

NEW WORLD NEWS

Vol 27 No 1 18 Nov 1978 8p

All over the world people are re-discovering the power of the Holy Spirit as a source of transformation, healing and direction.

He brings the inspiration which can unite people of opposing views and backgrounds into a force for creative action.

In this issue we explore the dynamic of the Holy Spirit at work when a group of people seek God's will together.

THE DYNAMIC OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

SOUTH AFRICA Who controls?

PUT TOGETHER a young, black militant who has led boycotts and undergone imprisonment, solitary confinement and beatings; a white liberal with a tendency to Marxist analysis; a Dutch Reformed Church dominie (minister) of hard-core, Afrikaner background; and a comfortably-inclined Irishman. What do you get? Confrontation? Compromise? Confusion? Or?

Recently I was part of such a group working together for ten days here in the Cape. There were many reactions among us. At one point the black man exploded: Could he ever work with whites? It made us look at many questions. What are we out for? What is MRA? How does it work? Some of these questions—and conclusions—went like this:

Should we have teamwork? We faced the fact that our instinctive reactions will always be different. I can never go through what a young black man goes through. Just because we take on a common battle for God's will does not mean we will then react alike. We won't. So then what? Teamwork does not mean becoming alike—though it will be a temptation to think, 'I hope he does become like me and so easier to work with.' If, however, this reaction takes over, then instinctively we will want to control or direct the other man and so kill his spirit.

The only basis for opposites to work together is to live to make the other man great—even if he and his role remain different from mine. This is easier to say than to do. Consider the person whom I find most difficult. Is my motive selflessly to make him great? Or to make him more suitable for me to get along with? This has many implications here in South Africa.

There is value in the black militant and the white liberal learning to work together; not because their aim is to unite black and white—this does not particularly interest the black man—but because each of us, for the rest of our lives, will have to work with

difficult people, be they all black or all white. We all need to learn the art.

What happens to the militant who gives his life to God? Is he more or less likely to end up in gaol?

At one point I saw one of the young men studying newspaper articles, some of them bitter, on the squatter problem. The first thought that crossed my mind was, 'Isn't this a bit "negative"?' On reflection, I realised that what I actually meant was, 'Wouldn't he be more comfortable to live with if he was concerned with something less controversial?' But this man feels he is called to bring change to such conditions and wrongs in the system. This is not comfortable to live with. But if such men are, with pure motives, to pre-empt for Christ the frontline of the struggle for needed change, then it will mean the Cross. I had to ask myself, 'Do militants, through their association with me, become more or less militant?' We talked of the new kind of militancy—where one moves in maturity from reactionary bitterness to creative, care-filled passion. And to be ready to take time to let these new motives grow in us. They may not be full-grown overnight.

What is success? We discussed the perspective of the Russian dissidents who, faced with a dictatorial, seemingly all-powerful establishment, enduring prison camps, torture and total deprivation, yet live an experience of faith-filled freedom which challenges the structure of Communist and Western selfishness alike.

'We in MRA ...' In the first few days this phrase recurred. Then we looked at it. We considered MRA as a vehicle for God's strategy, a most precious thing to be entrusted with, but something we will never fully comprehend. Loosely used, 'We in MRA...' can imply a clique, an idea that we know how to do it. Can we explore the inclusive spirit implied in the description of MRA as 'a lake where a lamb can paddle and an elephant swim'? Each are part of God's force, but perhaps with a different role. We need to be sure that the 'lamb's' who paddle do not hold back the 'elephants' who are meant to swim in deep waters.

The battle is for a handover of control, be it establishment control, nationalist control or Marxist control. Each one of us has to prove this practical every day. This is the revolutionary significance of a disciplined time each morning when we hand over control of our plans, our priorities or dreams, so that God can prompt us as to what *He* wants done. Only then can we have an answer for those in government or elsewhere who are wedded to their own ideas and projects.

PETER HANNON

Planned disruption

THE HOLY SPIRIT'S WAY is a way of faith. It often disrupts our well-laid plans. It is only after the event that one can see how the strands of God's leading came together in a pattern of events.

Readers of NWN will have followed the news of the presentation of two MRA plays in India earlier this year. How did it all happen? How is the decision made to undertake such a venture?

Last December many Indians met to think what God was meaning them to do for their country. Some of the national leaders, realising the need for a deepened moral and spiritual conviction in their country if their new-found democracy was to meet the challenges it confronted, were looking to MRA for help. The Prime Minister had accepted to open an MRA assembly in New Delhi on the theme, 'A dynamic, durable and ethical democracy'.

What could give the ideas India needed, these men sought? Could plays be presented at the assembly, plays which inspire people to accept God's rule in their lives? They thought of *The Forgotten Factor* by Alan Thornhill and *We Are Tomorrow* by Peter Howard.

They dispatched one of their number, R D Mathur, to Caux in Switzerland, where a world assembly for Moral Re-Armament was taking place. People from many countries met with him to think for this venture.

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Get the light burning

by Garth Lean

'I WANT TO ASK YOU a personal question. You've always worked in a group. How do you do it?'

The place was Washington and my questioner was one of the most dynamic and adventurous Christian leaders in America. I had never met him before.

'Yes,' I said. 'Always a group—sometimes half a dozen, sometimes hundreds. Not always with the same aim.'

'Well, you come from Oxford. How do you do it there?' he asked.

I tried to tell him of some of the people we worked with in Oxford. A former rugby international and his artist wife, the head of an arts department deeply concerned in the new emerging Europe, two academic women, one the retired Vice-Principal of an Oxford college, the other an expert on the Muslim world, another younger graduate with a principal commitment to Africa with his wife, a researcher into weed control whose great concern is industry, two teachers and a nationally-known broadcaster whose change had delighted or shocked, but always shaken, the most unexpected people. All with their children and other young people living with them, plus a variety of the students, nurses and foreign graduates who move in and out of a university city.

Breathtaking

The basis of our fellowship was not sanctity—none of us had grown wings—but commitment. Commitment to make that early phrase of the Lord's Prayer—'Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven'—our first priority.

'But how does it work?' asked my impatient questioner.

'Each of us give the first hour of the day to God. To the Bible and two-way prayer—where you listen more than you talk. A

movement of meditation—out of self into God through to others.' It was then that we got straight and forgiven on any wrong action or motive or thought left over from the day before—but also when thoughts came for people, whether in the house, in Oxford or at the ends of the earth. Also each thought of his own God-given commitment—the next move in another country, the book he was writing, his job, the need of a united Europe. Of what to do that day to push the frontier further out.

'Fine,' said my questioner. 'But how does this make a functioning group?'

'To start with, each of us shares his thoughts with those in his household. Husband to wife first, perhaps. But always with those in the house too. Over the 20 years in Oxford we have had dozens of young people—American, German, Japanese, Indian, Scandinavian—living with us. That time of sharing, when we are all equal before God—no experts only learners, all out of our depth in the majesty of the Holy Spirit's plan—that time is the training time for us all. Honesty about ourselves brings unity—and those youngsters now have their own groups and their own breathtaking commitments all over the world.'

Politician

'Family groups, good. But what of the other families?'

'We ask each other to help us sharpen our thinking and living, very practically—something we all need. And we back each other—and check each other—in our dreams and projects.' From the rugby international's home has come a play which has been presented at the Church of Scotland theatre in Edinburgh, prior to a tour of the Highlands and Islands. It is about St Columba and aims to restore Britain's Celtic nations—Scotland, Wales, Ireland—to their mission of Christianising Europe as they once did before. Naturally we all pile in. The producers are young people from Oxford. All our friends and neighbours have helped with the money and some have sent friends to

help make costumes, shift scenery and talk with the audiences.

Then there are the calls from further afield. One friend spent several years in the Sudan, working closely with those from the North and South who helped bring an end to the civil war. They ask him to visit them. How can we make it possible? What experience do we have between us that will help? Students come to one of us with a problem. Often one of the others can help more. A politician asks for prayers. That we can give and perhaps more. As also when a child is ill.

Take fire

Of course, we meet together frequently—once a week, sometimes more, sometimes less—and the phone is forever buzzing. Frequently when we sit together, the Spirit gives us some united plan to make His light understood by more in Oxford. Each new development is usually the result of not one person's brainwave, but of the interweaving strands of inspiration that have come to different ones of us. So Vladimir Maximov comes for a day and tells gatherings of senior and junior Oxford how the Russian dissidents found faith in the camps. This weekend a journalist is addressing two gatherings and talking on Oxford radio about the Christian way through the crises of food and energy shortages, population explosion and the need of a fairer world order, as outlined in his new book. Perhaps some will take fire today and devote their lives, as he has done, to finding the Holy Spirit's plan for some country or some aspect of the future.

Then there are all the other spiritual forces in Oxford to help and encourage, as they do us. From a university whose motto is '*Dominus illuminatio mea*', 'The Lord is my light', a light should go forth which will bring nothing less than a renaissance of life and letters to the world. None of us can do it alone. Nor will any one group. But the Holy Spirit can do it through all of us, if we will take the consequences of being 100% at His command.

DISRUPTION contd from p1

Many and varied were the feelings when they met, but after a few days there was a common heart and conviction that this was right.

Hugh Williams of the Westminster Theatre decided then that he was meant to find the casts and technicians needed for these plays. He needed 20 people who would go, without salary, to serve in this way. All had to be found and transported to India by the beginning of February—four weeks away—when rehearsals had to begin.

'At times it seemed impossible,' he said later. 'Only the conviction that God meant this done pulled me through.'

He approached many people. One by one the cast began to emerge. For many it meant great upheavals. For designer Bill Cameron-Johnson it meant putting aside a series of new books and an audio-visual production. For trainee actor Philip Tyndale-Biscoe it

meant giving up the final two terms of his drama course.

No stage manager could be found. Then someone thought of Alan Porteous, an experienced stage-hand in New Zealand. A cable went off. Alan was about to embark on a course in Dunedin. But the accommodation he had planned for himself and his wife and child had suddenly become unavailable and they were seeking whether God had some other plan in mind. 'Very soon after that cable's arrival, we knew it was His will to go,' Alan said. He flew to India, shortly followed by his family. Now, nine months later, they are still there, playing a part in the continuing action in that country.

For fares and living expenses a budget of £32,000 was drawn up. From all over the world cheques, large and small, came in. Many were from people who had lived and worked in India, who saw this as a means of continuing to serve that country. Sir Theo

Metcalfe, treasurer of the fund, has described how, time after time, adequate money arrived just in time to pay the bills as they came in.

The plays were presented to Cabinet Ministers and thousands of others in New Delhi, and as a result were invited to many other parts of India. The reports we have carried in past months, of people finding faith and purpose for their lives, are a fruit of this venture. **JCB**

IVAN MENZIES, the Gilbert and Sullivan opera star, found a vibrant faith. On tour with the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company, he worked tirelessly to pass it on to others. He was once asked what drugs he took to keep going at such a pace.

'I only take spirit,' he replied.

'Do you?' the man continued. 'What spirit?'

'The Holy Spirit,' Ivan answered, 'and it's never let me down.'

DOING WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE

by Paul Campbell



Paul Campbell is a Canadian medical doctor. Here he is pictured with Chief John Snow of the Stoney Indians.

THE MOST SENSIBLE STEP I ever made was to decide, as far as my human nature permits, to put myself under the control of God's Holy Spirit. God-control is the alternative to self-control and the one practical alternative to human control—by Right or Left; rich or poor; by race or class.

The notorious British stiff upper lip—could it be self-control, the dictatorship of self-will? For some it is an admired quality—but I have deep reservations about it.

In those I meet the stiff upper lip is frequently associated with the paralysed lower jaw. There is no communication of what the person is really feeling and thinking at all. Such people are not being themselves and so are of but little help to others. And they themselves are difficult to help for they want to handle things themselves or die in the attempt. One of the marks of the Holy Spirit in control is reality about what we are thinking and feeling at the moment.

'The one thing we need is to be guided by God's Holy Spirit. That is the force we ought to study. Then we will have a clear light that ends confusion.'

Frank Buchman

Buchman, who I believe explored the working of the Holy Spirit as genuinely as any man in our era, once said, 'I depend on guidance and my own discipline.' The Holy Spirit's control in his experience was inseparably linked to the standards he lived by and to what he lived for.

As I long to know more of God's control in my life, I find I have a growing desire to follow Christ:

● **In His faith** that all things are possible to those who trust God utterly with their own lives, those of their family, and with their nations.

● **In His purity.** The love of idols is adultery. 'You shall have no other gods but Me'—money, the Gross National Product, career, children, plans, your work—including MRA.

● **In His prayer.** 'Be still and know that I am God.' I spend the richest times not in moments filled with words, but in minutes filled with silence. I pray with utmost confidence that God will become central in the lives of specific people—some of whom I know and many whom I do not know particularly those who are responsible for policies, and for the millions of ordinary folk in our nations East and West. I ask God to forgive us for our stupidity and arrogance. I continuously pray for the world force of MRA and the people of faith everywhere—that we so live that we bring God's love and truth and guidance to our nations.

● **In His values.** I have a growing sense that there is nothing more important than a

person's relationship to God—born by practising trust and expressed by obedience.

● **In His attitude towards suffering.** Suffering is Christ's medicine to make us more like Himself. I see suffering as something to be welcomed, for I can trust Him utterly with my life. And He only gives what is good for me. A nurse told me recently that she had observed that people who seek to avoid suffering multiply their problems.

● **In His attitudes towards people.** Compassion for the lowest and the highest; forgiveness for everybody including His executioners; and inclusion of all races, classes and conditions of men and women—particularly those in need. Christ did not have a stiff upper lip. He was open with us about His belief, His fears, His dislike of pain and rejection, His hopes for the future.

A black South African who has given much leadership to his people through his work in education and the press said to me recently, 'I have moved from being a nationalist to being a world revolutionary.' I asked him how. He replied, 'I am drawing a circle which includes everybody and excludes nobody. I am to love the establishment of my country, South Africa, as it is and fight for it to be as it is meant to be.' The Holy Spirit's control brings a revolutionary expansion of minds and hearts.

Chronic fears

I have learnt another mark of the Spirit—the meticulous care of furniture, clothes, food, health and money. Be careless with your life and careful of your health, for he who won't take care of his body will scarcely take care of his soul. He who is careless about material things is somewhere indis disciplined about the moral and spiritual.

The greatest lesson I learned from Frank Buchman on the ways of the Spirit is to 'never be so busy that you cannot hear'. He often said to me, 'You do too much.' I was always feeling that I did too little. That can spring from a sense of self-importance.

He sent me to my room to rest. At the end of 24 hours I returned to resume my duties. 'Go back,' he said. This went on for two weeks. One day in a quiet relaxed mood, I was startled by the thought, 'You are to make a proposal of marriage.' Only a few days

before I had told two friends that I was too busy to consider marriage. If Buchman had not had the knowledge that a man who lives on activity makes it difficult for the Holy Spirit to get a word in, the whole plan of my life would have been twisted and immeasurably impoverished.

The Holy Spirit is always ahead of the movement of history. He led me away from what seemed to be a prize opportunity in one of America's leading clinics. Today I find myself in the forefront of medical advance. For the great weight of health problems is coming not from bacteria and viruses, but from the self-indulgence of people in food, smoke and drink from chronic fears, from bitterness and lack of purpose.

The next step in health care is to change our national philosophy from self-centredness to serving. That is the work of the Holy Spirit. Greed, fear, hatred are at the root of the problems facing every government. Lord Hailsham said to a visiting Asian group, 'Britain has no economic problems. We all want a bit more. That is not an economic but a moral problem.'

'When the Holy Spirit works, He is often dramatic. The whole of my life was changed in two seconds, and I didn't do it.'

Peter Howard

It was a statesman armed with the guidance of the Holy Spirit who re-directed the Asian and African nations at the Bandung Conference when the Chinese sought to enlist those two continents against the West. This man came forward with the policy that 'we are against the imperialism of the West. We are equally against the imperialism of the East. We are neither for the eastern camp nor the western camp—we are for the integral camp of moral re-armament.' He was acclaimed by the delegates with the largest ovation of any speech made. The Holy Spirit's ways are typically over-arching. They cross the deepest of caverns and go over the highest and most ancient of walls by means of a fresh concept.

The Holy Spirit gives perspective on the world, on history and on personal life. He is the dynamic answering the world's materialist ideologies. He gives purpose, direction and power to the ordinary man to do what needs to be done. He gives true freedom from self. He gives confidence and joy for today's living and for tomorrow's dying. He gives panic-proof peace of mind and heart whatever the circumstances. He is the source for the genuine progress of the human family.

If we decide that from today we will seek with all our hearts to be Spirit-led, our children will inherit a nation led by men governed by God.

Jerusalem Pentecost evening a conversation

'You could not even call us loyal, day in day out.
Oh yes, we cared, but with an inconsistency. We worked together but we shared Neither ourselves nor yet our things In that deep way He meant us to. Peter, how patient and how strong He was. He went.
We thought it was the end. Do you remember? We were dazed. And now. Oh! Now. Peter, today, There in that room, we were not crazed. For there was power—and unity And life new lived. Peter, it's strange What depth was there, and truth and joy. Yes He was near. I've seen men change In a new way today. Those crowds— Did you watch closely? See their eyes? Yes, I did too. One was quite old. She drew her grandson near and he Smiled up at her and caught the light There, in her eyes, which leapt to flame in his,
For he was young. I saw, too, some who seemed to aim Deep venom at us from their hearts. And one man sighed and turned to go— He with the donkey loaded high. How tired he looked. Peter, I know Now something of what Jesus feels for men. I knew if that man stayed he'd find new hope.
So, for what seemed the first true time, My whole heart prayed. His ass turned off to nose some grass. He stopped, looked round, then let her stay, Sank by the road and drank your words. Later we talked—he's born today. How mad it sounds as we sit here To say this, yet I do believe We've had a gift this day which could Set the world flaming.'

MER



Rohini de Mel

SRI LANKA Something for China?

POLO AND STOCK CAR RACING was not everyone's idea of how a young woman should spend her time in the Sri Lanka of the 1950s. But then Rohini de Mel has never been afraid of being unusual. 'If you want Rohini, look for trouble and you'll find her in the middle of it,' her relatives used to say.

'I used to live for horses and cars,' she recalled on a recent visit to London. Still an enthusiastic sportswoman—she captained her country at golf in Malaysia in 1975 and India in 1977—her major passion now, however, is to pioneer a way of life in her country that could offer China a new ideology.

On a visit to London Rohini went with her parents to see a Moral Re-Armament play, *The Forgotten Factor*, which described the struggles of two families on either side of an industrial dispute. 'I saw that I could unite my family,' Rohini remembers. 'But the next day I was going hunting for the first time—I had never jumped before—and I dismissed the whole thing from my mind.'

A year later, in 1952, Frank Buchman visited Sri Lanka with a team of 200. Rohini's cousin, the famous singer, Surya Sena, asked her to help collect props for the plays they were producing. 'Those people had some sort of quality that I didn't have,' says Rohini, 'and I was curious to find out what it was. They told me, "You can either be part of the disease in your country or part of the cure." I knew I wasn't part of the cure—I was self-willed, spoilt and selfish. The biggest things I had to learn was to say sorry—I started by apologising to my father for my resentment when he had tried to discipline me.

'I was very frightened that if I decided to obey God I would become a mindless cabbage,' Rohini remembers. Certainly there

is nothing cabbage-like about her today, 25 years on. She continues her career as a photographer, and her convictions have taken her to villages and cities all over India and Sri Lanka. A friend of members of the Cabinet and leaders of the Tamil minority, which, after years of discrimination, is turning to violence, she longs to cure Sri Lanka's divisions. This can only happen, she believes, if the change of attitude she and others have experienced is multiplied on all levels of society.

'I am so grateful that I learnt about listening to God. That is the one thing that has never failed me—particularly during the Emergency rule (1971—1976) when people were afraid.'

The last years in Sri Lanka have not been easy for the privileged. For many of Rohini's family land reform brought great suffering. 'It was hard for those who were old or had no profession. Some turned to drink, even suicide. But land reform had to come.'

Rohini's family had a long tradition of philanthropy. 'As a young woman I used to think, "They have done enough good works, I am going to enjoy myself." Then some years ago in Australia I met a young militant from Sri Lanka. I had to apologise to him for the way I had lived, thinking only of myself—I did not know how people suffered. I have learnt not to be possessed by my possessions, but to let go; also that people come first. Whatever I have I want to use for this revolution.' A recent visitor described the stream of people of all backgrounds who come to her home.

What is Rohini's aim for her country? 'Sri Lanka's President, JR Jayawardene, fought the election on the basis that he would try to implement a *Dharmista* society (based on Buddha's moral teaching) in Sri Lanka.

'Can we in this *Dharmista* society, with a listening mind, guided by absolute values, have as our aim, a passionate pursuit of good to combat the passionate pursuit of evil around us? I believe we can demonstrate a humane way of living. Then we would have something to say to China.'

JML

MALTA Venturing in

Finding the direction of the Holy Spirit is a daily adventure for ordinary people all over the world. In Malta 13 young people met last month to explore the nature of their calling to God's work. They sent us some of the thoughts that resulted:

18-year-old student: 'Christ had absolute love. God can tell you how to use your unused love. You don't have to wait till you are old. You just have to commit yourself to

absolute love to whoever you are with. Attitudes, motives and feelings—it's when they are crooked that you don't feel free to love.'

Dockyard foreman: 'Do not be afraid of being honest. Do not lose heart in doing your job—I am with you. Care for your workmates, pray for them, love them—then you can change them.

'Do not stuff your heart with pride—humility is more effective. A leader, like a servant, must be My instrument, not an instrument of selfishness.'

Another 18-year-old student: 'To make sure it is really God who is speaking to you, you must be ready to listen to other people's

thoughts and to accept that you *may* be in the wrong.'

Student nurse (20): 'There is a way of telling someone what is wrong with him. Be clear in your mind that what you are telling him is for his own good and not for the sake of showing him you are better.

'When you are self-giving you are not self-pitying.'

Former computer operator: 'Buchman took Christ crucified—the most important experience in history—seriously. Do you have a faith? That means have you left behind all sin for Jesus—not just for the sake of being good, or to be better than others, but for Christ's sake?'