



Ottawa with the Houses of Parliament in the background

OTTAWA CONFERENCE

SYNCHRONISING THE NATION'S HEARTBEAT

ARNOLD SMITH, first Secretary-General of the Commonwealth, opened a Moral Re-Armament Conference in Ottawa this month with a call to Canadians to return to the world perspective which inspired their 'invention' of the Commonwealth. 'I've been disturbed that while we used to think bigger than merely Canadian terms, we are beginning to think in less than Canadian terms,' he told the conference at the University of Ottawa. 'This narrowing of views to just the region or province is a very dangerous thing.'

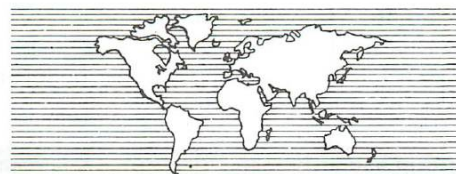
'In the past,' Dr Smith continued, 'Canadians knew in their bones that we were not big enough by ourselves to take decisions to shape the environment in which our children lived. So we wanted coalitions, clubs and multilateral organisations.' This had led to the creation of the Commonwealth, with its unique off-the-record discussions between heads of government and government ministers. As North-South issues became more urgent, and world problems more closely interlinked, the relevance of the Commonwealth was increasing. 'More and more problems are such that decisions to resolve them cannot be decided within the nation state or even the continent.'

As pioneers of independence through negotiation, of multicultural democracy and of regional equalisation, Canadians had shown remarkable 'political creativity', Dr Smith said. 'It's worth recalling some of our earlier creativity. It could help us to get back some of the reassurance we need to snap out of some of the rather degenerate tendencies of the last years.' As a diplomat and in his Commonwealth post, Dr Smith had observed that the main reason for failure in building a nation of diverse cultural elements was 'a lack of spiritual generosity and imagination'.

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Arnold Smith, first Secretary-General of the Commonwealth (right), talks with (l to r) Alberta farmer John Bocock, Alvin Manitopyes from Saskatchewan and Paul Campbell, Alberta.

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Ottawa's English-language daily, *The Citizen*, reported Dr Smith's speech, highlighting his belief in the Commonwealth's role as a peace-maker.

Two weeks before the conference an MRA international group had arrived in Ottawa on the last stage of a two-and-a-half-month action across the North American continent. The group was received by the Mayor of Ottawa, Marion Dewar, and welcomed to the country at a meeting in the Chateau Laurier Hotel by Senator Paul Yuzyk from Manitoba. 'Only those who have solid spiritual qualities will give the necessary leadership to our countries to head them off from catastrophe,' said Senator Yuzyk, referring to the threat of nuclear holocaust. 'Moral Re-Armament is needed very much. People haven't got the strength we need to change society. This strength has to come from the Almighty.'

Members of the group had interviews with Cabinet Ministers, MPs, government officials, trade unionists, police and diplomats. Many they met shared the concern of Dr Smith about the bitter divisions between different regions and language groups in Canada. One politician commented, 'I can never remember such hatred and bitterness in Canada as there is today.'

Another politician received 20 of the group, extending the interview for 90 minutes as people from Brazil, the United States, Europe and Canada spoke of their concerns and convictions. It was a visitor from Zimbabwe, however, who riveted his attention, as he spoke of the work of Zimbabweans of all tribes and races to build national unity. 'I can't help transferring what you tell me to Canada,' the politician said.

Diversity

'There are a great many countries like Canada in the world,' he went on. 'If we cannot reconcile our economic and linguistic differences in relative harmony, we will deserve collective shame. Our main responsibility in the world is more than providing grain, it is to provide an example of a country with all its diversity which is able to reconcile in a civilised manner.'

The aim of the conference, stated the French-language daily, *Le Droit*, was to seek the means 'to get rid of antagonism between human beings, as well as social and political prejudices and hates'. The conference included people from all over Canada, and opened with a blessing from Wallace Labillois, Chairman of the National Council of Elders and resident elder at the Assembly of First Nations. Speaking to a group beforehand he illustrated the North American Indians' belief in living in harmony with nature.

Indians had invented snow-shoes, he said, so that they could walk over the snow without disturbing it, because it protected the earth. 'I think the Great Spirit has preserved us to this day, so that we can call people back to the purpose for which the Great Spirit made us—to love and cherish the earth and to enjoy the real blessings the Great Spirit gave us.'

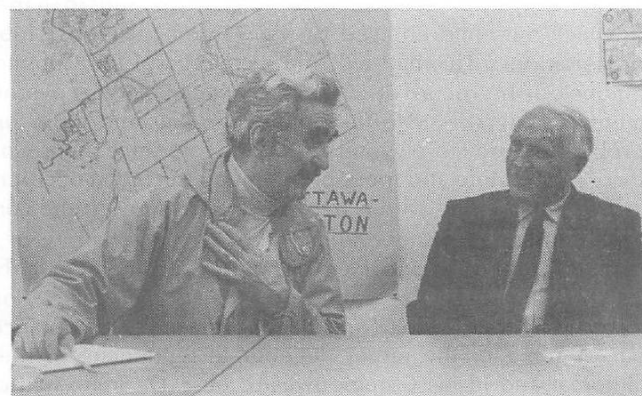
Another Indian participant, Alvin Manitopyes of Saskatchewan, drew attention to the World Assembly of First Nations, a 'celebration of survival' which will take place in July in Regina. Thousands of indigenous people are expected from all over the world. 'I believe the principles of MRA can apply to any nation,' he said. 'One of the basic beliefs in Indian culture is that everything has a spirit, God is everywhere and we must respect all creation. Creation includes all the white people, all the Communist people, all the black people, the whole world—it's a big challenge for us to live up to that.'

When Mr Manitopyes finished speaking, the conference sat in quiet reflection. Then a participant from the United States got to his feet. 'I cannot think of any wrong we Americans have done to any people in the world to match the wrongs we have done to our brothers the Indians,' he said. 'I want to apologise and to ask for help to see what we can do to bring change in the future.'

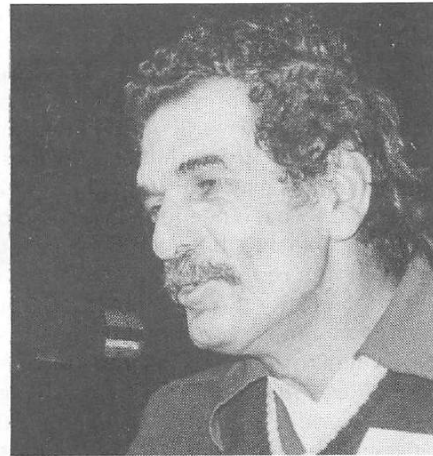
Mother Earth

'As a farmer concerned about hungry people, I feel we need to completely overhaul our relations with Mother Earth, with our fellow man and with our Creator,' said John Bocock, a farmer from Alberta. 'An Alberta farmer can stand in his field of flowing wheat with oil and coal under his feet, and still have very serious problems. Our statistics for divorce, violent crime and alcoholism are the worst in the country. Anyone who has any hope that material prosperity will solve the problems of the world, I stand here to shake your faith.'

A representative of another of the world's 'first peoples', Niketu Iralu from Nagaland in the North-East of India, warned of the danger to minorities of accepting half-truths as slogans. 'We find ourselves in the position where we can never be wrong politically, because of the guilt others feel towards us,' he said. 'So our slogans become more and more popular, we become more and more unhappy and this leads to self-destruction. This is something my people have experienced.' He had had to decide to extend his concern to the needs of the whole of India, with her 300 million undernourished. 'Unless we can create a sense of re-



Jean Luc Petain, Federal Minister of Transport (left), received some of the international visitors in his constituency office. Leif Hovelsen from Norway is also pictured.



T Braeckle

Raymond Vanasse, a teacher from Sorel, producer of 'The Ladder' (left), and two members of the cast—Chantal Letourneau, Montreal, and Gaston Comeau, a taxi-driver from Sorel.

sponsibility for the creation of a just society among backward groups like my own, we will empty the coffers in Delhi before our needs are met.'

One evening, a cast from the industrial city of Sorel, Quebec, presented a French translation of Peter Howard's play, *The Ladder*, as the conference's contribution to the Canadian Christian Festival taking place in Ottawa. Many of the cast were teachers or pupils in one school. The next morning they spoke of what they had discovered during three months preparing the play.

The part of the hero, a young politician who is confronted by Christ on his way up the ladder of success, was played by Michel Levesque, one of the organisers of the teachers' union in the school. The principal of the school directed the play. 'I had got to the point where I hated—in a sporting way perhaps—any employer or representative of an employer,' said Mr Levesque. 'Taking part in the play gave me a chance to understand that behind an employer there is a person with the same needs as me, someone who needs to be loved, listened to and respected. I had to accept his corrections, something I was not used to doing when we were negotiating.'

Teacher learns

The play had also shown him a new approach to his pupils. 'I used to be very authoritarian. I wanted to feel in control, to keep a step ahead of them. This attitude was interrupting our dialogue. My motive was really fear. I'm working to change this attitude and to really love each one of my students.'

For Claude Rompré, the principal and director, the challenge of the play had been working with actors whom he had not chosen. 'One of the cast was a teacher I had thought of sacking.' He apologised to this man, who was standing with him on the platform, for his attitude. 'I have discovered that the discord was based more on prejudice than reality,' he said.

Several of the cast said that the play had helped them to appreciate the value of other people. 'I understand now that we cannot possess somebody or control what they become,' said Chantal Létourneau, who drove from Montreal twice a week to attend rehearsals. 'People are like flowers and are in the hands of God. I have decided to leave my relationships with my friends, family and clients in His hands.'

'As we were studying the play, I would drive around

during the day thinking about it,' said Gaston Comeau, a taxi driver, who played the part of the 'man with the bag', who symbolises Christ. 'When the play talked about the hero's mistress, I thought of myself and my wife. When it talked about arrogance, I thought, "Maybe I am arrogant".'

The audience too were affected by the play. One man at the top of his profession said that he had decided to find an answer to his work enslavement and desire for the approval of one of his colleagues. Another going through a period of stress at work told of his fear of losing control of his emotions. 'Last night I had the promise that God would look after them.' A third spoke of his regret that he had not been able to pass his faith on to his children. 'Maybe listening to my children was the missing factor. I was so busy with my work, so absorbed with the idea of success and of giving them a livelihood which I had lacked when I was young.'

Specialists

'The people of my nation are specialists in climbing ladders,' said Richard Ruffin from Washington DC. 'There are two things about ladders. One is that there's no room at the top for more than one person. The other is that it's impossible to help somebody up a ladder—if you reach out you're likely to fall off. This had led us into a habit of unilateralism and individualism which has spilled over into our foreign and domestic policy.'

'Rather than coalescing with our friends in dialogue we Americans like to pronounce our views first and publicly,' said John Van de Water, Chairman of the National Labour Board which handles 60,000 disputes between unions and corporations in the United States every year. 'I learned from Dr Smith's speech how we cause other nations to react on an opposing track to show that they are not puppets of the USA.'

He went on to tell of a conversation with a colleague from whom he differed politically. He had told him, 'In the complexities of the problems we handle neither of us can be absolutely sure we're right. But if our motive is only to find out what is right, with no concern for proving who is right, then we can dialogue. If we are not the least concerned who gets credit for a good idea that we mutually accept, we can greatly increase our effectiveness.' Now they were 'the closest of friends'.

People in the West had four 'mental handicaps', Mr Ruffin stated—a failure to live what they talked about, aims that were too small, a tendency to be 'solo-fliers', unwilling

to work in partnership with others, and a failure 'to reckon on the extra factor of God'. As a result of the MRA spring action in Canada and the USA, people were deciding 'to live as best we can what we talk about; to put aside small aims and live to create a world of God's design; to pay the price of teamwork; and to trust that powerless, inadequate and useless as we may feel individually, God is adequate to accomplish what is needed'. This could be 'the beginning of a new partnership' between Canada and the United States, and with the rest of the world.

Two days after the conference, as groups were preparing to visit Montreal, Toronto and Canada's four most eastern Maritime Provinces, *Le Droit* carried a follow-up article on Moral Re-Armament, headlined 'Changing man to build a better world'. 'Is it utopian to think that "the action of citizens liberated from self-centredness and inspired by a vision of what the world could be" could have a determining influence in dealing with the world-wide crisis of the Eighties?' Adrien Cantin wrote. 'About 200 people from the four corners of the Earth affirmed at the end of the week in Ottawa at a conference of Moral Re-Armament that this action of citizens is just as necessary, if not more so, than that of governments. Armed with fundamental values like honesty, purity, unselfishness and love, it is effectively possible, they said, to transform the face of the planet completely.'

One of the greatest blocks in realising such aims, stated one of the speakers at the conference, former British diplomat A R K Mackenzie, was 'the cynicism which kills initiatives, corrodes agreements, and breeds division'. 'Canada has five and a half time zones,' he commented. 'What she needs is a single heartbeat.'



T Braeckle

MINA KING, music teacher and housewife from Ottawa, describes how she composed an anthem of unity for Canada, which has been sung on Parliament Hill on several state occasions, including this year's proclamation of the Constitution. Two years ago, at a time of considerable national division, her husband's work took him away for a year. 'I was faced by two alternatives,' she said. 'I could live by the divisions I saw around me and by fear, or I could let God have control of these things. I decided on the latter.' Shortly afterwards she had remembered some verses her mother had written about Canada forty years before and had decided to set a bi-lingual version of them to music for mixed choir, orchestra and piano.

EPIDEMIC NEEDED

MOST PEOPLE AGREE that honesty is 'a good thing'. How often though do they think out its implications for their own lives? A Third World journalist recently said that everyone in his country thought that corruption was a major problem, yet few were ready to stop being part of it.

Of course, in Britain we do not have much 'corruption'—only fiddling, shop lifting, moonlighting, tax evasion, 'perks' and expense accounts! Some still their consciences by saying that everyone does it, that taxes are unfair, that their little bit won't damage a whole industry.

The facts show otherwise. Estimates of pilferage and tax evasion in Britain are expressed in billions of pounds. Sir William Pile, Chairman of the Inland Revenue Board, estimated that undeclared income, mainly that of small businessmen and moonlighters, amounted to £9,000 million in one year. This means a huge loss of Government revenue. The fact that over 7 per cent of the gross domestic product is in the 'black' economy, outside Government control, could seriously hamper Government efforts to deal with inflation and unemployment.

Gerald Mars, author of a forthcoming book, 'Cheats at Work, an Anthropology of Workplace Crime,' points out, 'When someone is fiddling at work they don't see it as a crime. They regard what they do as legitimate because it has become institutionalised over the years. It is quite a different matter, of course, when that person who is fiddling at work becomes the victim of the fiddle. Then he is morally outraged.'

Honesty cannot be introduced by legislation. Like character, it is caught rather than taught. There is no easier route to an honest society than people deciding to live honestly. On the following pages we record the experiences of some who have taken this decision.

PAUL GUNDERSEN is an Executive in a Finnish electrical and mining industry:

BETTER THAN RUBBER STAMPS

BEFORE AN IMPORTANT meeting some time ago one of my colleagues told me that I must lie about a certain matter. I looked at him and he explained, 'Well, you know, everyone will.' I said, 'Exactly, and they all know it! So what do we gain by not telling the truth?' You can always justify the easier way by referring to statistics and comparing yourself with others.

People have told me that a policy of honesty is naive. Yet dishonesty causes endless problems. An industrialist in a Communist country told me in a melancholy voice, 'The only statistics I can trust are the ones I falsify myself.'

Honesty is not stupidity. It does not mean breaking confidence, nor does it mean answering questions from people who are out to exploit you. It does mean deciding not to be personally part of mechanisms which in the long run undermine all that I, and our company, want to build. I



Phiang

Paul Gundersen

have been encouraged by the response I get when I follow these policies.

I have found that without absolute moral standards as guidelines for life my perspective gets twisted and I also lose my compassion for people. Honesty is not a private matter, it affects your ability to help other people.

On a visit to East Germany I met an official responsible for a big commercial set-up. We were about to conclude a deal when he demanded some extra documents and rubber stamps (which are very popular there). I said, 'You can have as many documents as you like, but if there is no trust between us, your documents aren't worth the cost of the paper. It's exactly like a marriage contract.' I added, 'When my wife and I married, we decided that we would have no secrets at all between us.' He suddenly jumped to the edge of his seat, looked at me and said, 'How does that work?' I said, 'Well it's not always so easy and sometimes pride almost prevents you from being honest, but it is the most important decision we ever made.' At that point he forgot the contracts and we found ourselves talking about the deepest things in life.

I constantly meet business leaders who say that you can never put right the injustices in the world while there is colossal corruption in the Third World. Yet some of them do not hesitate to use dishonest methods in the battle for contracts. They ignore the desperate struggle of some Third World leaders to root out this disease.

An American recently complained bitterly about the stricter rules on corruption introduced after the Lockheed troubles. He said, 'We must get these rules relaxed if we are to compete with Europe.' Yet why should America go back to a system that does not work? Why not go forward—and invite Europe to join her in a new way of doing business, which is based on new relationships? I believe that God has given men and women in industry a unique calling to rebuild human relationships. Certainly, the problems of the Third World will never be answered unless wrong relationships are answered. ■

Upping the level

by Edwin Noble, Manchester

DISHONESTY IS A CAUSE of inflation. When large numbers of people cheat on bus fares, fares have to go up. The effects are cumulative—higher fares mean fewer passengers and

more temptation to cheat. A multiplier effect is at work. Honesty is a way of breaking this cycle. When, as a student of economics, I decided to try and live by the standard of honesty, I felt that God wanted me to pay back money for under-paid travel to the bus company. Enough such decisions might have enabled London Transport to make a success of its recent experiment in reducing bus and underground fares. An upsurge of honesty would lead to a positive multiplier effect.

Why did I cheat on bus fares?—the money did not make much difference to me. I thought it was clever, and I had never stopped to think whether it was right or wrong, or what the result would be if everyone did it. One person who stops cheating may not make much difference, but putting right the dishonesty might make others think—and 'everyone doing his bit' is surely better than a cynical 'I cannot do anything about it'.

Another cause of dishonesty is fear—fear of being found out, of stepping out of line, of being thought 'old fashioned', rigid or silly. One of the turning points in my life was when I admitted to my father that I had lied to him. I needed God's help to do it for I had been dominated by fear of my father—which I realise now was my fault, not his.

Statistics on the cost of dishonesty, as well as the cost of preventing, detecting and punishing it, are daunting. Yet it is worth remembering that society would not work at all unless most people were honest most of the time. Business, industry and everyday life, depend on promises being kept, contracts honoured, most debts being paid, most statements being true. Most people work harder than the minimum they could get away with. There are plenty of lorries' backs from which nothing has fallen.

I was once in an army unit where nearly half of the men had served prison sentences but neither I nor anyone else lost anything. 'You don't steal from your mates,' they said. There is a level of honesty in all of us. We need to raise it. ■

Testing time

by Hilda Kaonga, Zambia

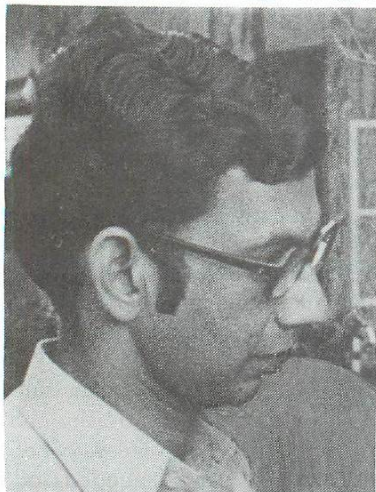
MY WORK AS National Organiser of the Girls' Brigade involved travelling to all corners of Zambia. The organisation gave me a car to help but, although I had learnt to drive, I had never taken a driving test to get a licence. Although it is illegal to drive without a licence, I did so several times in emergencies.

Each time I 'stole the road', my conscience troubled me greatly. Eventually, I decided to book a driving test.

While I was preparing for the test I was often tempted by the thought, 'Just pay and you will get through'. The temptation became worse when I learnt that my test was scheduled for the time when the traffic is busiest. Why not take the test in a rural area where there are fewer candidates and less traffic, someone suggested. However, when I prayed about this, a clear thought came, 'You are not to go elsewhere for your test. Take it here where you live. Take it not out of ambition, but for My glory.' I decided to wear my Girls' Brigade uniform so that everyone would know that I was a Christian. It would also encourage me to behave like one.

I took the test and all went very well. I did not offer a bribe—and I passed. ■

MIXING HONESTY AND BUSINESS



B. Cummock

by Om Prakash Bagaria, India

AFTER HEARING ABOUT Moral Re-Armament in 1972 I began to see where my life needed to change. For the first time in nine years I went to the home of a sick worker.

As a result of listening to the direction of 'the inner voice', an eight-year-long industrial dispute was resolved within a week. This delighted the thousand employees of our three engineering factories in Assam. I decided to apply absolute honesty in every area of my life, including my business.

A year later, I was working at our factory in Gauhati. The market was slack there and we were winning no contracts. Even though our management was worried, I refused to give bribes. Then came a break-through. We gave the lowest tender in a valuable order for pressure vessels for a paper mill. The mill's German consultants ruled us out when they discovered that we had neither the experience nor the equipment to do the job. However, we persisted and through our sincerity we won over the mill's managing director. When he gave us the contract he said, 'I have taken a risk because I want Assam's technology to advance. My prestige is in your hands now.' I was given the task of upgrading our factory's technology.

A qualified welder turned up unexpectedly just before the inspector came to our factory for the first time. Within four weeks, seven of our own welders were trained in radiographic quality welding and had their wages doubled.

The managing director of the paper mill later certified that our firm could work to any international standards. This led to our winning a huge contract to fabricate floating-roof tanks for a new petrochemicals plant against stiff competition, again without any bribes. After decades of stagnation, the workers saw hope.

In 1975, I took over an ailing steel foundry at Ranchi in Bihar. The Heavy Engineering Corporation had ordered 200,000 Rupees worth of manganese-steel liners for a blast-furnace. However, the liners were not of high enough quality, and were rejected by the Corporation's inspectors. They would have passed them for a bribe, but I refused as it would have led to a steel plant suffering damage one day. I had no alternative but to close the unreliable foundry.

The Gauhati refinery needed six heat-exchangers. Our tender was the lowest, but the refinery authorities were reluctant to give us the job because we had never done such

work before. One morning I had the thought that I should visit the key man in the purchase section of the refinery and make a friend of him for life. I asked for his help, saying that the work would give our men hope. I said that we would be grateful for his help but I would not give him a bribe. As a result he supported our case so strongly that the Corporation's senior officials in Delhi became suspicious. An enquiry revealed that we had neither the men nor the tools for the job. The managing director of the Indian Oil Corporation asked me why the purchase man was so keen to give me the job. I replied, 'Sir, if you are implying that I have bribed him, for once you are mistaken.' I told him the whole story and defended the purchase man, while pleading for our tender. In the end we did not win the job but we made a firm friend of the man. ■

A school teacher from North Wales writes:

New light for moonlighter

AT THE END of last year my wife and I bought our first home. It needed some redecoration. As we are both teachers, I decided to approach our very skilful painter and decorator at school.

While he was working on the first bedroom, he let slip that he did not regard this evening work as 'taxable'. I made clear that we wanted the highest standards of honesty as well as of workmanship. I also spoke of our concern that the government should have enough money to spend on its social programmes. As he continued work on the hall, I offered to pay the tax for him, but he thought that the taxman would find it very odd if he declared one solitary job. We understood his position and we asked him to understand ours. He finished the hall, but we would not let him do the kitchen though it desperately needed attention. It was hard to be caring and yet straight with a man we meet daily in school.

We were very happy when a month or so later he came to me and said he would be willing to do any more jobs for us. He had arranged with his accountant to declare his evening work regularly. It turned out that the school had cut off all overtime. Unfortunately for him, we had already taken the only step we could, and another man had done the job. However, we are firmer friends than ever. ■

Mother-in-law's part

by Eric Pearson

PEOPLE WILL OFTEN seek to borrow money from a bank when it would be more fitting to borrow from the family. As a bank manager my aim was honestly to say what I felt to be the right course.

A young man asked for a loan in order to buy a small business. He had some experience but little cash and no security to offer. I would have liked to help but could not

justify a loan. I asked him whether his family would help. 'There's only the wife and children and the wife's mother. She is living with us and is dying of cancer,' he told me. His wife did not want him to ask her mother for help because 'it would look as though we can't wait until she's gone to get our hands on her money'.

I reflected for a while and then pointed out that there was another way of looking at it. 'It must be depressing for your mother-in-law, lying there, knowing she has cancer and that it's only a matter of time. She might be delighted to help and it could give her a new interest in life.'

He was keen on the idea and decided to put it to his wife. She slowly came round to the idea, too. Later, he rang up full of excitement. He had put the question to his mother-in-law and she had been delighted to be asked. 'I'd rather use my money to help you now than for you to have to wait until I'm dead,' she had commented.

The old lady died within a year but during most of that time she took an eager interest in the progress of the business. ■

Back on track

by Sheila Rolfe

THREE FRIENDS AND I spent an evening recently at a Manchester youth club. We enjoyed it and were in good spirits.

As I drove the others home, we lost our way, ending up in a forest. One of my friends became very divisive, spreading a bad atmosphere and criticising me. I felt very angry and hurt especially at her lack of care in helping us find the way.

My first reaction was to blame her but not to say anything because I felt it would only make matters worse. I was afraid I would not be able to cope with my feelings. I was tempted to close my heart and not to face the issue squarely, lacking the faith that there was any step I could take to improve the situation.

Next morning I felt God telling me that I should not be afraid of truth and that I should dare to talk with my friend. Exposing my pride was painful but it opened up a chance to find out what was going on in my friend's heart. Through this talk we got to know each other in a deeper way than in normal communications. My faith has grown as a result. ■

We print here extracts from a broadcast over KBOO cable radio by Michael Henderson, who lives in Portland Oregon, in the USA:

LICKING THE STAMP-TRAP

WE HAD A VISIT last week from an old friend from Norway, Leif Hovelsen. He is in the United States to write a book about his father who was a pioneer of skiing and ski-jumping here. Leif has had an adventurous life and is a man of strong moral conviction into which I was given a little more insight.

As a teenager he was in the hands of the Gestapo, and

tortured because he was a part of the Norwegian resistance. Yet after the war he was one of a team of people who went into Germany, to give assistance to that people at their hour of greatest need.

More recently he has become a friend of many of the Soviet dissidents. Many of them have high hopes about what they will find in the West and then are sometimes disillusioned by the corruption, the moral corner-cutting, the materialism they encounter here. A recent incident revealed to me why the dissidents feel that they can trust Leif.

In the course of his book research Leif has travelled widely in the United States. As many do, he has visited the chain of hamburger shops, McDonalds, with some frequency. In fact, he told me, he got rather hooked on their recent promotion campaign with stamps. Over the weeks he managed to complete all but one stamp on a page for a hundred thousand dollar prize. As luck would have it he found himself at lunch one day next to a man who had just opened the missing number and, what was more, looked as if he might quite easily dispose of it with his trash.

My friend had great visions of what he could do with a hundred thousand dollars, even thinking that he might give most of it to charity. It was a terrific temptation, he told me. Temptation, you may say, as I did, where is the temptation? Well, Leif had been studying the fine print of the competition rules. There it was stated that the stamps were non-transferable. He believed that to take that stamp would not be honest and so he left the restaurant rapidly to avoid, as I say, temptation. 'I'd rather be poor with a good conscience,' he said when I asked him about it, 'than get a lucky fortune with a bad conscience—even if I gave the money to Moral Re-Armament.' He added, 'My conscience is not for sale.' It had not been for sale either to the Gestapo. When he was under sentence of death they offered him his life and freedom if he would betray his friends. 'No one will ever know,' they said to him. He turned them down.

I suppose that the health of society, even its survival, may depend on there being enough people with such a conscience. 'As I am so is my nation' is a phrase which has been a constant challenge to me. The way nations go can depend on decisions by individuals not to cut corners, not to make the fast buck their aim. Every day each one of us has to take decisions for honesty or dishonesty and often decisions that will never be known to anyone but ourselves. Taken together they will contribute positively or negatively to that intangible quality we call national character. As a wise old school principal in New England used to say, 'Character is what you do in the dark.' ■

It is through prayer that Jesus leads us to his Father. It is in prayer that the Holy Spirit transforms our lives. It is in prayer that we come to know God: to detect His presence in our souls, to hear His voice speaking through our consciences, and to treasure His gift to us of personal responsibility for our lives and for our world....

Everything is different when you begin to examine in prayer the circumstances of every day, according to the set of values that Jesus taught. These values are so clearly stated in the Beatitudes: "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God".

Pope John Paul II in Wales

English repentance—an Irish response

AT A RECENT MEETING in Dublin to promote cultural relations between Ireland's North and South, a journalist, well-known for her writings on Ireland, called everyone's attention to 'the most important article written on Northern Ireland since the trouble started'. She was referring to an article, 'Whither Northern Ireland Protestants?', in *The Tablet* (10 April 1982), the International Catholic weekly, by George Dallas, a chest physician from Belfast.

'My own tendency,' writes Dr Dallas, 'as a Northern Protestant and Presbyterian, who remembers past history, is to say that others are more to blame than we are—the Southern Protestants, the Church of Ireland, the upper classes, the English....'

'We can never say that others have been worse than us,' he continues, 'for we all share the same spirit of superiority, self-righteousness and arrogance.'

Dr Dallas quotes Canon Austin Baker, now Bishop of Salisbury, who described the Irish situation as 'a fatal legacy which England has bequeathed to the people of this island'. Canon Baker described repentance and admitting 'the fact that we cannot save ourselves' as part of the experience of Christians on the personal level. 'Today leaders of thought are emphasising again their application at community and national level,' said Canon Baker.

Canon Baker's 'humble and disarming plea for the repentance of his country in all its dealings with Ireland must find a similar response from the Irish Protestants,' writes Dr Dallas: 'I began to think of what repentance must mean for our community in relation to Ireland. Surely it must mean a humble and glad acceptance of ourselves fully as Irish people, as we were always meant to be, not Irish and British as well, or any other formula that allows us to go on feeling superior. Unless our community finds this kind of repentance and learns to care for all the people of Ireland, there will always be violence in this country....'

'But thankfully,' adds Dr Dallas, 'with communities as with individuals, there is an answer.'

Breaking prejudices

AFTER WEEKS of uncertainty, Pope John Paul II has visited Britain—the first Pope ever to do so. In Canterbury Cathedral, seat of the leading Archbishop of the Anglican Church, the Pope took part in a 'celebration of faith' with representatives of several other denominations. He em-

phasised the historic links between Canterbury and Rome, saying, 'I come to you... in the love of Gregory, who sent Saint Augustine to this place to give the Lord's flock a shepherd's care.'

Nearly 1400 years after Augustine had become the first Archbishop of Canterbury, Robert Runcie, the present Archbishop, said, 'Our unity is not in the past only, but also in the future. We have a common vision which also breaks up the lazy prejudices and easy assumptions of the present.... If we remember that beginning in Jesus Christ our Lord, if we can face the suffering of travelling his way, if we can lift our eyes beyond the historic quarrels which have tragically disfigured Christ's Church and wasted so much Christian energy, then we shall indeed enter into a faith worthy of celebration, because it is able to remake the world.'

The Church of Scotland has more fundamental theological and structural differences from Rome than the Anglican Church does. It is, therefore, perhaps more remarkable that the Pope was received in front of the Assembly Hall of the Church of Scotland in Edinburgh by John McIntyre, Moderator of the Church's General Assembly. Professor McIntyre said that if John Knox had been present in person his own commitments to the Gospel would have allowed him to understand what was happening.

1981 alternative

THE NEWLY-PUBLISHED Annual Report for 1981 of the Oxford Group (Moral Re-Armament's official name in Britain) describes 'mounting evidence of God's leading in the affairs of men' through the year. It goes on, 'We have seen that when men of whatever position or colour pause to ask for His direction, miracles of reconciliation are possible.'

The report states that men and women of Moral Re-Armament are seeking to live this 'alternative to the false choice between confrontation and surrender' and to focus it for society at large. This is affecting such issues as unemployment, race relations and British attitudes to Ireland.

Typical of the changes of attitude reported are those recorded by a general practitioner who attended a weekend conference at Tirley Garth, the MRA centre in Cheshire. He wrote in *Update* (15 June 1981), the journal of post-graduate general practice: 'At the meeting we attended, the opposite corners were held by the medical and nursing professions and the unions... Our brief was to talk openly and honestly about our differences and to meet as equals on entirely neutral ground.'

'Inevitably some grievances were mentioned (mostly by the doctors) and as one listened to these one had an uncomfortable feeling that they represented resentment at the undermining of prestige, rather than of patient care. During the discussion doctors and trade unionists looked at their own houses rather than each other's.'

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