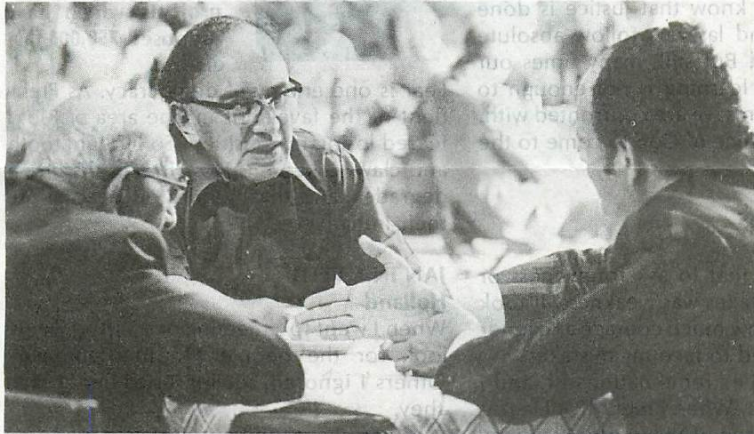




Ruandan, Ethiopian, Eritrean and Scot

# NEW WORLD NEWS

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A Cypriot judge with a member of the New Zealand Maori Council and a Dutch farmer

## A LOOK AT TOMORROW

WHAT KEEPS OUR NATIONS from realistically grappling with the vital issues that confront the world such as the growing tension between rich and poor, and the problems posed by shrinking resources?

Sig. Aurelio Peccei, who inspired the idea of the Club of Rome, warned last month that probably less than 10 years are left in which decisions must be taken to change the 'downtrend in human fortunes'.

What will persuade our leaders to take these decisions? Who will be the pioneers, treading a lonely and difficult road to stir people to action? What will sustain them in this task?

These questions require decision as much as discussion—from all of us. When 400 people from 35 nations met to consider them at a special session of the International MRA Assembly at Caux, Switzerland, last month, the question, 'What am I going to do about it?' was central to every meeting. The session was entitled 'A look at tomorrow: ten days of study, reflection and exchange'.

It would be impossible in the space available to give anything approaching a report on it. Each of the 16 groups into which the participants divided tackled the subjects differently. And the main conference sessions were full of fresh insights—sometimes presented humourously—into the issues we face, and decisions to work for the needed change.

In this issue, however, we give a flavour of the themes, the questions they raised, and conclusions reached.

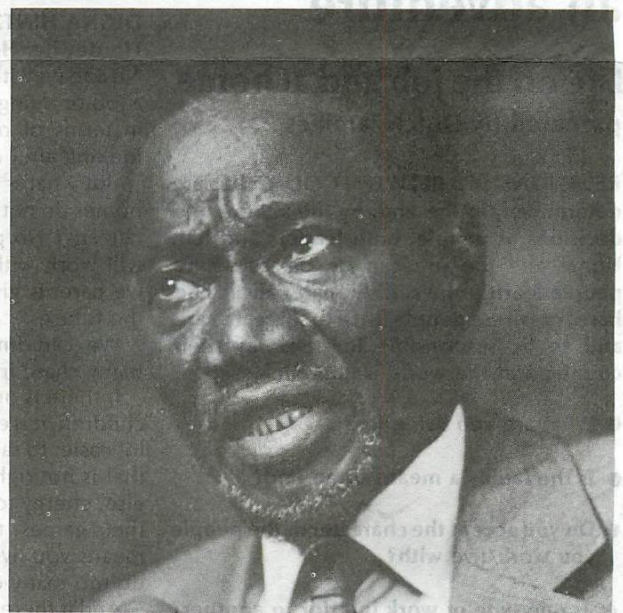
Photos by Jan Franzon and Lars Rengfelt



Evening entertainment



The President of the 150,000 Cairo University students with students from Jordan and Egypt.



Alhaji Yakubu Tali, Tolon Na, Ghana.

# To make a living democracy

prepared by a French team

SINCE NEARLY EVERY NATION describes its system of government as 'democratic', it is not our intention to consider the different political systems under which people can live. Instead, we intend to consider the true spirit of democracy.

- What is the basis of democracy?
- How do we practise democracy?
- What in our own lives is hostile to the democratic spirit?
- How can we develop this spirit around us?
- Is our idea of a democratic consensus to avoid conflicts rather than to learn how to resolve them?
- Do we help others to take part in running society, or do we decide things alone whenever we can get away with it?
- Do we allow others to have unjustified power over us?
- Is the discipline of listening to the inner voice part of our education as democrats?

**DR K E BEAZLEY**  
Minister for Education in the Australian Labor Government (1972-75)

I felt shattered to face the cruelty, the callousness, the apathy and the cold indifference characteristic of Australia's history in the treatment of the Aboriginal race. Up to that point I had been engrossed in electoral survival, party success and public support.

I faced the fact of my share in responsibility for this massive injustice, and apologised for the wounds of the past and the present to a distinguished Aboriginal from my State. Thereafter the path became clear to work for aboriginal voting rights, land rights, and to dismantle what was a structure of oppression.

**JUDGE ANDREAS KORFIOTIS**  
Cyprus

In our country we have experienced what it costs to forget absolute moral standards. Dishonesty on all sides led to the Cyprus tragedy. Every nation involved must understand that to ignore moral standards for economic, military or nationalist reasons is a short-sighted policy.

As a judge, I know that justice is done when judges and lawyers follow absolute moral standards. But still, many times our experience and learning is not enough to solve the problems we are confronted with. I need the guidance of God to come to the right decision.

**VERA KORFIOTIS**  
teacher

I used to think that to ask forgiveness or speak of my mistakes was weakness. It took time to realise how much courage and inner strength I needed to face my mistakes.

At 18 I was an extreme nationalist, and I hated the English. When I met MRA I learnt to feel like a citizen of the world. I love my country, but I care about other countries too. We have problems and so do other countries. They are not our problems and yours. We are all responsible for solving them. That is the spirit behind democracy.

**COLONEL MIRANDA DIAS**  
Portugal

I started managing a business at a time when we did not have much practice of demo-

cracy in my country. I called the staff together and said that though I knew something about organisation I knew nothing about salesmanship and we would have to learn together. That was how we created a team.

I was always under pressure from the directors to make the staff sell more and if possible earn less. But when I sought God's direction, the conviction that came was to defend justice. I learned that democracy is possible when men listen to God and work for what is right.



**LUIZ PEREIRA**  
Brazil, who as a leader of the favelados (slum dwellers) of Rio de Janeiro helped initiate projects which have rehoused 750,000 favelados.

Fear is one enemy of democracy. As President of the favelados in one area of Rio, I feared losing my position. So I fought tooth and claw to keep it. Now I realise that fear degrades, and that humiliated people lose their initiative.

**JAN IN'T VELD**  
Holland

When I went to a meeting or a party, I would look for the people I wanted to meet. Others I ignored, feeling I was better than they.

If you have an attitude of superiority towards some people you feel inferior to others. These attitudes kill the democratic spirit.

Mine is a small country. But we think we know best how France should deal with the question of the waters of the Rhine, how South Africa should answer her racial problems.

We need to find a new attitude of true care.

## Every day an adventure

Life on the job and at home  
prepared by Dutch families

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN COUNTRIES are determined, in the end, by the actions and decisions of people, both leaders and led. Home and the job can be places where people learn to be selfish, materialistic and hard, or where people learn to share, to care and to be responsible for the way their country and the world is going.

- What are you living for?
- Is the family a means or an end?
- Do you accept the character of the people you work/live with?
- Is one type of work inferior to another?

- Is there an inspired plan for every day when you are unemployed or retired?

**DIGNA HINTZEN**  
Housewife, Holland

Nowadays with so much emphasis on having a job or doing some study, it is easy to think in terms of *only* being a housewife, *only* looking after children and husband.

But what is going to happen to society if homes do not produce responsible, reliable citizens? No plan, no structure, no system will work without people who care. What we parents give to our children is vital for the future.

We can find the satisfaction here that many chase in other fields.

If there is one thing you need to bring up children, it is energy. Energy to say no—it is a lot easier to say yes—if they want something that is not right, and to think up something else, energy to stand their noise, to live into their games, to read or play with them. It means you live for this task, that you don't do too many other things.

And if there are people and situations that

demand your care and attention you can appeal to the children to free you from their claims (otherwise they will end up selfish little brutes after all!).

How to put all this into practise and get your house clean, your shopping done, the unexpected guests taken care of, and be nice on the telephone to people who call up about *many* different things!—that is exactly why every day is an adventure. I find that God has a plan, especially for the small details.

**AAD BURGER**  
Holland

I am a socialist member of the city council of Utrecht. A few weeks ago I attended a meeting of the members of my own party. Quite unexpectedly the lady who was chairing the meeting, an alderman of the city, strongly attacked me in the course of making a proposal.

I was on the point of getting up and leaving. Then I remembered what I had learnt here at Caux. I sat down and tried to honestly listen for what was right.

# A world order to God's design

prepared by Germans and Dutch

**WHAT IS OUR PART** in tackling the worldwide selfishness of man?

Six hundred million people starve. The industrialised nations, with a third of the world's population, use 7/8 of the available resources, and 90 per cent of the world's energy. And the gap between rich and poor is widening.

**What is the motive behind all the talk of a new world order? Is it to soothe our conscience so we can continue living selfishly and undisturbed?**

**Though greed is not the exclusive sin of rich nations—the inequalities within the poor nations are often conspicuous—many feel that manipulation by, and materialism in, the affluent countries block advance towards a more just world society.**

**Our wrong way of living may be a craving for satisfaction where it will never be found. The Holy Spirit may show a road to a new world order.**

**What might we do, individually and collectively? What is God's plan, and what is our part?**

**SHANTI JOHN**

**Headmaster, North East India**

The developing world has many problems. Material help is not enough. We need help spiritually too. Affluent and poor countries are in a mess. We need each other. Help us to uphold the fundamental values that are in danger of being lost.

The thought that came to me was that, whatever the misunderstandings, the chairwoman's proposal was completely right. So during the meeting I wrote to her explaining the facts, then saying that I fully supported her proposal, and I was sorry I got so angry.

After the meeting she looked at the letter, then said, 'Can you come to my room?' She realised she had been wrong on some of the facts. Then she said, 'I am sorry for the way I spoke to you. I was very strained.' And we left the meeting as friends.

During the following weeks we had to take quite a few political decisions. If there had been this wall between us it would have been very difficult.

**CHANTANALY VONGKHAMHEUANG**

**Laos, now living in France**

I used to skimp my work. 'I work in French administration, therefore for France,' I said. 'I get paid and that is that.' But I was not happy.

One day I had a thought which freed me. If I love my country I must equally love France. Wherever I am I can help rebuild

**FERNAND MATON**  
**Land Surveyor, Belgium**

There is a crisis of division between left and right all over the world. I have always considered myself a man of the right. Here I have decided to go out to meet people of the left. It has meant facing what in me is

**ALFRED NIELSEN**

**Denmark, former Vice-President of the Danish Wood Manufacturers.**

Mr Nielsen told the conference how one family's determination to reduce waste had helped the Danish Government frame a new law about this.

'One family in Silkeborg (an industrial town of 25,000 inhabitants) decided to launch a campaign to persuade our people to stop using more than we need and to re-use all materials that can be re-cycled,' Nielsen said. 'This family wrote to a local paper asking who would help them do this. My wife and I decided to join them and so did eight other families.'

'We ten families then asked the Mayor of Silkeborg how best to begin. At his suggestion we took on one area of the city, in which 1000 families lived, as an experiment. We wrote a letter to each of these 1000 families asking their help and later we visited them all.'

'As a result many people started to bring their waste materials—paper, glass and tin—to a central place to be sold for re-use. After 18 months 200,000 kilos of waste materials had been collected for re-cycling in this way. The money from the sale of these materials was used to propagate the idea more widely.'

Following the success of this pilot scheme, the Silkeborg city council took over the

our world. Whether in France or Laos, I can play my part.

**ANNELIESE KOENIG**  
**Germany**

For more than a decade I drank alcohol in large amounts, and I have gone through all the depths of addiction.

There was no helping hand when I needed it, only indifference, and people who said, 'Keep away—she is an alcoholic.'

With God's help I was able to start again. As I listened in quiet for his direction, I felt he was challenging me to start a new life, free of drink. It became clear that I had to make absolute honesty, purity, unselfishness and love its basis.

Then God showed me how to use my life to help people who are hooked on alcohol or drugs. My husband is a social worker in this field, and we are working together to help addicts, and to break down the heartlessness, prejudice, and arrogance which causes many addicts to fall back again.

I pray every day for God's love to be able to fulfill the task he has given me.

typical of the right. One man said to me, 'We resent having no information about the profits of big business.' This is justified, I feel. There is often an unhelpful secretiveness. So, as a start, I have decided to be completely open with my family and friends about money matters.

programme. A committee was formed, including trade unionists, farmers, businessmen, housewives and youth leaders to take the idea of using resources in the right way to the whole city. 'Trade union leaders were especially keen because it created more jobs,' said Nielsen, who was for many years on the National Executive of LAB (the national association to combat unemployment).

'Before the city took over the programme, we arranged a big exhibition which included a scientist's demonstration of how the resources of the whole universe are re-cycled, as well as our own evidence of what had been achieved in Silkeborg in the past 18 months. To open the exhibition our Government Minister for the recycling of resources sent his right-hand man to open the exhibition. He stated that the Government was interested because these problems could not be solved from above, but solutions must grow up from the grass roots—as had happened here.'

'After this the Government sought our committee's advice on drafting a new law. This law, which has recently been enacted by the Danish Parliament, asks all city councils to initiate programmes like that in Silkeborg, and offers government assistance to those that do so.'

'So that's how it went—from one ordinary family to a city and then to the nation.'



**JAN VAN NOUHUYS**  
**Holland**

I trained as a silversmith. But it was difficult getting a job, because of the high rate of unemployment. I decided to start my own business. This cost a lot of money. At the moment we have tax bills which we don't know how we will pay. So my wife and I have to live very modestly, and every penny we can spare goes back into the business.

The other day a man came into my workshop and asked me to make a sugar bowl, costing about £500. He asked me to make it without charging value added tax. I said I had decided to live by absolute honesty. 'We need people we can trust completely if we are to keep democracy in this country,' I said.

He said to me, 'The government are all thieves, taking away our money. You make the bowl and no talking about it.'

When I refused he took back the order, shook my hand—which he had not done before—and went.

# Responsibility in a divided world

## How to win people in opposing camps

prepared by a team from Scandinavia

- What divisions in the world do you first think of?
- Is there someone you are divided from?
- Is it possible to disagree and still find a unity of heart?
- What do you want to win people to? To your own point of view? To solutions that are fair to all? To their God-given destiny?
- Does fear keep me from making contact with people in the opposite camp? Do I see them as stereotypes? How can I bring out the best rather than the worst in an opponent?
- What in the camp-mentality makes it a threat to democracy? Are you in a camp?
- Is truth bigger than anything recognised by an individual or a camp?

Lt. Col. **BERTIL LJUNBERG**  
Swedish Air Force

We have heard of the favelas in Rio de Janeiro. But we in Sweden have favelas too, of a different kind. Our young people cannot get jobs. They get money and, with nothing else to do, it often goes on alcohol and drugs. It is calculated that in the next 20 years Sweden will lose 800,000 jobs through automation and the installation of electronic equipment.

How do we solve this? It must come from the grass roots. Some groups are at work to answer it. I came here with division in my heart. Here I realised that I could accept God's forgiveness and start again. It has given me the secret of unity, and I go back to take responsibility for action in my town.

**JOSEF DE BAKKER**  
Religious education teacher, Belgium

I am in a camp. I am Flemish. I am not prepared to call myself a Belgian. You can compare the Flemish movement with the revolutionary movements of today except that we have practically never used weapons. We discuss.

We have come here, French and Flemish-speaking, to find how we can bring our peoples together. Brussels is considered the



capital of Europe. But I have refused to speak French in Brussels because we have no rights there—or not enough rights. It was due to meeting MRA that I spoke French in Brussels for the first time last month.

We ask your prayers for the rebuilding of our nation so that I can finally say wholeheartedly, 'Ik ben Belgisch', 'Je suis Belge'.



**A South African mother**

It is easy, but usually not deliberate, to instill bitterness in our children, just because of what we have suffered. When my son asked me whether his white friend's father was bad, it dawned on me that I had answered wrongly when he had asked me, 'Why do we have to move from one country to another?'

I had to undo this before it was too late. I realised my greatest efforts should be directed towards planting love where there is hatred and hope where there is despair.

# Modern man's quest for meaning

## From where do we draw strength, satisfaction and a purpose for life?

prepared by a German and Swiss team

- What meaning does my life have?
- What do I feed on? What makes me happy, moody, proud or self-centred?
- What does it mean specifically to let God have first place in my life?

There are four steps which have helped our own faith to grow:

- **Faith is maintained through practice**—through prayer and quiet times, through the services and sacraments of our church.
- **Faith is deepened through study.**
- **Faith is rooted through facing the impediments to its growth.** All of us have experienced being driven by wrong motives, often unconsciously. We need to learn what stops

us being as God wants us to be.

- **Faith is renewed through passing it on.** If faith becomes an aim in itself, it dries up. Constant renewal is assured if we pass on the deepest experience we have found.

**MICHAEL HERWIG**  
Travelling Secretary for the Student Mission, Germany

There was a point in my life when I felt desperate. I felt so useless that I thought I must give up my spiritual calling. No appeal to the will, to absolute moral standards, to a new decision, helped.

I was sitting in church. Suddenly, while the minister was preaching, my whole life ran in front of my eyes like a film. It had one theme—ambition. To be something in the eyes of others. Ambition at school, where I had made my *Abitur* speech in Latin (to the irritation of many present); ambition at University; ambition in my work with MRA.

In the world you can push and get promotion. In the world of the spirit, the more you strive, the more pointless the whole thing becomes. Success in God's work cannot be achieved by human power.

At that moment something broke in me. Steel-hard self-will, pride, ambition. My dreams seemed suddenly so unimportant. If only God had a plan for me somewhere in his kingdom. Washing dishes, or anything.

That afternoon I went with a friend into a chapel. I prayed, 'Lord, I come to you with a broken heart. If there is a place for me somewhere in your kingdom, I'm ready—without conditions. Whatever you want.'

A great burden fell from me. A tiny plant of faith started to grow—fragile and inconspicuous, but a gift of God. An invitation to work in his kingdom.

**JEAN-MARC DUCKERT**  
Switzerland

When the girl I was hoping to marry fell ill, just before I planned to propose to her, this was a blow to me. My father had been ill for many years. I had thought that if I fell ill my wife would take care of me. I had not seen it the other way. I had to accept that marriage could mean a life of service to one person.

But God gave a clear indication that now was the time to ask her. As I look back I know it was the right moment.

Over the last months we have lived close to suffering, fear, and human limitations. Through it all we have learnt the power of gratitude. I have always run away from pain and difficulties. But we have started to thank God for these things, welcoming them as signposts to God, bringing us back to Him through a sense of need.

This acceptance is slowly leading her to real healing, which I believe would have been impossible otherwise.