

Beheading the monster of corruption



by Laurence Cockcroft

In 1991 a Kenyan friend, Joe Githongo, invited me for lunch with the regional director of the World Bank, Peter Eigen. The subject: would it be possible to form an international anti-corruption organization, along the lines of those NGOs which successfully campaigned on human rights issues? The answer was indeterminate. But we agreed that the potential benefits to a country like Kenya were indeed colossal.

Eigen left the World Bank that year and spent the next 12 months establishing whether there would be sufficient international support for such an initiative. In 1993 he founded Transparency International, now marking its 10th anniversary.

Several international workshops agreed that TI would concern itself with what is known as 'grand corruption', the bribes paid in connection with large scale projects in the developing countries—in which players from all over the world are involved. The organization would seek to build coalitions of government, business and civil society which could operate both within a particular country and internationally.

NO NAMING AND SHAMING

It was decided that TI would not investigate individual cases of corruption or 'name and shame' guilty parties. But it would work on mechanisms to enable the contract system to operate more freely, and advocate reforms in the way aid donors operated.

TI was set up as a coalition of national chapters, each with their own membership

structure. A mini-office was established in Berlin with one and a half paid staff and a very modest budget. By 1996 there were some 40 chapters; now there are 90.

The most important early debate was whether the organization should embrace small scale or petty corruption in its mandate. Many members from the developing world argued that the corruption which affected them and their families was driven by the demands of the policeman on the street, the nurse or orderly on the hospital ward, and the soldier at the roadblock. A path-breaking report of 1996 on corruption in Tanzania, by former Prime Minister Warioba, showed just how damaging this form of corruption could be. Later, TI came to recognize the close link between petty and grand corruption. But at this stage they tended to be seen as distinct problems.

The big international issue on which TI lobbied in the mid 1990s was the first international convention outlawing transnational bribery. Signed in 1997, this obliged the rich nations, members of the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), to pass legislation which would make the payment of bribes overseas a criminal act, as it had been in the USA since 1977. All 30 OECD nations—and four countries who are not members—have now introduced such

‘The man in the street may pay as much as 20 per cent of his income in bribes’

legislation and TI has switched its focus to effective implementation, where there is still much to be done.

Meanwhile, TI's national chapters in the developing world have sustained the focus on petty corruption. Using opinion polls as important tools, the chapters in Kenya, Bangladesh, Brazil and Senegal have shown that the man in the street, and the family in the slum, may pay as much as 20 per cent of their income in bribes. In many cases, pressure on the relevant authority has led to a significant reduction in such demands. Nowhere has this been clearer than in Kenya, where in the 2002 elections the incoming government of President Kibaki pledged themselves to an anti-corruption platform. Even taxi drivers reported a dramatic decrease in harassment.

The best example of TI in action has

been the 'integrity pact'—a device by which bidders for a particular contract commit themselves to a 'no bribes' policy. This has been successfully adopted in a range of countries, from Colombia to Nepal to Korea. Donor agencies are increasingly recognizing the value of such pacts, which are fully relevant to current scandals such as the Lesotho Highland Water Project. Their full potential has yet to be felt.

This is only one example of TI's success in persuading and enabling companies to take an anti-corruption stance in their own operations. Over the last three years, TI and Social Accountability International (SAI) have convened a steering group of 10 major international companies to develop a set of 'Business Principles for Countering Bribery', now being promoted internationally.

ARMS TRADE

TI (UK) and the Swedish Foreign Ministry have also led an initiative to tackle corruption in the international arms trade. We have met with companies, government representatives and NGOs to identify the policy changes which arms-importing and exporting governments, and also defence companies, should adopt. These could make a real contribution to reducing corruption in a very dangerous and sensitive sector. There is still much work to be done, but the initiative has justified the essence of TI's coalition-based approach.

These initiatives have vindicated TI's strategy of not 'naming and shaming'. This approach has made it possible to fight issues on the basis of non-specific evidence or evidence already in the public domain. However, TI's annual membership meetings see regular challenges to this and related policies. Debate within the organization remains lively and may lead to different strategies in the future.

TI's work over the last 10 years has won it wide recognition. But corruption is a hydra-headed monster and is seldom dormant. TI will be judged in the future by whether it manages to keep one step ahead of the monster.

Laurence Cockcroft is chairman of Transparency International's UK chapter and a member of TI's main board.

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Lead story from the summer conferences at the Initiatives of Change centre in Caux, Switzerland
Essay by Rajmohan Gandhi on the post-Iraq War world

FOR A CHANGE

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Corrupt politicians meet their match



by Christopher Mayor in Melbourne

**'Welcome, stranger!'**

Human nature is an odd and contrary beast. Migrants sometimes resent the newcomer, forgetting perhaps their own difficulties as newcomers—even in Australia, a nation developed by immigration.

This has been sadly apparent during the past three years when waves of asylum-seeking boat people (or security-threatening 'queue-jumpers', as the authorities regard them) have arrived. These people—often whole families fleeing oppressive regimes in Iraq, Afghanistan, Iran and elsewhere—risked everything to reach our peaceful and democratic land.

Rounded up at gun point, they are incarcerated in remote, razor-wire-surrounded camps. They languish for many months while a tedious bureaucratic process judges them eligible for either permanent residence or deportation.

So it was refreshing to read a recent article by former Governor General and third generation Australian Sir Zelman Cowen in *The Age* of Melbourne. His grandparents on both sides came from Belarus, then part of Tsarist Russia, in 1891 and 1908—a time of reaction, and of recurring pogroms, which did not ebb until the overthrow of the Romanovs during the First World War', as he put it.

'I appreciate our Government's need and right to maintain control of the process of deciding who is allowed to

settle in this country,' continued Sir Zelman. 'Being as generous as we can be is the most likely way to get the best result.'

'Compared with many nations of the world, our circumstances are comfortable, even enviable. We have an obligation, as part of the international community, to behave with magnanimity to those who arrive here carrying little more than their hopes for a better life.'

The first step

Throughout Australia on 1 June, many homes opened their doors to neighbours and strangers in a programme of 'Open Homes, Open Hearts'. It was launched at an international conference in Sydney in April by Initiatives of Change (formerly MRA). Its theme was 'Together we can make a world of difference'. Citizens were urged to welcome to their home

someone from another culture.

In Melbourne, a Muslim teacher from Somalia had resented the fact that when he and his family moved into their home some years ago, their neighbours made no approach. In June he decided to invite them to his home for coffee and a snack.

Water, water everywhere

What on earth did we do before someone had the brilliant idea to bottle water? In the train, at the cinema, while stationary at red lights one can see folk—usually elegant and fashion conscious young women—uncapping a bottle of water for a quick, satisfying swig.

Such is the threat to the soft drink industry that one of Australia's major water bottling companies, Neverfail, is now threatened with a takeover by the local Coca Cola bottling company. What a delicious irony. In the midst of an

historic drought in Australia, water threatens Coke.

Statistically speaking

As a letter to the press here apropos the Iraq war says, 'So now we have lies, damned lies and faulty intelligence.' Benjamin Disraeli could not have said it better.

Great Barrier grief

Now to the strange case of Queensland's Chief Magistrate, Di Fingleton.

She was convicted and sentenced to 12 months in prison over an e-mail she sent to another magistrate, asking him to explain why she should not demote him because he had supported the appeal of a fellow magistrate against Fingleton's judicial decision to transfer her. The fact that the transfer was further up the Queensland coast where hundreds of thousands of tourists pay good money to savour the delights of the Great Barrier Reef seemed irrelevant.

What Chief Magistrate Fingleton and many others saw as an office tiff, the court saw as a retaliatory threat against a fellow magistrate punishable under a new law designed to protect jurors and trial witnesses. Fingleton even declined to request bail lest her appeal be delayed. But she will continue to receive her salary until her appeal is heard and resolved. She is being assessed for protective custody in a situation where some former clients may resent her company. ■



Cover: A voter casts her ballot at a polling station in a temple in Taipei
Photo: Associated Press

FROM THE EDITORS' DESK**Honestly?**

Let's admit it. How many of us have been tempted to fudge our tax returns, travel without a ticket or to hang onto change we have been given in error? A recent European opinion poll, for the *Reader's Digest*, found that 46 per cent of Britons would cheat the taxman, and 60 per cent would steal office stationery. But 80 per cent would return extra change to a supermarket cashier.

By their own admission, Slovaks are the least honest people in Europe, with only 51 per cent of people reckoning to be totally honest, while 70 per cent of Italians chose the honest option to all the dilemmas posed by the magazine. UK citizens were 13th on the integrity list of 18 nationalities, with only 58 per cent reckoning to be honest.

The difficulty with such polls is, of course, the temptation to give the 'correct' answer rather than the honest one. It could be said that the Slovaks are more honest about their shortcomings than the Italians or British are about theirs. I know of a case where someone's answers to a similar survey were discounted because they appeared to be unbelievably virtuous.

On the other hand, once the cement of integrity in society crumbles, and cheating is seen as okay, trust is undermined. A climate of corruption undermines democracy. In its extreme, it leads to grand-scale larceny and contract killings.

Citizens' groups have fought back and in our lead story we feature anti-corruption Clean Election Campaigns in Taiwan which have been replicated in Brazil, Kenya and other African countries.

What prevents us from being honest or admitting our failings? Naked greed? The fear of being found out? The fear of recrimination? A refusal to admit what one is really like? Or that deadliest of tripwires, pride?

Transparency International, featured in this month's Guest Column, advocates that business contracts should include 'integrity pacts'. For the sake of the wider community perhaps we all need to make—and observe—our own personal integrity pacts.

Michael Smith

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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.
- in the family and the workplace, relationships can be transformed.
- in urban jungle or rural backwater, community can be built.
- 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.



Celebrations in Taipei after Chen Sui-Bian of the Democratic Progressive Party was elected President of Taiwan in 2000

The voters who won't stand for corruption

Citizens' movements have played an important part in cleaning up general elections in several countries. **Brian Lightowler** charts their development from 1988 to the present day.

Associated Press

In 1988 high level police and government corruption in the Australian State of Queensland began to unravel before the glare of the media and a stunned public.

The revelations at a Public Enquiry into Police Corruption, headed by Tony Fitzgerald QC, brought into sharp focus questions about the soundness of state administrations and of Australian society in general. The once-unrivalled state Premier Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen was forced to resign, and his National Party was soundly defeated after 32 years in power.

State Police Commissioner Sir Terence Lewis was found guilty on 15 counts, sentenced to 14 years' jail and stripped of his knighthood. Among other policemen convicted was an inspector who had personally collected Aus\$180,000 in bribes.

Even so, Fitzgerald said that he had only uncovered the tip of the iceberg. He urged the state government to make far-reaching reforms in government and police administration and in the electoral system, which they did.

Against this background a group of ordinary citizens, of which I was one, launched the grassroots charter, *Our Decision for a Corruption-free Queensland*. It challenged dishonest community practices and provided a focus for the expression of public opinion. We called on individuals to join us in committing ourselves to what Perth's Radio 6PR called a 'super honesty' programme.

Our Decision for a Corruption-free Queensland read in part: 'Any system, however well designed, is only as effective as the people who operate it and the community environment in which it functions. In the final analysis the only effective and durable answer to corruption is incorruptible men and women.'

Some of those who pledged themselves contacted tax or social security offices to make restitution. One radio commentator when asked if he would sign up, said, on air, 'This could cost me an arm and a leg.' With the support of Deputy Opposition Leader Tom Burns, who later became Deputy Premier, campaigners for the *Decision* visited or wrote to all State MPs, outlining their convictions.

Our initiative later proved to be the prototype for a much larger action in Taiwan.

TAIWAN VOTERS' POWER

Liu Ren-Jou, a worker with Initiatives of Change (then MRA) described what happened: 'In 1991, Taiwan conducted its first general elections for members of the National Assembly. Vote-buying was rampant. The atmosphere was such that the election came under great criticism from the public. [The National Assembly is the constitutional organ and has no legislative power. That resides with the National



The Courier-Mail, Queensland

Tony Fitzgerald, who led the 1987 enquiry into police corruption in Queensland, Australia.

Legislature or Parliament.]

'Towards the end of 1992, when the first complete electoral reform for legislatures was scheduled, one could predict that the main political power would move to Parliament. One day in May I was having lunch with two members of the business community who were very worried that the mood for vote-buying would favour only ambitious politicians, and enable financial groups to enter Parliament in great numbers, thereby worsening future politics. Business opportunities in Taiwan would become even more unfair. Fair competition and management and the development of the economy would certainly regress, the general environment would worsen and very soon Taiwan would lose hope.

'The next day during a time of reflection, I had a strong inner thought to initiate a clean election campaign.

'After discussing this with friends and colleagues involved with Initiatives of Change (IC) in Taiwan, we decided that over the next five years, IC would go all out to promote a clean election campaign.

'I publicly announced that I, as an individual, would never enter politics or take part in any political elections, in order

to prevent people from thinking or believing that I had any personal ambitions.'

The campaign had a four-point strategy:

- strive for joint action with non-government groups and religious groups;
- win the trust and support of the ordinary people;
- work for a positive response from the media and the public;
- make sure that the government keeps its promises in carrying out reforms.

RAGING FIRE

Taiwan's Clean Election Campaign was launched a few months prior to the 1992 National Legislature elections. In an interview with Liu and another Campaign leader, Jack Huang, a legal adviser to several major enterprises, Taiwan's *Global Views Monthly* magazine reported: 'It was Liu who conceived the idea of launching the "anti-corruption movement". Some friends criticised him as a Don Quixote but he persevered. His conviction that "human nature could be changed" inspired others in MRA to join him.' The article added that Huang's tactical skills had won the full cooperation of 68 other civic groups who also became partners in the campaign.

Liu said that all those running the campaign were personally committed to maintaining political neutrality; seeking no personal advantage; generating no hatred towards the corrupt but inspiring love of country as the motive for action; and running the public demonstrations peacefully and with joy.

As the weeks went by the impact of the Clean Election Campaign grew and became 'a raging fire', according to *Global Views Monthly*. The Minister of Education, Mao Kao-Wen, wrote to 4.2 million parents of schoolchildren in support of the campaign. He said that the behaviour of parents influenced the development of their children's character and none would wish their children to cheat in school exams. Parents must set an example and refuse vote-buying.

The China Post, Taiwan's largest newspaper, gave free advertising space for the campaign and printed stickers, leaflets and slogans. By the time of the election, some 670,000 had committed themselves in signed statements not to accept a bribe for their vote nor to vote for any candidate who offered a bribe—practices which had been commonplace for two generations. Of the 350 candidates for the Legislature, 162 signed pledges against vote-buying. President Lee Deng-Hui and Prime Minister Hao Po-Ts'un received members of the campaign and personally handed over their signed pledges.

The results of the Legislature elections were hailed by the media as the miracle of the Clean Election Campaign and a victory for people power. Five billionaires who had

The voters who won't stand for corruption

stood as candidates offering all sorts of incentives were defeated—and in those same electorates the highest number of votes went to candidates who had supported the Clean Election Campaign. The ruling party, the Kuomintang (KMT), lost heavily while the opposition Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) doubled their number of seats. The General Secretary of the KMT resigned.

CRACKDOWN

The campaign was certainly one factor in the swing of public opinion against vote-buying. It also helps explain the broad public support for then Justice Minister Ma Ying-Jeou's crackdown on corrupt practices in the city and county elections of March 1994. Twenty-three were arrested—including a Speaker, a Deputy Speaker and nine councillors from city or county authorities—on charges of buying votes or accepting bribes. They were found guilty and *The China Post* reported that Ma's move had been 'like an earthquake measuring more than six on the Richter Scale, rocking not only the DPP but also the Kuomintang'. Ma told me that the Clean Election Campaign had a positive effect on his crackdown campaign. The two campaigns had interacted with each other.



The President of Taiwan, Lee Deng-Hui, hands Liu Ren-Jou his declaration during the Clean Election Campaign of 1992.



Liu Ren-Jou (with balloons) on the Clean Election trail in Taiwan

Following the arrests, the regional chairman of the KMT resigned. A senior official of the KMT pointed out that if Ma continued his relentless attack on corruption the grassroots structure of the KMT could collapse. A group of KMT legislators warned Ma that if that happened he would be held responsible.

Ma responded by telling the Legislature that anyone believed guilty of vote-buying would be prosecuted, regardless of his background and political affiliation. The fight against corruption was not for personal show but an ongoing national policy. Nevertheless political pressure from within the ruling KMT on the President led to Ma's eventual departure from the Ministry of Justice. But he told me, 'After

three years of crackdown as the minister I was able to prosecute more than 5,000 government officials and 7,500 people involved in vote-buying. The conviction rate when I left the Ministry (and most cases were still pending) was 40 per cent.'

Ma said that from an early age he had guarded against any form of cheating or corruption. So when he became Minister of Justice, his conviction for personal integrity broadened, so that it was 'not only for myself and those around me but also for the people of the country'.

The Prosecutor-General said on Ma's departure as Justice Minister that if he had been able to stay on for a further three years, Taiwan would be a very different place. In December 2002 Ma won a second term as Mayor of Taipei and is regarded as potentially the main rival to President Chen Sui-Bian in the elections due in 2004.

The present Minister of Justice in the DPP government of President Chen, Chen Ding-Nan, continues the relentless fight against corruption and what is termed 'black/gold politics', where criminal figures buy their way into public office as legislators, mayors or councilmen. Chen, nicknamed 'Mr Clean', was described by the popular monthly magazine *Commonwealth* as one of the 50 most influential figures in Taiwan's history. *The Asian Wall Street Journal* (11 September 2000) quoted Chen on assuming office: 'In the past, the government and the people didn't obey the law and a lot of things that were wrong ended up becoming right. The crackdown on graft by the new government is an opportunity for people to be educated about the law. We can't let Taiwan continue to be lawless.'

In the recent past, 10 per cent of the members of the Legislature, around 20 members, had backgrounds associated with

gangsters, he told me in an interview. In the present Legislature following the December 2001 elections, however, only one member was considered to have a 'mafia' background. The London-based *Financial Times* said that these elections were the cleanest in the history of Taiwan. *The China Post* conducted a poll two days after the election and found that 70.1 per cent of those questioned considered that vote-buying had been greatly reduced, and were satisfied that the election was fair.

People are beginning to understand that it is not right to receive money for a vote nor to offer money for votes, Chen says.

Between 1992 and 1997, the Clean Election Campaign was in action at every election—national, city or local. Hundreds of teachers and university students volunteered for training for the campaigns, conducting public meetings, demonstrations and seminars. After 1997 the success of the Clean Election Campaign led to the setting up of an officially sponsored campaign against vote-buying and other forms of political corruption.

The campaign's present Vice-Chairman, Buddhist Master Shihjingyao, is also a member of Taiwan's Central Electoral Committee. Evaluating the campaign, he acknowledged that Ma had suffered a political backlash and been forced to step down. But, he went on, progress against vote-buying had continued over the years. 'We now see that the current government is very serious about cracking down on mafia-style activities and money politics.'

Su Yin-Kuei, a member of the Legislature and supporter of the Clean Election Campaign, not only campaigned against vote-buying and money politics, but also has a track record in tackling corruption in the judiciary. As a lawyer in



'No to bribery': Taiwanese Clean Election Campaign poster

Fact File

- Cheng Kejie, former Vice Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of China, was sentenced to death in July 2000 for soliciting and taking bribes totalling \$4.9 million when he served as Chairman of the People's Government.
- The US spends \$130 million a year on protection against money laundering and corruption in politics.
- According to a recent poll 68 per cent of policemen in Bangladesh use bribes for routine procedures like recording complaints or filing first information reports, and 90 per cent of Bangladeshis say that it is almost impossible to get in touch with a policeman without money or influence.
- The bond rating agency Standard & Poor's say that an investor has an 80-100 per cent chance of losing any money he puts into corrupt countries.
- The Independent Commission Against Corruption states that in Hong Kong in the year 2000 there were 43 pursuable reports of corrupt conduct and 288 pursuable reports of illegal conduct during the elections for the Legislative council.
- A recent survey conducted by Ibope for Transparencia Brasil shows that six per cent of people were offered money for their votes in the Brazilian municipal elections in the year 2000. In the elections of 2002, the proportion had fallen to three per cent.

Sources: www.chinatoday.com, Colombia international affairs online, www.netbangladesh.com, www.rosbaltnews.com, www.icac.org, www.transparencia.org
Doug O'Kane

Kaohsiung, the second city of Taiwan, in 1991 he brought to public attention payments to judges by 'mafia' families. He told me in an interview that this practice was known among lawyers but not generally by the public. The payments were made to persuade a judge to reduce the sentence of a convicted criminal.

In 1995 Su went further and published the names of the judges in the Kaohsiung district receiving bribes and the amounts they received. He told me, 'When I published this information I anticipated something would happen to me.' Two weeks later, two men attacked him and left him for dead. Fortunately he survived.

Later the Kaohsiung Lawyers' Association took up the campaign against corruption in the judiciary with Su as the coordinator. The Taipei Lawyers' Association followed, and eventually the campaign went national. Judges with a bad record were transferred by the government to remote counties.

Su is a member of an unofficial inter-party parliamentary committee, known as the Sunshine Committee, which seeks to have three anti-corruption bills passed by the Legislature:

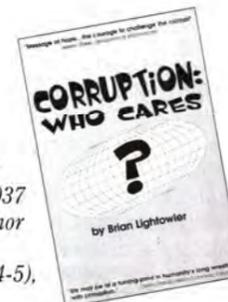
- a Political Donation Bill to ensure that all MPs declare any income besides their parliamentary salary;
- a Freedom of Information Bill, whereby the public can access government and public information;
- a Political Parties Donation Bill whereby political parties will need to declare their sources of income and how that income is used.

CLEAN AFRICA CAMPAIGN

Meanwhile, Clean Election campaigns based on the Taiwanese model have been run in Brazil (1994); Kenya (see *For A Change* April/May 2003); in the first democratic elections in Sierra Leone since the civil war (2002); and in Ghana. A group of Africans from five countries is planning to launch a Clean Africa Campaign in 2004. It will be spearheaded by a travelling faculty to train potential leaders in honest and unselfish leadership.

Amina Dikedi, Nigerian IC worker and an initiator of this new campaign, wrote, 'Experience shows that leadership which is not corrupt, but is unselfish and capable of reaching across historic divisions, receives an eager following. The Clean Africa Campaign aims to encourage and train such leadership throughout Africa. Working in partnership with churches, mosques and other like-minded groups, it will make use of the extensive network of Africans committed to moral change in their continent, and build on the experience of the Clean Election Campaign in Kenya.'

This article is based on extracts from Brian Lightowler's new book, *Corruption: Who Cares?*, Caux Books (ISBN 2-88037 507-7) and Grosvenor Books, Australia (ISBN 0-9592622-4-5), 2003.



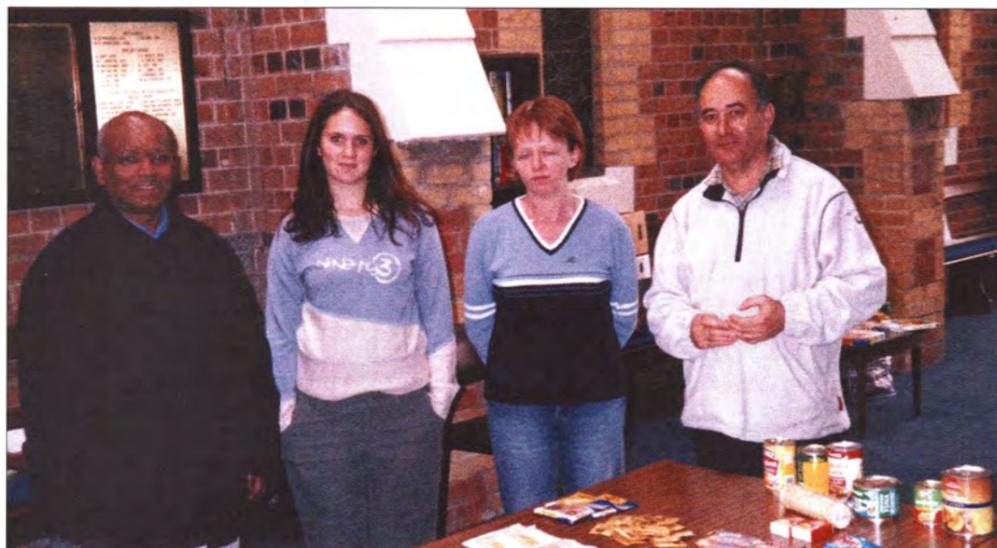


PEOPLE

MAKING A DIFFERENCE



Miko Lowe



David Spitteler (right) at the Asylum Seekers Centre in Melbourne

Reaching out to asylum seekers

Over the last six years, the Asylum Seekers Centre in Melbourne, Australia, has distributed over A\$250,000-worth of aid. Its founder, David Spitteler, has spoken to over 205 churches of all denominations, and to schools, radio stations and rotary clubs, raising awareness of the challenges facing people who come to Australia in search of sanctuary.

As National Service Performance Manager at Australia's telecommunications giant, Telstra, Spitteler had helped to change the company's assessment criteria to ones based on customer satisfaction. Two years after leaving the company, he took a part-time position as cross-cultural networker for the Anglican churches in his area.

In his spare time, he responded to a suggestion that he should help asylum seekers. 'Nobody else was doing that,' he says. He knew solicitors working with the Refugee Advice and Case Work Services, who introduced him

to Ema, a post-graduate agricultural student from Ethiopia. Her husband had been a lecturer in Addis Ababa when the regime changed in Ethiopia, endangering their lives. 'We talked about her needs, and then about the needs of other asylum seekers, and I started to think, "What can I do to help on one day a week?"'

Spitteler began to talk to churches about the needs, and offered to collect and distribute food. As the word got around, more asylum seekers came asking for assistance, and the project spiralled. Ema's family had also sought help in finding work, so Spitteler offered training. When Ema's husband finally did land a job two nights per week stacking supermarket shelves, they immediately stopped taking the food, saying that others needed it more. They were eventually granted asylum and Ema has since completed a doctorate at Melbourne University.

Three years ago, realizing that many of his clients were having to travel long distances to support centres, Spitteler moved his operations to the Trinity Uniting Church in Dandenong, a suburb of Melbourne where many

asylum seekers live.

He describes himself as a facilitator (now a full-time unsalaried job) matching needs with offers of help. Such offers have included free haircuts, conversational English classes, and seven garden plots where asylum seekers can grow vegetables.

Since Spitteler started, Australian laws have got tougher. All asylum seekers who arrive without papers are initially detained; if released, they are allowed to work. Those who arrive with proper papers, but delay in asking for asylum, are not allowed to work and do not receive support; neither do people appealing against negative asylum decisions. These groups are completely reliant on charities, and it is on them that Spitteler concentrates.

Asked how the experience has changed him, Spitteler responds that he has felt empowered by applying his faith outside the structures of the church. 'I made a conscious decision to step outside the committee work of the church. I didn't get any initial support from the religious institutions, but it has worked.'

Miko Lowe

Crossing the generation gap

Petty vandalism was on the rise in our village, Bradley in Yorkshire. Teenagers hanging out on the street by our one village shop were becoming an increasing concern. Milk bottles were smashed and letterboxes were rattled. Bikes played 'I dare you to hit me' with cars.

I'd thought of talking to some of the kids, but I was afraid of ridicule or taunting. And, besides, what could a single mother on Income Support like me hope to achieve anyway? It was never quite the right time.

Then a friend and I attended a consultation, all about facilitating dialogue between people, organized by the IC programme, Hope in the Cities. There I heard many inspiring stories and met a wide spectrum of people interested in doing something to bring about positive change.

This was the kick which booted me into stopping to talk to some of the teenagers. They told me there was nothing to do in the village: they were right.

I'd noticed in the paper that the annual open meeting of the parish council was taking place the next week. So I asked them if they wanted to bring this issue up with the council, offering to accompany them and introduce them if they wished. To my amazement, four of them turned up at my door the night before the meeting. At the meeting, a group of 10 trooped in, causing concerned looks and dropped jaws amongst the councillors.

My friend and I were worried that any provision of facilities for young people in the village would be done without including them. Our purpose in going to the council meeting was to stress that the kids should be involved in any discussions and planning that might follow.

A year on, the Bradley Youth

Group (BYG) is still going strong. Its committee is predominantly made up of teenagers, and its constitution was written by them. It's had its share of problems, but it has raised over £3,000, has founded a youth club with over 70 members and is working on getting a skateboard park and shelter where young people can hang out.

Vandalism has reduced significantly, and the kids have even done two voluntary litter picks around the village. They feel some sense of ownership and pride in the facilities being provided. Links have been made with the rest of the community, and the fear and negative view of teenagers is changing.

As for me, I found myself elected Secretary to the BYG and now run the youth club along with a handful of dedicated adult volunteers. I know most of the kids and wonder why I was ever scared of talking to them!

Fiona Johnson

Fiona Johnson



Members of the Bradley Youth Group at a fundraising sponge-throwing event

Yes from the heart of Europe

The people of Lithuania, the biggest of the three Baltic states, are the first former Soviet subjects to vote to join the European Union. Over 65 per cent of the population turned out for the referendum in May in which around 89 per cent voted 'yes'—eliciting a sigh of relief from the Lithuanian Government, which had feared that voter scepticism towards the EU would win out.

Like most candidate countries, Lithuania was torn by a deep division of opinions about entering the EU. Farmers in particular were concerned. The many reforms of the last decade of the 20th century had exhausted people and made them indifferent to change, says Dr Violeta Pukelienė, one of the leaders of the public information

campaign about the EU. 'Though it is paradoxical as the biggest benefit coming from the EU goes to agriculture.'

Dr Pukelienė is Head of the Economics Department at Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas and also holds the Jean Monnet Chair. She was invited by the Department for Foreign Affairs of the regional municipality to join a team of volunteers, which went to other regions to provide information and arrange discussions about EU membership.

During eight years of teaching and research on European integration, Pukelienė had realized that there was a critical lack of information about the EU. According to one poll 40 per cent of the Lithuanian population had no clear opinion on the EU and 11 per cent said they had no information about it. This was the biggest number of uninformed people in the applicant countries after Bulgaria (13 per cent). She believed that 'only knowledge can determine a solution which is objective'.

The campaign's open and transparent approach encouraged the public to start believing in reforms again. 'People changed their opinions after taking part in the meetings and declared this officially,' she says. 'People were not sceptical in their hearts.' A poll immediately before the referendum showed that 75 per cent of the population were in favour of joining the EU.

Located on the shores of the Baltic Sea, Lithuania contains the geographical centre of Europe. It borders Latvia, Belarus, Poland and the Kaliningrad district of Russia, and has experienced many invasions through the centuries.

After the outbreak of World War II, Lithuania was occupied three times: in 1940 by the USSR; in 1941 by Nazi Germany; and in 1944 by the USSR again. This final occupation lasted until 1990.

The country experienced mass



Violeta Pukelienė

deportations to Siberia (approximately 250,000 people) under the USSR, and the extermination of some 220,000 Jews by Nazi Germany.

Gorbachev's *perestroika* in 1985 led to liberalization and the 'Singing Revolution' in Lithuania. The first organized opposition to the Communist Party occurred in June 1988, when some two million people from Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia linked hands in a human 'Baltic chain' stretching 650 kilometres from Vilnius to Tallin in Estonia. Lithuania was the first Baltic State to regain independence in March 1990.

No wonder the issue of national sovereignty is a sensitive one here. Lithuania shares the fear of other accession countries of ending up on the periphery of an affluent and centralized Old Europe.

Before the referendum you could hear people saying, 'We've been in one Union—the USSR—we don't want to join another one.' Memories of Soviet attempts to homogenize their culture and language are still vivid. 'While in the Soviet Union Lithuanians managed to keep not only their language, but also their cultural heritage and national identity,' says Pukelienė. 'All these values will not vanish in the EU.'

Lithuania is due to become an equal member of the European Union on 1 May 2004, along with nine other countries.

Anastasia Stepanova

Anastasia Stepanova

Gabrielle Revere, Getty Images



Why we all need committed somebodies

Prof Richard Whitfield argues that we must get our relationships right if we are to give the next generation a fair chance in life.

The link between morality and human emotions, in the context of the nurture that babies, children and young people need, has been seriously neglected. Yet few things have a greater impact on the way that life is likely to turn out for both individuals and societies.

Human beings—like the other primates—are social animals, depending upon each other for physical and psychological survival from the moment of birth. We need nurture—that is 'tender loving care'—in order to survive, let alone thrive. We have little or no means of knowing who we are without reference to others, to our place in time and space, and to a range of social frames of reference. We are, quite simply, relational beings, even though too little of the way that we modern people organize our lives in society and families reflects this truism.

We pay a high price if we neglect what I call 'basic laws of human motion and emotion'. Central to these is that, especially when we are young, 'others' have to be 'there' for us for long enough to provide us with not only material sustenance, but also, crucially, nurture and emotional security.

Then we can venture safely and with reasonable confidence on our own in a complex and perplexing world for at least some of the time.

Without committed somebodies, we would all be nobodies. This imperative of human mutuality implies the cultural availability of sufficient predictable and stable human bonds or 'attachments'.

HOPES AT BIRTH

Throughout the months of foetal development, and from the moment of birth, the baby's hope is hugely invested in its mother. Relatively helpless compared with many other newborns in the animal kingdom, and having a much longer period of dependency, baby relies on mother to be the first mediator of a strange world. If secure and nurtured herself, the mother is able to give early meaning to her child through the first glimmers of physical then verbal language; also a sense of joy in life from providing rewarding body contact, including satisfying feeding. Mother's capacity to mediate warm, focused and sensitive concern is vital, the child's hope and potential mirrored in her countenance and demeanour. She is indeed baby's 'mother of hope'. At this stage the main

caring role of father, extended family and neighbours is to give practical and emotional support to the mother.

Within a few hours of being born, infants attend selectively to human stimulation. They soon develop preferences for the particular characteristics of those involved in their care. When the caring is disrupted, even in ways that adults might regard as minor, distress and protest generally follow. If the infant is often unable to engage adults' involvement, it tends to become dejected and withdrawn, and this tends to have lifelong consequences for relational intimacy. Maternal depression, however caused, is a powerful risk factor for child development. Aside from post-natal hormonal depression, a mother without a good sense of

self-esteem, who lacks hope and may not have the reliable love of a partner, family or friends, tends to pass on her low feelings to her child. We now know that the experience of attachment in infancy, for good or ill, is strongly transmitted between generations. The negative effects of poor experiences can only be ameliorated by early corrective intervention.

EMOTIONS

We humans have a range of feelings and emotions, though often a limited vocabulary for expressing them. Some emotions are innate and universal; others are the product of social learning. For about 15 years I have pondered on helpful ways of describing these two classes of emotions,

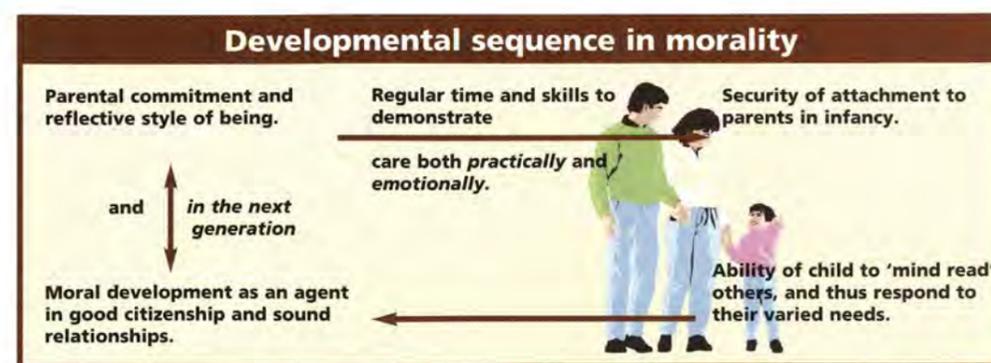
Basic, innate emotions	Socially learned emotions
Hunger	Love
Fear	Envy
Anger	Pride
Joy	Disgust
Distress (pain)	Guilt
Sadness	Embarrassment

while doing justice to the balance of logic and evidence. The outcome is summarized in the table (bottom left), in which it will be seen that 'love', if we are to regard it as an emotion, is not innate. That crucial ingredient for our well-being is better viewed as a gift, with covenant associations, handed on from one to another.

All of us long to be given reliable love, for it fuels our hope and trust in both life and people. Lack of trust, which originates primarily in the lack of reliability of human bonds in too many families, is the prime cause of the civic disintegration now growing apace. Not being certain of love from one's mother and father, and from their union, is more often than not a crippling emotional experience that affects moral consciousness and capability. Research shows that secure early attachment gives the best chance of enjoying all the good outcomes in life, such as educational achievement, health, relational stability and economic prospects.

Brain research is now suggesting that ethics, and much else in human capability, is more a matter of 'heart' than 'head'. Our delicate emotions are driven first through the lower limbic brain, not the much larger, reasoning, twin-hemisphere cortex. Moral behaviour has emotional underpinnings. How we feel about ourselves has more effect on our behaviour than conscious knowing does, particularly in stressful or testing circumstances. Amazingly, tender loving care enhances the way our brains become hard-wired; that is, it changes brain capability and electrochemistry. Rationally, we should therefore arrange life circumstances to be much more friendly to the emotional brain. Our intellectual cleverness too often lacks emotional wisdom.

Before the onset of speech, the young child is programmed to 'say' something like: 'I cannot become considerate unless you nurture my being so that I feel welcomed in this world and valued through your consideration.' Unless this child's voice is heeded there is



no possibility of reducing the ills of society—such as relational breakdown, crime and antisocial behaviour.

Humans have a fundamental motivation to respond to a world of consistent human contacts. Collaborative mutuality is in fact experienced as a joy, an end in itself rather than a means of self-interest. This is our intrinsic potential for morality, easily derailed and needing sensitive emotional conditions for its flowering into a mature concern for others. This potential for moral intuition is affected by attachment experiences. Treat a child with deep ethical concern and it then has a chance of becoming an ethical adult. This way a reservoir of inner value builds up involving surpluses of positive emotion. This satisfies the ego's hungers, so that energy is freed from intense longings to be naturally shared with others whose needs are more easily recognized and responded to. This positive emotional surplus can also be drawn upon for self-sustaining in the inevitable moments of stress, crisis and loss.

HAND-ME-ON LOVE

Unselfish, reliable love thus tends to create both new outreaching love and personal resilience. This is an emotional affair in which mutuality in the attachment dance, first to mother, then to others, becomes supremely satisfying. It thus makes both ethical and practical sense for parenting to be practised in unstressed circumstances. Careful adult interaction with the young is thus a prime social and cultural priority. The basic 'hand-me-on love' sequence, having strong intergenerational links, now

informed by extensive research, is summarized in the flowchart above.

Carlo Collodi's children's classic *Pinnocchio* is well-known. Pinnocchio is the puppet creation of the elderly Italian woodcarver Geppetto. He is a loveable, mischievous 'boy', who means well. He sustains our attention through his many ups and downs. We identify with the parental care and concern of 'father' Geppetto, as well as with the waywardness and unclear direction of the 'boy'. At one point, floundering in his own self-doubt, Pinnocchio turns to his maker Geppetto, saying: 'Papa, I'm not sure who I am. But if I'm all right with you, then I guess I'm all right with me.'

Embodied here is profound insight about right relationships of self with Maker, self with self, and self with other, in which faith and trust is based upon the steady experience of care.

GIFT RELATIONSHIPS

No society can be sustained without covenant relationships. Looking after one another, yet giving each other space to grow and to be; keeping each other in mind; and living in an ethical environment are not luxuries. They are central to being fully human. Our fast-moving world sidelines children's emotional interests, placing the need for secure attachment and safe separation at risk. This is neither rational, nor ethically defensible. Status, recognition and resources for parenting and partnering are key aspects of sound social management. They are also a business investment, with extensive educational, social and economic advantages.

The future depends on the experiences of today's child. Gifts of time for togetherness,

touch, and tenderness build up that other 'T'—trust—the platform for almost everything else at whatever age. Parenting is at core a matter of gifting unique self-worth through a network of lasting human bonds. These act both as social glue, and as a bulwark against factors that prompt despair or a sense of insignificance and disposability.

Westernized culture desperately needs new research-informed social and ethical vision. Planning and investment for reliable bonds, including parenting within and beyond kin, needs to be at its core. That means that girls who would be mothers, and boys who would be fathers, must be given every encouragement to view those roles as prime career tasks needing their active and collaborative involvement.

Human welfare is always dependent upon the gift of loving relationships. But now 'hand-me-down reliable love' is in seriously declining supply. Society, individuals and governments must act to stem the draining tides of emotional and thus ethical deprivation.

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Richard Whitfield is a Professor Emeritus of Education, and he and his wife Shirley share four grown children and, so far, five grandchildren. Originally an antibiotic chemist who became a Dean of Social Sciences and Humanities and Director of UK Child Care at the Save the Children Fund, his last full-time post was Warden of St George's House, Windsor Castle.

His latest book, the final part of a trilogy of poetic commentary on life, is 'Messages in Time', Bracken Bank Books, 2002, ISBN 0-9538624-2-9.



The hands that unleashed thunder

Brutal honesty and an unswerving commitment to his ideals have driven **Letlapa Mphahlele** into areas most people would turn away from in horror—and onto an extraordinary journey of reconciliation. He talks to **Anthony Duigan**.

When he smiles, his whole face lights up and you feel an immediate connection, a warmth of one human being to another. Open. Charming. Easy to like. But behind this, Letlapa Mphahlele, South African liberation fighter, carries the shattering consequences of terrible decisions.

It started a long time ago, in August 1978. Then only 17 years of age, Letlapa slipped out of his home village of Manaleng in the north of South Africa early one morning without telling his parents and fled to Botswana. He had lived through the Soweto riots of 1976, albeit at a distance, and was radicalized by a deep feeling for the dispossession and violence his people had suffered over many generations.

One thought buzzed in his head: 'I have to leave the country to study and train as a soldier, and return to fight the whites.'

His single-mindedness and uncompromising commitment drove him into the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC),

'By meeting we are able to restore each other's humanity'

the most radical of the South African liberation movements that were then in exile. The intensity of his desire to liberate his country projected him above the ordinary and he quickly rose to become

Director of Operations in the PAC's armed wing, the Azanian Peoples' Liberation Army (Apla).

By 1993 he had flitted back into South Africa. In July, armed Apla cadres under his command stormed into St James's Church in Cape Town during the evening service and killed 11 people, maiming many others. Five months later, another group of Apla fighters targeted a popular tavern in Cape Town. Five people died, including Lyndi, the only daughter of a lecturer at the University of Cape Town, Ginn Fourie.

The horror of these attacks burnt itself into the imagination of South Africa, and the Apla soldiers who carried them out were hunted down and prosecuted. The man who commanded them could have stayed beyond prosecution since he flitted in and out of South Africa and was not

present during the attacks. But this did not fit the mould of Letlapa Mphahlele.

'I've never shied away from taking responsibility for Apla activities at the time I was Director of Operations,' he says in his quiet but decisive voice. 'At the time the Heidelberg Tavern was attacked I had issued an order suspending attacks on civilian targets. I waived this order after the murder of five schoolchildren by the South African Defence Force in Umtata (in the Eastern Cape).

'I also believed that the foot soldiers who carried out the attacks should not shoulder the blame. They did not do it without my say-so. I authorized the targets.' All said without emotion, quietly, firmly.

He appeared before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), established by Nelson Mandela's government to uncover the truth of the past and heal the wounds. He was urged to 'make full disclosure of my crimes', the rider being that he could be granted amnesty if he did so. He refused, insisting he had waged 'a just war that shouldn't be treated as a crime'. Charged in the Supreme Court, he was finally acquitted on a technicality last year.

EXCITING JOURNEY

Meanwhile, deep change was taking place within Mphahlele and many of the people deeply affected by his orders. Two people in particular were to have a profound effect on him.

In 1998 Mphahlele met Charl van Wyk, one of the survivors of the St James's Church massacre. 'Charl was the man who returned fire and wounded one of the Apla cadres in the church,' says Mphahlele. 'My meeting with Charl was facilitated by journalists who had interviewed us separately and so before TV cameras we shook hands and shared our experiences from different viewpoints. This was the beginning of an exciting journey I was to travel.'

On that journey he has also linked up with Ginn Fourie. Struggling to come to terms with the violent death of her only daughter, she had met the killers who were seeking amnesty before the TRC and forgiven them.

'We met last year and it has been a profound and humbling experience for me to be with Ginn,' Mphahlele says. 'I am an atheist but I believe absolutely in reconciliation. Meeting soul to soul, person to person.'

The seeds of the journey he has undertaken were sown some years ago when Mphahlele faced both the past and the future with the tough-minded scrutiny he has used to test all his assumptions throughout his 42 years.

'No conflict should be forever,' he says. 'What happened was the result of history

For Lyndi Fourie

Forgive our deafness
Our ears are modulated
To hear voices of the dead
Counselling us from your tomb
We leap at your still commands

Hands that unleashed thunder on you
Nine summers ago
This summer tremble before your throne

In the twilight of our age
The angry soldier breezed from the bush
Tried in vain to hate
Succeeded in hurting
Today the guerrilla is foraging in the bush
For herbs
To heal hearts swollen with grief

Show us
How to muffle the roars of our rage
How to dam the rivers of our tears
How to share laughter and land
Land and laughter

Forgive our idiocy
Our souls are tuned
To heed prophecy
By the graveside of the prophet
Whose blood we spilt
Whose teachings we ridiculed
While he walked among us

Letlapa Mphahlele

and once the page was turned I knew that it was not enough to have legislation to put reconciliation in place. As human beings we have to face each other and mend relationships.

'I had to face the fact that people were killed and harmed because of my orders and that I had to sit down with those who were prepared to do so and pour out our hearts to each other.

'In doing this I am not undertaking a party political task. It is an intense human mission. The people we had fought and harmed and caused grief to were never our direct enemies. But they suffered. My job is to reach out to those who survived. By meeting together we are able to restore each other's humanity.'

Not everybody who was affected by the attacks has accepted the hand extended by Mphahlele—and he does not condemn them. 'Some people have decided not to forgive me for what I have done. I know it's not easy to forgive and I understand them. But to those who do forgive me, it is the start of rebuilding our communities.'

Mphahlele says he draws his strength from the journey he has undertaken and the response of those who have joined him despite the suffering he has caused them. 'It is my mission. I am seeking as many of those left poorer by my judgement as I can find and asking their forgiveness,' he says. 'At the same time I know that they have

every reason to seek legal recourse against me and feel bitter.'

The strength of purpose and mission that drove him into exile and onto a path of confrontation with injustice has not been dampened. Transformed, yes; but unchanged in its determination to make a difference. 'I am a rebel and have always been one,' he explains. 'I have resisted the hypocrisy of political structures and never held political office.' This despite inducements from leaders within the PAC which he still loyally supports—and just as loyally criticizes for its shortcomings.

'I am proud to be part of the PAC, an organization that once strode centre stage of South African politics with confidence,' he writes in his autobiography, *Child of this Soil* (Kwela, 2002). 'The PAC is now reduced to a shadow, thanks to its unusual birth and other self-inflicted ills.'

But Mphahlele is too tough-minded and visionary to get stuck in mere criticism. 'The fuel that keeps me running now is community involvement,' he says. And the smile takes over and lights up his being. 'Out of the gift of forgiveness which so many black and white people have given me I am regenerating community development.'

PROCESS NOT EVENT

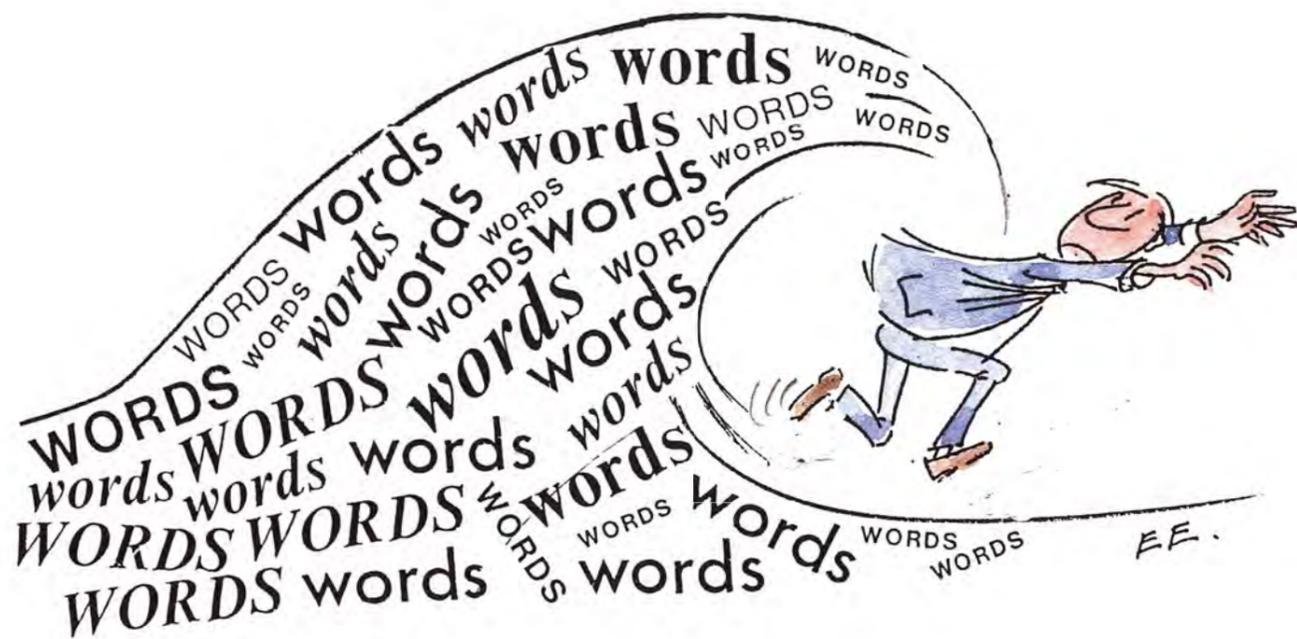
On 2 December last year, Mphahlele was formally welcomed back into his village in Limpopo Province. Guests of honour at this occasion were Ginn Fourie and Charl van Wyk. He spoke of his philosophy of reconciliation and read a poem he had written the year before for Fourie's daughter, Lyndi (see box).

'We should not congratulate ourselves for achieving reconciliation,' he said bluntly to the masses that gathered to meet him, the exile returned. 'What we are doing today is a mere attempt at it. Reconciliation is holistic. A process, not an event. True reconciliation cannot be blind to history and the injustices of the past. We must go beyond preaching reconciliation and start practising it in the thirsty villages and hungry townships.'

'Colonial land dispossession left the indigenous Africans with no choice but war. Without addressing the land question and just redistribution of wealth, our efforts to reconcile will be undermined. True reconciliation addresses economic realities and redresses socio-economic injustices.'

At the same time, he added, violence and reconciliation are incompatible. 'In the past apartheid divided us racially and ethnically. Generations that lie ahead won't forgive us if we continue to stay apart out of our own choice.'

He then turned to Fourie and van Wyk, 'people who had every reason to hate but who chose to understand and forgive'. 'Thank you for your gift of forgiveness,' he said softly. ■



Einar Engebretsen drove his teachers to despair. 30 years later he discovered why.

Word-blind

The teacher leant over her desk and pointed a white, quivering forefinger at the boy in the third row. In a falsetto voice she declared: 'You, Einar, are stupid!'

This educational stimulus came early in my academic career and I responded to it wholeheartedly. I was then in the third grade at 'Bolla' in Oslo—or Bolteløkken Primary School as it was called on solemn occasions.

Among these solemn occasions were the many times when one or other of my teachers took me to the headmaster's office to describe my unorthodox lifestyle in colourful detail.

'Bad behaviour' as it was unimaginatively described in my reports.

My class teacher was basically kind. But, in the heat of the battle to raise 28 young souls up from the darkness of ignorance, the base rarely reached the surface.

Had she been Japanese, she would have regarded me as a gift from the gods, sent to test her patience and strengthen her character. However she was from Lillestrøm, where they don't think along those lines.



In Norwegian, the words for 'model' (*monster*) and 'monster' (*monster*) are almost identical. My class teacher could see no teaching model that would convert her monster pupil into a model—other than taking me to the headmaster at regular intervals.

Not that I was entirely without principles. On the contrary, at an early stage I made a decision, which I kept to unyieldingly: I never did any homework. It is incredible how much education you can avoid if you work at it wholeheartedly.

This showed very clearly in my school reports: a depressing monthly event for my parents. The darkest of Finnish TV dramas brought forth joy and mirth compared to the dismal depression that descended on readers of my report book.

One day, I came up with a plan to shield my parents from the recurrent trauma of

reading and signing my report book. I signed the book myself, with my father's name.

Not many days later, my father asked about my marks. I replied that we had started a new system. That 'new system' worked for half a year—then it collapsed. But that's another story.

Finally, after seven years at primary school, I found myself squinting towards the future. I felt the past scratching the back of my neck. The Norwegian



classes scratched the most.

From the very beginning I had trouble keeping letters in order. For my fellow students words paraded like elite Prussian soldiers. For me they flapped around like chickens scared by a fox.

Thirty years later, completely by chance, I found the reason why. Dyslexia—which in Norwegian we call *ordblindhet* (word-blindness). During a visit to England, I met an expert on dyslexia. She explained that my word-mixing had its root in a 'technical' defect in my brain, beyond my control.

I had just been telling her the story of how, when travelling in the United States, I once wrote to a kind hostess in Hollywood thanking her for her 'warm hostility'. The difference in letters between 'hostility' and 'hospitality' is small—the consequence of getting it wrong is big.

During a debate in Richmond, Virginia, I referred to 'the Minister of Inferior Affairs'. And when I talked about '20 cents foxery', it was only my wife who realized that I was attempting to pronounce the name of the renowned film company '20th Century Fox'.

Quite without meaning to, I shorten words, for example 'physiopist' instead of 'physiotherapist'.

When it comes to a word like *artikkel* (Norwegian for 'article'), I simply cannot get into my head whether it is spelt with one or two 'k's. I have to ask my wife, a proficient speller, every time—or look it up in the dictionary.

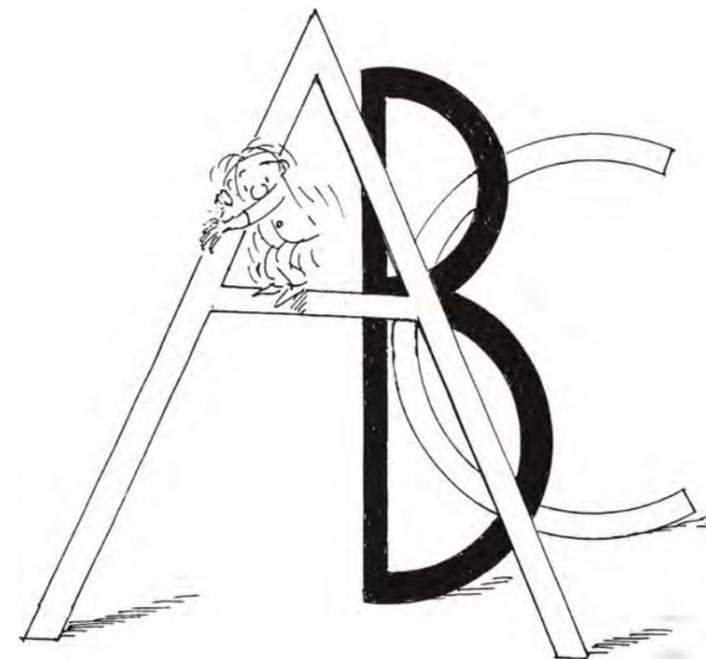
In spite of my dyslexia I love reading and writing. In the 1960s Norway's largest paper, *Aftenposten*, ran a writing competition, judged by an impressive group of intellectuals. My contribution resulted in a generous cheque in the mail, and the article was printed in a prominent place in the paper.

A year later *Aftenposten* held another competition. I tried again—with the same happy result. Since then I have been writing for some ten newspapers and periodicals.

King Olav V of Norway (1903-91) was dyslexic; a popular Norwegian author, Vera Henriksen, is dyslexic. It is said that Winston Churchill had a touch of dyslexia. The English actress Susan Hampshire is dyslexic. But you don't have to be dyslexic to be gifted—there are cases of normal academic pupils who have succeeded.

But the dyslexic person has certain advantages. He or she is often forced into mobilizing brain resources which ordinary people easily leave untouched.

Intelligence tests in the Western world are based on a French model, which sought to promote the supremely clever pupil and created the IQ test. This primarily tests the left side of your brain, which is analytical, rational and logical. The right side of the brain, which takes care of the visual, intuitive and creative aspects, is often neglected. This side is also the best



for the overall picture.

Many experts today reckon that if we are to handle the problems of the future we will need to make much more use of these right-brain qualities and characteristics. In other words, there is a possibility that the clever ones could be less intelligent than the not-so-clever.

That is my consolation.

I must add one more thing. The false signature in my report book was not to protect my father from unnecessary worry, but to protect my own skin. A dialogue with the Lord—who broached this sensitive subject—convinced me. I recognized my sin and made it up with my father.

There is never an excuse for dishonesty.

I remember my teacher with sadness and sympathy. She had an impossible task—or, rather, an impossible pupil. And though I am trying to prove the opposite, I have no guarantee that she was unjustified in claiming:

'You, Einar, are stupid!'

This article is taken from Einar Engebretsen's booklet, *Ordblind* (Agave Forlag 1997)

FOR A CHANGE

'The best publication ever, which I read from cover to cover and pass on to others.'

Winifred Blunt

Fact file:

- Up to 20 per cent of Norwegians suffer from some degree of dyslexia.
- One child in every British classroom is likely to be severely dyslexic.
- Only five per cent of the US's 25 million dyslexics are recognized as such and receive assistance.
- 80 per cent of people with learning difficulties in the US are dyslexic.
- 40–60 per cent of prisoners in the USA suffer from dyslexia or problems with reading or writing.

Sources: Norsk Dysleksiforbund; British Dyslexia Association; Dyslexia Research Institute; US Department of Justice

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Simon Burr/Apex

The Eden Project in Cornwall, England, was named after the ancient biblical paradise, lost through original sin. Today, many would say we are in danger of losing our present Eden, the natural world.

The philosophy of the Eden Project evolved over four years. Its first aim was simply to showcase plants from around the world, but this evolved into a deeper strategy to show how plants form a common thread, which links all human life. The challenge was how to present the message in an attractive way.

Tim Smit, the leading light behind Eden, says: 'There are many ways of telling people that without plants there is no life on earth. Finding a way that is beguiling and amusing and memorable enough to make people reflect on the message

is more tricky.'

As you approach the Eden Project, the Cornish landscape suddenly changes from beautiful rolling hills and pastures into towering angular pyramids of dusty brown. In between these giant termite mounds, the land is gashed by deep valleys, where machines dig up the very earth they stand on. These are Cornwall's china clay pits, an age-old industry that provides the raw material for everything from fine china to the glossy pages of magazines.

The pits provided employment, but altered the landscape irrevocably and could not halt the region's overall economic decline. By 2000, Cornwall had become seriously deprived; local communities were suffering from poor wages and unemployment.

The Eden Project is trying to rebalance the landscape. Now, when you turn a corner

Bringing Eden to Earth

Sandy and Caz Hore-Ruthven visit a tourist trap with a message.

into one particular pit, you see a green landscape of trees and flowers and space-age bubble domes. Two giant greenhouses contain rainforest and Mediterranean plants where visitors can marvel and learn about sustainability through plants.

The Earth Summit in Rio in 1992 identified three areas that need to be in balance, if life is to be sustained indefinitely into the future: the economy, the community and the environment. This sums up what is meant by 'sustainable development'—the key words of the 21st century.

For instance, when the china clay industry bolstered the economy, it did so at the expense of the environment. Some businesses have created wealth but destroyed communities. Community projects can support people, but without jobs how can they survive?

The Eden Project is trying to develop all three areas of life in harmony with each other, a balancing act which takes some doing. Economically, it benefits Cornwall by providing a world class tourist attraction, which gives local communities a greater sense of pride. Environmentally, the old quarry helps to plant 'seeds of change' in the hearts of those who visit, with its clear message to recycle, conserve, protect and cherish the natural resources we squander at our peril.

But this is still the real world, and even Eden falls short of utopia. Most visitors arrive by car, adding to pollution. You can still drink Coca Cola at Eden (although the vending machines have been 'greenwashed' with scenes of nature, rather than the usual brash red and white logo).

Having said that, there is no doubt the message is a sincere one, and a fervent passion for the man who helped created Eden on Earth. 'We are part of nature and nurturing it is our responsibility as the predominant species,' says Smit. 'Failure to do so will ultimately lead to our own extinction. If that happens, good riddance; we wouldn't deserve any tears.'

Police chief engages in Welsh dialogue

How to resolve tensions in and between communities was the subject of a dialogue held in North Wales in April. It is an issue that concerns many Welsh-speaking communities who feel that their way of life is threatened by large numbers of non-Welsh speaking incomers.

Held at the Welsh National Language Centre on the Llyn Peninsula in north-west Wales and entitled, 'One Wales—building trust between communities', it asked: What makes a community? Why do some communities feel threatened? Is 'one Wales' possible?

Clive Wolfendale, Assistant Chief Constable, North Wales Police, gave the keynote address in Welsh, although he had only moved to the area from Greater Manchester three years ago. This in itself was an illustration of the determination on the part of the police to reach out to the Welsh-speaking community.

Emphasizing the priority now being given to community policing, he said that the focus had shifted from just responding to random calls about crime to addressing the fears and concerns of particular communities. 'Our new Community Beat Officers, released from isolated car patrols and the ceaseless demands of the police



Dr Carl Clowes (left), Founder Chairman of the Welsh National Language Centre, talks to Howell Morgan from Cwmbran

radio, will be able to operate in really constructive ways, developing a stake in the communities they serve.' He announced a new initiative to crack down on trivial misbehaviour and yobbish culture, to be called *Dyna ddigon* (enough is enough)—a milder, Welsh version of 'zero tolerance'.

Would families support this, or just defend their own? asked Bishop Saunders

Davies of Bangor, who chaired the dialogue.

Mohamed Messamah, who was representing the Iman Centre in Llandudno Junction, emphasized that the police could not do this on their own. 'Everyone has to join in. We need a moral strategy for the nation. For Muslims the strength of a community or a nation lies in its moral life.' Wolfendale agreed that the *Dyna ddigon* strategy could not work in isolation. 'The strong sense of right and wrong that was fostered by the churches has largely gone. How can it be brought back?' he asked. 'What is the religious future in North Wales?'

Judy Ling Wong, Director of the North Wales-based Black Environment Network, said how important it had been for her that a leading figure in the police, 'one of the power structures that affects all communities', had been part of 'a constructive communal conversation'.

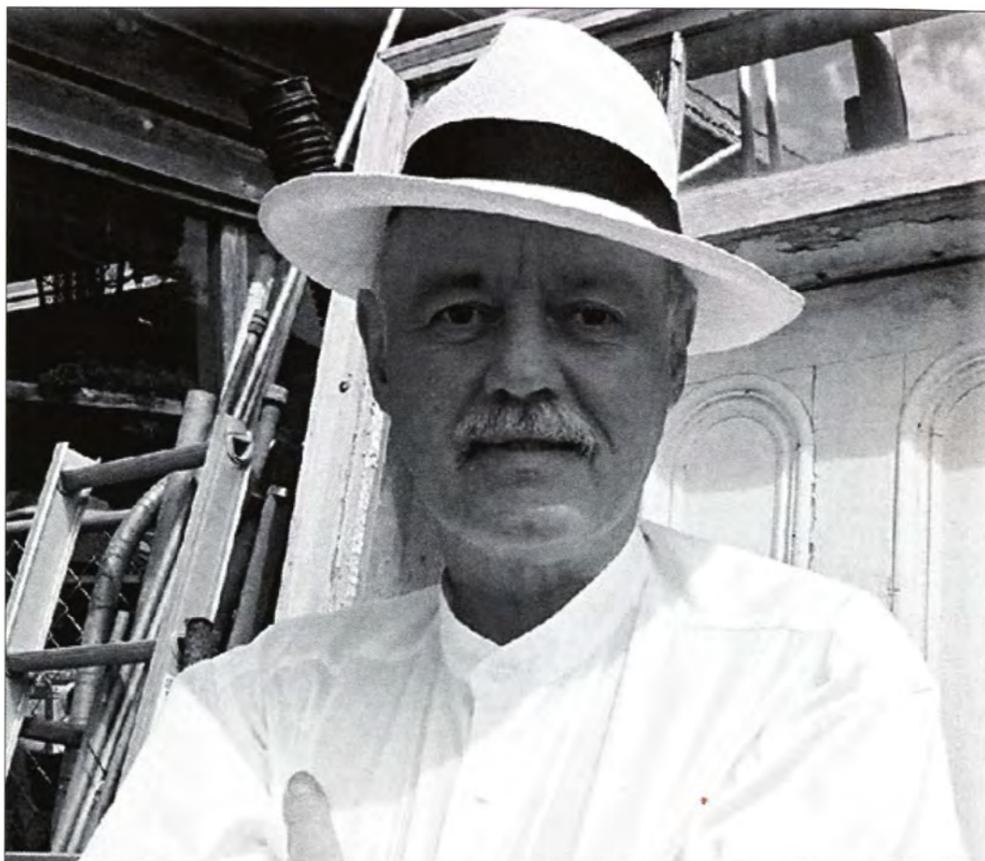
Paul Williams

'Africa in search of good governance'

was the theme of a conference organized by Initiatives of Change in May in Ghana. Guests included the Attorney General of Ghana and the President of the All Africa Conference of Churches, as well as representatives of the Muslim community in Accra. Left: participants from Cameroon, Canada, Côte d'Ivoire, UK, Burundi and the United States.



AK Bondzie



David Jenneson: stranded at the coldest spot in Canada

Jenneson says he will never forget. 'The last rays of the sun illuminated a little white church on the opposite rise. "If you are listening, God," I thought, looking at the church, "please get me home now. If you do, I swear I'll believe for the rest of my life."'

ELECTRIFYING

The effect was immediate and electrifying. As they got to the gas station a brand new Chrysler roared in. 'I asked the driver if he was headed west and he said "Sure, hop in". In a few moments the four of us were hurtling down the highway. The driver drove at a steady 110 mph. The car was roomy and comfortable. The heater was on. Our rough-housing friends were safely asleep in the back. The driver even paid for our food. We shot 700 miles westward across the map as major cities slipped by—Thunder Bay, Winnipeg, Regina. There the man turned north. Everyone went with him except me. I stuck out my thumb. The first car pulled in and whisked me another 300 miles to Calgary. To catch my breath I went into a café and spent my last 20 cents on a cup of tea. I emerged from the café, stuck out my thumb again and boom—the first car pulled in and drove the final 500 miles non-stop through the night and deposited me at my parents' front door on a beautiful warm August morning.'

He had seen a church and made a promise. 'On doing so I was delivered home like some Priority Express package, rocketing over 1,500 miles in 30 hours. I couldn't have taken anything faster—not a train, nor an express Greyhound, and 20 cents doesn't buy a plane ticket!'

'It seems I am one of the rare ones lucky enough to have asked God for proof and got it on the spot,' he says. 'So do I still believe? You bet. Especially as a writer it has helped me to have faith in myself. That was 35 years ago, but believe me, you only need that kind of demonstration once.'

Paul Williams

Hitching a miracle

Canadian novelist and newspaper columnist David Jenneson was just 18 in August 1967, when he had an experience that was to play a major role in his life.

Earlier that summer he and seven friends had set out to hitch-hike their way to Montreal to see Expo '67—the world fair that was celebrating Canada's centenary—and had then gone on to Quebec City. Now he and one other were trying to hitch-hike home across the continent. The first week had brought them no luck—they had travelled just 500 miles and still had 1,500 left to go.

'Now, although it was late in the afternoon, we had been stuck on the same spot since early morning. It was a mean stretch of cold road—a thousand miles of nothing but small, hostile towns. A central point on this highway is White River, where a sign boasts "160 degrees below zero—coldest

spot in Canada!" We stood shivering on the gravel shoulder, shuffling to keep warm. We dreamed about the warm leafy streets of Vancouver—and our homes.'

They each had just 20 cents in their pockets. A police officer had warned them that two men who had been dropped down at that very spot had later had to be picked up by the authorities to save them from starvation and exposure. 'At that moment a Provincial Police cruiser pulled over. In most places they check your ID, here they checked your health. He said he would be back in the morning, as if he already knew how hopeless our situation was.'

ROARING PAST

Hope of a sort was suddenly extended in the form of 'a strange little man' who approached them. He turned out to be a railway switchman. 'He advised us to hop the next westbound freight. He assured us that the trains had to slow

down to 10 mph to take the curve. We had both hopped freights before, so followed him down. In a few minutes the train came whistling round the bend—roaring past my nose at 40 mph. I have never stood so close to anything so big moving so fast. I was rooted to the spot in terror.' So much for alternative transport.

It did not seem that Jenneson's situation could get any worse. But it did. Another car pulled up, but only to disgorge two more hitch-hikers. 'They were in worse shape than we were—with only the shirts on their backs. After a few minutes one landed a punch on the other. Soon they were rolling around on the gravel shoulder, wrestling and fighting. Cars veered around them, horns wailing. That absolutely guaranteed there would be no ride. Motorists saw them, and by the time they passed us they were actually accelerating.'

The sun was now sinking and the chill sharpened. The four of them decided to walk towards a tiny garage at the foot of the hill. As they did so something happened which

Finlay Moir's attitude to his son changed when he asked his own father for forgiveness.

I am now 80. I was 17 when I answered a knock at the door one evening to find a tall police inspector standing there. Having satisfied himself as to my identity he asked if he could come in.

I had had a row with my father the night before and had thrown a collar stud at him prior to picking up a knife. The inspector spoke some stern words to me for about an hour and ended by telling me to promise my father that I would always honour, love and obey him. If I didn't do so, he added, nothing would prevent my being arraigned before the magistrates. He would be back in a fortnight to check.

As a law apprentice I was well aware that the police officer had been kind to me—and the knowledge that my father had gone to the police didn't exactly endear him to me. My dislike of him had been one of the reasons I had chosen to go for the law as a career rather than for the church as a vocation.

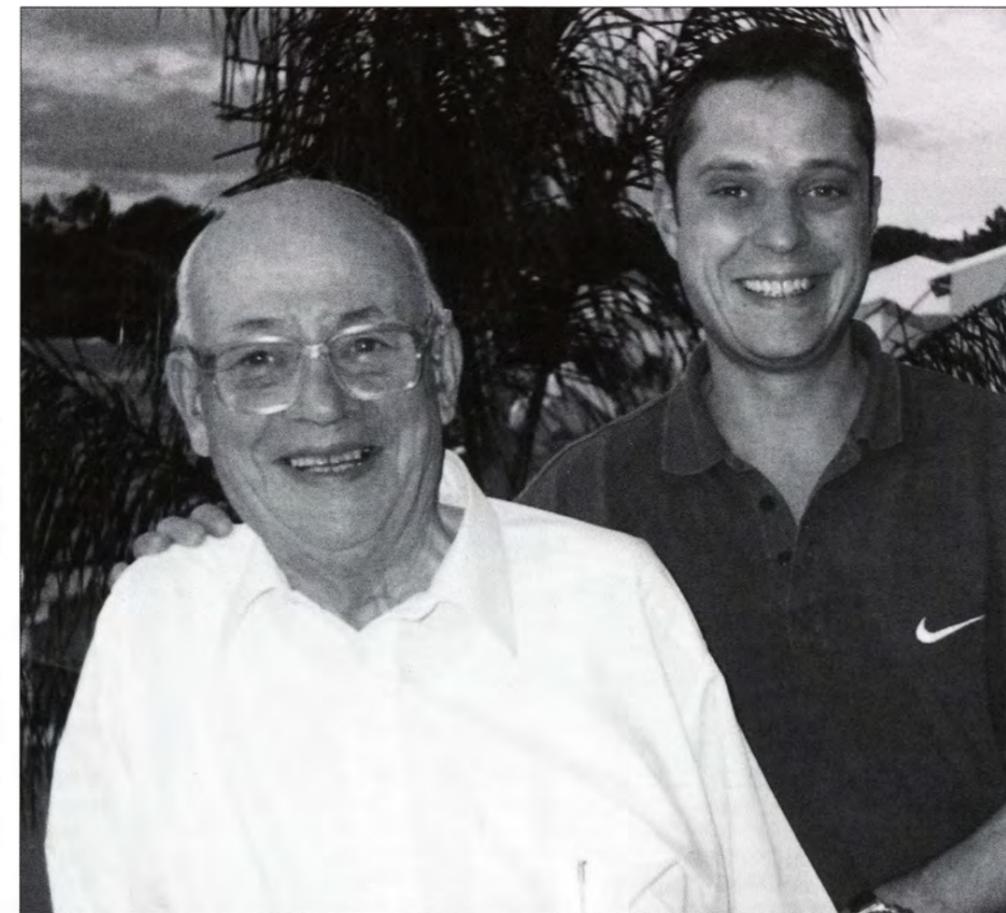
The idea of making the

promise stipulated by the policeman was nothing less than anathema to me. However I had little

option and I wrote it out, with the proviso that 'I will never love you'. The policeman did not return.

During the war, I served in India as an ordnance officer. My job was to ensure that all the units going to the Burma front had their required allocation of small arms and machine guns. Meanwhile a revolution in my thinking and way of life was taking place, after the chaplain

'It was like a stone rolled from my heart'



Finlay Moir and his son, Alastair

Fathers and sons

of our garrison introduced me to what was then called Moral Re-Armament.

On my return to the UK at the end of the war I apologized to my father for my previous attitude and actions. It wasn't easy and I knew I hadn't

achieved any feeling of love for him. 'I don't hate him,' I acknowledged to a friend who encouraged me to take the

step in the faith that God would give me love for him. However, when you make an oath that you will never love someone, God takes that seriously too and he wasn't going to make it so easy for me.

My apology to my father improved our relationship, but it was still difficult, and I really didn't know what more I could do to improve things. He still

seemed to enjoy trying to get my dander up, and even though I no longer rose to them, his remarks hurt. He died 11 years after the end of the war.

STUNNED

Five years later I suffered a duodenal ulcer which I silently and unfairly blamed on a colleague, with whom I had worked for the previous year. I was stunned when a good friend suggested to me that the cause of my ulcer was my relationship with my father. I was even more stunned when, after a row with a different colleague, another good friend suggested that my relationship with my father was the cause of that as well.

I was not surprised that I had strong reactions to a friend who seemed to constantly criticize the work I was doing. But I began to realize that my reactions were way out of all proportion to his sin, if sin it

was. In the privacy of my room I went down on my knees and asked God why I was like this. Immediately the thought came, 'It is your relationship with your father.'

But I had already apologized to my father, I appealed to God. What more could I do? 'Yes, you apologized but you never asked his forgiveness.' Even then, long after my father's death, that further step was a challenge. I decided that if by some miracle my father were to appear at the door I would say, 'Dad, will you forgive me?' It was like a stone rolled from my heart. I felt free.

It meant a new relationship with my son who it seemed to me always wanted my attention when I was wanting to do something else. From that moment I never found his requests irritating and always had time for him. Now in my old age it is he who generously has time for me! ■

Is fundamentalism the problem?

Pierre Spoerri reads a book which sheds light on one of the key issues of our age.

In each period of history, words or expressions have appeared that have stirred, excited and polarized people. The classic examples are 'liberty', 'equality', 'fraternity'—the watchwords of the French Revolution. Such words can motivate people to mount the barricades.

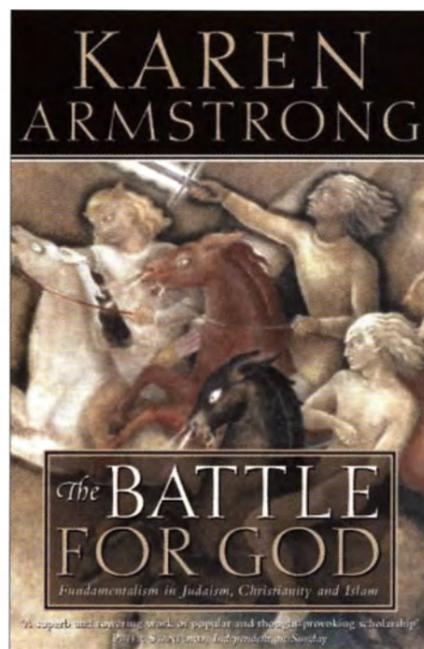
In the ideological world of the 1930s and 1940s, the words were 'fascism', 'communism', 'nazism'. At the beginning of the 21st century there are two words which leave few people indifferent. The first is 'globalization', the second 'fundamentalism'.

To the difficult subject of fundamentalism, Karen Armstrong brings an amazing collection of qualifications. She spent seven years as a nun. After leaving the order, she took a degree at Oxford University and is now one of the most highly regarded commentators on religious affairs in Britain and the United States. She teaches at a Jewish College and has received the Muslim Public Affairs Council Media Award. Her published works—the titles are a programme in themselves—include *Holy War, Muhammad, A History of God* and *A History of Jerusalem*.

Karen Armstrong's *Battle for God** is probably her most ambitious project. In some 400 pages she tries to analyze not only the present fundamentalisms in the Christian, Muslim and Jewish worlds, but also how they came about. She concentrates on American Protestant fundamentalism, Jewish fundamentalism in Israel and Muslim fundamentalism in Egypt (as a Sunni country) and Iran (where the majority is Shiite). She starts in 1492 and ends in the 1990s.

While in many books the introduction is a light starter, in *The Battle for God* it is the main dish of the menu. Without it the reader would find it difficult to follow the line of thought of the later chapters. For Karen Armstrong there are some basic historical facts which lie at the root of what we now call fundamentalism.

The term was first used by American Protestants in the early 20th century. 'Some of them started to call themselves



"fundamentalists" to distinguish themselves from the more "liberal" Protestants, who were, in their opinion, entirely distorting the Christian faith. The fundamentalists wanted to go back to basics and re-emphasize the "fundamentals" of the Christian tradition, which they identified with a literal interpretation of Scripture and the acceptance of certain core doctrines.'

'Such words can motivate people to mount the barricades'

She finds the way the word has been applied to reforming movements in other faiths 'far from satisfactory'. 'It seems to suggest that fundamentalism is monolithic in all its manifestations. This is not the case. Each "fundamentalism" is a law unto itself and has its own dynamic.... Muslim

and Jewish fundamentalisms, for example, are not much concerned with doctrine, which is essentially a Christian preoccupation.'

However, while 'the term is not perfect', she sees it as 'a useful label for movements that, despite their differences, bear a strong family resemblance'. What unites them all is that 'they are embattled forms of spirituality, which have emerged as a response to a perceived crisis'.

PERIOD OF TRANSITION

One of the key developments in the relationship between Europe and the other continents and cultures came at the turn of the 15th and 16th centuries. Then, just as today, Europe was going through a period of transition. 'The people of Western Europe began to evolve a different type of society, one based not on an agricultural surplus but on a technology that enabled them to reproduce their resources indefinitely....' The economic changes led to the 'development of an entirely different, scientific and rational, concept of the nature of truth'. All over the world, people were finding that in their dramatically transformed circumstances, the old forms of faith no longer worked for them.

Karen Armstrong goes on to introduce two terms that accompany us through the whole book, 'mythos' and 'logos'. Both are necessary for human society to function, and they complement each other.

Mythos is concerned with what is thought to be timeless and constant in our existence, providing a context which make sense of our day to day lives. Logos, on the other hand, is the 'rational, pragmatic and scientific thought' that enables men and women to function well in the world. Unlike mythos, logos must correspond exactly to facts and external realities if it is to be effective. It must work efficiently in the mundane world. 'We use this logical, discursive reasoning when we have to make things happen, get something done, or persuade other people to adopt a particular course of action.' The difficulties happen when either logos or mythos take the upper hand and want to rule exclusively.

Armstrong chose 1492 as her starting point because of three important things which happened in Spain in that year. On 2 January, the armies of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella conquered the city-state of Granada, the last Muslim stronghold in Christendom. Then, on 31 March, the king and queen signed the Edict of Expulsion, which gave Spain's Jews the choice of baptism or deportation. 80,000 Jews crossed the border into Portugal, while 50,000 fled to the new Muslim Ottoman empire where they were given a warm welcome. The third event was the departure from Spain of Christopher Columbus.

The conquest of Granada completed the unification of Spain. The ethnic cleansing which resulted was a tragedy. The loss of Spanish Jewry was mourned by Jews all over the world as the 'greatest catastrophe to have befallen their people since the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem in 70 CE.... Exile now seemed an endemic and inescapable part of the Jewish condition.'

MORE VALID THAN EVER

The author then leads us through developments in the Muslim, Jewish and Christian worlds up to the end of the 20th century. The chapter which describes the split between the Sunnis and Shiites and later, in the 18th century, the birth of the



Women belonging to the Islamist Jamat-i-Islami demonstrate against political corruption in Pakistan in 1996.

Wahabite movement (which still controls Saudi Arabia today) throws an interesting light on present developments in the Middle East. Another chapter charts modernization attempts in the Jewish and the Muslim worlds, mainly between 1700 and 1870.

More than half the book is devoted to the period since the end of the 19th

century. Of special interest are the chapters devoted to the attempts of Egyptian fundamentalists to revolutionize their country, and to the story of the Iranian revolution. Reading the book four years after Armstrong wrote its last chapter, one realizes how quickly things can move, in any part of the world, but especially in the Middle East. But her main concern—that 'we need to understand how our world has changed'—remains more valid than ever.

What captures the reader is Armstrong's deep understanding of—and even sympathy with—both the fundamentalists and their opponents. This shines through in the last lines of her book:

'If fundamentalists must evolve a more compassionate assessment of their enemies in order to be true to their religious traditions, secularists must also be more faithful to the benevolence, tolerance, and respect for humanity which characterizes modern culture at its best, and address themselves more empathetically to the fears, anxieties, and need which so many of their fundamentalist neighbours experience but which no society can safely ignore.'

It seems to me that there is no book that I have read in recent months that has such relevance to understanding what is happening in the world today.

*Karen Armstrong, *The Battle for God—fundamentalism in Judaism, Christianity and Islam*, HarperCollins, London 2001, ISBN 00063-834-8-3



74,000 Christians gather to hear evangelist Billy Graham in 1996.



WEBSITE

by Robert Webb

Facts and fiddles

If there were a media Richter scale, the *New York Times'* Jayson Blair affair might well have set a new shock record. *The Times'* disclosure of how for years Blair, 27, deceived and tricked his readers and editors alike sent shock waves through media across America and doubtless the world. He was accused of widespread plagiarism, falsification of information and of using datelines to create the impression he'd done on-the-scene reporting when he hadn't. The revelations not only brought Blair's resignation but also those of the executive and managing editors.

More important, however, may be the episode's impact—for better or worse—on mass communications generally. One poll in the imbroglío's wake showed that 62 per cent of the American public distrust media. This diminished trust didn't begin with the Blair revelations, but clearly they intensified it. 'We're losing our readers' trust and must work to get our credibility back,' William Middlebrook, associate editor for recruitment at *Newsday* and a former editor at the *New York Times*, told the *National Press Club* in Washington. 'You need determination to do the right thing wherever you work.'

Not surprisingly, news organizations are examining themselves as perhaps never before. The Blair revelations are only the latest and most searing incidents of

journalistic chicanery in recent years. While most journalists strive for accuracy, newspapers have been plagued by staffers who fictionalize or plagiarize. Journalistic consciences have been pricked. The editor of a national media trade journal confessed that as a 19-year-old he fictionalized the names and quotes for the story he wrote for the newspaper where he was interning. Citing that as an example of what can happen, he urged editors to keep a close watch on young journalists. But some offenders have been veteran journalists.

Tackling 'Why Journalists Lie: earning back the community's trust', a National Press Club/Newseum panel that included Middlebrook and another former *New York Times* staffer, Geneva Oberholser, seemed to agree that such supervision is woefully missing in many newsrooms. Panelists cited deep budget cuts by media organizations that reduced supervisory manpower. Oberholser, professor in the University of Missouri's Washington journalism programme and once on the *New York Times* editorial board, said media were 'under enormous profit pressure'. She was also aghast at what she said were 'the autocratic management styles' in some newsrooms.

More than one panelist not only blamed inadequate training of young journalists but also of their editors. One, Jeffrey Dvorkin, ombudsman for *National Public Radio*, said,

'Newer journalists don't get feedback instilling in them the values of the organization.' But Alice Bonner, professor of journalism at the University of Maryland, said, 'Susceptibility to dishonesty comes much earlier in life.' However and whenever the susceptibility comes, it has no place in the workplace—especially in media organizations. The panel's moderator, Hedrik Smith, former deputy national editor and Moscow correspondent of the *New York Times*, drove home the need to instill in journalists the values held by their organizations. He said, 'We have a double standard in the way we look at other institutions.... We need to look at ourselves.'

No journalist is immune to mistakes, I know from a long career in daily newspapers. But deliberate error betrays the public trust so eloquently etched in *The Journalist's Creed* which says, in part, 'I believe that the public journal is a public trust. That all connected with it are, to the full measure of responsibility, trustees for the public. That acceptance of lesser service than the public service is a betrayal of this trust.' It continues 'I believe that a journalist should write only what he holds in his heart to be true.... I believe that the journalism which succeeds the best—and best deserves success—fears God and honours man; is stoutly independent; unmoved by pride of opinion or greed of power....'

Written by Walter Williams, founder in 1908 at the University of Missouri of the nation's first school of journalism, *The Journalist's Creed* claims a prominent place on the wall of the National Press Club.

It should be engraved on the heart and mind of every journalist.

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

REFLECTIONS

by Mary Lean



Getty Images

In real time

I'd like to wait for you
like a child for her parent
like a lover at the airport
like an old man for his family
after a long parting

with joy, excitement
knowing you will soon be here
and with you the sun
after a long winter

But more often I'm like
the commuter at the station
the parent at the school gate
the patient in the waiting room
which is running late

fed up, impatient
doubtful if you'll make it
and not quite sure
the waiting's worth it

Time doesn't hang about
these days; days full of doing
disappear into months.
Prayer slows it to true pace,
lets me breathe and be,
to find you in the waiting,
as well as the receiving.

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