

NO HOPE FOR PEACE WHILE CHILDREN STARVE

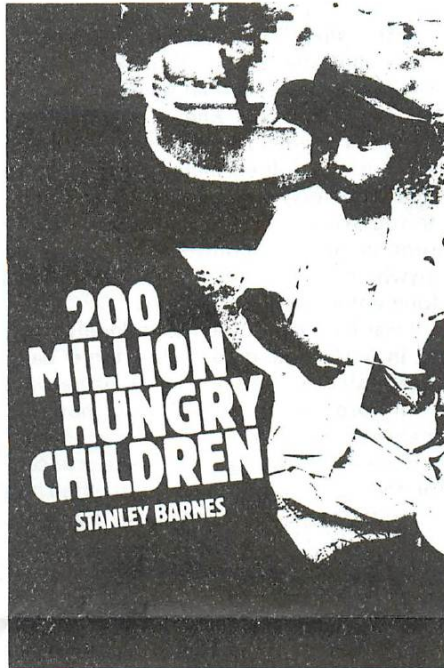
WORLD PEACE can never be achieved while poverty and starvation continue, said an Australian dairy expert in London last week. Stanley Barnes was speaking at the press launching of his book, *200 million hungry children*.

'Fifteen million children will die this year because they do not have enough to eat,' he said. 'There is a great deal wrong in a world where milk powder is fed to animals at highly subsidised prices on one side of the world while children suffer and die for lack of suitable food on the other.'

Dumping of Western surpluses on Third World countries was no answer, he said. What was needed was long term schemes, worked out between Western and Third World nations, to give milk powder under aid as a bridging operation while developing local milk production. This involved setting up modern milk plants to recombine and process milk for distribution in liquid form to infants and mothers.

During his visit to Britain, Mr Barnes gave evidence to the House of Commons' select committee on agriculture on the use of the EEC's milk powder surpluses in aid programmes. Among the groups he addressed were a colloquium of scientists at the National Institute for Research in Dairying, a meeting in Cambridge sponsored by the university's department of development studies and the staff of Action Aid in London.

Mr Barnes also spoke at a branch meeting of the National Farmers' Union in Radnorshire, Wales. Thanking him, Simon Gourlay, a member of the union's national executive, commented, 'The greatest danger is apathy.' People in Britain, he said, too readily dismissed the problems of the Third World as the responsibility of its people. 'Our surplus agricultural produce could become a lifeline to those in need instead of an expensive aggravation to tax-payers,' he said. 'Surely it is wrong that we cannot breach the political barriers that stop this?'



At a meeting at the Westminster Theatre, London, Stanley Barnes outlined three steps in creating the political will needed for action. 'We must face the facts,' he said. 'We need concrete plans of action, and because I am involved in dairying, I have suggested one for milk. And we need the passion and compassion that overcome apathy, that see every insurmountable problem as a challenge to be overcome, that mean we don't say it is someone else's job, or use mistakes as a reason for doing nothing.'

Another speaker at the same meeting was Stephen Miles, who until recently handled Britain's second largest aid programme as British High Commissioner in Bangladesh. 'Aid should not just be charity,' he said, 'although there is scope for charity in emergencies. Aid is only successful in the long term if it inspires the people of the country to learn new ideas and methods and to put them into practice.'

Western attitudes were very important, he said. 'It is so easy for the superiority of the West to come in, for us to be paternal or patronising—just because, by an accident of history, the industrial revolution hit us first.'

Geoffrey Lean, the author of *Rich World, Poor World*, described Mr Barnes' book as

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'bold, because it runs against the unfortunate philosophy of most Western governments, including our own which is cutting back heavily on aid.'

Side by side with increased food production, said Mr Lean, must go the fight to end poverty. 'There's no point in producing more food if people can't buy it.' Change was needed in trade relations between the rich and poor countries and developing countries must find a style of development which reached the poorest of their populations. 'This is such a vast area that almost every kind of expertise is needed and almost everybody can make a contribution.'

Politicians often failed to act on these issues because they felt they had inadequate backing in the country. 'But,' Mr Lean said, 'where politicians have put across the facts to the country in some form of public education programme, there has been an enormous response. This has meant that governments have had to adopt new policies and that these policies have had to stay even when the government has changed. This has happened in the Nordic countries, in the Netherlands and to a lesser extent in Canada.'

Mr Barnes ended his speech with a quotation from the report of the Brandt Commission into the new international order: 'He who wants to ban war must also ban mass poverty. Morally it makes no difference whether a human being is killed in war or is condemned to starve to death because of the indifference of others.' 'All these problems are not just technical problems,' he said. 'They are moral and spiritual.'

Stanley Barnes, author of *200 million hungry children* talks to John Bond

WHO WILL PUSH THE MILK BARROW TO THE THIRD WORLD?

WHAT IS THE REACTION when someone turns the dinner conversation to the topic of world poverty? Sighs of 'How terrible?' 'No point in getting too involved in such a vast and complex problem,' is often the unspoken comment.

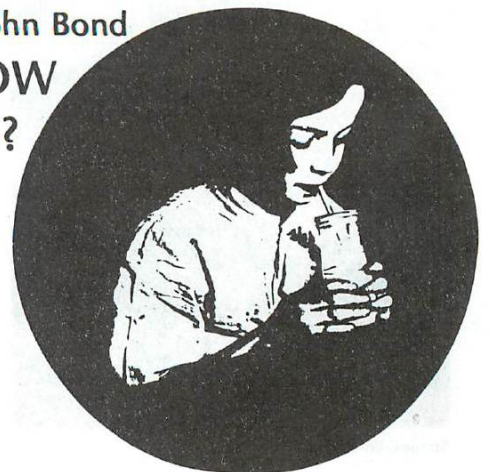
It is not that no one wants to do anything. Bodies such as Oxfam, which seem to be doing what is needed, are strongly supported. But a strategy that will deal not just with emergencies, but bring a steady im-

provement in the lives of the world's desperately poor, seems beyond us.

It is not beyond us, Stanley Barnes believes. He has a remarkable faith in the power of ordinary people to help their governments to pursue enlightened policies. Perhaps it comes from his own experience.

Born in London, he didn't have much success at school, and left at 15 to learn farming in Wales. With the money earned,

MILK BARROW contd on p2



MILK BARROW contd from p1

and a scholarship, he went to agricultural college and obtained the National Diploma in Agriculture.

On leaving college his first job was as a foreman of milk rounds—and he was often pushing the milk barrow round the streets of East London himself. At the age of 20 he was asked to manage a run-down cheese factory in South Wales. Impressed by what he did there, the directors made him manager of a larger factory in Moreton-in-Marsh.

Here came a turning point in his life. Impressed by what he had seen of the Oxford Group—later MRA—he went to a weekend gathering to learn more. 'I realised that if I was prepared to accept God's plan for my life I could have a part in helping to create a just society.'

After three days he decided. It meant apologising to the staff for the ambition which had made him a hard taskmaster—'Understanding began to develop, and a new spirit in the factory.'

It also meant that when, two years later, he was shown an advertisement for a person to set up a milk pasteurisation scheme in Malta, he did not just stop at his first reaction—'I am doing well here, thanks'. He sought direction from God in quiet—and decided to go. Thanks to the scheme, Malta was freed of its debilitating 'undulant fever', a disease spread by goats' milk.

Indonesia

Before Mr Barnes could move on to other fields, the war broke out—and during the siege of Malta he found himself dealing with another liquid—as the RAF's Command Fuel Officer. In Malta too he married Joyce, a nursing sister.

After the war they went to Australia. For eight years Mr Barnes was project manager for a Brisbane dairy company. But a long-held desire to work in Asia was fulfilled in 1957, when he was appointed Dairy Development Advisor to the Pakistan Government. Later he went on to set up milk-processing factories in Thailand and Singapore.



Stanley Barnes

It was harder to convince his employers, the Australian Dairy Produce Board, in the uncertainty after the overthrow of President Sukarno, that they should set up a factory in Indonesia. But he knew how urgently Indonesia needed foreign investment—and that Australian dried milk, reconstituted in such a factory, was needed in the milk-starved country. In the event, the factory went up in 15 months—'very good time anywhere in the world,' he said. And it was done entirely without bribery.

It was here that Joyce was suddenly taken ill, in 1969, and died within three days. Greatly shaken, he saw that he had always been absorbed in projects, and now the chance to give her more care had gone.

However, the thought of her deep concern for people, including the poorest, lifted him out of self-pity. 'I felt I was meant to give this to other people,' he told me.

He left Indonesia and spent two years as an industrial consultant in Australia, casting around for the next step. When he was invited by Rajmohan Gandhi, grandson of the Mahatma, to take part in MRA's action in India, he felt immediately he should go.

In India he worked at the MRA centre in Maharashtra, meeting managers and workers who came for seminars, village farmers who came to see new ideas being carried out at the centre's farm, and many others. He learnt intimately about the life of India's poor. The urge grew in him to spur on the rich countries to grapple with these problems. 'The means exist in the world,' he said, 'to answer poverty and malnutrition, if people care enough to see that action is taken.'

'I wrote *200 million hungry children* to help ordinary men and women understand better the needs of the Third World, and how the needs could be met.'

Stupid question

Listening to him, it seemed to me that all he had done had prepared him to write the book. Did he see a thread running through his life?

He laughed. 'Certainly in most cases I have taken the job because I felt I should. How far I could say God was guiding I don't know. In certain instances I see I made a decision for the wrong reasons. But God still used it—because I was trying to obey Him.'

So did he have ideas on how people could find a strategy to help answer such a huge problem as world poverty? 'You must get your aim clear. Development will only be truly in the interest of people as we learn to live on a moral and spiritual basis and use wealth aright. But then you must do the next thing you feel is right—without necessarily knowing where it will lead. It means seizing the opportunities that come, and not being governed by considerations of security.'

'Since I gave my life to God, financial security has always been secondary. And though at times I have had little—especially since I've been doing this work with MRA, for which I get no salary—I have never been completely broke.'

So what does he see ahead? Even as I asked,

it seemed a stupid question after all he had said about being unexpectedly led. He is determined to rouse the conscience of the West about the issues of malnutrition and poverty. His book is giving him many opportunities to do this. 'Only last week a farm worker sent the book to the secretary of the Parliamentary Select Committee on agriculture, to find that they are just now discussing the use of surplus milk in the EEC and asked me to give evidence to the Committee.'

I left having learnt something, I felt, about the adventurous way a person who lets God take control is led and equipped to challenge the wrongs of our world.

'200 million hungry children' by Stanley Barnes

Published by Grosvenor Books, 54 Lyford Road, London SW18 3JJ, hard-back £4.95, with postage £5.65, paperback £1.50, with postage £1.95.

Brandt in Bristol?

WORLD DEVELOPMENT is not just an issue worked out in international conferences. We all have a part. Because the problem is not primarily technical. It is about relationships.

The Brandt Commission suggests that the world economic deadlock could be broken by using the huge surplus of petro-dollars in the oil-producing countries to pay the bills for the industrial goods the poorer countries need.

Let's bring that closer to home. The poor conditions and unemployment in our British cities need to be answered. The recent riots in Bristol show what can happen when frustration builds up—especially where people are at a disadvantage because of their colour. Are we working for the level of community spirit in our areas where the shopkeeper who has just won the pools pays the garage owner for the truck that the unemployed man needs to start a business?

When it comes to creating that sort of spirit of community those of us in rich Western countries realise how much we have to learn. We may know about micro-processors and aerodynamics, but what about developing people?

Seventeen years ago Kenya adopted the slogan of 'Pull together'. It seemed a distant hope against the background of civil disturbance and sectional rivalry that existed between black, white and Asian communities. But thanks in part to people who made the implementation of this spirit their priority, the country has surmounted problem after problem. A huge programme of land transfer, for instance, has been carried out such that Kenya is now producing considerably more food than at independence.

Everyone can start, where they are, to learn the skills of bringing out the best in people. Our multi-racial Britain of today gives us special opportunities.

Russell Carpenter

'Ten months for life'

MONIQUE CHOLET worked in a haberdasher's shop in Bourgueil, France. 'For me it was, "I do my job and that's that—finish", she says. 'But life isn't going to be the same again—even if I go back to the same job. I've found a different way of thinking and of looking at people.'

Monique is taking part in a ten-month course based at the MRA centre at Caux, Switzerland. She and the other young people on the course have spent the last two months in Britain. When we talked in London before they left, few of them could say what they would be doing after the course finished, but they all agreed with Monique that their lives would be different because of it. In an hour sandwiched between two visits to the House of Commons, they tried to tell me what this meant.

We started with the practicalities. The course combines theory and practice by floating four ten-day islands of intensive study in longer periods of practical work or visiting. The first five months were spent in Switzerland with study sessions on the basis of MRA and on the practical running of a conference centre. A chance to put both into practice came as the group helped with MRA's work in different parts of Switzerland, including the Christmas conference at Caux.

Then in February the course moved to Britain where it based at the MRA centre in Cheshire. After ten days' study of faith and ideology, the group split up and visited different parts of Britain—meeting the Lord Mayor of London, miners, MPs, speaking in schools. Some helped with the tour of the play *Keir Hardie—the man they could not buy*, which two of last year's course have been travelling with.

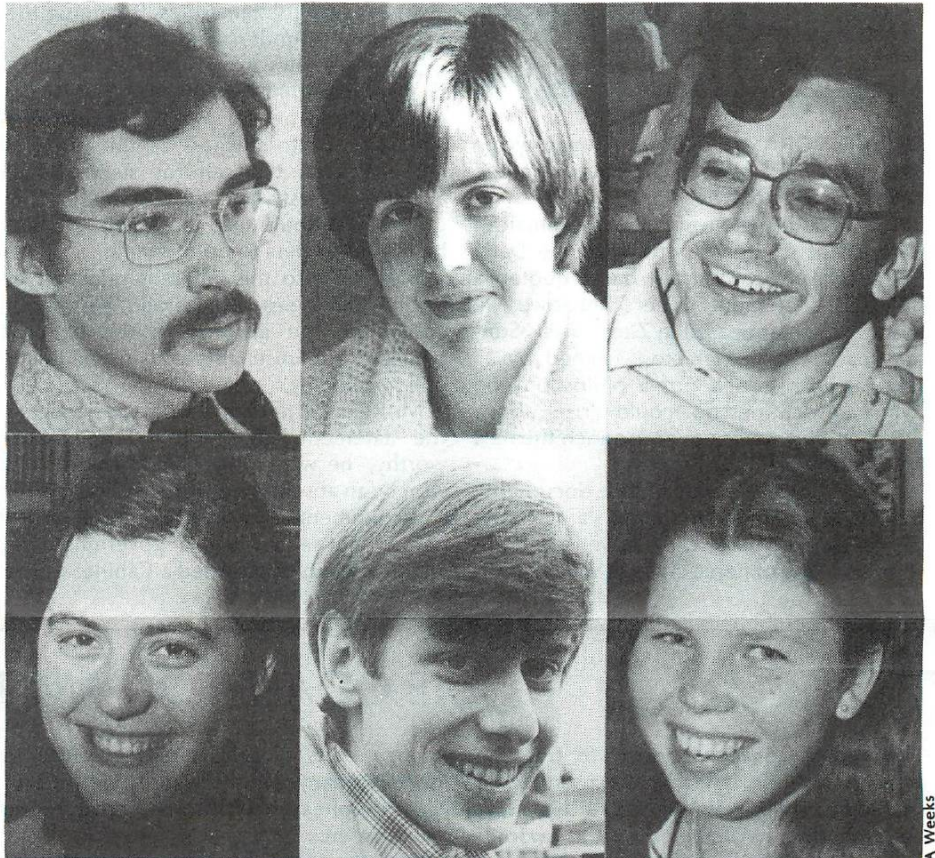
Rough and tumble

So what difference had all this made—with three months still to go?

Pierre Dampne, a horticulturalist from Grenoble, will spend the next two years in the Cameroons doing voluntary work. 'Because of the months in Britain,' he said, 'I can go to Africa without thinking that I can care for the poor while hating the rich.'

The son of a factory worker, he studied on the French Riviera and grew to hate the rich he saw around him. In Britain he had realised that the biggest gap between rich and poor lay not within European lands, but between Western countries and the Third World. 'In Europe we are all rich,' he said. 'We must love each other and those richer and poorer than us.'

The months away from the routine of her work as a physiotherapist have helped Margrit Schmidt-Gehrke, from Bensheim, Germany, to rediscover the meaning of faith. 'I have realised that faith isn't just something between God and myself,' she said. 'I have to open my thoughts to the world, to visualise how people and situations can change, and have the desire to help them to do so. I want to stand for my convictions even if other people don't agree.'



Six of the participants in the ten-month course. Clockwise from top left: Pierre Dampne (France), Margrit Schmidt-Gehrke (Germany), Claude Bourdin (France), Marja Ekdahl (Sweden), Christian Petterson (Sweden), Monique Cholet (France).

Ten days before we talked, Monique had written to her parents. 'I told them the things I had been doing behind their backs—to show them I was not better than anyone else. My contact with my family has been difficult because I felt superior to them.'

Some of the most important lessons had been learnt through the rough and tumble of working together as a group. 'I haven't always felt I wanted to be part of this group,' said Monique. 'After all, we didn't choose each other, yet we have to be friends and work together.' 'It means learning to respect other people and their views,' added Sharon Taylor, who has played hockey for South Glamorgan in Wales.

Journey

The group were leaving next day for Bourgueil, the town in the Loire valley which Monique and one of the others in the group, Claude Bourdin, come from. 'When we were discussing the visit recently,' said Claude, 'one of the group suddenly said to me, "I can't stand you talking any more". Someone else had already told me the same day that my attitude was upsetting people.' Claude felt he couldn't go on without seeing why this was. 'It was my sense of superiority, my way of judging, my hardness with people and my strong will. I decided not to look for excuses but apologised to the person involved. It gave me a new freedom and joy and it brought new unity to the group.'

Perhaps there was a parallel between this experience and the relationship between European countries, he went on. As an agricultural adviser he knew the problems

between France and Britain. 'But I am convinced that by dealing with the prejudices on both sides, we'll be able to play our part together in answering the urgent problems beyond Europe.'

It was no surprise that life on the course had been difficult at times. After all, painful confrontation is often part of finding something new. What was slightly startling was Marja Ekdahl's response when I encouraged the group to expand on the theme. 'This has been the most inspiring and easiest time of my life,' she said with great conviction.

The reason, she explained, was a decision she had made before she joined the course. The daughter of two well-known Swedish artists, she had always wanted to do something for the world, 'but in a famous sort of way', perhaps as a peace researcher. She put up a fight for what she believed was right at school, in and through the anti-nuclear movement, and wherever she was. 'But I relied on my own strength and intelligence—and I was unable to help anyone. I only made life difficult for myself. So I decided to give up and just enjoy life. But that didn't give me any satisfaction either.'

'Then—before I came on the course—I discovered a third way,' she went on. 'I gave everything to God—my plans, dreams, time and money, to be an instrument in His hands.' This meant that the world's problems and the attempt to do something about them were no longer a burden to her. 'If God is our only security, and inspiration, this task can be like an exciting journey, full of possibilities, impressions, surprises and joy.'

Mary Lean

Jamaica hears Zimbabwe

A LEADING JAMAICAN churchman wrote recently about lessons his country could learn from Zimbabwe.

C S Reid, former President of the Jamaican Council of Churches, writing in the *Daily Gleaner*, Jamaica's largest daily, quoted a full-page statement, 'The Zimbabwe we want', which appeared in Zimbabwe's Sunday papers. The statement, signed by 15 Zimbabweans, spelt out a philosophy on which every person could 'rise above conflicts and sufferings and launch the new Zimbabwe in unity and peace.'

Describing it as 'a remarkable document', Mr Reid points to its timing, 'a few days before the crucial Zimbabwe elections, during a time of fierce charges and counter-

charges', and its signatories, 'spanning the spectrum of Rhodesian society'.

'There are some tremendous notes struck,' he goes on—'that "what is right, not who is right" should be the rule of conduct, the necessity for forgiveness as the price of reconciliation, the call for standards of absolute honesty, and the assumption that the people would lead the way in this and help their leaders to do the same.'

'There is also the inherent rejection of foreign ideologies from East and West, as not containing the answers to the nation's problems and unsuitable as an inspiration to nation-building.'

Mr Reid did not know what the impact of the statement had been. 'But it is noteworthy,' he writes, 'that Mr Mugabe, who won by an absolute majority and could form a government without the help of other parties, chose to form a government of National Unity and named a Cabinet which

included two whites.

'I identify very strongly with the sentiments of this pamphlet,' he writes. 'It was inspired by Moral Re-Armament. It was doing for that country what I believe the Churches should be doing in Jamaica at the present time.'

'Because everyone tends to see opinions on issues in relation to party positions,' he goes on, 'even sincere Christians are trapped into silence for fear of being classified, while "what is right" goes by default for lack of a champion.'

'Is it too much to ask Mr Manley and Mr Seaga (the party leaders) to study this pamphlet, drop sterile and dishonest debate and think Jamaican?'

He concludes by saying, 'I fervently want to build a prosperous and united, God-fearing, clean-living Jamaican nation.... I believe I am speaking for the vast majority.... Will our leaders hear us?'

HOME GOALS FOR AMERICA

The recent abortive attempt to free the hostages in Iran has again focused world attention on America. How will this affect future policies? Will she now withdraw from responsibility, her confidence having been destroyed? America's foreign policy cannot be divorced from her home life, writes ROBERT WEBB in 'The Cincinnati Enquirer'. We print extracts:

WITH THE ONRUSH OF EVENTS at the opening of what may be America's most challenging decade—bar none—political candidates might profitably spend at least a month exploring the roots of their country and where they're meant to take it. Too many in high office, and aspirants thereto, spend too little time reflecting on what they *should* do with the public trust they have or seek. Yet the office holder's is, indeed, a sacred trust. For America was surely not an accident of history but the crucible for an experiment meant to point man's way up from the wars and devastations of the ages.

As Lee Vrooman documented so well in his book, *The faith that built America*, the driving force of the nation's basic documents—and hence early thrust—was that hunt, however faltering, for wisdom beyond human reason. But that search has faltered, perhaps as never before.

And yet America may be summoned to a leadership demanding the ultimate in wisdom. Abroad, of course, are the Iranian and Afghanistan crises. Closer to home, violence rocks El Salvador.

Building up on a scale of awesome dimensions, meantime, are demands of the 'have-not' nations. Racked by hunger and

energy costs sapping their capacities to borrow, many may be at the threshold of violent upheavals with consequences none can foresee.

But the challenges of the American decade ahead won't alone be those abroad. Some of her toughest will be at home. The economy, of course, is in pain. More painful, perhaps (and not totally unrelated), may be the breakdown in family life that's long anchored America amid buffeting storms. How long can a Judeo-Christian nation tolerate a million or more abortions annually? What will be the toll on the national psyche, whatever one feels about abortions?

America, above all, needs aims for the '80s. Here are seven:

- An America, foremost, with the answer abroad because she has it at home;
- An America whose young are thus free from the ravages of drugs because their hearts are fully satisfied and minds fully and constructively occupied;
- An America where management and labour have a mind-stretching vision, beyond profits and wages, important as they are—for what together they can do as an example for the world;
- An America where black, white, red and yellow are united in nation-building because they see what together they can do as an example for all nations;
- An America in which the press is not a tool

of government but an inspirer of statesmen from all parties and backgrounds;

- An America in which the creative arts are committed not to the exploitation of man's lowest instincts but to the cultivation and feeding of his highest;
- An America in which education ranks character with the transmission of knowledge.

America needs to recapture the promise of her founders. An America fired by the vision of men and nations remade will have answers not alone for her own—but for Moscow, Peking and Havana. She would know what she stood for, and love what she knew. Any lesser vision—or commitment—could be suicidal in today's world.

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