

## The war against fear

A little while ago, I made a visit to Mount Athos, in Greece, to make a programme for BBC radio about that ancient centre of monasticism—one of the holiest places of Orthodox Christianity. After a complex process of permits and passports and a journey by air, road, sea, bus and finally on foot, we arrived at one of the many monasteries which dot the holy mountain. We were welcomed courteously with spring water, coffee and fiery liquor.

The guest master looked at me and asked, 'Are you Orthodox?'

I hesitated.... 'I am a believer,' I said.

He asked again, 'Are you Orthodox?'

'No,' I admitted, 'I'm a Catholic.'

'Ah... come with me,' he said.

I followed him, intrigued, to a side chapel, and to a long wooden chest which he solemnly opened. Inside was a skeleton. These were the bones of a 13th Century monk, killed for hiding the monastery treasures from Catholic Crusaders. 'Skeletons in the cupboard' took on a whole new meaning for me that day!

There are many skeletons in the cupboards of Christian history, and unless we Christians face them, our unity will only be the unity of politeness, not of love.

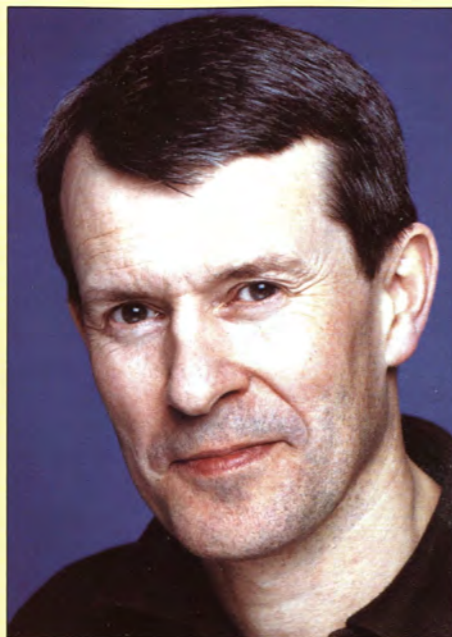
We have, of course, travelled a long way in a short half century. Even in my own childhood it was forbidden for people of my tradition even to pray with members of any other. I suppose that to do so could imply that our view of ourselves as the One, True Church might need to be qualified. And who knows where that subversive idea might lead?

### 360 degree appraisal

Thank God, my parents' generation dared to start out on the risky road towards unity. And over the years we have come, in our various traditions, tentatively, to respect each other. To begin to accept that we are all fragments of the whole, that none of us has the whole truth. Except—although we're much too polite to say so—we each think our fragment is bigger than anyone else's!

Mind you, Christian unity is not the same as Christian uniformity, still less conformity. The key to unity lies not in trying to be like each other—nor even in trying to like each other—but in hearing afresh the call of Christ to repent, to change our minds.

And how should we repent? Well, maybe one way is to give up that narcissistic desire, so deep in our nature and culture, to convert others, to make them into copies of ourselves. Instead, let us aim to be converted, to see the world and ourselves through others' eyes, 'to walk in the other man's



by Denis Nowlan

moccasins,' as the native Americans say. To be prepared to acknowledge that we have something to learn, before we try to teach.

A common tool of management consultants is the 360 degree appraisal. In it you are assessed, not only by your superiors, but also your peers and those who work under you. I've been through it—and it can be very bracing! It's based on the conviction that none of us has a complete picture of ourselves or of the world.

### ‘We are all Muslims now’

Recently I visited Rome, in the company of a Welsh Baptist minister. I was looking forward to sharing with him the artistic glories of the city. But often I found myself learning from him how to see the place afresh. Where I saw a vast basilica as a symbol of the unity of the Church, he saw it as a symptom of megalomania: the architectural equivalent of saying, 'We've got it in the bag.' Where I saw a statue of St Paul holding a sword as a symbolic reference to the word of God, he saw a very different message, 'Believe or suffer the consequences!' It can be painful to see yourself as others see you—but it's good medicine! And it's a vital part of that process of repentance, which is the doorway to the Kingdom of God.

To see ourselves through our neighbours' eyes is only the first stage of this 360

degree appraisal. The next is to see ourselves through the eyes of our enemies. And the last is to see the world through the eyes of God, in the light of eternity, where all the barriers are down.

### Out of the box

So much of our life is spent inside mental and emotional boxes. And our theological arguments can be thinly disguised attempts to persuade others to climb out of their box and join us in ours. So should we rather aim to build a new box, big enough for all of us? Or could we dare to step out of our boxes to meet in the big, unpredictable, open space where the spirit of God moves?

We are told that the great task of our time is the war against terrorism. But I believe the great task of our time is the war against fear itself. Our fear of those who think differently. And their fear of us.

Last September it was often said, 'We are all Americans now.' We didn't mean we had become any less British, Irish, French or whatever. It meant we felt the Americans' loss, and stood with them in their pain. Terrible events brought us closer together and helped us to experience, for a moment, a sense of universal humanity.

I believe we will not have peace in the world, until Christians can say, 'We are all Muslims now.' Not that we believe as Muslims believe, but that we feel as Muslims feel, and stand with them in their sense of pain and insecurity.

Can we unite in befriending the Muslim world, not in an effort to convert it, but to understand its hopes and fears and even—who knows?—to learn from Muslims something new about the mystery of the love of God, which is always so much bigger than anything we can ask or imagine. And could it be that in sharing this great task of global reconciliation the Church will find the unity for which we long?

*Denis Nowlan is an Executive Producer of Religious Programmes for the BBC. This article is taken from his sermon in Westminster Abbey during Christian Unity Week, January 2002.*

### NEXT ISSUE

**Feature:** *For A Change* explores the power of silence.

**Profile:** Cornelio Sommaruga, former President of the International Committee of the Red Cross

**Guest Column:** Joseph Montville of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington DC

# FOR A CHANGE

Volume 15 Number 3

June/July 2002

- **Nazi victim forgives**
- **A life of diplomacy**
- **Northern Ireland's centre for reconciliation**
- **Stained-glass artist extraordinaire**

## Children of Chernobyl's Fallout





from Alison Wetterfors in Sweden



### Northern timeshare

For most Scandinavians, opening up their holiday cottages might entail some cleaning, or perhaps dealing with mice. In Northern Norway it can be more exciting, as Trond Olsen discovered on returning to his holiday cottage on the remote northern island of Svalbard. As he approached, he was surprised to see a polar bear looking out of the window. When he banged on the walls it fled, followed by two cubs.

This gives a new angle on the concept of time-sharing. No doubt they enjoyed their spacious winter den.

### God is back

In this most secular of lands, it was encouraging to read an article the other day by Göran Skytte, a wellknown Swedish journalist. In the early Nineties, he said, he had been afraid to take up questions of faith in his popular TV interview programme for fear of losing his audience, but had discovered from viewing figures that the opposite was true.

'This convinced me that the media were wrong in ignoring spiritual questions,' he wrote. 'Behind the rational welfare state there is deep dissatisfaction and spiritual longing. When spiritual need is so clear, then the demand for spiritual leadership is also obvious. For many years the question of God was stone dead in the media. Now it has

a completely different position in public debates.'

### Apology to minority

Speaking to the Sami Parliament recently, the Bishop of Luleå in northern Sweden asked their forgiveness for the churches' actions or silence towards Sami people in the past. 'God has given us the ministry of reconciliation,' he said. 'Truth and reconciliation belong together. That process must continue in many contexts in our world. Without forgiveness and reconciliation there is no good future. And reconciliation demands putting things right....'

He listed the places where he felt the churches had a shared responsibility for past

wrongs, for example an education policy which contributed to many Samis being robbed of their mother tongue. He also named places where the churches were addressing wrongs, including the fact that their education programmes now include teaching on the Sami identity, spirituality and ethical questions.

### Power of the pen

Recently I watched the funeral of Sweden's largest selling author, Astrid Lindgren, who is best known for her children's book, *Pippi Longstocking*. Attended by royalty and government, it was a tribute to a lady deeply loved in Sweden and worldwide. Her books have sold millions and have been translated into 85 languages, as

diverse as Swahili and Gaelic.

She was more than a writer of wonderful stories. She was a fighter of causes. All her life she championed the rights of children, often talking of the importance of a happy family life. A farmer's daughter, her influence helped make it unlawful to keep farm animals indoors all year. More controversially she played a role in ending briefly the 40-year reign of the Social Democrats, when she publicized the fact that she was due to pay 102 per cent tax in one year. Slightly excessive, even in Sweden!

Recently she talked of 'living in such a way that we make death our friend'. The actress who played Pippi in the film of the book said of her, 'She had the art of lifting other people.' A warm-hearted and feisty lady, she will be greatly missed.

### Goldfish and xylophones

Our local council promotes an environmentally friendly rubbish sorting system, of which in general I approve. In a fever of efficiency, it has now produced a booklet to help us decide in which of eight or nine places we should put every imaginable kind of rubbish, including such items as unwanted goldfish (dead presumably), xylophones, wigs or rubber boats. They also give us strict instructions on what not to do with our goldfish, which I leave to your imagination!



Cover:  
A child from a contaminated region on a charity-sponsored holiday in Hereford, UK  
Photo: Camps for Children of Chernobyl

## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

### Breaking the chain of hate

In Europe, this spring saw the rise of populist right-wing, anti-immigration parties in elections in several countries. In France, the National Front leader Jean-Marie Le Pen came second in the first stage of the Presidential elections, only to be swept aside by Jacques Chirac in the second. And in the Netherlands, the maverik politician Pim Fortuyn was assassinated nine days before the elections which, at the time of going to press, seemed likely to give his party an assured place in a new coalition government.

Fear of 'the other' all too easily fuels racism. So does the perceived threat to jobs, housing opportunities and ways of life from new arrivals. But one of the great challenges facing a shrinking world is how peoples of different cultures and religions can live together peacefully.

At the end of April, Lord Ouseley, the former head of Britain's Commission for Racial Equality, was reported as saying that no progress had been made towards better community relations in the Yorkshire city of Bradford, since the riots which took place there last year. On the same day as his statement, Bradford's community and religious leaders were entertaining a remarkable group from Lebanon, which included former Christian and Muslim militia leaders.

The four Lebanese told their hosts, in the British city with the largest proportion of Muslims, that their message was 'to break the chain of hate'. Before their 15-year civil war, Beirut's Christian and Muslim communities had lived side by side, without getting to know each other. Some of the group had been involved in atrocities during the war. Since then, they said, they had had to discover 'true religion', based on love, rather than 'ideological religion' which demonized the other side. Now they had found the capacity to face what they had done, and to reach out across the divides in courageous acts of reconciliation.

The Lebanese, who had been invited to Britain by Initiatives of Change, spoke to a large audience in London and met with the Prime Minister's advisor on faith issues. Their experience has a message for multi-ethnic communities everywhere. Violence can be born out of the refusal to meet the other and to address the roots of conflict. Equally, the readiness to reach out is a necessary foundation for peace.

Michael Smith

<http://www.forachange.co.uk>

# FOR A CHANGE

- closes the circle between faith and action, action and faith. It is for anyone, anywhere, who wants to make a difference to the world.

FOR A CHANGE believes

- that in a world torn by ancient hatreds, the wounds of history can be healed.
- that in the family and the workplace, relationships can be transformed.
- that in urban jungle or rural backwater, community can be built.
- that peace, justice and the survival of the planet depend on changes in attitudes as well as structures.

FOR A CHANGE

- draws its material from many sources and was born out of the experience of MRA, now Initiatives of Change.

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## A NOTE ON INITIATIVES OF CHANGE

Initiatives of Change (formerly Moral Re-Armament) works for moral and spiritual renewal in all areas of life. It was born out of the work of Frank Buchman, an American who believed that change in the world must start with the individual.

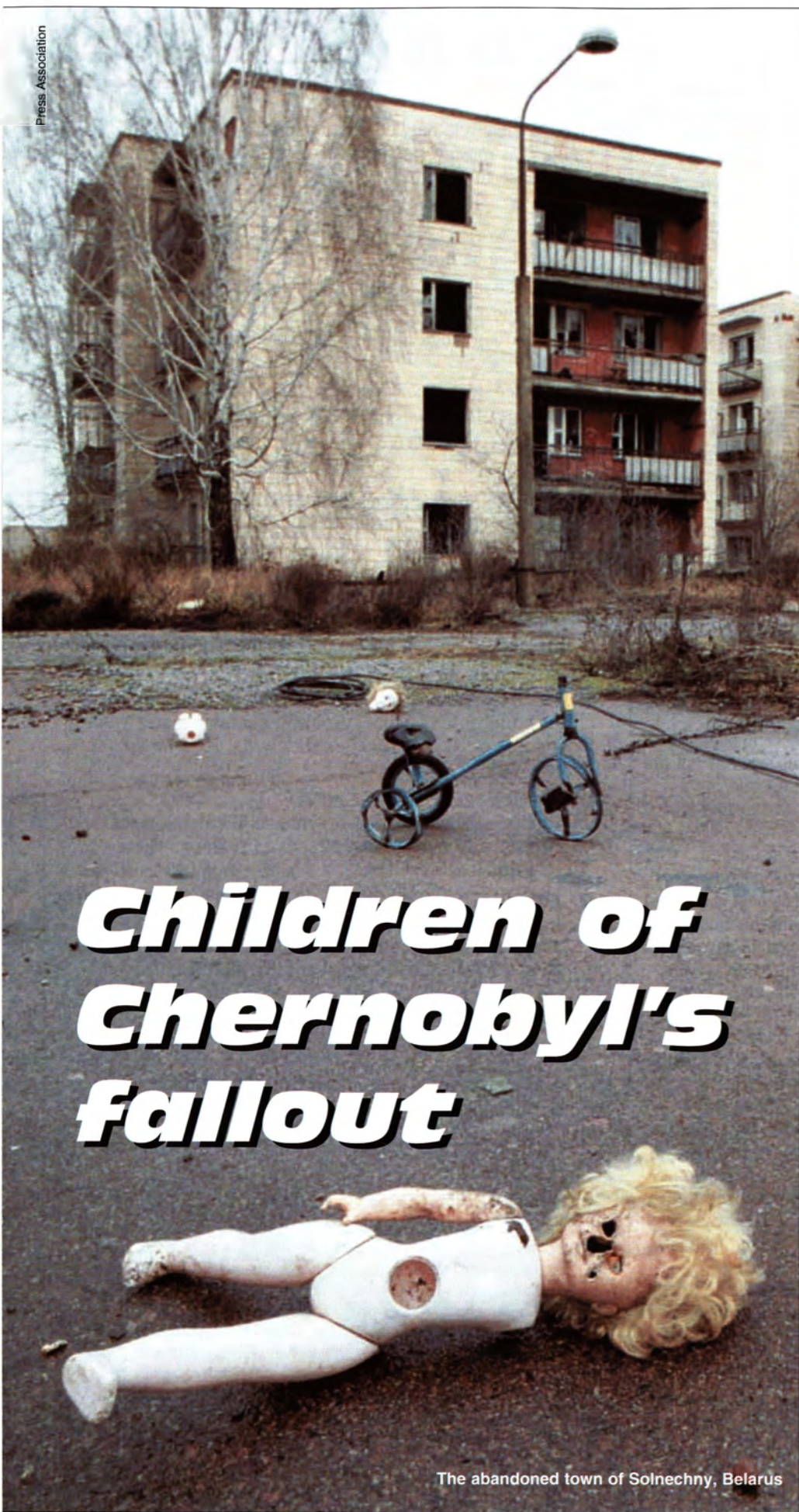
Initiatives of Change is open to all. Its starting point is the readiness of each person to make what they know of God and eternal moral values central in their lives. This personal commitment to search for God's will forms the basis for

creative initiative and common action: standards of absolute honesty, purity, unselfishness and love help to focus the challenge of personal and global change.

These ideas have given rise to an international community of people at work in more than 70 countries in programmes which include reconciliation; tackling the root causes of corruption, poverty and social exclusion; and strengthening the moral and spiritual foundations for democracy.



Press Association



# Children of Chernobyl's fallout

The abandoned town of Solnechny, Belarus

Sixteen years after the world's worst nuclear accident, **Kenneth Noble** visits the children who are still suffering as a result.

**I** sit at lunch with three teachers and two scientists in the village school of Yurovichi in south-east Belarus. The teachers are all widows. One lost her husband, aged 46, to cancer. The other husbands died at 50. Nothing can be proved but the teachers feel that these and another such premature death in the school must be linked with the Chernobyl nuclear explosion of April 1986.

Yurovichi lies just 60 kilometres from Chernobyl in neighbouring Ukraine and is outside the most contaminated area—the so-called 'dead zone' which foreigners are not allowed to visit. But tests carried out in 1999 in a similarly situated school by the Institute of Radiation Safety, Belrad, showed that the average level of radiation in the pupils was some four to five times the safe level for children. Children are more vulnerable to radiation as their body cells are dividing rapidly.

My host, physicist Alexander Pinchook, says that some 370,000 children living in villages in Gomel province, as well as many more in neighbouring Mogilev province, are at risk. The mission of CentreAction—the NGO which he, Sergei Shavrei and others set up in 1999—is to get to know the staff and pupils at schools in the contaminated area; to teach safety measures; and to combat the fatalism and depression that the disaster has engendered in many.

At a school in another village, Glinishcha (famous as the birth-place of the novelist Ivan Melezh), the children and teachers have been told to bring in food samples. Pinchook and Shavrei have brought their Becquerel monitor, an expensive piece of apparatus which measures radiation levels. It was donated by the Otto Hug Institute in Munich, Germany, in 1992, two years after Pinchook first started devoting his spare time to this work.

The teachers fill beakers with carrots, cabbage, wild mushrooms, milk, berries and other standard items of fare. As each sample

is placed in the apparatus, numbers are illuminated on a small display screen. A boy, perhaps 11, peers at the monitor and relays the figures to his 45 schoolmates, jammed into desks behind him. They listen in silence as the verdict is passed on each sample. Most of the items are safe but the dried mushrooms, a popular food gathered from the forest which covers one third of the country, registers almost double the permitted level for adults. Some of the milk measures a safe 13 becquerels per kg but Pinchook recalls one sample that read 700 because the cows had been grazing in the forest, which is more contaminated than farmland.

The scientists finish their tests and then talk to the children about radiation. 'We don't just give dry figures,' Pinchook tells me. 'We explain what counter-measures can be taken—for example if milk is turned into cheese or butter most of the radiation goes in the water that is drained off.' Shavrei produces a small sample of radioactive strontium from a lead container and holds a Geiger-counter above it. There is an audible clicking which rapidly increases in speed as he approaches the sample.

The point of this demonstration is that it gives the children something tangible to observe. The unnerving thing about radioactivity is that no human senses can detect it. The surrounding fields and forests, the food and the village all look normal. Without expensive equipment it is impossible to tell where the danger lies. Yet the symptoms are there in the children, and the teachers are all too aware of them. CentreAction were asked to come to Glinishcha because the teachers were worried about their pupils. 'Before Chernobyl there would be perhaps three children per class who were unfit to have PE (physical education) lessons; now the average class has only three who *can* do PE,' the school principal, Ol'ga Tsirulik, tells me. 'Children often faint or have headaches, and many have had to have their thyroid glands removed.'

When the class has been dismissed we retire to the staff room for a discussion with the teachers. They ask me many questions about schools in the UK, and I want to know



Children at the Belarusian oncological centre in Minsk. Some 70 per cent of the patients come from the regions contaminated by the Chernobyl accident.

why there are hardly any men teachers. Apparently few are willing to work for the equivalent of £1,000 per year. The teachers' concern about their pupils is heartfelt. 'Could you arrange for some of them to have holidays in Britain?' they plead. It has been proved that getting away from the contaminated area for even a couple of months markedly reduces the level of radiation in children. Formerly the government paid for such holidays but funding has now dried up.

Pinchook and Shavrei give the teachers a few precious copies of their booklet, *Living with nuclear radiation: theory and practice*. Produced in small numbers with funding from a Dutch voluntary organization, Milieu-kontakt Oost-Europa, it is full of advice on how to minimize the risks of nuclear contamination as well as explaining the physical processes. It shows, for instance, that the forest absorbed far more radiation than other ecosystems because the countless bil-

lions of pine needles presented a huge area of exposure to the rain-borne radionuclides (radioactive atoms). As a result fruits of the forest—traditionally popular free food—are especially dangerous. The book also explains that clay particles will bond with nuclei of Caesium-137 (the main contaminant which will persist for another 600 years). This means that the contaminant stays in clay soil and does not enter the crops.

As we prepare to leave, Ol'ga Tsirulik tells me that her own son works at Chernobyl and she

worries about him, though her grandchildren seem to be healthy. She feels that her 147 pupils, aged between six and 17, will be more aware of the dangers of radiation following CentreAction's visit but adds: 'Officials assume that our area is relatively safe, and special measures are no longer taken. Now, if parents want to send their children to clear areas, they have to pay.' The children's health is her teachers' main worry, more so than the lack of books, computers and equipment.

These sentiments are echoed by the teachers in Yurovichi, a village which was the scene of heavy casualties during World War II because it occupies strategically important high ground. The village was also the site of a massacre of 400 Jews by the Nazis, a fact recalled in a remarkable school museum which has Jewish memorabilia as well as exhibits ranging from locally excavated mammoth tusks through antique agricultural artefacts to Soviet-era portraits of Lenin.

The teachers produce a generous four-course meal which climaxes in a magnificent concoction of sponge cake, chocolate, sugar, cherries, nuts and jam. It rejoices in the politically correct name of 'ruins of the count's castle'. As we tackle this *tour de force*, the teachers tell me that in this school, too, the children often faint, and get pains in their livers when they run. The teachers are also concerned about their pupils' psychological state. 'Since Chernobyl there is a lot of anxiety. The children have difficulties with their mental and emotional development. Concentration and intelligence are lower than previously.'

P. Carr



Press Association



## Children of Chernobyl's fallout

Pinchook and Shavrei have visited this school many times before. In fact the school director, Tamara Veko, is one of the five founding directors of CentreAction which is a registered NGO. Pinchook—who has reduced his work-load at university in order to devote more time to CentreAction—stresses the importance of building long-term relationships of trust with the teachers and pupils if the psychological and spiritual damage from Chernobyl is to be dealt with.

I ask the teachers about their hopes for the children. Some sigh at the size of the task. But they too would like the children to have time outside the 'zone', especially in Western countries, so that the quantity of radionuclides in their bodies could come down.

Pinchook shows me some research done by Professor Vasilii Nesterenko of Belrad. It includes a table of the levels of radiation in children before and after a two-month holiday in Moldova. The recommended 'safe' level for children is 20 becquerels per kg. Before the holiday the average reading was 80–100. Two sisters, born in 1991 and 1993, had readings of 896 and 687. After the holiday some children had acceptable levels and even the sis-



Kenneth Noble

Alexander Pinchook (right) talks with staff at Glinishcha's village school. The principal, Ol'ga Tsiurlik (second from left), would like her pupils to have holidays in Britain.

ters had come down to 179 and 157. It turned out that their father was a hunter who brought home meat from the forest.

Back in Mozyr, a city of 105,000 just outside the contaminated zone, I talk with Pinchook and his wife Nathalie, a post-graduate student of diplomacy in Minsk, the Belarusian capital. She, too, is a director of CentreAction. She worked previously as a journalist in Narovlya, a seriously contaminated town, and knows only too well the fear

that many live with. 'When the wind was from the direction of Chernobyl I was afraid. I was afraid to sunbathe or eat meat that my colleagues offered me. I had to walk through a beautiful park to catch the bus but I didn't dare to step off the asphalt into the woodland which was contaminated.' When she went to a collective farm to write an article she found great fear there, too. People expected to die young.

Alexander Pinchook sees an important

Adventure, which is run by two former SAS soldiers. The aim is partly to build up their confidence, which is an important part of combating cancer, and to boost their immune systems. The children, aged from seven to 12, will be given good food and interesting outings. Children who have previously been through this programme arrived with 20,000 radionuclides in their bodies and left with 1,000, Chatfield says.

He has been to Belarus many times and recently visited Chernigov in Ukraine, just a few kms from the Belarusian border, where the contamination is extremely high.

C4CC also sends aid to the contaminated areas. 'Three lorry loads of medical supplies, clothes, beds and bedding will be going to Chernigov shortly,' he says. These will be distributed between the children's hospital and an orphanage for 350 children who lost their parents or became disabled as a result of Chernobyl.

A search of the internet revealed similar initiatives in many other countries including Canada, Germany, the USA, Ireland, Denmark, Switzerland, Italy and Japan.

**Links:**

- [www.chernobylchildlifeline.org](http://www.chernobylchildlifeline.org)
- [www.c4cc.org.uk](http://www.c4cc.org.uk)
- [www.chernobyl-children.org.uk](http://www.chernobyl-children.org.uk)
- [www.belarusguide.com/chernobyl1/chlist.htm](http://www.belarusguide.com/chernobyl1/chlist.htm)

## How foreign charities are helping

The biggest UK charity providing holidays for children from all parts of Belarus is Chernobyl Children Life Line (CCLL), a nationwide organization founded by Maltese-born Victor Mizzi. Over 22,000 children have had holidays in the UK as a result of CCLL's work, including 3,000 in 2001.

Mizzi says that there has been a worrying increase in cases of cancer recently, affecting Minsk especially, even though it is outside the officially designated contaminated area. Even babies have been affected. All the children brought to the UK last year were tested for Caesium-137 and every single one was over the recommended level.

Camps for Children of Chernobyl UK (C4CC) is part of a similarly named US orga-



A child on a holiday in England organized by Camps for Children of Chernobyl

nization. Dave Chatfield, the full-time UK coordinator, speaks with enthusiasm about the programmes that they give Belarusian children. Twenty-two were due to arrive shortly after we spoke. They would start with a programme of physical activities at a centre in Hereford called Taste for

## Chernobyl fact file

One of four nuclear reactors in Chernobyl exploded on 26 April, 1986. Some safety systems had been turned off while an experiment was carried out.

70 per cent of the radioactive fall-out landed on Belarus, affecting 23 per cent of the country's area. (4.8 per cent of Ukraine and 0.5 per cent of Russia were contaminated.)

The area within 30 kms of Chernobyl is now deemed uninhabitable.

It has been estimated that, although different radionuclides were released, the total radioactivity of the material from Chernobyl was 200 times that of the combined releases from the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The most dangerous isotopes released were Iodine-131, Strontium-90 and Caesium-137. They have half-lives of 8 days, 29 years and 30 years respectively. Iodine is linked to thyroid cancer. Strontium can lead to leukaemia. Caesium is the ele-

ment that travelled the furthest. It affects the entire body and especially the liver, heart and spleen.

In the area affected by Chernobyl there have been at least 1,800 cases of thyroid

part of CentreAction's work as dealing with the psychological aftermath of Chernobyl, which one psychologist diagnosed as post-traumatic stress disorder. 'Fear and a sense of helplessness lead to apathy,' he believes. Part of the answer lies in self-help schemes. He cites the example of a school where the teachers were complaining they only had black-and-white TV. CentreAction encouraged them to start breeding pigs. The school was able to earn enough to buy the colour TV they needed. The children learn from such schemes that there is something that they can do, and become motivated to observe safety precautions and have faith in the future.

While Pinchook is in favour of sending children abroad for holidays, he says that the benefits will be short-term unless they are taught how to eat safely—in fact Belrad's research suggests that the contamination in children's bodies can return to previous levels within a matter of days. 'Many families say that they cannot afford to eat correctly, but although there is genuine poverty the truth is that many do not take the trouble to eat the right food because they are still suffering psychological trauma from the shock of Chernobyl,' he says.

The Pinchooks and Shavrei gain no material reward for their work but say that they do gain a sense of spiritual fulfilment. It is as if they are doing what they know they are meant to do. Of course, says Alexander Pinchook with a note of realism, they can



A power station at the Chernobyl nuclear plant.

ment that travelled the furthest. It affects the entire body and especially the liver, heart and spleen.

In the area affected by Chernobyl there have been at least 1,800 cases of thyroid

only keep in touch with about 50 schools out of the thousand or so in Gomel province.

As I leave the contaminated zone, two things live with me—the genuine concern expressed by so many of the teachers, some of whom have also suffered as a result of Chernobyl; and the memory of the children who are so vulnerable and need help.



Pupils at Glinishcha's village school look at a radiation monitor to see whether their food is contaminated. Mushrooms from the surrounding forest were found to be unsafe.

cancer in children who were under 15 years of age when the explosion occurred—a far higher incidence than normal.

The International Committee for Radiation Protection considers that if a child has x times the permitted level of radioactive substances in his or her body, they are x times more likely to suffer cancer or some other disease.

In February this year the UN called for a new approach to helping the millions of people impacted by Chernobyl. The 'emergency phase' is now over, argues a UNDP- and UNICEF-commissioned report, and a new 10-year 'recovery phase' must gradually replace it. A fundamental shift is needed in the way assistance is delivered to those impacted by the disaster, says the report, *The human consequences of the Chernobyl nuclear accident—a strategy for recovery*. It emphasizes the need for long-term community redevelopment and empowerment in which the affected populations play a key role.

**Links:**

- [www.un.org/ha/chernobyl/dev2373.html](http://www.un.org/ha/chernobyl/dev2373.html)
- [www.iaea.or.at/worldatom/Press/Focus/Chernobyl-15/cherno-faq.shtml](http://www.iaea.or.at/worldatom/Press/Focus/Chernobyl-15/cherno-faq.shtml)

If any reader of 'For A Change' would like to have a part in helping the victims of Chernobyl, please write to the editors. We would also like to hear from anyone who has helped with holiday schemes.

Link: [www.centreaction.narod.ru](http://www.centreaction.narod.ru)





Eva Mozes Kor with a photo of her twin sister Miriam and herself

## My path to healing

**F**ifty-seven years ago my twin sister and I were used as human guinea pigs in medical experiments in the Nazi concentration camp at Auschwitz. In the last 20 years I have made contact with

many of the other survivors of these experiments. I care deeply for the Mengele Twins, but I am not their spokesperson, I speak only for myself.

It was the dawn of an early spring day in

Only some 200 children from the 1,500 sets of twins and triplets used in medical experiments in Auschwitz during World War II survived. **Eva Mozes Kor** was one of them. In June 2001 she addressed a symposium at the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute in Berlin, which nearly 60 years before had been in charge of the experiments.

We print extracts:

1944 when I arrived in Auschwitz, in a cattle-car train, with my father, aged 44, my mother, aged 38, my older sisters Edit, 14, and Aliz, 12, and my twin, Miriam. We were 10 years old.

As soon as we stepped down onto the cement platform, my mother grabbed Miriam and me by the hand, hoping somehow to protect us. I suddenly realized my father and two older sisters were gone—I never saw any of them again.

An SS officer stopped to look at Miriam and me because we looked very much alike. 'Are they twins?' he asked.

'Is that good?' asked my mother.

'Yes,' nodded the SS.

'Yes, they are twins,' said my mother.

Without any warning, he grabbed us away from our mother. Our screaming and pleading fell on deaf ears. I looked back and saw my mother's arms stretched out in despair as she was pulled in the opposite direction. That was the last time I saw her.

Miriam and I were taken to a huge building, with 16 other sets of twins. We were ordered to sit naked on plank seats, while our clothes were taken away to have a big red cross painted on their backs. Then our processing began.

When my turn came, I decided to fight back. Four people had to restrain me while they heated a pen-like gadget to red-hot, dipped it in ink and then burned into my

flesh, dot by dot, the number A-7063.

We were taken to a barrack filled with girls, all twins, aged 1 to 13. Two other girls showed us around. They explained to us about the huge smoking chimneys and what had happened to the two groups of people we had seen on the selection platform. We learned we were alive only because Dr Mengele wanted to use us in his experiments.

That night, when we went to the latrine at the end of the barrack, we found the corpses of three children lying on the filthy floor. I realized that the same could happen to Miriam and me unless I did something to prevent it. From that moment on, I concentrated all my efforts, all my talents and all my being on survival.

Some 1,500 sets of children were used as human guinea pigs by Josef Mengele. It is estimated that fewer than 200 children survived.

We were starved for food, starved for human kindness and starved for the love of the mothers we once had. During the whole time we were in Auschwitz, Miriam and I talked very little. It took every ounce of my energy to survive one more day, to live through one more experiment. We did not cry because we knew there was no help.

I had a big decision to make every night when we received our daily ration of about two and a half inches of bread. I would ask myself, 'Should I eat the bread tonight? If I do, I will have a whole day tomorrow without any food.' It was logical that I should save the bread for the next day. But if I put it under my head, by next morning it was gone—either stolen or eaten by rats.

All this was done to us because we were born Jewish. We did not understand why this was a crime.

I became very ill after an injection in Mengele's lab and was taken to the hospital. The rumour was that anyone taken there never came back.

The next day Dr Mengele and four doctors looked at my fever chart and then declared, 'Too bad, she is so young. She has only two weeks to live.'

I was all alone. The doctors did not want to heal me. They wanted me dead. I made a second silent pledge, 'I will do anything I can to get well and be reunited with my sister.'

In the hospital we received no food and no medication. People were brought there to die or to wait for a place in the gas chamber.

After two weeks, my fever broke and I began to feel stronger. I devised a plan that would show a gradual improvement in my condition. When the so-called nurse came in to take my temperature, I would wait until she had left the room, take the thermometer out, and shake it down a little. Then I would stick it back under my arm.

After three weeks my fever showed normal and I was reunited with Miriam. If I had

died, Mengele would have killed her with an injection to the heart and performed comparative autopsies on our bodies.

The experiments lasted six to eight hours. We had to sit naked while every part of our bodies were measured, poked and compared to charts and photographs. Every movement was noted. I felt like an animal in a cage. Three times a week we went to the blood lab where we were injected with germs and chemicals and they took a lot of blood from us.

When one pair of twins was lost in the experiments, another pair would come in on the next transport to replace them.

On a white snowy day, 27 January 1945, four days before my 11th birthday, Auschwitz was liberated by the Soviets and we were free. We were alive. We had survived. We had triumphed over unbelievable evil.

**T**he fact that we are here today in the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute, which was in charge of Dr Mengele's experiments, shows how much progress has been made in the last six decades.

Those of you who are physicians and scientists are to be congratulated. You have chosen a wonderful and difficult profession—wonderful because you can alleviate human suffering but difficult because you are walking a very narrow line. I appeal to you to make a moral commitment that you will never violate anyone's human rights and that you will treat your patients with the same respect that you would want in their place. Remember that if you are doing your research solely for the sake of science and not for the benefit of mankind, you are heading in the direction of the Nazi doctors.

We meet here as former adversaries. I hope we can part as friends.

There is a lot of pain that we, the Jewish people, and you, German people, carry around. It does not help anyone to carry the burden of the past. We must learn to heal ourselves from the tragedies of the Holocaust. I realize that many of my fellow survivors will not share, support or understand my way of healing. But this is the way I healed myself—and I dare hope it might work for other people.

I have forgiven the Nazis. I have forgiven everybody.

In 1992, Miriam and I were co-consultants on a documentary on the Mengele Twins produced by a German TV company. In the documentary they interviewed a Nazi doctor named Hans M Münch. In 1993, after Miriam died, I contacted the TV company and asked for his address and phone number, and a friend called him and asked if he would see me.

That August, I arrived at Dr Münch's house. I was very nervous, but he treated me with the utmost respect. As we sat down to talk, I said to him, 'Here you are—a Nazi doctor from Auschwitz—and here I am—a

survivor from Auschwitz—and I like you, and that sounds strange to me.'

We talked about many things. I asked him if he knew anything about the operation of the gas chambers. He said, 'This is the nightmare I live with.' He proceeded to tell me how the gas chambers were operated and how, when the bodies were dead, he had signed the death certificates.

I asked him to come with me to Auschwitz in January 1995, to observe the 50th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz and to sign a document at the ruins of the gas chambers and in the presence of witnesses about what he had told me. He said yes. I went home delighted that I was going to have a document which would help me combat the Revisionists who say that there were no gas chambers.

I tried to think of a way to thank Dr Münch. Then, one day, I thought, 'How about a letter of forgiveness?' I immediately realized that he would like it. I also realized that I had the power to forgive. No one could give me this power and no one could take it away.

Friends who spell better than I do helped me to correct the letter. One of them threw a question at me: 'Would you be willing to forgive Dr Mengele?' I decided that I could. And if I forgave him, I might as well forgive everybody.

In January 1995, we all arrived in Auschwitz—my children, Alex and Rina, and my friends and I, and Dr Münch and his children and grandchildren. On 27 January, by the ruins of one of the gas chambers, Dr Münch's document was read and he signed it. I read my Declaration of Amnesty and then signed it.

A burden of pain was lifted from my shoulders. I was no longer a victim of Auschwitz. I was no longer a prisoner of my tragic past. I was finally free. So I say to everybody, 'Forgive your worst enemy. It will heal your soul and set you free.'

The day I forgave the Nazis I forgave my parents because they did not save me, and I also forgave myself for hating my parents.

**A**s I understand it, most governments and world leaders bear a heavy burden in trying to keep the world at peace. In my opinion, they have failed miserably by not advocating, encouraging and facilitating survivors of tragedies such as the Holocaust to forgive their enemies, which is an act of self-healing.

How can we build a healthy, peaceful world while all these painful legacies are festering under the surface?

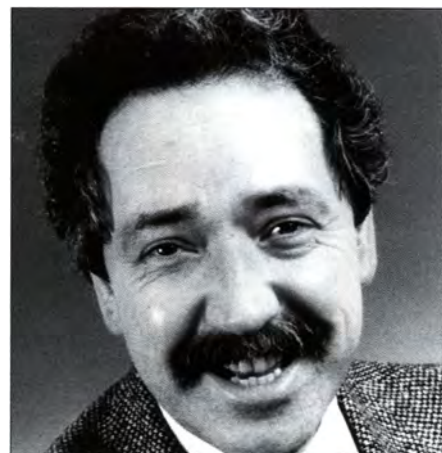
I see a world where leaders will advocate and support with legislation the act of forgiveness, amnesty and reconciliation rather than justice and vindictiveness. ■

*Eva Mozes Kor is the founder and President of CANDLES (Children of Auschwitz-Nazis' Deadly Lab Experiments Survivors).*





The Corrymeela centre



## Planting the seed of reconciliation

We may need our enemies for our own healing, maintains **Trevor Williams**, the Director of Corrymeela, the reconciliation centre in Northern Ireland.

He talks to **Faustina Starrett**.

**F**ew of us in Northern Ireland are qualified to write even a footnote on managing an effective peace process. Yet, as broadcaster Martyn Lewis comments, 'Everywhere there is war there are people trying to build peace.' The harrowing events in the Middle East emphasize that secular solutions and strong-arm tactics for the most part only fuel passions.

So what does it take to get people to engage genuinely in the business of peace-making? There are currently over a hundred groups registered with the Northern Ireland Community Relations Council, working on conflict resolution physically and psychologically. I recently visited Trevor Williams, Director of Corrymeela, one of the oldest and perhaps the best known of these groups. It has a beautiful centre on the rugged North

Antrim Coast just outside Ballycastle. In their outreach offices in Belfast I asked him, 40 years on from their foundation, how he now embraces the challenges.

For Williams, Corrymeela is a place where people live together and share in community, not a mere conference centre. Their founder, the Rev Ray Davey, believed that the essential prerequisite was to begin with change in yourself and your own attitudes; and that putting God's will before your own point of view could make the transforming difference. Much of Corrymeela's work centres on building relationships of trust and respect between people whose hate and fear have created the ugly, stereotyped scenes of Northern Ireland that orbit the world—pictures of children being terrorized on their way to school; and of Catholics and Protestants hurling bricks at

each other on so-called 'peace lines', with the police being attacked by both sides.

'We live in a deeply contested society where it is Us against Them,' reflects Williams. 'When you ask people to describe themselves they reply, I'm not this or I'm not that. So many have little self-esteem other than that of being opposed to the "enemy".'

Coming from such a starting point of fear and lack of confidence 'makes it very difficult for them to be peace-builders. And their world is no help, built as it is on domination, on the need to be successful, judged on what they have achieved rather than who they are.

'Yet we are taught as Christians that each person is created in God's image; so, no matter their background or what they may have done, each has a dignity and worth that is unassailable. That is where we have to start.'

Each year Corrymeela welcomes several thousand people from the opposing communities to conferences, residential weeks and other activities. Trevor Williams explains, 'Our programmes begin with how you greet each person as an individual of value when they arrive. Then we seek to create a safe place where each can tell his or her own story. It is amazing how many people when given this opportunity, will say, "No one has ever asked me for this before; no one has taken the trouble to listen."'

He makes the point that the 'outer' political arguments—be they about the police, political prisoners or other contentious issues of Them as against Us—are so well rehearsed that everyone knows what will be said before a word is uttered. So you have to begin differently. 'The difficult things *do* have to be addressed,' he says. 'And it's not enough to say, "Let's all talk about what we have in common." That does not touch the pain and the hurt that divide.'

**H**e believes that it is when people have the chance to share their personal, often harrowing stories, that they meet at a different level. He illustrates this. 'We had a residential week for two groups of teenage girls, 25 Catholic, 25 Protestant. They came from a tough, interface area in Belfast. Along with the usual round of varied activities, indoors and out, we set up small discussion groups, each facilitated by one of the dozen young international volunteers who join us every year. In one particular group there were eight girls, four from each side. The topic was, "How the Troubles have affected my life".'

'After initial apprehension they began to talk. One girl plunged in, "My father was killed by the IRA. He was a member of the RUC [the police force]." It took great courage for her to come out with that. The rule of thumb in Northern Ireland is not to mention religion or politics if we are not sure of the company we are in. But here was a safe place, and the group listened. She went on to describe the empty seat at the table and the sense of loss that was still very raw—on family occasions it was still like the first day.'

'This started a great opening up in the group. By the end of the evening six of the eight had shared stories of loss—parents, relations or neighbours killed in sectarian violence. After they had talked themselves out, those girls became inseparable. And their friendships continue to this day despite all the pressures. Why? Because everyone who suffers needs to tell their story, realistically and truthfully, into the community from which it stems. And to have it acknowledged and accepted provides release. It is the first, essential step in peace-building, for time alone does not heal.'

Trevor's own background gives point to this: 'I am a Protestant minister. My views belong to the Protestant community. My

questions and opportunities have been different from those of Catholics. After 30 years of violence and hundreds of years of fear, I have to face the truth of the past, acknowledge the wrongs that happened and expose them to the air. And the only people who can help me in this are Roman Catholics. We need each other for our mutual healing.'

What comes across from the Corrymeela experience is that individuals matter—and can make a difference. But what of its political impact? Trevor Williams defines their contribution as 'to help people break the deadlock of hate and enmity that wrecks political initiatives'. The latest issue of their regular magazine, *Connections*, brings this home in its interviews with such polemical figures as Martin McGuinness who has moved from the IRA to become Minister of Education in the new power-sharing Executive; Ronnie Flanagan, just retiring as RUC police chief; and Gusty Spence, former hard-line Protestant paramilitary. 'To bolster our own position, we demonize those who oppose us,' says Williams. 'We need to reclaim their humanness as individuals, perhaps not so different from us.'

Although Corrymeela has a huge outreach facility, and works in partnership with the civil service, trade unions and a great range of community groups, its core is a small group of about 200 Catholics and Protestants throughout Northern Ireland. Williams explains, 'One of the founding prin-

**Everyone who suffers needs to tell their story.**

ciples of Corrymeela is not to build an empire. When you're working on the same patch as someone else you have two choices: to be their rival or their partner. We believe in smallness, in supporting others in their initiatives rather than expanding our own structures.

'The challenge of community is continually tested for us,' he goes on. 'Much publicized incidents such as Holy Cross School [where children walking to school have been subjected to sectarian abuse], or events in the past—such as the 13 hunger strikers starving themselves to death in protest over government policy—can pull us in opposite directions. Then we have a choice: for each of us to be willing painfully to acknowledge our ingrained judgements and preconceptions, letting the Cross of Christ cut across our self-will at the deepest level of our being; or to throw in the towel. It becomes, first and foremost, not what we can do for others but what we allow God to do for us.'

The Corrymeela Centre has, as its iconic reference point, 'The Croi', a place of informal interfaith worship. On my visit it struck

me as somewhat like an underground bunker. But getting to the heart of things is a journey down under the conscious mind to confront often hidden unpleasant facts and attitudes.

John Morrow, a former Director of Corrymeela, reminds us that it is easy to dream a dream of community in idealized relationships rather than work with the real brothers and sisters God has given us. 'We have to learn to call forth the gifts of those who tread on our toes rather than to crush them,' he says. 'And because we continue to hurt one another and often fail to listen, community life is only possible through forgiveness.'

'Perhaps it is dangerous to speak of models because each undertaking is more a developing story,' he continues. 'The important thing is what we are prepared to risk together in response to the Holy Spirit.'

**C**orrymeela emphasizes the importance of always looking outwards. In the aftermath of the 11 September attacks and world-wide tensions, one forthcoming event Trevor Williams highlights is an interfaith gathering including Muslims, Jews and Hindus. Crisis in the world signals a renewed urgency for dialogue. In the current world climate, Williams reminds me, 'it is easy to retreat into the siege mentality that we in Northern Ireland understand so well'.

And while such dialogue may not provide the solutions to deep-rooted political conflict it can correct misconceptions about one another. Corrymeela's work is also evidence that dialogue can do something more. It can open up a space for the miraculous, a place to plant the seed of reconciliation. Clearly, this may be a long and painful process but one where courage and generosity of spirit can provide an alternative to the voices of hate that threaten to destroy our humanity.

Somewhere in this equation I find myself remembering my own complicated roots. My father, an English Protestant Petty Officer in the Royal Navy; my mother, an Irish Catholic from Derry; and myself, as one of six children, a cocktail of their different attitudes, backgrounds and psychic histories. And so we are all placed in a time and place that requires us to work out complex mergers in our relationships: in families, in workplaces, in communities, local and global. So maybe we all understand something about this process of peace-making.

'We all have a role in peace-making,' Williams assures me. 'When Jesus says, "Love your enemies", it wasn't to paper over the cracks. Some of the most important things we need to learn about ourselves and about others are only accessible through those who have named themselves as our enemies. So the challenge of peace-making extends beyond politics to each of us. Some ask, "Has my contribution any value?" I would say, "There are some differences that only you can make."'



Throughout the highs and lows of a long diplomatic career, Archie Mackenzie has always striven to put service ahead of ambition. Campbell Leggat and Kenneth Noble tell his story.

If former British ambassador Archie Mackenzie told you that he had seen the Loch Ness monster as a boy, you would believe him, for he has made honesty a hallmark of his distinguished career. But he confines himself to a bare account of the fishing trip as a 14-year-old when 'the loch's surface was like glass. Suddenly, at a distance of about 25 yards, I saw a large grey glistening back breaking the water's surface. I suppose I saw at least four feet of it.' Diplomatically he refuses to speculate as to what it was.

Now retired, Mackenzie, and his wife, Ruth, live on the banks of Loch Lomond in a modest house with 'a million dollar view', in the words of a builder who worked on an extension for them. They shared the diplomatic life on four continents, until Archie retired as the British representative on the UN's Economic and Social Council in 1975.

Becoming a diplomat was not Mackenzie's intention when he left school in 1933. As he relates in his new autobiography, *Faith in diplomacy\**, he entered Glasgow University to study English Literature with a view to becoming a teacher or a journalist. But, at the end of his first year, he came out top in Moral Philosophy and the professor advised him to switch to his department. This would involve some hard work to make up for the time spent on a different course. But a potentially greater challenge was the lack of any obvious job opportunity at the end of his studies.

By this time Mackenzie had already embraced the philosophy of MRA (now renamed Initiatives of Change) and committed himself to 'consciously seek God's will in each new choice that I faced. I naturally consulted with family and friends but I knew that the decision must be mine and the inner conviction steadily grew that I should take the risk and switch courses.'

After graduating he went on to further studies in Oxford and then won a Harkness Commonwealth Fellowship to research 'the ethical implications of democracy with

# Faith in diplomacy



Philip Carr

special reference to the work of Moral Re-Armament' in the University of Chicago in 1939 and Harvard University the following year. Thus it was that Mackenzie was in the US as the Second World War got under way.

The British Embassy in Washington were soon looking for extra staff and so, 'at short notice and without any prior planning', he was offered a temporary diplomatic post 'to make use of the very knowledge about America and her policies that I had been acquiring under my Fellowship'. Although he didn't know it at the time, this was the beginning of a 32-year distinguished career with the diplomatic service that took him to, among other countries, Thailand, Cyprus, France, Burma, Yugoslavia and Tunisia.

He says that those years were 'thoroughly enjoyable' and 'when asked by the younger generation about choosing a diplomatic career, I invariably give an encouraging response'. He admits, however, to not having been 'a wholly orthodox member of the service'.

Apart from his unshakable religious convictions, Mackenzie's unorthodoxy showed itself in the fact that he never declared any preference as to where he should be posted—a common practice—believing that his role was to be 'ready for anything, ready to serve'. He was sufficiently humble to believe that his bosses would know where his best contribution would lie.

His daily practice of seeking God's direction also led him to take unexpected steps. In 1965 he was appointed British Consul-General in Zagreb accredited to Croatia and Slovenia. 'From a career point of view, Zagreb was not a prize posting,' he dryly comments. 'It was then a provincial capital in a Communist country.' The greyness of the surroundings and the fact that the Mackenzies knew nobody there reduced Ruth to tears to begin with. But 'the first unexpected break in the clouds came less than three weeks later'.

Arriving at the office Mackenzie saw a group of Africans having an altercation with one of his staff. His secretary advised him to have nothing to do with them: 'They are always causing problems. Your predecessor said they should never be allowed to go beyond the outer office.' But Mackenzie had 'an immediate inner sense' that he should get to know more about them. Next time they turned up at the consulate he met them and discovered that they were Commonwealth students who, having failed to get into British universities, had accepted scholarships to study in Zagreb. But they did not speak Serbo-Croat and were unprepared for the cold winters. Having no embassies of their own countries in Yugoslavia they were looking for help as Commonwealth citizens from the British consulate.

Mackenzie gave them what advice he could and then, at his wife's prompting, invited them to come to their home for tea

the following Sunday. This was a start of warm friendships. Some of them eventually visited the MRA centre in Caux, Switzerland, where, says Mackenzie, their 'moral and spiritual roots were deepened'. One, Ben Markin, a Ghanaian medical student, eventually spent his working life in Bosnia. During the 1990s' civil war, after a long silence, he wrote to Mackenzie saying, 'The wounds I am treating up here in the mountains are terrible: but the hatred is even worse. Could I come back to Caux?' Despite having only refugee status at that time, Markin did visit Caux twice. Later he was unexpectedly appointed Bosnian Ambassador to Japan.

Mackenzie's book gives many fascinating glimpses into the world of diplomacy, and also some of the personalities he worked with—Isaiah Berlin, Sir Alexander Cadogan, Lord Halifax and former Prime Minister

**'Cleverness is not enough: character is also vital.'**

Edward Heath among others. We are also taken behind the scenes of historic events. Mackenzie was involved in the key negotiations that led to the setting up of the UN.

The book contains some timely historical reminders. While tensions are running high in the Middle East, it is not always remembered in Britain that our hasty withdrawal from Palestine—and the dumping of the problem on a fledgling UN—lay at the root of many of today's tragic events.

Mackenzie's involvement with MRA was not without cost. Some elements in the Foreign Office and the security services were suspicious of his association with the movement. It seems likely that it was this that resulted in his unexpected posting to Zagreb after two other jobs had been offered and then withdrawn.

When faced with calls for his resignation from the diplomatic service he exercised his right to argue his case in front of one of his accusers before the then Foreign Secretary, Sir Alec Douglas-Home. The future Prime Minister sided with Mackenzie, saying, 'I think you will probably be in the Foreign Office longer than I shall.'

It is ironic that Mackenzie should fall under suspicion because of his association with a movement that advocates the highest standards of probity in public and private life during an era when the moral lapses of some who turned out to be traitors were no bar to promotion.

'There is no doubt that moral weakness played a part in the extraordinary duplicity of men like Maclean, Burgess and Philby,' comments Mackenzie, whose encounters with the first two are related in his autobi-

ography. 'Cleverness is not enough: character is also vital.'

He has no doubt that 'my links with MRA strengthened my character. This is not a boast; it is just the result of honest reflection on my own nature, strong points and weak points, over the last 80 years. MRA introduced me to the concept of a daily time of moral and spiritual meditation which changed my life-style and has remained my regular habit early every morning for the past 68 years.'

He likens his daily 'quiet time' to 'a moral vaccine which stops bugs on the spot', and explains how this works. After a bad day at the office, where he felt tempted to be bitter or wounded by a colleague's actions, he often repaired the damage with a swift apology. Within two years of leaving the UN he was appointed assistant to Edward Heath in his role as one of 18 members of the Brandt Commission—or the Independent Commission on International Development Issues, to give the full title. After two years' work, Mackenzie found himself part of a five-person drafting committee charged with producing the final report to a tight schedule. He became impatient with another of the committee who seemed to be slowing their work down, and made sarcastic remarks about him which amused the others. At the end of their session, Mackenzie thought, 'You made an enemy today.' The next morning he apologized to the man for his attitude—and made a lifelong friend. Shortly afterwards they finalized the draft of the highly influential *Brandt Report*.

Since then Mackenzie has constantly pursued any opportunity that he could see to play a constructive role in affairs. As the *Scottish Field* revealed this year, he 'had just been asked to travel to Istanbul in April on an important mission which could have far-reaching consequences on international affairs'. He was 'still very much involved in "track two diplomacy", where he can be called upon to work with the influential contacts he has built up over his career'. Not that he underestimates the importance of official diplomacy, which he says is 'more important than ever' after such tragic events as 11 September.

Looking back over his long life of service, the phlegmatic Scot with a warm twinkle in his eye comments, 'When I awake in the morning and look across Loch Lomond from our home on the eastern shore, my first thought is very often one of gratitude. Not achievement; not failure; not frustration; and certainly not boredom. Just gratitude.'

Because of Archie Mackenzie's efforts, many have cause to share that feeling of gratitude. ■

\**Faith in diplomacy*, Grosvenor Books, London, and Caux Books, Switzerland, 2002, ISBN 1-85239-030-1.



Phyll Evetts



## Letting in the light

Mary Lean is transported by the work of a man whose art was his message.

The 60-mile St Cuthbert's Way footpath ends up on the island of Lindisfarne off the north-east coast of England, the home of the 7th Century Celtic Christian saints, Aidan and Cuthbert. As we arrived in St Mary's Church, at the end of our walking holiday, the last light of evening was shining through two stained glass windows at the west end. One depicted Aidan, with a dove, and the other, Cuthbert, with a flight of terns.

The windows had particular meaning for me, because they were the work of Leonard Evetts, whose second wife, Phyl, was an old family friend. We had encountered his windows all along our walk through the Scottish/English borders. The most prolific English church window designer of the 20th Century, Evetts created over 400 works of stained glass—and hundreds more in other media.

I had visited the Evetts on my way north, in their beautiful Arts and Crafts movement house, where he assembled his mosaics of glass on removable glass panels fitted behind his studio windows. Though infirm he gave me useful advice on our walk—which included the crossing to Lindisfarne, which is only uncovered at low tide. He died a few weeks later, in September 1997, at the

age of 88—10 days after completing his last window.

Now his wife and friends have published a beautiful book on his life and work—windows, calligraphy, altar frontals, church furniture and watercolours. With its many illustrations, *Leonard Evetts—master designer* is



Colin Burt

a delight to the eye and a balm to the spirit, a tribute to a man whose highest compliment was 'It works very well, doesn't it?'

Evetts was born in Newport, South Wales, the son of a building and painting contractor, who taught him to paint and write signs and to appreciate medieval architecture. He studied at the Royal College of Art, and spent most of his working life in the Department of Fine Arts at Newcastle University, where he became Head of Design.

Evetts conceived his windows to show the play of light and shade at different times of day and with different shifts in the weather. Speaking at the dedication of one of his windows in Wylam, Northumberland, in 1992, Evetts pointed out that the quality of light coming through it would alter as the leaves on the tree outside came out, changed colour and fell.

He believed that windows should let the light in and disliked elaborate Victorian windows which had the opposite effect. The book tells the story of how a friend accused Evetts of ruining a Victorian church. When Evetts asked what the friend meant, he replied, 'All the other windows look so dark in contrast to yours.' 'Oh, well,' said Evetts, 'I don't mind that as long as you've noticed the difference.'

One of the delights of the book is its juxtaposition of photographs of entire windows with close-ups of their details. The window at Wylam—on the theme of creation—includes beautiful pictures of fish, a butterfly, a squirrel and a dipper (a river bird known for its bobbing motion). 'He took pleasure in adding an image which had special meaning for a donor,' writes his wife. 'A Euro football, a tiny pet dog, a salmon or a

pun on a clerical friend who was fond of going to the races (illustrated by a line with a horse shoe at either end and a pair of green wellingtons), all these and more can be found if one knows where to look.'

Another source of fascination is the inclusion of Evetts' intricate, softly coloured preparatory sketches, which are sometimes reproduced alongside photographs of the finished product. The book includes the sketches for the 16 clerestory windows at St Nicholas Bishopswearmouth, where Evetts designed 46 windows in all. Malcolm Peach, the church's vicar from 1972 to 1985, writes, 'For Leonard this was not just the work for a stained glass artist taking up another commission but the pilgrim identifying steps along the way of faith.'

As well as the chapters on his glass, there are sections on Evetts' life, his lettering and heraldry, his teaching work and his watercolours. Ian Lavelle, a past President of Newcastle's Pen and Palette club where Leonard was 'master of paintings', describes his need to 'experience the atmosphere at a scene' before he painted it, working 'fast and boldly'. His aim was to convey the spirit of what he saw, rather than produce a photographic likeness. Thirteen beautiful examples of his watercolours are reproduced in the book.

There is also a chapter by Peter Burman, a colleague on the Council for the Care of Churches, where Evetts served for 23 years. Among the Council's duties was the vetting of new artistic works which congregations wanted to install. Evetts could be uncompromising in his assessment—'It would be difficult indeed for one to experience any enthusiasm for this design on any objective grounds,' he commented on one occasion. On another, he wrote, 'Immediate impressions are sometimes wrongly formed, but... one might be forgiven for thinking that... the figure in the right light is slipping down a band of material held aloft by a bird.' Burman comments, 'No one who took Leonard's advice in the same generous spirit with which it was given could do other than benefit from that advice.'

The book has a foreword by the opera singer Sir Thomas Allen, and the contributions by Phyl Evetts, who edited the book, give an intimate picture of her husband's life, character and sense of humour. Given the book's—justifiable—expense, this may be one to borrow from the library. But you may find it hard to give it back! ■

*'Leonard Evetts—master designer', privately published in 2001 by the Leonard Evetts Estate, ISBN 1-870787-80-3, hardback £45, paperback £29.50, available from PO Box 243, Woolsington, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE13 8YY (add £5.00 for postage).*



Colin Burt

Fish (above) and squirrel (left page)—details from Leonard Evetts' window in St Oswin's Church, Wylam, Northumberland

## FOR A CHANGE

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Anna Davis, Haywards Heath, UK

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'The date' by Natalia Pankova

What has political freedom meant for the arts in Russia?

**Natalia Pankova**, Chair of the Russian Arts Foundation of Nizhny Novgorod, talks to **Anastasia Stepanova**.

## Painting a brighter future

**W**e have a beautiful but very hard task—to create goodness by means of the language of art,' says Natalia Pankova, the Chair of the Russian Art Foundation, a non-governmental non-profit organization, which promotes artists and culture in Nizhny Novgorod.

The Foundation stands for art which brings light and positive emotions to its audience. Pankova believes that art has an impact not only on the psychological but also on the energy level as well. 'We absorb what is given to us despite our will, subconsciously,' she says. 'Children are more vulnerable.' She is against any form of aggression or destruction—especially the current trend for 'dark art', full of negative and depressing messages. 'It pours down on us like a bucket of waste, full of stuff the artist wants to get rid of.' The work of the Foundation is to counteract this negativism.

For most of the 20th Century, art in the USSR was strongly controlled by the Soviet government. 'Sociorealism was the only artistic expression accepted by the state—a deeply ideological movement, that didn't carry any aesthetic function,' says Pankova. 'When I was an art student, artists couldn't even think of experimenting artistically.' The irony was that this period of artistic repression followed the flowering of the Russian avant-garde at the beginning of the 20th century.

The end of the Eighties was a time of great changes in Russia—the period of *perestroika* (rebuilding). It not only changed political and foreign relations, but also the government's attitude towards the fine arts.

Nizhny Novgorod, then known as Gor'ky, was still a closed city due to its military industry. 'Local artists kept painting portraits of our leaders and praising the labour heroism of the Soviet people,' says Pankova.

What Pankova and her friends were doing

then, in the 'Black Pond' group, was considered quite bold and daring. They were free thematically and versatile in their expression and style. 'Artistic values came first for us,' says Pankova. 'We didn't think of money. We were saturated with art.'

In 1991 the collapse of the former USSR and the transition to a free-market economy marked a new beginning. 'It seemed as if people were waking up after a long, long sleep,' says Pankova. The Russian Art Foundation was set up in 1993 to unite talented local artists, some from the 'Black Pond', who shared the same values and ideas.

It was a boom time for active entrepreneurs as well as NGOs and charities. On the other hand, science and art, which had always been supported by the government, were going through hard times. 'The Foundation was born out of a growing need to support each other,' says Pankova. 'Although artists usually prefer their own studios to *beau monde* gatherings.'

In its first years the Foundation was funded by a commercial bank (NBD-bank) and other commercial organizations. 'Together with them we were building our future, where art would take its proper place and people's lives would become much brighter.'

They arrange several exhibitions a year, in large exhibition halls in the city and around the country, which have drawn the attention of the mass media and the city's élite. The exhibition openings have been gala occasions, with performers and musicians invited to set the scene. It could be a medieval chamber orchestra or a mime performance to contemporary music. 'We wanted our artists to be well-known and appreciated,' says Pankova. 'We felt that we were responsible for creating a special atmosphere in the city, for building bridges between artists and the public.'

They have also mounted a series of international projects. The biggest one—a Russian-British project called *Konversia* (conversion)—was run in collaboration with the St Andrew Foundation of Edinburgh. The main concept of the project was the artistic conversion of military, aggressive objects into civic, peace-loving art installations. For this reason the project was partly financed by the British Ministry of Defence and the Garantia Bank of Nizhny Novgorod.

Supported by Boris Nemtsov, a former Governor of Nizhny Novgorod, who was then Deputy Prime Minister of Russia, from the Russian side and by Baroness Smith of Gilmorehill, a member of the House of Lords, from the British side, the project aimed at a joint workshop for Russian and British artists followed by exhibitions in Russia and the UK. Due to the crisis in the Russian economy in August 1998, the project was only partly realized. Two major exhibitions of several Russian, Scottish and



'The birds' by Natalia Pankova

English artists were held in the Russian Embassy in London on the invitation of a former Russian Ambassador to the UK, Yuriy Fokin.

The most recent project, *Vusokoe*



Natalia Pankova and Aleksey Sannikov, the general director of the regional power company, opening the High Voltage exhibition.

*Napryazhenie*, (High Voltage), which took place from December 2001 to January 2002, involved 42 artists of different media, genres and professions, aged from 23 to 70 years old. 'The range of exhibited works—from classical paintings to video art—gave a representative picture of what is happening in the Nizhny art scene at present,' says Pankova. It was the second largest exhibition in 10 years at the Nizhny Novgorod State Museum of Fine Arts.

The group which developed the exhibition was chaired, strange as it might seem, neither by an artist nor by an art-critic, but by Aleksey Sannikov, the general director of a power company. 'I believe that this unexpected combination is very much up to date and is a mark of the time we are lucky to witness,' says Pankova.

The slogan of this event, 'Switch ON!', was a cry to stimulate people's free artistic imagination. Many of the participants were not connected with art professionally. 'It was a unique platform for all who desired to express their artistic ideas,' says Irina Marsheva, a leading art-critic.

'The association of High Voltage with High Art has charged us up with some positive energy that will allow us to carry on,' says Pankova. This will include a good range of activities to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Foundation in 2003. ■





# PEOPLE

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Edited by Anastasia Stepanova



Festival time at Karaosta: Kristine Briede (centre back) with some of the young participants

### From Utopia to reality in Latvia

Right on the picturesque Baltic Sea shore lies a derelict and forgotten land of empty nuclear rocket storehouses, bunkers and abandoned multi-storey houses, shaping the landscape of Karaosta, the former sealed military zone in Liepaja, Latvia.

Karaosta (Warport) was set up by the Russian Tsar's army and then taken over by the Soviets. In 1994 the Soviet army left but people without jobs and starving dogs still live here today on Future Street and similarly named roads.

Carl Björsmark from Sweden and Kristine Briede from Riga, Latvia, first came to Karaosta as artists and documentary film-makers, and, enchanted by the place and its people, soon became part of its life. They found that their art was becoming 'more than pictures hanging on a wall or showing your latest documentary on a screen'. 'I wanted to create a vision of a Utopia that would become real,' says Björsmark. 'I wouldn't have dared to do it on my own,' says Briede. 'Carl's strength and belief was of great importance.'

In December 2000 they set up K@2, a

cultural and educational centre in an old mansion which was the former headquarters of the Tsar's army and then of the Soviet Naval Forces. With its high ceilings decorated with angels and old stoves in every room, it lures local children, youth and pensioners. Artistic photos, conceptual installations and *objets d'art*, scattered around the building, are products of the creativity of the people, who come to the centre's weekly workshops and cultural events, led by professional artists.

The main purpose of the centre is to provide an alternative playground to the current situation with high unemployment, street crime and drugs problems. 'By "alternative" we mean not a "one off", but a parallel variant of the today's situation,' says Björsmark. Through different projects, such as a new media project 'Digital Kitchen', the visual art gallery 'K Maxla?' (Latvian for 'What is Art?') and even a 'Circus', for children, adults and animals, they are realizing their main aim—to break barriers and open new views, images and approaches to an everyday life that might otherwise seem extremely horizontal and flat.

They also work on the hot issue of integration between Russians and Latvians, a legacy of the Soviet era when the Latvian

language was only spoken at home and cultural traditions were not supported. Latvian nationals constitute only 54 per cent of the total population; approximately one million or 43 per cent are Slavonic or other nationalities for whom Latvian is not the native language. Latvian language courses, with outings to the theatre and cinema, are very popular among Russian-speaking locals. As a symbol of integration, an ancient Russian Orthodox Church, which used to be a sports hall during Soviet times, rings its bells inviting people from all over Liepaja.

With only two per cent of the centre's funding coming from the local authorities, Carl and Kristine have to battle constantly to raise money from overseas. 'Without everyday struggle our centre might fall asleep,' says Carl. 'As soon as you become an "institution" the edge seems to disappear.'

It is very hard for them to evaluate the changes that the centre has brought to Karaosta as they have integrated into the process themselves. 'We are in the middle of the painting, becoming an object ourselves,' says Björsmark. 'Though I have heard comments like "there is a new light in the eyes of the kids now..."'. 'Karaosta started to live again!' says Briede. 'It's got much more confidence in its future—not only because of K@2, of course.'

As for future plans, they are both determined to strengthen the centre's infrastructure and move forward. 'A process like this one can never be finished, only continued.'

Anastasia Stepanova

### Borrow a youth

It was the end of a hot and long day in Kampala, Uganda, and my energy and enthusiasm were fading. We climbed the steep stone stairs to the third floor of the building and entered a small office, where we were greeted by a smartly dressed young man. Suddenly more young people appeared through a door, which led on to the roof. They kept coming until the room was filled with about 30 of them. We sat on the only available chairs and they perched on the desks, window sills or stood. They were all members of Borrow a Youth Volunteer.

Their organization only began at the end of last year, but already they number over 100. Some are in their last year at school, others are at university and a few are

recent graduates. They are all volunteers, coming under the umbrella of the youth section of the Ministry of Gender.

Their work is mostly focused on helping young people to find solutions to their problems. 'Young people are an engine for change' is one of their values. Their vision is 'to pool together young professionals of whatever race and social grouping and inspire them to play an active role voluntarily in the development of the communities in which they live'.

One of their first projects has been with a remand home, where they provide educational services on a regular basis, as most of the detained youth have very little education. At Christmastime some volunteered to stay there to arrange a party. They have also persuaded a colleague who is a doctor to provide a regular clinic in the home. They want to plough back their skills into the community and help to tackle the problems of poverty.

Why do they do it? One of the volunteers told us about his grandmother. During the civil war in Uganda, refugees used to pass by their home. His grandmother took food out to them, even though they had very little themselves. 'I was trained to be generous,' he said.

Another said, 'At this moment in my life I have free time and I felt I had to do something, as I have no money to give.' Yet another said that he had been helped

by a charity to get his education when he was young and that he wanted to help others in return, now that he was in a position to do so.

We were told that volunteering was not part of the culture of the country and that Borrow a Youth Volunteer are setting a precedent. Some of their leaders have been to Kenya to study how volunteering works. They have 'discovery evenings' every month for their members when they take stock and strengthen themselves and have speakers. They have also had training in conflict resolution from a German charity.

As I heard these young people speak, my tiredness went. There is no doubt that they will find many opportunities to employ their energies and abilities.

Ann Rignall

### INDEX 2001

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'An engine for change': members of Borrow a Youth Volunteer, Uganda

## Cleaning up the arms trade

by Michael Smith

The arms trade accounts for 50 per cent of all corrupt international transactions, stated a report launched by Transparency International (TI) in April.

The arms industry is worth \$40 billion a year—and the 'commissions' (or bribes) it pays to governments average at least 10 per cent of contracts. 'Corruption plays a significant role in influencing arms procurement,' says Laurence Cockroft, Chairman of TI's UK chapter. 'Despite repeated scandals this situation has been largely ignored by governments, NGOs and academics.'

Not any longer, it seems. Britain's redoubtable International Development Minister, Clare Short, believes that a breakthrough is on its way. 'With international mergers, it is a time of real opportunity to clean up the whole industry,' she said at the launch of TI's report. 'The time is now ripe to have a proper, transparently managed security sector.' Short bases her optimism on the British Government's new legislation to counteract corruption, which is part of the Anti-Terrorism Act prompted by 11 September.

Short is also spurred by her concern to tackle global poverty. She believes transparency in the arms industry could bring 'enormous benefits' to developing countries. 'This sector tends to be the most secretive,' she said. 'Corruption hovers in clusters around it and it causes the continuation of desperate poverty for lots of people across the world.' Corrupt arms expenditure diverts taxpayers' money away from schools, hospitals, roads and transport infrastructure.

Of course, Short continued, poor nations need adequate defence. 'The legitimate arms trade has nothing to fear from a call to clean up... to have legitimate conduct, to procure properly, to have transparent and well-managed security sectors.'

Britain's arms industry is one of the world's largest and, says Cockroft, most

Continued over



Philip Carr



Clare Short: Time now ripe for a transparent security sector

secretive. He gives the example of British Aerospace's refusal to respond to TI's inquiries about its sale of an air traffic control system to Tanzania, which has been described as needlessly complex and expensive.

Asked about this, Clare Short said the issue dated back over ten years, and her department 'doesn't have the information to understand how this contract was made'. But she also added: 'I find it very difficult to think that a contract like that could have been made cleanly.'

The Cold War, she continued, had led to 'bloated defence sectors' throughout Africa, where 20 per cent of the population still lived in countries in conflict. There was a need to reduce the circulation of small arms and light weapons throughout Africa, under the auspices of a recent UN convention on small arms control.

If the British industry is secretive, at least one French defence company has had a change of heart. CSF Thompson beat a South Korean contract to sell frigates to Taiwan. The Taiwan government's anti-graft body later reported that the contract was strongly influenced by pay-offs and the French Foreign Minister of the time, Ronald Dumas, was convicted last year of receiving improper payments. The scandal was Thompson's nadir, said Cockcroft. It has now changed its name to Thales and has published its own compliance system and collaborated with TI.

Cockcroft listed several reasons why corruption is so widespread in the arms industry: the excuse that secrecy is needed to guard national security; the huge size of contracts, which makes 'commissions' easy

to hide; the complexity of specifications which makes bribes hard to detect; and the 'revolving door syndrome', whereby former government officials look to join defence companies on retirement, risking a conflict of interests.

Paul Eavis, Director of Saferworld, a London-based post-Cold-War research body, pointed out that the Export Credit Guarantee Department now insists that UK exporters give guarantees that they will not engage in corrupt practices.

He picked out four actions the British government should take to clamp down on corruption. First, an exporting licence should be conditional on the company declaring that it is not engaging in any corrupt practices. The licence would be revoked if any employee was found to be engaged in corruption.

Secondly, he stressed the need for transparency and the disclosure of information. He wants the UK government to publish the value of individual export licences, and the quantities of arms involved, each year.

Thirdly, he called for better systems for tracking large bills and monitoring payments. And, finally, he believed the government should give greater protection to whistleblowers within companies who expose corrupt practices.

Even with all the necessary legislation in place, the big issue remains: will there be prosecutions? Britain's old anti-corruption laws, dating back to over 100 years ago, proved ineffectual. The new anti-bribery legislation replaces them—and Cockcroft said that the Crown Prosecution Service, the Serious Fraud Office and the Home Office are all taking it very seriously indeed. ■

**A**s a teenager, Vendela Tyndale-Biscoe lived the fast life of the 60s and dreamt of success on the stage. But when she finally made it, at the age of 24, she felt 'dead inside'.

She grew up near Gothenburg, in southern Sweden. When she was nearly eight, her father died of a hereditary kidney disease. He was only 44, and Vendela's older siblings were 18, 15 and 13.

Vendela threw herself into activities to 'compensate' for her father's death. She had taken up ballet at the age of four and enjoyed performing comic songs for her family and friends. At 12 she made her 'real' debut in an annual review in her city. 'I experienced the sweetness of making people laugh and applaud for more. By then I knew that this was what I wanted to do.'

She started singing her own songs in rock clubs, in the intervals when the evening's band took a break. She didn't tell her mother about staggering onto stage after throwing up half a bottle of brandy, nor about hitchhiking home in the small hours during a visit to England where she spent her evenings in the night clubs. Nor did she tell her mother when a friend of her sister's seduced her on her second visit to Britain, when she was 17.

For the last years of her schooling she lived away from her mother, first with her brother and sister and then on her own. She fell for a young actor—only to discover, painfully, that she wasn't his only girlfriend. 'For four years, he became my invisible idol who I always looked out for and seldom met. My brother was suffering from depression, and I longed for a man who would love and care for me.'

She started smoking hashish—'I found it helped me to forget my pain and laugh.' While working in Spain before taking up her place at the Malmö Theatre School, she tried LSD. 'I was also taking slimming pills containing amphetamine to keep me awake so I could stay up all night and still cope with work. When I got home I was so tired and nervous that I used to wake up at night shouting.'

She loved theatre school, where the famous drama teacher, Andris Blekte, became her mentor. In her second year, she played a lead role in Kjell Andersson's play, *The State*, in which patients in a mental hospital tell their stories. 'It confronted me with my conscience. One night I was smoking hashish with a friend, while listening to the soundtrack of the musical, *Jesus Christ Superstar*. When the crucifixion scene came, I thought I heard Jesus crying to me, "This have I done for you, Vendela. What have you done for me?" I thought of all the drug addicts in the square outside, who hadn't been as lucky as me, and I felt terribly ashamed.' She decided to quit drugs.

As she turned back towards her childhood faith, she got into arguments with her friends at theatre school, where a Marxist Leninist cell had been created. 'After one

Ragnhild Löfgren



Vendela and Philip Tyndale-Biscoe

## A life I never dreamt of

### Theatrical success didn't make Vendela Tyndale-Biscoe happy. Nor did drugs and partying.

argument, I cried out to God, "I feel so lonely! I want to talk about you!" Almost at once I felt a presence which was very peaceful, which said, "I will be close to you always."

Vendela's parents had been involved with the Oxford Group and Moral Re-Armament since the 1930s, when it had inspired a religious revival in Scandinavia. In December 1971 she went with her mother to spend New Year at the movement's conference centre in Caux, Switzerland.

'When I arrived there, I just cried. Everything was so wonderful. When my room-mate asked me what was wrong, I said that it felt as if there was a hard glass wall between my mother and me, because I could never tell her that I had taken drugs.' After three days, she found the courage to talk to her mother—who took the bombshell unexpectedly calmly. 'Being honest with the person of whom I was most afraid made me feel as if a stone had been lifted from my heart.' She returned to theatre school full of energy and with the determination to speak up for her beliefs in any company.

After her final exams, she travelled with the National Touring Company for a year and then, in 1974, landed a permanent contract with the prestigious Uppsala Stadsteater. 'By now I was 24, and ought to have

been very happy, but I felt dead inside,' she says. Her work was exhausting and her latest boyfriend was becoming an alcoholic. Just when she had achieved everything she had hoped for, life didn't seem worth living.

Desperate, she went back to Caux, a place where she had found hope. There she found herself taking the only female part in a play, which placed the story of the New Testament in a modern context. The rehearsals were an eye-opener to her—'I felt that the men I was working with loved me just for being me.' There was no need to flirt. 'God was the boss and this gave me a great sense of security, peace and excitement. I realized that this "clean" friendship, combined with the vision that people could change and that I could do something by beginning with myself, was what I wanted.'

When she thought about what this would mean, she realized fundamental changes were necessary. 'I decided to stop trying to make myself more popular, stop thinking that I had to sleep with every boyfriend, stop drinking alcohol and become open with everyone, especially in the theatre world, about what I had decided. It was like saying goodbye to my career.'

She returned to work 'like a new person' and found, to her surprise, that her col-

leagues respected her new values, because she was living them herself, rather than trying to impose something on them. The following summer—feeling that she did not want to spend her life acting other people—she gave up her contract so as to work full-time with MRA.

During her first four months, in Britain, she suffered from depression—caused, she believes, by mercury poisoning after a dental operation—and, after returning to Sweden, a minor nervous breakdown. After recovering she went to Canada to visit her sister, and there became involved with MRA work once again, and was faced with the decision of whether to return to her career or remain available. 'I shut myself into my room for a "talk" with God. I had the most clear thought, "If you give the theatre to me, even risking never to do theatre again, I promise to give you a life that you could never dream of. Do you trust me?" When the Uppsala Stadsteater cabled to offer her a part in a play, she replied that she had decided to continue to work with MRA.'

Over the last 25 years, this decision has taken her to Africa, India, Russia and other parts of Europe, often acting in plays and reviews which challenge the audience to rethink their lives and values. In 1980, she married Philip Tyndale-Biscoe, an English actor whom she had first met in that play in Caux. In spite of painful times—not having children, her brother's suicide, her sister's and her own struggles with the kidney disease which killed their father—Vendela believes God has kept his promise to her. She and her husband now live in Stockholm, after 17 years of travelling the world together.

Mary Lean





# WEBSITE

by Robert Webb

## Life after Enron

For weeks the collapse of the Houston energy giant, Enron, competed with the war on terror for headlines. While the company's top executives made millions selling stock as Enron headed down, thousands of their employees, not knowing what was happening, lost almost everything. The debacle brought a billion-watt media focus on Enron's 'creative accounting'—and also on its massive campaign contributions to both major US political parties and the access this presumably aided.

Arthur Andersen, the accountants, failed to sound the alarm when their client steered into ethical danger zones. They were accused of complicity in Enron's questionable practices, even shredding documents that Congress and the Justice Department would have sought. Thousands of lower-level Andersen employees—most, if not all, innocent—were laid off while the firm struggled for survival as many of its major clients deserted.

'The Enron debacle doesn't mean capitalism is broken,' say Julian E Barnes, Megan Barnett and Christopher H Schmitt in *US News and World Report*. 'Nor does it fully discredit a devil-take-the-hindmost management style. Still, Enron stands as the signature scandal of the new economy, reinforcing the notion that, for all the progress made since the robber barons of the late 1800s, fair and open markets remain more an ideal than a reality.'

As with many tragedies, some good may

result. Enron was almost certainly the catalyst for assured passage of the most sweeping campaign-finance bill in recent US history. In the wake of Enron, neither reluctant members of Congress nor the White House could risk killing legislation that tightens the spigot on corporate contributions.

Enron has provoked leaders of industry to do some soul-searching. At least one, Charles M Denny Jr, of Minneapolis, Minnesota, former CEO of ADC Telecommunications, has gone public. In an article for the *Minneapolis Star and Tribune* headed, 'Integrity requires eternal vigilance', Denny lays bare the questionable practices of many corporations, their executives and boards. 'I raise my finger to point in righteous indignation at the culprits,' he writes, 'but it bends back upon itself and points directly at me—Mr or Ms Everybusinessperson and Mr or Ms Everycitizen. I have been convinced for years that corporate executive compensation practices are destructive to the integrity of the social contract between management and those they would lead. Yet I only emit an occasional squeak in protest.'

The disaster has also called new attention to the widening pay gap between top executives and their employees. In an interview with CNN, Senator Carl Levin of Michigan, a leading apostle of reform, said that whereas top executives once made 20 times the average pay of their employees the ratio today is 500 times.

'In my role as a citizen, I must hang my

head in shame,' wrote Denny in his article. 'The thought of federal or state regulatory agencies being staffed at the direction of those they are to oversee contradicts the very purpose of the regulatory agencies.'

But Denny's most telling point was the urgency for those who see something wrong in business to say or do something about it. He lamented his own 'history of unfulfilled good intentions'.

It is encouraging to see the localizing in Washington, DC, of the annual Caux Business and Industry conferences which aim to raise ethical standards and heighten performance. Periodically young people from business and industry meet to focus on how the ethical foundations of the economy may be strengthened individually and collectively. With speakers and small discussion groups, the emphasis is on making the American economic juggernaut a more just servant of humanity. For all its strengths and grandeur, the US economy leaves millions behind and, as Enron demonstrates so dramatically, occasionally robs those on the lower rungs while showering riches on those at the top.

In his book, *Beyond the Bottom Line*, which contains examples of exemplary business practice, Michael Smith, Managing Editor of *For A Change*, says, 'Something further still is needed if industry is to fulfil its role, not just as the great provider of goods, services and jobs but also in building a more just world order.' He calls for 'a moral and spiritual dynamic' which 'touches inner motivation and gives wisdom and insight into people and situations'. The secret we all need to discover is that such a dynamic offers far more rewards in inner fulfilment than could ever be measured in monetary terms. ■

Robert Webb is a former columnist and editorial writer for the 'Cincinnati Enquirer'. He lives in Alexandria, Va, USA.

## REFLECTIONS

by Leena Khatri

Associated Press



## Doors to serenity

*Lord, grant me the courage to change what I can  
the serenity to accept what I cannot change  
and the wisdom to know the difference.*

To me, life is about finding the balance between the three aspects of this Serenity Prayer. The second aspect, 'to accept what I cannot change' is not fatalism. It is however an antidote to stress and strain.

Inner listening or listening to the Inner Voice is a God-given means to discern what path of action to take and, indeed, whether to act or not in a certain situation.

Once we have been shown what

action or non-action to take, the how of it is suggested in our Hindu scriptures, in a chapter of the *Bhagwad Geeta* which deals with Karma Yoga or the Yoga of Action.

The first of the two attitudes this chapter suggests as the basis of action is, in Sanskrit, *ishwararpan buddhi*: doing an action surrendering it to the Almighty. It implies an appreciation of the Lord even before I begin an action. It means doing my best. The act has to be pure, done without wanting credit for myself, and with selfless motives. Personal likes and dislikes are not the motivation for the action. And once it is surrendered, it is not mine any more.

The second attitude suggested is *prasaad buddhi*: an attitude of graceful and reverent acceptance of whatever comes, after the action, as a blessing and gift from the Lord. It may not be what I expected or even hoped for. My personal likes and dislikes are no longer a standard for judging the results or even judging myself.

I have found these attitudes not only helpful but indispensable in my work, in my dealings with my children, and in being as I am now with my ageing parents and my ailing mother.

Though not always easily acquired these attitudes are always freeing. ■

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