

EMANCIPATOR FOR TODAY

THE ORDER PAPER of the House of Commons on October 31 contained a motion commemorating one of Parliament's greatest orators and reformers, the emancipator William Wilberforce.

The motion, sponsored by Labour and Conservative MPs, was stimulated by the 200th anniversary of Wilberforce's arrival in Parliament to represent Kingston-upon-Hull. 'This House,' it stated, '...while praising his life's work for all mankind in freeing the African peoples from the bond of slavery, would add that this has something important to say to everyone in these troubled times.'

The same occasion was celebrated by Darton, Longman and Todd with the publication of a new book on the reformer, *God's Politician* by Garth Lean. In a centre-page article in *The Times* next day, Mr Lean described Wilberforce's two great campaigns—to abolish the slave trade and slavery and to 'reform the manners' of a society shot through with corruption and heartlessness.

'Knowing that he had no chance of changing society by "running amuck and tilting at all I meet",' writes Mr Lean, 'he deliberately set out to make goodness fashionable. And, amazingly, he succeeded.'

He describes the Christian experience that turned Wilberforce from personal ambition to take up the struggle which has earned him the unusual distinction for a politician of being recognised as a saint by the Anglican church.

'William Wilberforce may seem at first sight remote from the issues and struggles of



Richmond's portrait of William Wilberforce

the late 20th century,' commented Dublin's *Sunday Press* in its review. 'But Garth Lean in *God's Politician* shows his immediate relevance to both politicians and everyday people in every country on earth, by using him as an inspiring example of the fact that one man of integrity, courage and good will can change not only his own time but future trends for the better.'

The same question was on the minds of interviewers for BBC Radio 4 and local radio

NEW WORLD NEWS

Vol 28 No 50 15 Nov 1980 10p

in Wilberforce's native Yorkshire and in Northern Ireland. 'I wrote this book because I feel there is a helplessness syndrome about today—the feeling that no one can do anything,' Mr Lean told BBC Radio 4's *Sunday* programme, explaining why he wrote the book.

'Wilberforce had tremendous determination, he stood up to persecution, he had amazing friendship and the ability to win people. Ten or 20 MPs worked with him. It took him 20 years to win the abolition of the slave trade and then 26 years for the abolition of slavery. If you want to change anything you've really got to keep at it until it happens.'

'*God's Politician*' by Garth Lean, published by Darton, Longman and Todd, available from Grosvenor Books, 54 Lyford Road, London SW18 3JJ, price £2.50, with postage £2.90.

'The only true freedom is the choice of one's own servitude' Signposts seen in silence

In this article from the French daily, *Le Monde*, Michel Sentis examines the daily practice of silence as a source of personal integrity, freedom and purpose in the midst of the pressures of life:

OUR PERSONAL VIEW of man and his happiness dictates our opinion of society, and therefore determines our conception of the world. It is within our inward attitudes that the structures of the world we wish to create are designed.

The thoughts outlined here are the fruit of contacts with people of widely differing standards of living, culture, religious and philosophical background, whose acquaintance I have made during my varied activities with Moral Re-Armament.

Two key words come to mind: cohesion and coherence.

First, cohesion. Man becomes whole when his inner self is whole. I find my own cohesion from day to day through a silence which has become a disciplined part of my life. During this silence I acknowledge the conflicting impulses which dwell within my nature and learn to master them, so that I remain free to choose my road through life. I regain my inner freedom from the strong social pressures which threaten the integrity

of my personality. Above all, in this silence a person chooses his own unique calling, the spring of his inner cohesion, the pattern which he will allow to shape all aspects of his personal and his social life.

The only true freedom which a person possesses is the choice of his own servitude. And the most satisfying of servitudes is an integrated calling which matches the will of his Creator. That is a vocation.

Inner cohesion comes first, therefore; and it creates in its turn a coherence of personal, family and social life.

Chicken and egg

Our conception of human happiness must, if it is not to be totally empty, originate in our own personal experience of a satisfying life. The critical spirit produced by an unsatisfying life or an unsatisfactory society does not by itself provide us with an idea of what a life of happiness might be like, or with the recipe for acquiring it.

My own experience, and even more the experience which the men incarcerated in the Gulag have recounted, the experience of friends I met last year in the shanty towns around Rio de Janeiro and of the refugees from South-East Asia who have been thrust from prison to camp to exile—this experience repeated through the centuries confirms that a person can find and retain inner cohesion and coherence of life no matter what the conditions. The long line of martyrs proves that this inheritance, once possessed, is more precious than life itself.

Those who make the greatest contribution to the bettering of society will not necessarily be found among the great whose critical sense has been sharpened by the cultivating of their minds; they will arise from those who, simple though they may be, find the courage to claim for themselves this inheritance of cohesion and coherence.

So many of the roads essayed by so many of the revolutionaries have ended in disillusion, because their signposts have been their criticism of society rather than their own existential experience of a satisfying life.

As in the chicken-and-egg situation, an experience of a satisfying life instils a desire to improve the conditions of living, and an improvement in the conditions of living creates a greater possibility of a satisfying life. Some of our contemporaries seem to

SIGNPOSTS contd on p4

WHEN YOU'VE MADE IT THROUGH THE TRAFFIC LIGHTS,

I WAS BORN and brought up on a farm in Rhodesia. As a young child most of my friends were the black children whose parents worked on the farm.

It was when I first went to school that I began to notice the racial divisions in our land, and the prejudices of our society began to affect me. I began to take the privileges that my white skin gave me for granted—that I would get a good education, a top job and servants to work for me.

While I was at school my father became Prime Minister. After a while I noticed that it affected the way other people treated me. Some who had been my friends no longer spoke to me because they disagreed with my father's politics, while others tried to become my friends to win favour or status.

Often people would introduce me as 'the PM's son' and never feel they had to mention my name at all. I began to react to this.

Then I went to university in South Africa. If there was a demonstration or protest march on campus I would be there. It gave me a fantastic buzz to walk round and have people point me out, not as 'the PM's son', but as 'that revolutionary student leader'. As for the issues I protested about, I didn't even know what they were. I didn't really care about academic freedom, black rights or anything else, just about satisfying the ego of a young man who wanted to be himself, not someone else's son.

Drug-smuggling

I was studying law, but spent more time breaking it. I went out of my way to find exciting or dangerous things to do; I was soon in trouble with the police. I started taking drugs and soon I had tried everything going from hash to heroin.

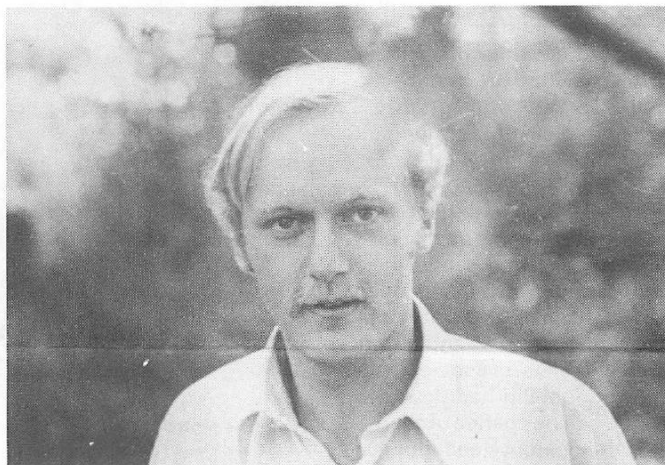
One of the problems of going to university was that each year I had to take exams. At the end of my first year I reeled into the examination room ten minutes late, blind drunk and exhaling marijuana smoke. There was a Latin question. I hadn't done any Latin the whole year. So I wrote to the professor saying that in my opinion the works of Justinian had been translated by far more eminent Latin scholars than I would ever aspire to be, and could he refer to them for my answer. I received a letter back from the Law Department expelling me.

It was quite a blow. In university I had friends who liked me for myself and I trusted them completely. It meant that I would have to go back to Rhodesia where the guerrilla war was slowly escalating, where I would once again be 'the PM's son' and where I'd be liable to be called up into the army. I could do nothing about the first two, but I was a peace-loving, long-haired hippy and the last thing I wanted to do was to get my hair cut and march up and down with a rifle shooting at people.

I decided to rig my medical exam and got some medical students to help. I took all sorts of weird and wonderful mixtures that turned me into a walking cabbage. They

Last week BBC TV, in its series, 'The light of experience', carried a 20-minute programme on **Alec Smith**, son of the last Rhodesian Prime Minister. *The Times* described the programme as 'a moving story', while *The Guardian* called it 'an identity search through drug addiction and despair to a new and positive role in the country once led by his father'. We print his talk, slightly shortened:

By permission of BBC TV



took me to the army medical centre and shoved me through the door in a state of collapse. My hearing was hardly functioning, my reflexes were non-existent, my eyesight was blurred and my blood-pressure low.

I had forgotten to take my father into account. I was declared A1 fit and called up. I spent the next year in the army. I hated the system. I blamed my father for everything because I believed he had had me called up. When my full-time national service ended, I drifted into a meaningless life of drinking and drug-taking. I had no job, no prospects and an ever increasing habit to satisfy.

The best way to make lots of fast money was to smuggle drugs. Within a few months I was a full-time drug dealer—mostly marijuana but also LSD and anything else I could find. I was caught smuggling a large amount of marijuana into Rhodesia from Mozambique.

Face to face

When I went for trial my lawyer had worked out a script which made me look sorry and repentant. I never believed a word of it as I spoke, but it worked.

To pay the fine I needed money. Smuggling was out because the police were watching me, so I had to get a job. I managed to bluff my way into a job as an industrial photographer. But my new life did nothing at all to change the bitterness and hate which filled me and I continued taking drugs, every few months doing more call-ups in the infantry.

I started to look around for other things and tried Eastern mysticism and yoga. Everything was something that would draw attention to me, help me, make me feel better. Then one day someone I hardly knew invited me to his church. I was surprised and curious. I hadn't been to a church for years and I had never been invited to one before.

The service began in a fairly normal way. Then half way through I realised I was somewhere else. After years of drug trips and mind-bending experiences I should have been able to cope. But I couldn't. I was suddenly face to face with God. It was the most amazing experience I have ever had. I have never been able to find words to describe it.

But I didn't want to surrender my life to God or to anyone else, and I said 'No'. As I did, there was a sudden emptiness.

For the next two weeks I went round convinced that having met God and said no to Him, my reason for existence was over. I drove the streets literally praying I would make it to the next traffic lights. I was sure I had blown it, and any second the clouds would part and a bolt of lightning would come and get me.

I can tell you I was happy when I had that same feeling of peace again and this time I said 'Yes'. I agreed to surrender my life to Jesus Christ.

I no longer needed drugs. The hatred and bitterness that I had built up disappeared, and I went home to make friends with my parents. Above all, I found strength to sort out my life, and for the first time since I started school I began to lose my racial prejudice, to understand and even to care about my country and its problems—even my father and his problems.

Crazy?

It's one thing to turn your back on a way of life, but where do you go from there? Aimlessly giving your life to Jesus, or anything else, is as pointless as drifting along as a junkie. In a way I was lucky because, with my country in the middle of a bloody civil war, I was able to develop two roles. My national service became important instead of an intrusion. At the same time I knew that sooner or later the war would be over, and people

WHERE THEN?

would be needed to rebuild.

I looked for where to start that process even when I was fighting. Then I met up with people working with Moral Re-Armament who were already trying to build solid foundations for the future. Through them I met a Methodist minister, Arthur Kanodereka, who was also a nationalist political leader. He hated whites and actively supported the guerrillas. At an international conference which I helped to organise he decided to work together with all races for the future.

His change of heart presented me with my first real test. He asked me to speak in his church in the African township of Harare. On the day before I was due to speak in his church, police had shot and killed 13 people in a riot there.

When I arrived the church was full. The atmosphere was tense, and I felt unsafe and unhappy. I remember looking at the door to see how far I'd have to run to escape. This church was a refuge for black guerrillas.

Arthur introduced me as the son of the Prime Minister, his greatest enemy, whose army was hunting down black guerrillas. What saved the day was the change in Arthur and in me that meant that I, who represented everything these black people hated, could stand with him, and we could look forward together to the end of the war.

When my white friends heard what I had done they thought I was crazy. But I just did what seemed right.

Zimbabwe's future

For the next four years Arthur and I worked closely together to heal the racial and political divisions in our land. When I was not away fighting I would often meet young guerrillas from Arthur's church and discuss the future with them.

Just over a year ago, Arthur Kanodereka was assassinated. I was stunned. His death was a loss not only to me but to the whole country, and I want to continue his work.

My father is no longer Prime Minister. But even if he were, it would not matter to me. I regret the heartache and problems I created for my family at the time when my father had more than enough problems. I now see that he worked through politics to do what he believed was right, while I must work through people for what I believe to be right. I've been a rebel, a drug addict and a soldier and now I'm an army chaplain. Perhaps because of these experiences, and because I now have a wife and child myself, I can help carry some of the responsibility for the future of Zimbabwe.

The war has taken many lives and there's a legacy of hate to overcome. I have lived for years with hatred—family hatred, racial hatred, the hatred of one army for another. I have learnt to overcome hatred in my own heart and now I want to use my experience to help in the reconstruction and the rehabilitation of my country, and to prepare people for peace when they have known nothing but war.

REFUGEES MUST KEEP FREEDOM IN PARADISE

Phieng is a Laotian now living in France. He recently spent several months at the MRA centre in India where he talked to **Reginald Holme**:

DISGUISED AS FISHERMEN and women, Phieng and his three friends climbed into the little boat to cross the Mekong River to freedom. Phieng, a 22-year-old student, had decided to escape to Thailand after the Pathet Lao Communists gained control of the government of his country, Laos. He had felt his life was in danger.

Not that he was anti-communist. As General Secretary of the 3000-strong Students' Association in the largest high school of Vientiane, capital of Laos, he had been keen on Marxist ideas. And he knew five of the new Communist Cabinet Ministers who had ousted a Right and Left Coalition government in 1975. But Phieng had discovered an ideology which attracted him more than Communism.

Phieng's brother diverted the attention of the river guards by telling them there was a fight going on further down the river. The little boat got safely across.

Revolutionary root

Once on the Thai shore the four took a taxi and put 50km between themselves and the border in case they were pursued. Then they got a train to Bangkok, where Phieng thought he might meet friends.

Two French friends whom he had worked with in Laos and South Vietnam were at that time in Hong Kong. Strangely enough, they suddenly had a feeling that someone might cross the Mekong and need their help in Bangkok. They arrived in Bangkok in time to meet Phieng and help him to get to France as a refugee.

He took with him the new ideas which he had begun to find while Laos was still under democratic government. When an MRA musical revue was presented in Vientiane in 1974, Phieng had taken part in discussions between students and the cast. He was interested because of his experience of Communism. 'I had the root of revolutionary thought in me,' he said. 'I wanted to see society and the world change.'

Re-education camp

'It was a French girl who pulled me up with a jolt,' he said. 'She had rebelled against her father. Her story was my story. I hated my father, an infantry colonel who was often away fighting the Pathet Lao. Polygamy was common and socially accepted. I criticised my father for spending money on other women, and because I saw my mother crying. So at 13 I left my family, got schooling through a scholarship and lived in a boarding house. This French girl had asked herself, "Am I any better than my father?" I asked myself the same question. I realised I used women too.'

At the same time the Prime Minister of Laos of the day made money available to send students to Asia Plateau, the MRA centre in Maharashtra, India. Phieng was one who went.

'At Asia Plateau I saw I must apologise to my father for hating him, and I wrote to him. One of our group belonged to the tribal Huong people. He apologised for his hatred of Laotians. I saw then that he who can cure hate can bring change in society and may change history. It was a vision that gripped my mind and heart.'

'When we returned to Laos I found my father had changed quite a lot. He began to help my mother with the cooking and washing up and we did this together. He became one of my best friends.'

For five years Phieng has not had any direct word from his father, who is in a 're-education camp' for officers and supporters of the old regime. His sister sent word that their father was not getting enough food and had aged considerably.

As an exile in France, he thinks often of his far-off land. 'But I don't feel sad and lonely,' he said. 'Most of the students who were with me in Panchgani are now also in France. We feel like a family, even closer than childhood friends. And hundreds of French families have welcomed us.'

Warning

There are some 60,000 Laotians in France. 'When we come to France it seems like Paradise,' Phieng says. 'We can see TV, drive cars, enjoy technology 20 years ahead of what we left behind. One could have an easy life, with the French government paying. People lose their dynamism.'

'But you can't stand in the middle. Either you are in the group who destroys or in the group who builds. If you live in comfort you don't want to sacrifice. If you have enough for yourself, some ask, why should you fight for the common good? We need people like Solzhenitsyn who will tell the truth and challenge the way we live.'

'Laotians who have suffered should share their experiences. They can help to stop tyranny coming to the West.' In a poem published in Laotian and French, Phieng writes of his responsibility for what happened in his country. 'We lost our country because we didn't fight corruption. We can learn from our mistakes and warn against tyranny.'

Phieng took a course in agriculture in France and then taught the subject. Recently he returned to Asia Plateau and worked for several months as a volunteer on the farm. He finds in animal husbandry a creativeness and satisfaction. 'When I switch off the tractor and look at the sky, I feel close to God.'



Muslims' impressions of Christianity owe more to Europe's armies than her missionaries.

Learning in Cracow

ANNEJET CAMPBELL, who has recently been in Poland, writes:

'IF NECESSARY we will fight with a cross in one hand and a knife in the other,' someone said to me. It was a bold statement. Russian troops are stationed 30km outside Warsaw and there are 800,000 more in East Germany. One woman described it as 'living on a volcano'.

Everyday life is hard for the Poles. The average wage is 4000 zloties per month (about £60) and a pair of shoes costs 900Zl. Meat is only for export and sugar is rationed. Due to the acute housing shortage newly married couples are compelled to live with their parents for at least seven years.

Warsaw, the modern capital, was totally destroyed on Hitler's orders, house by house, and three quarters of its population were murdered. It brought tears to my eyes, standing in the old market square, to realise that the houses I saw around me had been rebuilt with meticulous care in exact replica of the old houses.

The ancient and beautiful capital of Cracow has one of the oldest universities in Europe. Faustus is said to have studied there—as did Copernicus, Lenin and Pope John Paul. We visited the Cathedral on the second anniversary of his election and the church was jammed with people and groups of school children. 'We got our courage and inspiration from the visit of the Pope to our country last year,' I was told.

For me the challenge of Poland is to live my faith as militantly as they dare to live theirs. Are we using our freedom to build a society that works? This may be the greatest thing we can do for the Poles.

NORWAY and the 900 million

The events of the last year have forced Western nations to re-examine their relations with the world of Islam. They challenge individual Christians too to search for a deeper understanding of the faith that motivates 900 million of world's population.

Norway's Muslims—mainly from Turkey and Pakistan—are still only a tiny fraction of the country's total population. But their presence may require a revolution in Norwegians' thinking, suggests EINAR ENGBRETTSEN in a recent article in the regional daily newspaper 'Drammens Tidende Buskeruds Blad'. We print extracts from his article:

THEY HAVE BEEN LYING THERE a long time—three grey giants. They have become part of the landscape I see from my window every day—three tankers which ought to be in Libya but are anchored at the rim of Sande Bay. The Swedish owners have had a disagreement with the Muslim leaders of Libya who ordered the ships—and now no one seems to want to buy ships that could put them up against a rich Arab nation.

I read the papers and the headlines are full of the conflict between the two Islamic states, Iran and Iraq. I go to get petrol for my car and the bill reminds me of developments in the Middle East. I hear that a Pakistani family are building a house nearby.

In different ways, from different angles, the Muslim world is coming nearer to us.

Some time ago I got talking to a Turk who lives and works in Norway. I asked him what it was like to be a Muslim among so many Lutherans. He did not give me a direct answer, but said he was glad to live in Norway. It wasn't so easy to practice one's faith here, he said with a smile of resignation. He ought to turn towards Mecca five times a day and kneel to pray. But where, he asked, could he do that without drawing too much attention to himself?

In 1529 Vienna was besieged by Turkish armies. The pulpits of Europe thundered forth that Muslims were 'the enemies of Christ'. Nevertheless Theodor Bibliander, a Swiss, had the incredible courage to publish the Quran in Latin, the language spoken by most educated Europeans of the day. The printer in Basel was imprisoned and later freed on the intervention of Luther.

Europe has learned something since then—but only a little. Few in Norway know what the Quran contains, and what they think

they know is often wrong.

On the other hand, Muslims' understanding of Christianity is not complete either. Europe's armies have made a stronger impression on them than her missionaries.

There was a time not long ago when Europeans were 'immigrants' in the Middle East, Asia and Africa—but with a difference. While today's immigrants get the worst jobs and houses, the Europeans had the best jobs and the best houses. They took over.

Norwegians may protest that Islam is a warlike religion. But just as it is senseless to judge the Bible on the behaviour of Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland, so it is senseless to judge the Quran by upheavals in the Middle East.

It is hardly God-given love that lies behind our lack of interest, understanding and insight into what the world's 900 million Muslims believe and think. The spiritual leader of the Muslims in the Nordic lands, Al Mojaddedi (born in Kabul, Afghanistan) said to us Christians, 'If you don't respect and honour the prophet Muhammed, at least don't treat him with disrespect and contempt.'

I do not believe in mixing religions, but I do believe in co-operation between people of different religions. You don't detract from your own faith by respecting another man's belief, quite the reverse.

What will become of humanity in the 1980's will be decided, to a great extent, by the world of Islam. What happens to the world of Islam could partly depend on our attitude. Our attitude could depend on whether or not we take a little more time to find out what Muslims believe, think and feel. It could mean stretching our brains and widening our hearts. It may not be an easy thing to do. But it could be a Christian thing to do.

SIGNPOSTS contd from p1

me to fall into the error of wanting to impose what they imagine will be improvements in the life of society which are not, however, the fruit of a positive experience in their own lives. So the quiet voice of Mother Teresa is heard more clearly than theirs.

Our vision for humanity is that each person can find within himself, through the silence of his own spirit, the signposts for his own revolutionary path. Our experience—astonishing for people who do not believe in a unique Creator, decisive for everyone who has the courage to travel the experimental road—is that these revolutionary trails, marked out by a multitude of experiences of the most diverse people in all corners of the world, in the end converge.

When the individual finds his own integrity, humanity again finds its unity. There lies our great hope. Within the personal will be won the battle for the global.