

# NEW WORLD NEWS

Vol33 No14 20 July 1985 25p

## SPECIAL CONFERENCE ISSUE

Photos: Margaret Gray, Rob Lancaster



A session of the conference in Georgetown University

## MAKING A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE

THE GREY SPIRES of Georgetown University are a familiar landmark on the banks of the Potomac River in Washington, DC. The university campus, established in 1789, was the setting for the MRA international conference, 'Making a World of Difference,' from 15-23 June.

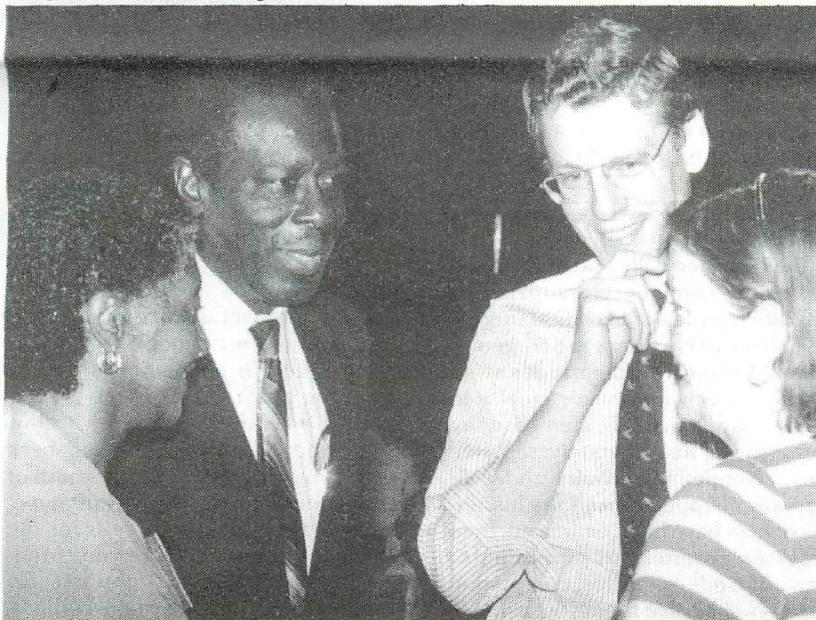
This was definitely a gathering in the 'market place' as opposed to a 'desert' retreat, to use the words of the Catholic author Father Henri Nouwen, one of the principal speakers.

There was a constant coming and going of participants from the city. Some 600 from the United States joined 200 from 44 other countries ranging from Argentina to Finland, Japan to South Africa, from El Salvador, Tibet, Cambodia and Afghanistan.

A Republican Senator and a Democratic Congressman spoke to plenary sessions; an Assistant Secretary of State and others from government agencies and Capitol Hill took part in workshops on Central America, Southern Africa, Food Surplus and World Hunger, Informal Diplomacy and Industry. Three

*contd page 8*

(l to r) Audrey and Collie Burton from Richmond, Virginia, chat with Henry and Margaret Palmer of Chicago, Illinois.



Chief Gordon Crowchild of the Sarcee Band, Alberta, Canada

### HEAR THE TAPES!

**Tape 1: Closing the fundamental gap**  
An evening with Henri Nouwen and others

**Tape 2: Pathways to Effective living**  
Also including Henri Nouwen

**Tape 3 & 4 Making a world of difference**  
Highlights of the plenary sessions, including an evening with John and Bonnie Green

Order from MRA Books, 15 Rio Vista Lane, Richmond, VA 23226, USA, price \$10 per tape, \$25 the set, including postage and tax.

UK enquiries to Grosvenor Books, 54 Lyford Road, London SW18 3JJ.

# Where loss of freedom begins

TWO MAJOR MEETINGS of the conference and a showing of the film *One Word of Truth*, based on Solzhenitsyn's Nobel Prize speech, followed by a panel discussion of his message, explored the purpose of freedom, its moral underpinnings, and the links between personal freedom and national liberation, between private morality and public policy.

The presence of people from countries which have lost their freedom, or regained it having lost it, including human rights champions Alexander Ginzburg and Pavel Litvinov, added to the reality.

Leif Hovelsen, who at 19 was imprisoned by the Gestapo for his participation in the Norwegian resistance, outlined three lessons his countrymen learned from their war experience:

'First, it was only when we lost our liberty that we understood what a precious gift freedom really is. Secondly, we discovered that freedom has an inner kernel, a moral and spiritual dimension transcending the constitutional function granted us by our parliamentary democracy. And thirdly, we learned that under a suppressive dictatorship fear is a deadening power supporting the enemy. We experienced that when force cannot play on fear, that force is powerless. The whole apparatus of suppression was helpless when faced with people of inner freedom refusing to obey it.'

Pauli Snellman, a senior inspector in the Ministry of Labour of Finland, said, 'It takes more strength to live as friends with a superpower committed to an ideology than to live as enemies.' Speaking of his decision to be responsible for the policies of his government and for what transpires in his country, he said he had decided to voice his ideas, 'to risk being wrong or annoying somebody who had power, rather than to risk an idea being lost.'

'Freedom has to be conquered anew and re-enforced every day by those who enjoy it,' said Jan Chowaniec, a Polish government economist who defected to the United States in 1980. Among the 'irreplaceable benefits' which freedom



Panelists discuss the film 'One Word of Truth': (l to r) Alexander Ginzburg, Russian dissident; authors Leif Hovelsen and Michael Henderson; Professor Edward Ericson of Calvin College, Michigan; and film producer Ailsa Hamilton.

brought was free education. 'Only under the conditions of freedom can education be based on the principles of truth and moral standards, without which life becomes meaningless,' he said. On the importance of morality in international life, he said, 'We cannot go on justifying everything by the so-called national interest of a particular country.'

## Historian

Gisela Oberländer, a historian currently working for the Department of Inter-German Affairs in Bonn and active in the Christian Democratic Party there, spoke of the link between personal freedom and national liberation as she, a member of the post-war generation, perceived it. 'It is a complete change for us to admit that it is a joy to be here as Germans,' she said. 'Our experience is that real freedom can only come through real forgiveness.'

'I was just lucky to grow up in the western part of Germany. We were lib-

erated by the western allies, who gave us back a democracy and the possibility to choose for ourselves. We were liberated, but another dimension is needed to become free.

'Inner freedom is something which we as Germans have to find by ourselves. I had to face the fact that I as a German will always be responsible for what happened in the name of my country. It doesn't matter that I was not born at that time. But when I was able to see that I could ask for forgiveness for this, I became free—free to stand in front of you without fear that you would find out that I am German.'

While underlining that individual Germans need to find inner freedom for themselves, Dr Oberländer also urged those present to become truly reconciled with Germany, as France had in the post-war years. When President Reagan stood by his decision to go to Bitburg, 'he wanted to show that he trusted us again, and this is what we need for our young people so that we can go on to do something positive together,' she said.

Her son, Christian, continued in the same vein, referring to his experience as an exchange student at a California high school three years ago. He had been struck by the fact that 'on television shows or in the mass media in general, German history is condensed to the 12 years of the Nazi regime.' He also found that 'in the US there is a great deal of national pride', while 'when I went back to Germany this was missing, because of the constant reminder that we are guilty.' He pleaded for real forgiveness for the past 'to allow the young generation to get a sense of national identity and to allow Germany to take its place in the world.'



**Commander Ahmed Zia Mas'oud (left) from the Panjsher Valley of Afghanistan addresses the conference, translated by Bashir Zikria, professor of clinical surgery at the College of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia University. Commander Mas'oud said, 'Only when man's cruelty to man has disappeared will men have the opportunity to heal themselves. When jealousy, competition, rivalry and evil-doing have disappeared and the highest values of man have been embraced, then societies or governments according to the laws of God—of justice, compassion and love—will be able to rule the world.'**

# Private morality and public policy



Donna Zajonc from Oregon

POLITICIANS FROM the US, France, Britain, Norway and Australia identified the links between private morality and public policy.

Charles Bennett has been a Democratic Representative from Florida for 36 years, serving on the Armed Services Committee and as Chairman of the Subcommittee on Naval Affairs. He said that the four absolute moral standards cited by MRA could 'come from an analysis of what it takes to be a congressman. The greatest criterion of being in public life is honesty—saying things like they are, not like you want people to think they are. Of course, you might be wrong.'

Purity, he saw as 'living a good clean life.' As for unselfishness, 'If you don't really want to serve people, you are wasting your life in public service, because that's all you do.' And 'If you don't love people, you're not in the right business!'

Referring to a recent disappointment, he said he had decided to 'do something positive' rather than 'go off in a corner and cry'. By hiring additional staff responsible only to him and to the priorities he set, he had become a more effective Representative.

## Referendum

Johannes Osttveit, Chief of Planning for the Christian Democratic Party, was formerly a member of the Norwegian parliament. Cooperation between members of his own party had broken down at the time of the referendum over Norway's joining the European Community in 1972.

'In one caucus meeting we began to blame each other,' he said. 'I began to think about what I had learned in Moral

Re-Armament, to apologise first for my own shortcomings. Though it was not my experience to do much of that, I began to do so. I told them that I had mistrusted the other side. I had not been open about my activities and my loyalty. In fact, I just admitted doing what I had blamed the other side for doing. I was quite astonished to see how immediately this changed the atmosphere. Everyone admitted his part and unity was restored, although the disagreements were still there.'

## Decisions

Donna Zajonc, a psychiatric nurse and until recently a member of the Oregon State Legislature, asked, 'How will we Americans learn to accept the difficult decisions that need to be made, rather than looking for easy answers?'

'I always thought I was an honest person, but I am finally understanding for the first time this week what total honesty really means. It means that you don't use the State telephone Watts line to call your parents or your family. It means you don't use the Xerox machine for your daughter's birthday invitations, or the few stamps that might be lying around the office. In this country, we may not be so prone to criminal corruption, but I do believe we are prone to a lower standard of honesty that may breed mistrust.'

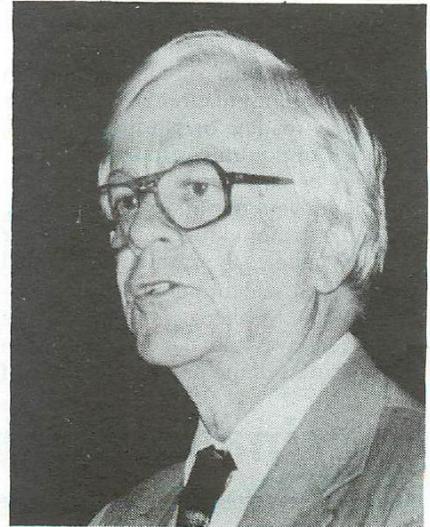
'I hope we will all consider what it takes to create a community where honest people will run for office and continue to be honest while they are there.'

Another demonstration of the link between private morality and public policy was given by Oscar Alaniz, until recently

Deputy Director-General in Uruguay's Ministry of Education, and his wife Sara. Mrs Alaniz described how their marriage was remade, following her visit in 1981 to the MRA centre in Caux, Switzerland. After that personal reconciliation, Mr Alaniz was able to make a contribution with the Cabinet Minister he advised to the restoration of democracy in Uruguay. 'Seeking inspiration in silence', they prepared 'a rough agreement', which they then showed to the military and political leaders in turn. 'The second meeting took place in my home,' Mr Alaniz said, 'with political leaders of all backgrounds, including our President.'

'Later,' he concluded, 'the military and political leaders came to an agreement in the Naval club of Uruguay. In November of last year we had free elections.'

## Congressman Charles Bennett



## Liberty and love

*Senator Jeremiah A Denton, Jr is the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Security and Terrorism, Senate Judiciary Committee. He was seven and a half years a prisoner of war in North Vietnam. We print extracts from his speech:*

THE UNITED STATES was indeed founded as one nation under God. I have seen since my return (from imprisonment in Vietnam) too many Americans forgetting what their own orientation is: the human species with respect to God, of child to parent and parent to child, the place in society of law and order, sacrifice and co-operation, and ultimately the relationship that exists between international peace and the collective personal integrity of each citizen in each country of the world. That's why you're seeing what you're seeing in Beirut, in South-East Asia.

Too many of us have a materialistic mentality developed in a society of surfeit. That is the threat to us, to our freedom. It is difficult for us in that kind of surfeit to pray. It's easy in Cambodia, or in prison where I was, but difficult here.

The American way of life equals free enterprise times compassion—not just free enterprise in the economic sense, but freedom to raise flowers for pleasure instead of profit, to paint for beauty, to move where you want to, do what work you want. The key to that working is the love factor basic to the principles of our Judaeo-Christian and revolutionary heritage.

The best way to lose freedom for individual people and for nations which have freedom is to abandon responsibility, and the root of the word responsibility is response—response to conscience, to faith, to God.

# Beyond conflict—the role of forgiveness



Phuntsok Tashi Takla (centre), brother-in-law of the Dalai Lama, talking with Chinese participants.

TWO SESSIONS of the conference, workshops on informal diplomacy and on industry, a presentation on Zimbabwe and a play-reading on Northern Ireland, provided opportunities to examine case histories of conflict-resolution and the role of forgiveness in international affairs.

Conflicts should be tackled at four levels—intellectual, psychological, moral and spiritual, said former British ambassador A R K Mackenzie. Alongside the techniques was the need to deal with the bitterness of the past and the egos of

the present which could stalemate negotiations. And, on the spiritual level, 'if we are willing to accept the discipline of humbly listening each day for the whispers of the Almighty, we can get the unexpected thought which will solve deadlocks.'

Politicians can 'do a limited amount' to overcome distrust in industrial or international affairs, a British Member of Parliament told a session on 'Beyond Conflict'. Jim Lester, who represents a Nottingham constituency, went on, 'We can seek to

build bridges. But it is people like you who can build the more secure bridges and help to create a climate of trust.' Mr Lester also made informed and valued contributions in the light of his considerable international experience to workshops and discussions throughout the conference.

The Dalai Lama of Tibet was represented by his brother-in-law, Phuntsok Tashi Takla who is a senior government spokesman, and by Lodi Gyari, who has been Chairman of the Tibetan inner parliament. Both have represented the Dalai Lama in talks with the Chinese about their country's future.

'It was very difficult for me to visit China,' Mr Gyari said. 'I lost nearly half my family, including two brothers, through the Chinese occupation of Tibet.' At an MRA conference in India he had met a Chinese girl who 'had the courage to ask my forgiveness, which made me very ashamed of my negative attitude. Since then I have been making a small contribution towards building closer understanding between Tibetans and Chinese.'

An Indian housewife, Prabha Mathur, described her experiences during the riots which followed Mrs Gandhi's assassination in November. She and her two sons were alone in their home in Delhi when they heard that armed mobs were coming to attack their Sikh neighbours. 'I knew that if we didn't do anything to help, we would never have easy con-

## Vaccinated against hate

IT WAS POSSIBLE to 'cultivate hate the way you cultivate a plant'. Argentine agronomist Jorge Molina, a world expert on soil conservation, told the conference. For years, he said, he had hated the

English and the North Americans. His meetings, however, with soil conservationists from these countries had 'vaccinated me against hatred. Now I only wish to put into practice the standard of

absolute love.'

Argentina and the USA had 95 per cent in common, said Mr Molina—the same democratic feelings, constitution and system of justice. 'We cannot allow the last five per cent to divide us.' The return to democracy in Argentina meant 'above all the re-establishment of love between the two nations'.

Mr Molina told how he had managed to secure a visa for William Peters, a former British Ambassador to Uruguay, to visit Argentina on a bridge-building mission. 'How was it possible that I was helping a Britisher to get a visa to Argentina? This is the miracle of MRA.'

Mr Peters said that he shared Mr Molina's 'wish to find a way through the fundamental areas of disagreement which surround the future of the (Falkland) islands'. Mr Peters is a member of the South Atlantic Council in London and visited Argentina to meet members of a parallel group, the Centre for South Atlantic Studies. 'Where discussion at official level is not taking place,' he said, 'it is vital that those who are unofficial, but interested,

(L to r) Jorge Molina, an agronomist from Argentina; Oscar Alaniz, Uruguayan civil servant; Eduardo Molina Olivares, who is Director of the Salvadoran Institute of Municipal Administration in El Salvador; and Juan Battista, a youth worker from Costa Rica.



# Awakened conscience

sciences,' she said. Although her Hindu neighbours tried to stop her risking injury, she rushed out to confront the mob. 'I was very astonished when all the neighbours followed. Three times that day we were able to turn away the mob. Many Hindus all over Delhi did things like this and when the troubles were over banners went up throughout the city saying, "We Sikhs thank our Hindu friends."'

## Fraternal

The Muslim World League was represented by Mazhar Hussain, its representative at the UN, while a message from Dr Inamullah Khan, Secretary General of the World Muslim Congress in Karachi, gave 'a fraternal call for all-round commitment to peace and justice and moral obligation on our good green earth'.

'I came from a part of the world where the first flames of three great religions were kindled: Judaism, Christianity and Islam,' said Ayman El Mohandes, an Egyptian doctor living in Washington, DC. 'I am saddened that at times these great faiths have become banners of nationalism and bias, rather than what they truly represent, a way of bringing people together.' Speaking of the death of his cousin in the war with Israel, two weeks before his wedding, he said, 'There is no God-sent message which does not believe in absolute and unconditional forgiveness.'

should be holding a dialogue.'

'My experience in South America was deep and moving and really a great shock,' said John Van de Water from California, a former Chairman of the US National Labor Relations board. On a visit to Uruguay he had been asked, 'Why is it you people of the USA do not even think of Central America or South America until you feel that Communist infiltration of our countries has reached a depth of danger?' This had made him realise that 'when other nations are desolate we of North America ought to feel desolate as well. Only then will we be willing to turn to God and his guidance as to how we are meant to build together. My own change must begin today with a deep apology to the people here from Central and South America for our thoughtlessness and lack of caring.' He pledged himself to work for better relations between the Americas.

The issues facing North, Central and South America were further discussed in five workshops, attended by Washington experts as well as conference participants.

SOUTH AFRICANS of African, European and Indian extraction spoke in main sessions of the conference. They also discussed America's relations with their country with American experts in a special session of the workshop on 'Informal Diplomacy'.

The workshop was addressed by Dr Chester Crocker, US Assistant Secretary of State for Africa, who described the philosophy behind US policy in South Africa. US interests, he stated, 'depend on a process of change away from apartheid towards consent of the governed'.

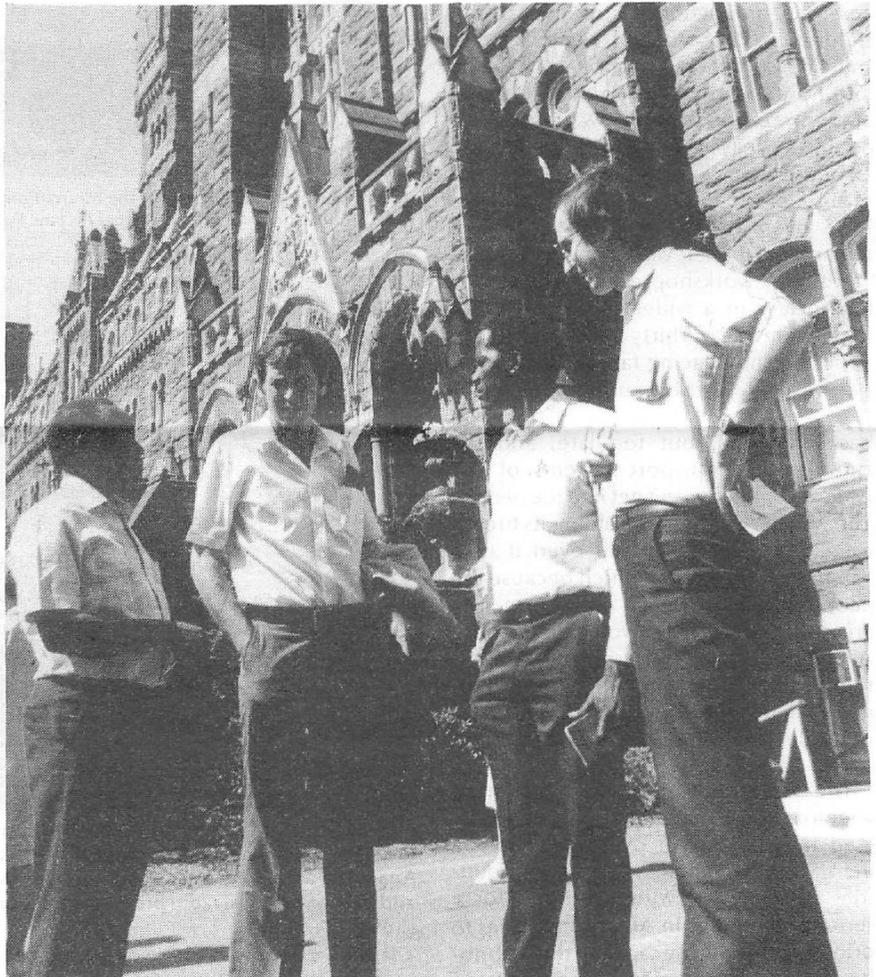
Another speaker in the workshop, Congressman Jim Leach of Iowa, warned that the policy of 'constructive engagement' meant that Americans were 'perceived as apologists for the regime in power'. His call for 'more engagement with the majority' echoed a speech by a former Assistant Secretary of State for Africa, Ambassador Donald Easum, earlier in the day. Referring to the Carter administration's readiness to talk with the Patriotic Front during the struggle for Zimbabwean independence, Mr Easum, who was then US Ambassador in Nigeria, said that it was

important for America to listen to all sides in areas of conflict.

'South Africa is very explosive at the moment,' said Samuel Pono from Soweto, at the conference's opening dinner. People are dying every day in the black townships.' He was amazed to find people still talked of creating a nonracial, democratic country. But, he said, goodwill was not enough. 'What is needed is genuine change in structures, so that the aspirations of all our people can be met and change of heart and attitude can happen.'

Marie van Selm from Cape Town spoke of the injustices that lay at the feet of her people, the Afrikaners. 'I grew up with arrogance and the right to my privileges. Then I met Africans for the first time as equals and I heard and saw what they were going through. It was an absolute mental shock.' She described a day spent with an African woman who had been in detention. 'At the end of the day I was shattered. I said, "Apology is cheap, but today my conscience has become alive." She said, "I believe trust has been built between us."'

(L to r) Samuel Pono and Pieter Horn from South Africa, Steven Sibare of Zimbabwe, and Reg Barry from South Africa.



# Creating a caring society

WORKING WITH DEPRIVED young people in the inner city is not nice, says John Coleman of Richmond, Virginia, but it is necessary. 'I don't have any question about how much I care for these kids,' Mr Coleman, the Director of Richmond's Peter Paul Development Center, told the conference. 'But at 3.30 each day, when they hit on that door, they challenge my *commitment*. When you've got 35 kids running at you from all directions, throwing books and screaming and jumping on the table, you ask yourself, do you really care?'

The question of motivation was also featured alongside discussion of the practical issues in plenary sessions and workshops devoted to 'Creating a Caring Society'. Discussions in the 'Communities' workshop ranged from the problems of Washington, DC, with its thousands of homeless, to the challenges facing small rural communities in Jamaica.

A panel from Richmond, Virginia, described the transformation in racial attitudes in the city which has undergirded its recent economic boom. The Rev John Perkins from Pasadena, California, author of *Let Justice Roll Down*, described his work to restore individual dignity and a spirit of creative self-help in a decaying inner city area where 60 per cent of the children are born out of wedlock. John and Denise Wood, from the same city, told how they had set up a skills development centre which now trains 3,500 people a year. Woodrow Mitchell and Osborne Francis from Walkerswood, Jamaica, described self-help projects which have given employment and a sense of community to their village of 2,000 people.

Another workshop examined the caring society in a wider context—that of famine in Africa. 'Thirty million people in Africa are now facing famine,' one of its participants, British journalist Geoffrey Lean, told a plenary session. 'The world has sent food, but too late, and the rudimentary transport systems of the African continent can't get it to the people. The whole continent is holding its breath waiting for the rains, but even if they come, they won't help much because the people have eaten their seed corn.' The crisis was likely to get worse unless both African and western governments changed their approach to agricultural development. 'I believe this issue is the moral equivalent in our generation of the slave trade,' he concluded.

The workshop, attended by farmers, scientists and government officials, examined the paradox of overproduction in the US and starvation in developing countries. It came up with proposals for a series of meetings in African countries to bring together those tackling the technological, social and moral aspects of the

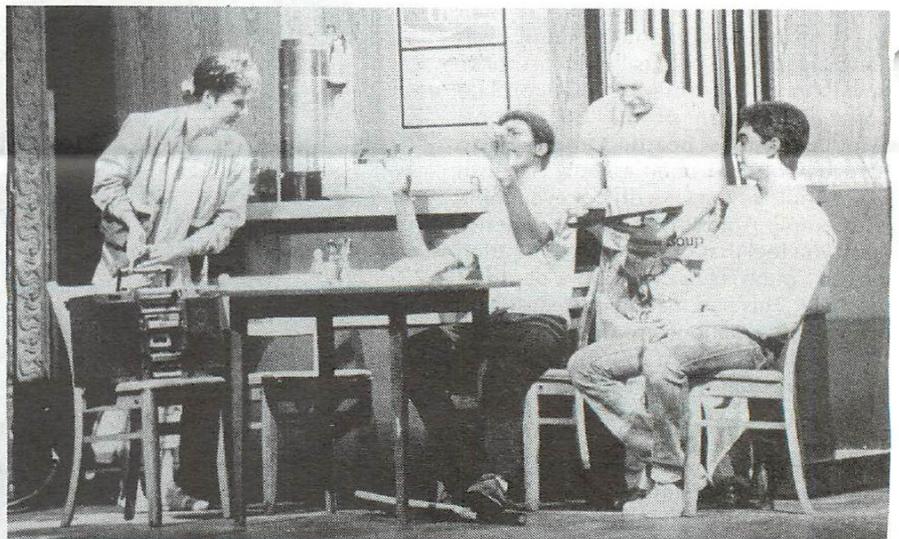
crisis; for a further seminar in Washington; and for ways of arousing concern and action among people in the West.

'We have many examples of America as a caring society,' said Virginian lawyer Larry Hoover, when chairing a session on 'America's Unfinished Business'. 'But there are areas which have been neglected. It is often fear that stands in the way of our tackling tough jobs, fear of what others may think, fear of conflict, fear of people who are broken.'

Several spoke of the change in motivation which had helped them to overcome fear and find the will to serve. An Australian politician who had pioneered legislation for Aboriginal land rights and education described how putting things right in his country had begun, for him, with putting things right in his own life. A young American couple spoke of their decision to work overseas with the Agency for International Development, and a French woman, told how her release



(L to r) Fred Small, a Delegate of the International Longshoremen's Association from Brooklyn; Dewey Parrish, Director, Guaranteed Annual Income Fund; and Horace Alston, International Vice-President of the ILA from Baltimore.



A scene from the play, 'Clashpoint', by Betty Gray and Nancy Ruthven. The British cast gave three performances in Washington, DC, and extracts at Ballou High School in the city's Anacostia area. This was organised by Calvin Rolark, editor of the 'Washington Informer' and host of the local radio programme 'Sound Off'. Members of the cast spoke on this call-in show.

'Clashpoint' is now available on videotape. Enquiries to MRA Productions, 12 Palace Street, London SW1E 5JF.

## The right role



**Freddye Webb-Petett, former President of the Urban League, in Portland, Oregon.**

from the bitterness caused by an unhappy childhood had freed her to help other people who were suffering. 'We can all have a part, big or small, in remaking the world,' she said. 'If we refuse to play it, we are robbing the world of something God wants to give through us and not through

anybody else.'

A writer told how offers of better-paid jobs had tempted him to give up his attempts to awaken public conscience over the African crisis. 'Then I saw some of the news footage about Ethiopia again—so many children dying, so like my own. I had to go on.' An Irish-American said that the conference had made her decide to commit her life to try to help Northern Ireland.

Freddye Webb-Petett, former President of the Urban League of Portland, Oregon, said that in recent months her own effectiveness had been transformed by a decision to take time every day to seek God's direction for her life. This had spurred her to spend more time with her family and had increased her 'energy, time and resources'. 'The will to serve comes from the heart,' she concluded, 'but understanding how, when and what to do comes from God.' ■

## Three Rs in development

*John Perkins is the Director of the Harambee Christian Family Centre in Pasadena, California.*

I BEGAN TO BE EDUCATED when I was 11, hauling hay all day for a white man for 15 cents. Later my brother was killed in a Civil Rights incident, a few months after he returned from World War II.

I looked at the white people in Mississippi who were very religious. Their religious life had nothing to do with their racial behaviour. It looked to me as if the more religious black folk became, the more submissive they would be towards that oppression.

We went to California, and I married. My son got me to go to Sunday school and there I saw what I had been searching for all my life—love. My energy and economic drive was linked to my desire to earn things which would win me respect and love. There I learned that God loved me.

We returned to Mississippi. Living in a small town there I began to see why poverty persists. Education gives people a sense of sophistication and upward mobility and it makes them feel better than the folks they leave behind. How do you get the people who have education to return to the villages?

My wife started crying when I said, 'We are going to stay here in this poverty community until we can give the young folks a love for God, for themselves and for their community which is greater than materialism or greed. Then we will help them to go to college, to get some skills and bring them back to the community.' We stayed there for 12 years and it hap-

pened. Then we went to Jackson, Mississippi, and started all over again. Now we are in Pasadena.

There are three Rs of Christian community development: Relocation, getting people to go back to live among the poor; Reconciliation, which assumes equality; and Redistribution. In this last, there is something more important than money. People need motivation, incentive, skills, love and compassion first. ■

*Margaret Palmer is a Chicago attorney who worked for the Illinois State Legislature for about ten years:*

I LOVE WORKING for government. I adore being right in the middle of everything, studying tough issues, coming up with solutions, proposing them, lobbying them through the legislature and sitting next to the Governor when they are signed into law.

But I am also the wife of a frantically busy doctor and the mother of three children. I often feel torn apart.

When Harold Washington was elected mayor of Chicago, I had a big opportunity. I was one of his main staff people in the state legislature; I could write my own ticket and be one of his top administrators. I had a real struggle whether to take the job, or hold my new marriage and family together. In the end I decided to let my chance go, although it might never come again.

Some time after this the thought came to me that the mayor could be very effective in helping poor black kids in the ghetto to learn to read. His hobby is reading, he's great with kids and he's a hero to them. I wrote a proposal and gave it to him as a private citizen. He asked me if I'd run the programme for him.

When I gave up my heart's desire, it came back to me without having to sacrifice my family. I see a real hope that this work may be a way of closing the gap between the uneducated and the educated. ■

*Oscar-winning composer John Green and his wife Bonny talk about the rebirth of their marriage after years of difficulty. Mr Green also played Gershwin and an arrangement of his own music.*



# Finding our home

We print extracts from one of author Henri Nouwen's talks at the conference:

THOSE WHO DON'T LISTEN are deaf and the Latin word for deaf is *surdus*. If you're very deaf, you're *absurdus*. An absurd life is a life in which you're not listening any more. The Latin word for listening is *audire* and if you listen with great attention, that is *oboedire* and that's where the word obedience comes from. In a certain way, we could say, the spiritual life moves from absurdity to obedience, from deafness to listening. Somehow that is what we are called to do, to become listeners to a voice of love. That is why we often say, 'Well, I am not so sure if I really want to listen because I might not like what I am going to hear.' Fear makes us deaf.

Fear always has something to do with the unknown in us. It's amazing to see how many people are afraid first of all of themselves and of what goes on in their own hearts. There's also fear of the other person of whom we don't know what to expect. We often deal with it by giving people labels and putting them in boxes so that we can live with our illusions of them.

There's another fear deep within us. The fear of The One. We feel that to keep God at a distance might be the safest way to live the spiritual life. If I think about my own prayer life I discover how selective it is, because I present to God only the parts of myself that I think he can handle.

I see the spiritual life as one in which we have to move out of the house of fear into the house of love. God says, 'Make your home in me as I have made my home in you.' We realise that God is our home. As

---

A young woman, recently widowed, wrote at the end of the conference:

*'I came here with fear so great that my circulation was impaired, and I'm leaving with hope, with renewed faith that God has his hand on my life.'*

*'I came here listening to friends, now I'm going to listen to God.'*

*'I came here with prejudice and I'm leaving with humility and love.'*

*'I came here feeling some security in my material possessions and now I want to serve freely.'*

*'I am beginning to bubble with new life.'*



Father Henri Nouwen

soon as you enter into the house of God you find out there are houses so spacious that they embrace all the people of the world. And finally you discover that where you find your neighbour, where you find your God, you will find your true self. You find a unity among people, in your own heart and with God that transcends all imagination. That's where you become a new person.

Jean Vanier (who works among the handicapped) said, 'Living with very handicapped people has taught me that all

---

contd from page 1  
performances of the British multiracial play *Clashpoint* drew responsive audiences from Washington's black and white communities.

The aim of the conference was to explore the part of each individual in creating a world of justice and peace. The outcome is difficult to measure. At this stage it is felt mostly in the stirrings within individuals' hearts. But as the conference drew to a close, more people were ready to speak of these stirrings and of decisions taken than time permitted.

A company president from Boston told of a successful business and a failed marriage. The conference had been a 'profound and totally new experience'. Faced with the 'disaster' in his family he had pondered the situation through one night. In the early hours 'I accepted God totally and completely and am in his care'.

A college student, one of a lively group in their teens and twenties who served as 'facilitators' to help the conference run smoothly, spoke frankly of drink, drugs and sex. He referred to Henri Nouwen's assertion that we need to make our home

human beings have three basic rights. The first is the right to intimacy; the second is the right to fecundity or fruitfulness; and the third is the right to ecstasy.' I read chapter 15 of John and realised what Jesus was talking about. 'Make your home in me as I have made my home in you.' That is intimacy. 'And if you remain in me with me in you, you will bear ample fruits.' That is fecundity. 'And I tell you this, that my joy may be in you and your joy may be complete.' That's ecstasy. These are the three qualities of living in the house of love.

The closer you come to God, the closer you come to people, because God shines through people. That's true intimacy. When we love one another as God loves us, our lives can become fruitful. We often think that we are called to be productive, but that's something different. The basis of your life isn't products, but faithfulness to love. And the word ecstasy is a very important word in understanding joy, because ecstasy comes from *ek*, which means 'out' and *stasis* which means 'static place'. Ecstatic living is a life in which you dare to move out of the place of security into a place of freedom. ■

---

with God and place our trust in him. 'I always thought that I was so self-sufficient that I could sort of wing it. That was why I would fall to temptation all the time. In a thunderstorm the safest place to be is my home. It is the same thing with putting my trust in God.'

A Cambodian, whose family is involved in the struggle to restore democracy in his country, told of vowing when he joined the resistance not to drink alcohol until he reached Phnom Penh again. 'It was easier in Cambodia than it is in Paris, but I intend to keep that pledge.' Now, he said, he had a further decision to make: not to be so quick to criticise and satirise others. It not only did harm to those around him: 'It is bad for my own family.'

A young Florida couple described the new relationship they had found. The wife had apologised for 'my selfishness and self-righteousness'. The husband said he needed a sense of 'humour, forgiveness and destiny' in putting things right on his side. 'God has been telling me to accept the forgiveness he offers, forgive myself and move on to the global task that we have.' ■

**NEW  
WORLD  
NEWS**

Published fortnightly for Moral Re-Armament by The Good Road Ltd, 12 Palace Street, London SW1E 5JF, England. Printed by T W Pe gg and Sons Ltd. Articles may be reproduced without reference to the editor, acknowledgement welcomed. Price 25p. 10 copies £2 10 p us postage. Special rates for pre-publication bulk orders. **Annual subscriptions: British Isles** £9.00 (2 copies of each issue £12.50) UK pensioners and students £7.00 (2 copies £10.50); **All other countries** airmail £13.00. Regional offices and rates: **Australia** New World News, PO Box 1078J, GPO Melbourne, Vic 3001 \$25.00; **Canada** Moral Re-Armament, 387 chemin de la Cote Ste Catherine, Montreal, Quebec H2V 2B5 \$20.00; **New Zealand** New World News, CPO Box 1834, Wellington \$36.00; **South Africa** Moral Re-Armament, PO Box 10144, Johannesburg, 2000 R20.00; **USA** Moral Re-Armament Inc, 1030 Fifteenth Street NW, Suite 908, Washington DC 20005 \$20.00. **Business:** Tirley Garth, Tarpoley, Cheshire CW6 0LZ. Tel: 082 93 2305; **Editorial:** 12 Palace Street, London SW1E 5JF. Tel: 01-828 6591