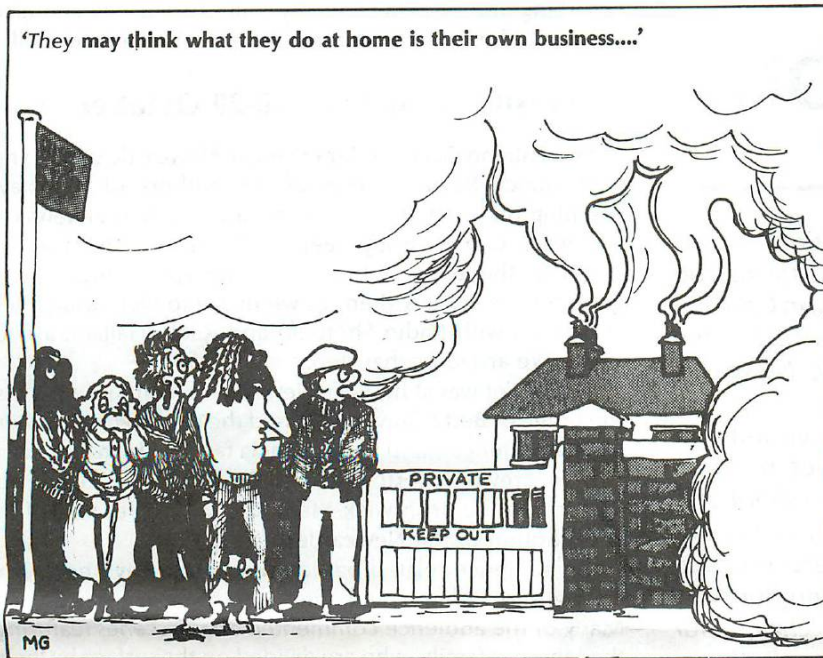
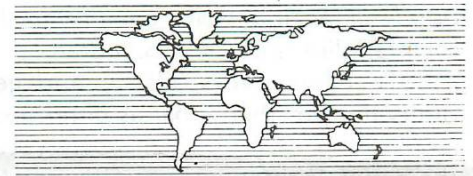


# NEW WORLD NEWS

Vol 31 No21 12 Nov 1983 20p



'They may think what they do at home is their own business....'

## PUBLIC IMPACT OF PRIVATE LIVES

by former British diplomat ARK Mackenzie

HOW DO WE react when another scandal is uncovered involving people in high places? Do we just smirk in the bar? Condemn? Condone? Or forget it?

Mrs Thatcher says a crucial battle is going on for the minds and hearts of people all over the world. Is there any connexion between that battle and these private dramas?

I believe there is—for three reasons.

**First, because of the nature of democracy.** Other systems of government—dictatorships—can try other types of strength: Big Brother's supervision, re-education camps, psychiatric hospitals. But democracy's strength depends ultimately on the character of the people who speak in her name.

Democracy implies freedom, and freedom implies discipline. Without morality freedom ends in permissive anarchy. Therefore anything that weakens morality weakens democracy. And how can you compartmentalise morality?

Of course, the same rules must apply to everybody. Yet those standing for public office—in any walk of life—are special in one way. By aspiring to leadership they are inviting our trust. That trust is bound to be shaken if they are found to have got themselves into positions where they are compelled to break promises. Brilliance is not enough. For democracy, character also counts.

The Watergate affair proved that. No one suggested that American security was endangered in that case. Nixon had to go because trust had been broken, and the link between public and private morals was underlined by the common remark at the time: 'Would you buy a second-hand car from Richard Nixon?'

**Secondly, because of Britain's position in the world.** We cannot match the superpowers in military or economic strength. But we still have prestige as the cradle of democracy, personal liberty and fair play. Because of this, our international influence far exceeds our size. Everything depends on whether we are seen to be living out our

beliefs. If we try to sweep scandal under the carpet, many overseas critics will nod knowingly and say, 'You see, the British talk big: but when their interests are affected, they bend the rules.'

There was a highly embarrassing example of this recently at the world golf championships at Wentworth, when an unknown spectator threw a British player's ball back on to the green so that he would have a better chance of getting into the final. A private act, no doubt; but when caught by the cameras and reproduced on TV screens all over the world, Britain's reputation for fair play got badly dented.

**Thirdly, because of my own experience,** privately and in 35 years of public service. I know that living a lie, even in very small matters, makes me, in significant measure, less free, less creative and efficient. If that is true of an ordinary individual, how much more true—and more significant—must it be in the life of someone holding high office for the state? There is a freedom about living without pretence which would rejuvenate many a burdened leader—not only in politics.

What is to be learned from these recurring melodramas? Is it perhaps what Prince Charles recently stressed in a courageous and unusual speech: that to listen to 'the inner voice'—call it conscience, call it God—is 'the beginning of wisdom'? To restore conscience to a central place in private and public life could be the path to national salvation. To put moral standards first would not be Victorian: it would be revolutionary. It would be a revolution that would put our economic performance up, our divorce rates down and would make democracy more secure. Not to mention the savings in government bills for dealing with drugs, abortions, one-parent families and the control of vandalism and crime.

Certainly there is no place for gloating over these scandals. The best of us is vulnerable. Yet as Solzhenitsyn has said: 'Man's hope lies in this, that we are capable of change.' And if men can change in the Gulag Archipelago, they can change anywhere. ■

CONTENTS: CLASHPOINT DIARY p 2-3; MONEY p 4-8

# CLASHPOINT DIARY

## EYE-OPENER ON THE ROAD

At the beginning of October the multiracial play, 'Clashpoint', set out on a tour of British towns and cities. We reported the first performances, in Croydon and Brixton, in our issue of October 15. Since then the play has been performed in Newbury, Newcastle upon Tyne, Sheffield and Nottingham.

'Clashpoint' looks at the potential and tensions of a multiracial community through the lives of three pupils at an inner-city comprehensive school and their families and teachers. It dramatises the causes of clash between races, classes and generations and offers the possibility that as bitterness and hurts are healed in the individual, society can change for the better. Written by Betty Gray and Nancy Ruthven, it is performed by a multiracial company. We print the first instalment of the tour diary of CAROL DENYER, born in South Africa and now living in Kent, who plays the part of Hazel Browne, the West Indian mother.

### Newbury, 12-15 October

YOU CAN'T GET MUCH FURTHER away from Brixton than Newbury, a country town in Berkshire with a very small black-British population. As the *Newbury Weekly News* commented in its review of the play, 'Unless you happen to live near Greenham Common, it is possible to spend a quiet, peaceful life in Newbury and never know any kind of violence—certainly not the race hatred that erupts in our northern cities.' The writer, E M Slater, went on, 'Going to see the play *Clashpoint* at St Bart's School last week was a very effective eye-opener.' The response from many of the audience reflected this. 'I never knew, I just never knew,' somebody told me. I was surprised to find myself in the role of educator.

This was something we had to get used to as we took classes at St Bartholomew's School, where our performances took place. We also took morning assembly at one of the school houses. As 400 eyes stared up at me, I described how my headmaster in Cape Town used to walk up and down the rows at assembly checking our hair and shoes. All over the hall heads bent to check their own. The ice was broken. I could go on to describe what it was like to experience discrimination—for instance when my mother and I were thrown off a bus because there were no more seats in its 'coloured' section.

This assembly was in preparation for our first schools' performance in Newbury. After the play, the students were told that the *Clashpoint* company would be having lunch in the canteen, should they wish to talk to us. They were so eager to do so that we became quite reconciled to cold chips!

We had three performances in Newbury. 'It is unashamedly a play with a message,' wrote E M Slater. 'The actors make no secret of their identification with that message, but that does not obscure the fact that it is an extremely well-written,

absorbing and entertaining play, full of humanity and nice touches of humour to counteract the tensions and turmoils.'

### Newcastle upon Tyne, 18-20 October

My husband Gary and I travelled to Newcastle upon Tyne with Nancy Ruthven, one of the authors of the play, stopping off at Sheffield for press and radio interviews on the way. Our journey seemed fated—on the way to Sheffield the exhaust broke and we spent three hours getting it fixed, and then, as we drove to Newcastle after interviews with Radio Sheffield and Radio Hallam, a tyre burst. We arrived exhausted.

*Clashpoint* was at home in Newcastle in many ways, as it is the home of Betty Gray, who based the play on many of her own experiences, and of the Shukla family who have taken part in previous performances. We had been invited to perform in the Brunswick Methodist Church as part of its contribution to the Newcastle Festival 1983.

The audience related particularly to the play's northern setting and humour and the family tensions it portrays. Many of the audience commented on the scenes featuring the Jennings family, who are divided on the surface by their political beliefs and more deeply by the ways they have been hurt in the past. A former trade union branch secretary, now a member of the co-operative formed in Consett to create jobs in the town after the closure of its steelworks, identified with Mr Jennings, who finds that he is not militant enough for the young trade unionists; a Sikh doctor told us how he felt for the young British who have had a decent upbringing and education, but cannot find work and feel part of the 'dustbin generation'. Several people asked if they could talk further about the idea of 'listening to the inner voice' of conscience, through which the Indian deputy headmaster sets reconciliation in motion.

'*Clashpoint* is a very funny play, not least for the fondly disapproving eye it casts on stereotypes,' wrote Sue Hercombe in an interview with Betty Gray in the regional daily paper, *The Journal*. 'Betty's play is about relationships. It is witty, moving, pertinent and well-informed.'

Betty told Sue Hercombe how she had grown up 'feeling a great deal of bitterness against society'. 'Now I feel that the class war is a terrible waste of time. We should fight the things that are really important—like racial discrimination, pollution and poverty in the Third World....All I want is for this play to make a real impact on the people who see it. I want them to question their own attitudes to race—and to other issues raised by the play such as the class war and the importance of family life.'

'*Clashpoint* is important because it examines the complex issue of racial prejudice without blaming anyone simplistically,' commented the town's *Evening Chronicle*.

### Newcastle to Sheffield, 20 October

Our Newcastle hosts bade us farewell with a generous practical gift—£2 for each member of the company for lunch on the way to Sheffield, where we were to be received by the Provost of the Cathedral at 4.00 pm.

Gary and I were travelling with Nancy again. It was a beautiful day, if nippy, and we were all enjoying ourselves when the car began making a joyful noise of its own. The exhaust had broken again, even though Nancy had had it checked in Newcastle. Once again we had long, chilly, waits. We began to feel thoroughly fed up with each other. The last

straw came when Gary and I went off to phone Sheffield and found that everyone we tried to reach was already at the reception. The atmosphere was icy as we drove on to Sheffield and then we missed the turn into the city! Needless to say, none of us slept very well that night.

In the next days I was in a state of inner turmoil. How could I take part in *Clashpoint*, with its message of apology and reconciliation, if I felt so divided from Nancy? I was scared of approaching her to talk things out, and wanted to try and keep the peace without saying anything. But then, I knew, my frustration would not really go away.

In the end I wrote Nancy a three-page letter, not just about the journey but also about the deepest reasons why I had decided to tour with the play. Nancy responded and we had a long talk. She explained how she had felt during the drive and told me where she felt she had been wrong. This has created a strong bond of friendship between us and I have learnt that instead of feeling frustrated when things don't work out well, I need to turn to God and trust that He will show me what to do.

## Sheffield, 20-22 and 23-28 October

*Clashpoint's* week in Sheffield began with a welcome reception from the Committee of Invitation and a short service of commissioning in the Cathedral, led by the Provost, where each of the company were prayed for, including the three of us still on the road. Among those of the Committee who had come to welcome us were the President of the Chamber of Trade, the Chairman of the Council for Racial Equality, the Chairman of the magistrates' Bench, last year's Chairman of the Sheffield Council of Churches and police officers, trade unionists, community leaders and businessmen.

Our Sheffield hosts were determined that we should get an all round view of their city. As one of the cast, John Locke, commented at our final meeting in Sheffield, most of the south of England knows very little of the problems of the north. It was certainly true of me.

We were taken on a tour of Sheffield by a man who had worked for 40 years in the steel industry and had also been a city councillor. He showed us factory after factory with 'For Sale' signs and factories which were being pulled down. It was a grim tour. Earlier we had visited a museum of Sheffield industry—from the poverty and disease of the industrial revolution to Sheffield's heyday as a flourishing steel and cutlery centre. A line from *Clashpoint* came alive for me, 'There was poverty and unemployment in those days too—it seems we have come full circle.'

A group of us went to the Pakistani Youth Centre to invite them to the play. 'Why have you come to us?' they asked. 'Why don't you go to the police and other ethnic groups?' We listened as they told us about the problems and injustices they face.

When a group went to the South Yorkshire Police headquarters to speak to a roomful of police sergeants, we were asked the same question—'Why have you come to us? Why not go to the social and civic workers and leaders of the ethnic groups?' Their question gave us an insight into their feelings—and was partly answered by a police inspector who had already seen the play, 'This play does not nobble the police.' We listened to their side of the story, their frustration at what they see as a reversal of their police oath to act without 'fear or favour'. They quoted an example of two similar cases involving the illegal sale of drink by a white man and a black man, where the white man was



Howard

**The Master and Mistress Cutler of Sheffield, Mr and Mrs Denys Carr, and the President of the Sheffield and District Chamber of Trade, Eric Priestley, talk to Nancy Ruthven and Bob Normington from the 'Clashpoint' company.**

raided and fined, but not the black, for fear of starting a riot. Later one of the officers who had been most outspoken came up to us and expressed his gratitude for what we were doing. He recognised that the problem was not colour but attitudes, he said. The police sergeants came to see the play.

A group of us were also invited to meet the Lord and Lady Mayoress of Sheffield at the Town Hall and the Master and Mistress Cutler in the Cutlers' Hall. During the week we played to 12 school parties, and, as in Newbury, some of us took lessons in schools. The two public performances drew 700 people, from all walks of life, including the Sheffield Chamber of Trade and the University.

## Nottingham, 22-23 October

During our week in Sheffield, we travelled to Nottingham for a one-night stand. This meant striking the set late after Friday night's performance in Sheffield and setting out for Nottingham early the next morning. As we travelled through the foggy orange haze to Robin Hood country, we were somewhat bleary-eyed.

We spent the morning setting up the stage and carrying out the technical rehearsal at the College of Further Education, opposite the Trip to Jerusalem, reputedly England's oldest inn, built into the Nottingham Castle rock.

After the performance that night I had a long conversation with two black youths. One was a new Christian, worried about how to get the right balance between his faith and his political involvement. The other couldn't see the need for faith at all and believed a new society could be built through political action alone.

We talked about my experience that God can lead, if you want Him to, and that it is important to be clear that your own motivation is right before getting involved in politics. Otherwise you can get caught up in a power game which will not achieve the things you are fighting for and may destroy you in the process.

## Tirley Garth, 29 October

Now we are at Tirley Garth, the MRA centre in the North of England, where our visit has coincided with a medical conference. We are resting and recharging the batteries before setting out for Manchester, Bristol and Liverpool—of which you will hear more in a month's time. ■

*Money gives power, status, independence. Yet it also wields a power of its own. It can fascinate, obsess, even enslave.*

*Not that there's anything wrong with money—it's useful stuff, facilitating trade and commerce, the creation of coal mines and shopping at the supermarket. But it's not the answer to all our dreams. Nor is it worth the family feuds and webs of deception we often weave around it.*

*In the next pages we ask, what is money's rightful place in the scheme of things?*

## ACCOUNTING FOR THE INTANGIBLES

by Kenneth Noble

EVERY INCH OF NIGEL MORSHEAD's pin-stripe suited six-foot frame marks him as a City man. This is hardly surprising as he began his career in London's financial zone. Yet he did not start out to be a financial man. 'I left Cambridge with a third class degree in Greek, Latin and ancient history, and took up accountancy to earn a living.'

On qualifying as a chartered accountant in 1955, Morshead joined the Commonwealth Development Finance Company (CDFC) which provided finance for aid projects in developing Commonwealth countries. At first he felt that 'many of the problems of the developing world could be solved if we could channel more money to them'—a widely held belief at that time. However, as he got to know more about industry, he became convinced that Britain was meant to do more than just distribute money. 'I saw that if we could resolve our industrial problems we would offer a *hope-giving example* to the world. In any case, we would have little money left for development if greed and division were the rule in industry.'

Morshead got to know the developing world at first hand when the CDFC despatched him to Nigeria to set up the Lagos stock exchange. 'I guess I was a 5-star economic imperialist,' he says dryly. 'As an idea it wasn't bad—to set up a flexible capital market which would give Nigerians the chance to show confidence in their own economy by *investing in it*. But financial structures are not enough to ensure a sound financial basis for a country. Money is closely tied up with morals, and cash with character.'

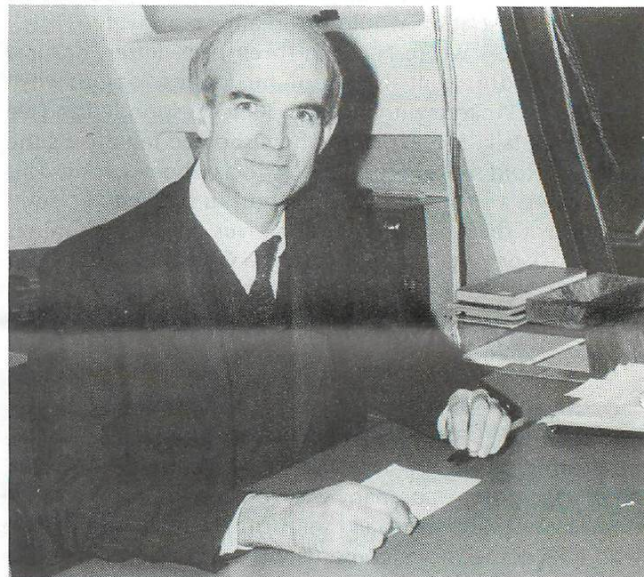
This was illustrated on a later visit to Nigeria when a young officer in Customs and Excise tried to involve Morshead in mispending money from his department. Morshead managed to convince the officer that this was equivalent to stealing from his government. As a result the officer wrote to his department and restored money he had already misdirected.

On several subsequent visits to Nigeria in connection with Moral Re-Armament Morshead has met others working to answer corruption there. Some of them have produced a play which shows how corruption dissipates development, and paints a vision of a brighter future when absolute standards begin to be accepted.

'What about those who say that one person can do little in the face of widespread corruption?' I want to know.

'I think there are many people, far more than one might expect, who respond in their heart of hearts when they see someone taking a stand of this kind,' says Morshead. 'And anybody can make a start.' He hastens to make clear that corruption is not only found in the Third World. A case involving a well-known City firm has recently come to light.

The City is a subject that arouses strong passions in some. Does he feel that the City works in the best interests of the nation—could more of the financial resources be used to help answer unemployment, for example?



Cummock

He agrees that the City could do better at this—but 'not a lot better'. Unemployment needs tackling on a wider front. 'My own company set out to provide jobs for many people by using our good name to help them raise capital,' he adds.

Most people who work in the City are not personally wealthy but act for clients who want a good return on their investments, he goes on. 'These clients are not just a rich minority. Millions of people invest indirectly through their insurance companies, pension funds, churches, friendly societies or trade unions. If the brokers put too much money into high-risk enterprises in the hope of creating more jobs, people will soon be breathing down their necks.'

He concedes that great power is concentrated in the City. This can be used responsibly or abused. A great deal depends on the people who wield it. 'There are good and bad capitalists, just as there are *good and bad communists*.' He talks of the strong Christian tradition in the City—there are 32 Anglican churches alone in the square mile. 'My word is my bond' has been the ruling principle, and a good one. 'It saves a lot of paperwork, too!'

Morshead left the City 20 years ago when he pursued 'a calling' to work full-time with MRA. 'I felt that I should take on the battle to help people in finance and industry put God first in their lives,' he explains. This meant giving up his salary and 'living on faith and prayer'. Morshead is convinced of the principle that 'where God guides He provides'—and it has certainly kept him afloat with few visible means of support. It first came into play on the day he handed in his resignation, when he learnt that he had inherited £4,400. This gave him an income of £5 per week.

'The first task I was given,' he recalls, 'was to raise the funds needed to double the size of the Westminster Theatre, which belongs to MRA. Till then I had felt that what I could contribute was limited by my income. Within a week

of giving up my job a lady put a cheque for this project into my hands that was equivalent to four years of my salary.' The extensions were completed, though with what one suspects might be undue modesty he attributes most of the success to other people. 'I wrote letters of thanks and spent the money,' he says.

Soon after this, Morshead married. At first they lived in a house belonging to MRA which they shared with several other people. The birth of their first son seemed the right moment to buy a house of their own. Nigel Morshead's £4,400 had by this time grown to £7,000—still far short of the £20,000 they needed to buy a suitable house for the work they felt called to do. However, they put down the £2,000 deposit, having just received two gifts of £1,000 from relatives. 'After that nothing came for two months.'

The Morsheads told no one about their needs except relations and a few close friends. Instead they decided to pray each day for 20 minutes. 'At first it seemed an awfully long time. But it was an enriching experience.' It was a testing time. Yet God seemed to be saying that they should 'go out and fight His battle' and leave the money to Him.

The day for the final payment grew closer. Two days to go and the halfway point not reached—then a businesswoman approached Nigel Morshead. She had wound up a small family firm and wanted to use the proceeds to help accommodate one of the people who worked at the Westminster Theatre. With a reserve that was extreme even by English standards, Morshead refrained from mentioning his situation. However, the lady also spoke to one of his colleagues. The result was an interest-free 15-year loan which made up the short-fall.

## Confident

In January last year Nigel Morshead took over as Treasurer of Moral Re-Armament. How have things been going? 'Overall, we have a strong sense that God is in charge of our work and that we need to keep finding His way,' replies Morshead. 'We have had heavy expenses over the last two years as we have taken plays which give much-needed truth around the country. Also, to take advantage of new technology, we have computerised much of our administration. Meanwhile we have to keep our existing "plant"—the Westminster Theatre and MRA offices—going. We wondered how it would work out. Yet we have had some very generous legacies over this time. One of them doubled in value after the donor's death.'

He also spoke of many other unexpected gifts. Recently a cheque for £40 came from a retired Liverpool teacher, now living in an old people's home, who wanted to help with the visit of the play *Clashpoint* to her city. A senior citizen in Kent sent £1,000 for the same purpose after receiving a legacy.

Does the fact that 'faith and prayer' works, both personally and in financing a multi-faceted programme like Moral Re-Armament, have a significance for society as a whole? 'I think it has,' replies Morshead. 'There is a tendency these days to feel helpless in the face of a declining economy. I believe that everyone has a chance to play a part in forming a new economy where decisions are based, not on the visible resources available, but on what God wants done. The first need is a willingness to step out in faith.'

As he returns to his ledgers and computer print-outs, I reflect that he looks remarkably confident for a City-trained man whose all-too-tangible liabilities outweigh his tangible assets. ■

ERIC PEARSON, a retired bank manager, describes some of the personal decisions which his work involved:



## BANKING ON HONESTY

A CUSTOMER WHOM I HAD helped start up in business and I had known for some time came in one day. I knew that he had been fiddling his income tax and I had expressed my disapproval, but it was water off a duck's back.

'How long does it take to sell National Savings Certificates?' he asked.

'About seven days,' I replied. 'Do you want me to arrange it?'

'Well no. It's my tax accountant who wants to know if I have any NSCs.'

'So you want to sell them and then tell him No?'

'That's right,' he replied.

I was silent for a time trying to see what was right. Then I said, 'You know you puzzle me. I saw you start up in business with little capital. You've worked hard and made a success of it and you make an excellent product. You've always been straight with me but when it comes to the Inspector of Taxes you don't fit in with my image of you.'

He shot up out of his chair so sharply that I was startled. 'What do you want me to do?' he demanded.

'I don't want you to do anything except be the man God made you to be,' I replied. He asked what I meant so I said that, in his position, I would tell the tax inspector the truth. 'I think you would be much happier and it might help your ulcers,' I added.

After I had retired I bumped into him. 'I've been wanting to see you,' he said. 'I did what you said and it's just been cleared up. It cost me half what I expected.'

He looked ten years younger.

★ ★ ★

One day we had a carpenter in to do a job in the basement. About 3.30 pm he knocked on my door and asked me to look at his work before he went home. It looked all right to me. However, I had an inner sense of warning. So I said, 'I'm no carpenter. You're the expert. The thing that interests me is that when you go through our

front door you'll be satisfied that you've done an honest job.'

'That's all I wanted to know, Sir,' came the answer, and he took the whole thing to pieces.

★ ★ ★

A few weeks before I retired I felt that I should pass on some of the useful experiences I had had. My assistant was due for promotion in a year or two so I called him in for a chat. I decided that it would help him most if I told him about my worst mistakes in banking.

After we talked he said that he had learned more in that hour than in all his previous time at the bank. He then asked whether I would have a similar session with a gathering of bank accountants and second officers.

'Do you mean a public gathering or a private meeting?' I asked.

He suggested taking a hall under the auspices of the Institute of Bankers. I replied, 'Sorry! I'm quite willing to talk to an unofficial group. But the Bank wouldn't approve a public meeting. Officially, Bank Managers don't make mistakes!'

## Emma's will

by Virginia Brinton, Richmond, United States

AFTER EIGHT years of caring for Emma, a 97-year-old lady, I learnt that she wished to give a large sum of money to her grandson for his education.

This new course of action would have put into jeopardy the hope that we could remain in her house after her death, as her will stipulated. The higher the amount, the less there would be for me later.

I had the choice of blocking this new idea of helping Emma accomplish her mission. She couldn't remember how much she wanted to give, \$100, \$1,000, or \$10,000! It became my responsibility to investigate her financial situation and help her 'remember' how much the gift should be.

As we had the equivalent of power of attorney we could easily have negotiated behind her back. However, I did the investigations and put the facts before three people, including her lawyer, to see what they thought. Rather reluctantly, I had to admit that her motives for making the gift were good and the need was great and imminent. Mine was not.

On the morning of the final transaction, four people independently came to the same conclusion over the exact amount of the gift. To my amazement, instead of feeling frustrated, I was at peace. A cloud lifted. The whole thing put new life into Emma. She perked with joy. ■

## Ditched

by Katarina Pehrson, Sweden

ONE DAY LAST summer as I travelled to my job, I fell off my bicycle and landed in a ditch. My finger was broken and the bicycle was a write-off, but I went on to work. When my co-workers asked me what had happened, I was in such a state of shock that I told them someone had driven into me and

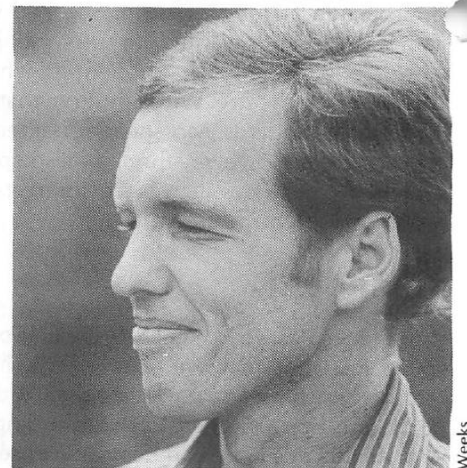
caused the accident. I was afraid of what my father's reaction would be, because he had told me to cycle more carefully.

I told my family the same story. My grandfather, who is a retired insurance man, helped me get money for the repair of the bicycle plus the wages which I had lost. I felt guilty when I had to sign a police report at the insurance company, but my pride wouldn't allow me to tell the truth and I received 1,000 Swedish Kroner in compensation.

With all this on my conscience, I had a very difficult autumn and winter. I finally reached the point where I felt I must be honest about everything. I apologised to my parents and to my grandfather and I wrote a letter to the insurance company. The reply I received said I could pay back what I owed without any interest.

Through all of this I have experienced God's guidance and love and my relationship with my parents has become much deeper. ■

## Football transfer



by Ron Lawler,  
Australia

A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO I wanted to sign up with a Melbourne soccer club. This meant getting a transfer from my previous club in Brisbane to whom I was still bound by contract. I applied for a transfer but the form was lost.

Time dragged on and as the end of the football season was rapidly approaching it did not seem worth reapplying. Several times the coach and some of the players suggested that I should play under someone else's name—a common practice. This was tempting because I was keen to make friends and impress people at the new club. However, whenever I prayed about it I knew that I could never carry out this deception with a clear conscience, I would always feel that I had let down God and these friends.

With the help of much prayer I managed to stick to what I felt was right. A couple of weeks later one of the players visited me. My stand had intrigued him and he wanted to know why I had made it. We talked for more than two hours and he told me about some personal problems, such as his poor relationship with his father. Without my earlier decision to be honest I would not have felt free to tell him how I had found solutions to similar issues in my life.

When corrupt practices such as tax evasion are exposed in the media it is not a time to find scapegoats for what is wrong in the nation—it is a time to review where we ourselves stand and what we can do to help build a credible and trustworthy society. ■

# Money talks

by Margaret O'Kane, Coventry

BEFORE WE WERE MARRIED, Patrick and I opened a joint bank account and closed our individual ones. Within a month of the wedding we were threatening to reverse the procedure! Two long walks together convinced us that this would hardly be in the spirit of the vows we had so recently taken. It would mean that we had started a list of issues about which we were not prepared to make the effort to talk and reach agreement.

The shared account means that we have to tell each other what we would like to spend our money on and make a joint decision—whether it is an item of clothing, a wedding gift, or bulbs for the garden. It is an effort, and a humbling experience, for two individuals who have rarely had much money, but have always had independent spirits.

A year ago Patrick returned to his trade as a bricklayer after ten years of unpaid work with MRA. The week he started his job, we saw some friends who were going to India for three months to participate in the MRA programme here. I immediately thought it would be a good start to give them something towards their fare from Patrick's first wage packet. Then, with a start, I realised that it was *his* wage packet. How would he take to me having ideas on how to spend it before he had even earned it? I said nothing and that evening Patrick said, 'Shall we give Bill and Rita some money for India from my first week's wages?'

We decided that we would not let Patrick's wage packet determine our standard of living, but would try and find out how God wanted us to spend it. We have sometimes given money to someone else who needs it when we haven't felt we could 'afford it' that week. It is important to be responsible about money and not to live beyond our means—but all we have is God's, and He has a much larger view of our means than we do. ■

## Pay—the usual; duration unknown

by Hazel Clark, South Africa

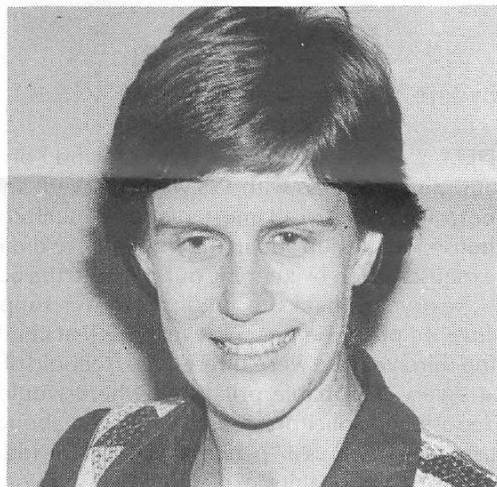
IN FEBRUARY this year I followed an inner conviction to resign from my job with a publishing company in Cape Town where I had been working for the past two-and-a-half years. This decision was rather a cliff-hanging step in faith, as I had no idea what next God had in store.

A week after I had handed in my resignation, I received a letter from a friend in London who works whole-time with MRA inviting me to work with her on a certain project. The invitation went something like this: 'The nature of the job, were it to be given a name, would be assistant to the editor. Conditions: pay—the usual (i.e. nothing); duration—unknown; qualifications—a sense of God saying 'do this' plus willingness to take the consequences!' While the nature of the work appealed to me, the thought of leaving my country and the 'duration unknown' bit, was not so appealing! I had been living in the Cape for six years, had made some good friends and had developed amongst other things a passion for mountain-climbing and for the wide

open spaces. London with its concrete jungle and mountains was not quite the same thing! I also thought of the many needs and problems in my country and surely, I argued with God, charity had to begin at home...

The 'usual' salary would not be a new experience. Before taking the publishing job, I had worked without pay for ten years. Now, however, I knew what it was not to have to decide between a tube of toothpaste or a bottle of shampoo! I had also enjoyed being able to help friends who found themselves in that predicament.

Three months earlier I had bought a bright red mini, after two years' saving. Surely, I bargained with God, You wouldn't give me something like that and expect me to give it back to you so rapidly! However there was my ticket to London to consider—all my savings had gone into the car.



Cummock

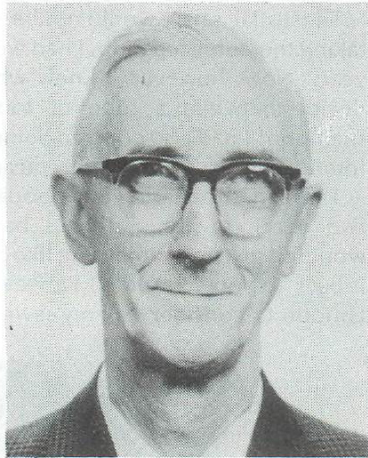
For a few weeks I continued to bargain with God and then one morning I felt He was saying: Are you willing, one, to go to England forever and never return to your own country, if that is what I ask of you; two, to sell your car and have no financial security ever again; three, not to see or work again with certain of your friends? I thought these were rather tall orders, but I got down on my knees and rather tearfully said to Him that I was willing to surrender all these things. As I was getting up, it was as if Christ was beside me with a look of amusement on His face, saying, 'Right, now I'd like a joyful and wholehearted decision please!' I suddenly saw the funny side of it all—the pathetic sight He had been looking at and the miserableness of my offering!

I burst out laughing, got back onto my knees and started all over again, this time with more enthusiasm. 'If you don't want to do what I ask more than anything else in the world, then why do it at all?' God seemed to be saying.

I knew deep down that above all I wanted to love and serve Him wholeheartedly and make the costly choices that would make me more useful as an instrument of His peace not only in South Africa but in other parts of the world. The decision focused for me certain things in my nature which I had often been critical of in my fellow countrymen. While I had wanted to see changes brought about in South Africa, I wanted those changes to be on my terms, with as little cost to my personal comfort and security as possible. But I knew that anything which came before my willingness to serve God, meant that He would not be able to use me as fully as He would like.

I have now been in Britain for almost five months and I can't pretend that I don't experience a pang or two when I pass a red mini, but I don't regret my decision. ■

# FAMILY OUTFIT



by Eric Thomas, Kent

FIFTY YEARS AGO this year my wife and I opened a men's outfitting business with £75 we had saved, and £75 we had borrowed. We used most of our capital converting our house into a shop and in the first year we did not cover our expenses, even by keeping our needs to the bare minimum.

Next year, thanks to credit from our suppliers, we just covered our expenses. That year our first child was born. In the third year we were offered the freehold of our premises at a very reasonable price, but where would we find the deposit and solicitors' fees? We prayed about this, and the bank advanced us 87 per cent. We had the idea of writing to 20 of our wholesalers, explaining the situation to them, and asking for three months' credit so that we could find the remaining money we needed. Eighteen agreed and so we went ahead.

Three years after we opened our shop, my father, who was also in outfitting, went bankrupt. We took a small branch shop near our home and put him in to manage it. After 18 months it became clear that this shop was never going to make money and that if we kept it going the whole business might collapse. But how could we throw my father out of work? We agonised and prayed about this for three months. Then we felt that we could trust that God would look after my father. We closed the branch, and within two weeks he had found another job.

Years later our second son joined us in the business, after two years' experience with another, larger, firm. Then the trouble started. He would say, 'This is the way the other firm did it,' and I would say, 'This is the way I've been doing it for 20 years.' We clashed continually and explosively, in spite of my prayers for patience.

One day he pointed out something he thought I had done wrong. I was about to explode, but instead I went to my room and prayed that God would change me. Suddenly I realised that I wanted to be different for selfish reasons—so that I could live in peace, without having to apologise to my son all the time for my violent reactions. I wanted to know I was right. God seemed to say to me, 'I'm not interested in

your rightness. I'm interested in whether you love Me and your son. If you want change on that basis, you can have it.' I accepted.

From then onwards my son and I found we could work things out on the basis of what was right, rather than who was right. As he took on more responsibility, and I took on less, our business expanded. We now have five shops and are negotiating for a sixth. ■

## LIMITLESS OPPORTUNITY

by Roland Wilson

THERE IS INCREASING doubt whether the end of recession or government spending schemes will cure the scourge of worklessness. So much of modern technology as well as economic realism points to fewer rather than more jobs. Flexible working schedules and other fresh techniques greatly help, if people can be prevailed upon to adopt them. But a more massive and fundamental development is called for.

If the urgent *economic* and human needs in, for example, India with its 680 million people were to be fully met, millions of people would be needed. Perhaps 50 million homes would have to be built. Water systems for such cities as Madras, as well as for many thousands of villages, still need to be created or re-created. Countless other urgent tasks on a vast scale are waiting. And the plan must already be in God's mind if selfless men and women of vision are daring enough to consult Him, and take each progressive step.

What is called for is people who embrace the impossible because they know God moves in that dimension. 'Charity' would not be the basis. Rather a statesmanship new to the mind of man. Many nations would need to move in partnership with the people of India herself.

A new approach to money would be required. 'Where God guides, He provides' is a truth which has time and again been proved in individual experience. Yet it is not limited to individuals. It is the principle on which God wants to run the world. As people make daring and selfless decisions, the provision will be forthcoming.

This could all happen more swiftly than the world dreams. More than material innovations would be essential. Bribes would be as much sabotage of the whole adventure as rotten workmanship. Unity would naturally be necessary and inevitable among men and women working for the fulfilment of one great idea. People everywhere might start to learn how God's world is meant to work.

In Africa, West and South-East Asia, Indonesia and the islands of the Pacific, the doors of limitless human need are open. The industrial nations may never solve their own pressing problems till they let God expand and widen their horizons. ■

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Published fortnightly for Moral Re-Armament by The Good Road Ltd, 12 Palace Street, London SW1E 5JF, England. Printed by T W Pegg and Sons Ltd. Articles may be reproduced without reference to the editor, acknowledgement welcomed. Price 20p. 10 copies £1.70 plus postage. Special rates for pre-publication bulk orders. **Annual subscriptions: British Isles** £8.50 (2 copies of each issue £12.00); UK pensioners and students £6.50 (2 copies £10.00). **All other countries** airmail £11.00. Regional offices and rates: **Australia** New World News, PO Box 1078], GPO Melbourne, Vic 3001 \$20.00; **Canada** Moral Re-Armament, 387 chemin de la Cote Ste Catherine, Montreal, Quebec H2V 2B5 \$25.00; **New Zealand** New World News, PO Box 31009, Christchurch \$25.00; **South Africa** Moral Re-Armament, PO Box 10144, Johannesburg, 2000 R20.00; **USA** Moral Re-Armament Inc, 1030 Fifteenth Street NW, Suite 908, Washington DC 20005 \$20.00. **Editorial and business address:** 12 Palace Street, London SW1E 5JF. Tel: 01-828 6591.