubbery here at Kilmarth, laughing and joking as of old, and confessed to a mutual eccentricity in our late sixties; we apologised to flowers when we picked them. Dearest Phyll, let me end with a quotation from my grandfather's *Peter Ibbetson* on the life to come. 'All I know is this: that all will be well for us all, and of such a kind that all who do not sigh for the moon will be well content.'

A memorial will be held in St Paul's Church, Portman Square, London, at 11 am on Monday, 1 November.

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