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Education for Living

by the Hon K.E. Beazley
and Dr Anton Skulberg

MORAL RE-ARMAMENT

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Foreword

THIS PAMPHLET presents the addresses of two statesmen. The occasion was an Education Conference held at the Moral Re-Armament Conference Centre in Panchgani, Western India, from January 1st to 10th, 1974.

Both Mr Beazley and Dr Skulberg are educationists by profession and have reached the office of education ministers in their respective countries. Mr Beazley started his career as a teacher of history. Dr Skulberg is a professor of veterinary medicine and an expert in food microbiology.

Mr Kim Beazley has been Federal Minister of Education for Australia since December 1972. When the Australian Prime Minister was asked recently what he felt was the most successful policy during his first year in office, he replied, "Education". The man who handles Labor's education policy of Australia is a controversial figure. He has had an uphill task to ensure that Federal grants are more evenly distributed to the needy schools of Australia in the outback and other areas instead of being concentrated on a few wealthier city schools. He has faced strong opposition but has successfully seen through his reforms.

I had the privilege of living alongside Mr Beazley in India and Bangladesh, which we visited soon after liberation, and have come to know and appreciate him.

Plato wanted the world to be ruled by philosopher-statesmen. Mr Beazley is such a statesman of our time. He has been a parliamentarian for almost three decades. On a walk with him one can listen to quotations from

Kipling or Tennyson (he has a phenomenal memory) or a detailed description of the deployment of armies during the Battle of Waterloo. He once told me that some day he would like to write a book exploding historical myths. He is against cant and hypocrisy in public life and has not hesitated to pay the price of his convictions.

Mr Beazley is a man of strong feelings, with a concern for the downtrodden. He feels for the poverty-stricken millions of Asia as much as he does for the maimed and the battered children in some Australian schools he speaks about. He has allowed the whole world to walk into his heart, to stay there till it hurts so that he can try to alleviate their sufferings. His presence in Government has brought to bear on the intelligent policies of the Australian Cabinet the authority of a man with a world conscience. We hope that the publication of his address will bring to thousands in the field of education the fruits of his experience and vision.

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Fifty-two-year-old Dr Anton Skulberg came into public life after a distinguished academic and research career that took him to universities in Britain and the United States, including Oxford, Cambridge and Leeds. He was elected to the Norwegian Parliament in 1969. His term as Minister for Education lasted a year from October 1972. He belongs to the Centrist Party in Norway. In the Council of Europe at Strasbourg to which he belongs, he has stood against the tendency of the European powers to build high tariff walls shutting off trade and other facilities from the developing nations. During the Bangladesh crisis when millions of refugees

were pouring into India, he, with his friends, moved the Norwegian Government to make fish protein powder available for the sustenance of the refugees. When Bangladesh became independent Norwegian aid was about to be funnelled into providing trucks and other mechanical facilities. Dr Skulberg, both in Parliament and in his dealings with the Administration, fought to get Norwegian aid authorities to continue their programme of nutrition so that children of that new-born nation could have their diet fortified with the protein they needed for their growth. He felt that as a food microbiologist, nutrition of these millions in Asia was part of his responsibility.

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Dr Skulberg comes from near Oslo, not far from the Arctic Circle, Mr Beazley from Perth in south-western Australia. Though they come from two extremities of the earth they have much in common. Both of them are men of faith, genuine humility and deep conviction.

Mr Beazley puts his points across forcefully; Dr Skulberg with a quiet determination. They are both thoughtful men, incisive in their expression. Both men have studied the trends of our times and know that human wisdom has failed. They feel that a Superior Wisdom is necessary if mankind is to fulfil its destiny.

Both are idealists but they know that there is no permanent social change unless motives of men are tackled.

Mr Beazley speaks from his experience as a teacher who once wanted his class to be a credit to him, to impress his superiors and to advance his career. He speaks of how change came to his motives. Dr Skulberg reveals

to us his experiment in setting right his relationship with his own son. It was on the eve of his assuming office as Education Minister and was a preparation for it.

Both speak about the part that fear plays in decision-making. "I never wanted to be suspected of inability to cope", says Mr Beazley. "This fear, if it is not honestly faced, will result in bluff and ruthlessness. Faced, it can gain co-operation of the child (or the staff, or the parliamentary colleague)."

Dr Skulberg says, "In my opinion it happens far too often that political decisions are taken under the influence of fear." He speaks from experience how faith casts out fear.

Both Beazley and Skulberg are committed to the moral re-armament of the world. When asked by a journalist what his commitment to MRA meant to him, Beazley replied, "MRA is a discipline of the conscience . . . not a doctrine I run round putting on people."

Just before he left India recently, Dr Skulberg told some friends, "Moral Re-Armament has much to give to a politician in any country. We are more in need of it than anybody. Our responsibilities, our tasks are so enormous and we feel under such tremendous pressures that we are in great need of listening to the inner voice."

Dr Frank Buchman wanted the world "to be governed by men governed by God".

Mr Beazley and Dr Skulberg are pioneering this new statesmanship which could mould the policies of nations to God's design.

R. M. LALA
New Delhi
January 19, 1974.

The Hon K. E. Beazley

Minister of Education, Australia

THE LATE Dr Frank Buchman believed that

"Education finds its inspiration as teachers and students, morally sane, are taught by God."

It is not often that education, inspiration and moral sanity are mentioned in the same sentence, nor teachers and students mentioned in juxtaposition with God.

The statement expresses a crucial truth—crucial to civilisation, crucial to the dignity of youth, and crucial to valid educational research.

Buchman expressed the same truth in a manner many revolutionary young people today would understand more easily:

"Education's principal assignment and mission is in refining man's capacity to listen to his conscience."

If the audience were less conformist he might have expressed it slightly differently:

"Education's principal assignment and mission is in refining man's capacity to listen to his God."

Education for sanity

Dr Buchman did not imagine that education was unrelated to literacy, music, technical skills, traditional crafts, health and physical well-being, social relationships, gymnastics and athletics, linguistic skills, or the advance of civilisation. He believed that

"The function of universities in a world crisis is to create new men who can fashion the new civilisation."

He clearly perceived that education had everything to do with philosophies and concepts which would enhance the dignity of man, and saw very clearly, when many statesmen in the West did not, the philosophies and ideologies which would degrade man as he has never been degraded before, and which would be blindly proud of their programmes of degradation.*

Some of the Parliamentary debates in my country which are actually pivotal to education do not mention the word education at all. They have turned on the very value of child-life itself, and the placing of a high value or a low value on that life will determine as a secondary issue whether a good deal of educational research is worthwhile; and as a primary issue whether the advances of education and civilisation are to be stultified by a new callousness. By 98 votes to 23 the House of Representatives in my country recently rejected proposed legislation for abortion on demand in the Australian Capital Territory. But the threat is not finally disposed of.

The beauty and dignity of the impaired

I participated in that debate. Not long before the debate I had, in my capacity as Federal Minister for Education in the Australian Government, visited the North Rocks School for Special Education. This complex of schools caters for the educational needs of handicapped children. It is situated in an outer suburb of Sydney, New South Wales. Some of its pupils and students are deaf, some blind, some retarded, some were

*Dr Buchman was nevertheless convinced that (to use his words), "A race that has grown up intellectually must grow up morally or perish."

born deaf or blind, some were born deaf *and* blind, some were deafened, blinded or afflicted with multiple handicaps in childhood or adolescence.

In the philosophy of many of the advocates of abortion there would, for many of these children, have been no educational problem. They would have been exterminated.

Children born deaf and blind begin with one basic item of knowledge. They can tell the difference between a loving touch and an unloving touch. From that basis, like the famous case of the late Helen Keller of the USA, they can build to intelligent responses, to intelligible speech, and in some cases to literary capacity of value. They can advance to dignity. Those I saw at work in their classes were lovable children:

The intellect as god

But do not let us evade the meaning of philosophies powerfully advocated in my country in the mass media. Clear, hard, trained, purposeful intellects are child exterminators upon terms which they regard their intellects as qualified to determine.

The people who assume this power, or seek to assume it, have made a god of their own intellects, and have conferred upon this god the power of life and death, much like the Old Testament god Moloch, to whom the young were sacrificed.

A. J. P. Taylor, the noted historian of central Europe and of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire, in a study of one statesman of the Hapsburg Monarchy *(who hap-

*Felix Schwarzenberg, Imperial Prime Minister. From A. J. P. Taylor, *The Hapsburg Monarchy*, page 84 (Penguin-Hamish Hamilton 1974).

pened by his policy to have encompassed the death of many revolutionary university students) commented:

"He held the belief, not uncommon among men of dry intellectual power, that force is everything and ideas are nothing."

I could not help feeling, as I watched an Australian television debate on the destruction of the unborn, that the women involved in the debate had a basic contempt for ideas, even the legal idea of the sanctity of life, let alone the Pauline idea:

"This faith is valid because of the existence of God Himself Who can make the dead live and speak His word to those who are yet unborn."

They were prepared to confer upon the State a violent knife-edged power against human life as the first tenet of their philosophy and the first move of their social strategy. They did not seem to be ruthless people, and to respond to their philosophy with hate would in itself violate the sanctity of life.

That a child has rights is an idea. That a child may be killed without warrant is the application of unbridled force, without a scintilla of pretence at a process of justice. It demonstrates a different application of the philosophy of the Austro-Hungarian statesman of more than a century ago, upon whom A. J. P. Taylor commented. Incapable of justifying the killing on any ground but personal convenience, the television ladies advanced an ideology of nihilism. The basis of government they unashamedly affirmed, without being logical enough to realise what they were doing, was force, not ideas, not the restraint of justice, not the inhibitions of the recognition of intrinsic human right.

Change and "the knowledge industry"

Dr Buchman had known Mahatma Gandhi since 1915 and in this respect their philosophies were identical—ideas were vital.

To Buchman valid ideas were God's weapons to create a new world:

"...and man has the capacity to receive ideas from God. When men act on these ideas they find a new direction for themselves and their nations."

When Schuman and Adenauer came together at Caux we saw operating an idea powerful enough to unite nations separated by generations of hate. Schuman wrote:

"Moral Re-Armament brings us a philosophy of life applied in action . . . a school . . . overcoming the prejudices and enmities which separate classes, races and nations . . . It is not a question of changing policy but changing men . . . the beginning of a far-reaching transformation of society."

As a teacher I wanted my classes to be a credit to me; to impress my superiors; to advance my career. This is desperately inferior thinking in education, the root of insensitivity to a child's real needs, the projection into the children of an equally selfish ambition, the basis of superiority for some, the provocation to violence for others.

"Education" was accepted in this philosophy as "the knowledge industry"; and since "knowledge is power" resentment and division characterise those whose needs are not merely unmet, but scarcely considered. I do not insult the dignity of the teaching profession by asserting its motives to be so inadequate, but most of us, if we are honest, recognise the temptations of

careerism and few, I fear, could say we never succumb.

There are two alternative motives in wanting people to change. As a Canadian medical practitioner put it:

"We want change so we will be liked better, be more attractive, more successful. Parents want their children to change to relieve their parental anxieties about the children and to bridge the generation gap between them."

Stripped of the camouflage, this is the self-centered pursuit of personal admiration or control of other people.

The alternative source of change, not within the control of any individual's self-love or self-interest, was stated by Dr Buchman thus:

*"God's living Spirit is the intelligent source of information in the world today. That spiritual power is the greatest force in the world. The only sane people in an insane world are those guided by God. It is obedience to God that counts, for obedience taps the great creative sources in the mind of God. Where are the men who will rise and accept the sovereignty of the living God? God's guidance is vital. All other ideas are too small to touch the centre of the evil. A man's change and development depend on his standing firm for what God tells him to be right. What you need is the independent touch with God's living Spirit, and then you need never defer wrongly to any man, woman or group."**

*Dr Buchman had objective tests to minimize our capacity to deceive ourselves. Apart from the test of fellowship with other people seeking the guidance of God, he tested thoughts by absolute moral standards.

"Definite direction, accurate information can still come from the mind of God to the mind of man. It can come to our nation as men and women everywhere listen to God and obey, as they learn to plot their own course and their nation's course by the four compass points of MRA—absolute honesty, purity, unselfishness and love."

In this he echoed St. John who died on the island of Patmos nearly 2000 years ago:

"The man who is following God's will is part of the permanent and cannot die. Obedience is the test of whether we really live 'in God' or not."

Stumbling blocks to the teacher

Four challenging statements, ultimately from Buchman's thinking, make me look back with some regret on my career as a teacher and stand as a stark challenge to my decisions as a Minister.

- * *It is human selfishness, not human wisdom, that decides policies.* (Not forgetting, however, that this statement has no validity if the miracle of God's living Spirit is accepted to break the power of pride and selfishness, of lust and fear and hatred.)

How often it was true of my classroom that my selfishness operated, even when I was being an immense success. As a Cabinet Minister I have had to face and apologise for jealousy and arrogance.

- * *Fear is a liar and the worst kind of guidance.*

I never wanted to be suspected of inability to cope. This fear, if it is not honestly faced, will result in bluff and ruthlessness. Faced, it can gain the co-operation of the child (or the staff, or the Parliamentary or Ministerial colleague).

- * *To be so full of self-importance that there is no room for anything else.*

This is the core of the teacher-centred class or the Minister-centred office and the signpost to disaster.

- * *Fear will lure us onto the wrong battlefield.*

The sarcastic remark, the evasion of the difficult child's problems, the preoccupation with what will lead to promotion are examples of fear leading to the teacher fighting the wrong battle. Politics, heaven help us, are almost always the wrong battle! How often local issues overshadow life-and-death world issues!

Nations and education

National aims in education can express insensitivity in a different way. The proposition is often advanced that a major purpose of education is to increase productivity, enhance national efficiency and strengthen the nation in a competitive world. Napoleon, Hitler, Stalin, Cobden Bright, and a whole range of politicians of all nations in the last 200 years would have agreed. Allied to military purposes, sometimes asserted to be "enlightened self-interest", generations and continents have been ruined by that philosophy.

Optimum human development is sometimes advanced as the alternative aim, but in advancing it, we need to be clear what we are talking about.

Human development is ideological in nature:

"Ideas quick and powerful to reconcile nations, to conquer hearts and wills, to inspire a world-wide renaissance are instantly available, immediately applicable. Every man, if he will, can listen to God."

Buchman would not compromise one iota to abandon the real, practical, experimentally verifiable truth of that assertion. The false idea—and the ideologies of the 20th century which have slain their millions demonstrate the truth of his assertion—has a swift consequence too.

Many saw Schuman and Adenauer meet and face:

"False ideas which threw up a mountain of chaotic debris that dammed back unity and freedom for millions."

From their meeting:

"The debris was swept away by the force of a God-given idea."

The characteristic of the false idea in education (or anywhere else) is that it begins by affirming belief in man and man alone. It ends despising and destroying him.

The characteristic of the valid idea is a ceaseless self-discipline, inspired by a constant experience of God's help, leading to an intense preoccupation with the individual and

"An all-consuming care for people".

These attributes are essential to inspired statesmanship and inspired education.

Students matter

Taylor, the historian of the Hapsburg Monarchy cited earlier, commented that desperate peasants and workers in the revolution of 1848 looked to find leaders among the students:

"It is a sure sign of economic and political backwardness of the working class if working class leadership is found in students at the University."

Yet it has been our experience in Australia that students who cared for the education of somebody else produced writings notable for extending educational opportunities.

I believe that communities are longing for selfless analytical thinking from students, whose personal discipline sets their minds and time free to consider the obvi-

ous and the subtle problems of society and world affairs and come up with creative suggestions which will turn the thinking of mankind.

St. John on Patmos was impatient with bogus Christians:

"The man who loves his brother lives and moves in the light and has no reason to stumble."

He wanted to see *"The stamp of Christ—love"*.

If we love and value our children, educational research, thinking and planning, the professional services of teachers, the interest of parents and students, will produce the knowledge that will meet their needs. Knowledge not based on a motive of love can do many things. It can produce thermo-nuclear weapons. The motive for education is a perpetual vision of human dignity and value. A decision, a philosophy, to love and value our children will revolutionise education and meet the needs of the genius child, the normal child, the child of the deserted wife, the orphan, the battered child, the dysfunctioning, the dyslectic, the retarded, the gifted, the child from the indifferent home, the child of the ambitious parent. A new appropriation of money for education may constantly be necessary, but it will not answer a false philosophy.

"Ideas are God's weapons for a new world. And man has the capacity to receive ideas from God. When men act on these ideas they find a new direction for themselves and their nations."

I believe that these ideas can turn education to its true function—the source of happiness and renaissance instead of a factor of permanent privilege.

A recent Australian report noted:

"At the point of entry into school, patterns of privilege

and disadvantage in relation to learning have already been set."

In the providence of God, disaster, including disaster in families, can be turned to good account. The true fight for educational equality is the fight to make every home a power house of God's living Spirit. That gives permanence, effectiveness and direction to every financial and economic policy.

Dr Anton Skulberg, M.P.
Member, Council of Europe,
Education Minister, Norway, 1972-73

THE PROTEST of youth today is not simply directed against a few traditional values of education, but against all the present establishments which perpetuate what they regard as an existing unjust and dehumanised social order. Authentic human feelings of the students are coming to the foreground. They do not want to be the tools of the Establishment to preserve the status quo, or computers to be fed with mere information.

I know personally a young, brilliant student just graduating from university who was offered a good job in a private industry, but who said, "no thank you", due to the fact that he had a feeling he was being bought and because he disagreed with the materialistic aims of the firm. I should like to underline that he is not by any means a Left-wing student. On the contrary, he and his friends are members and even leaders of non-socialistic student groups. I got to know this rather accidentally just before leaving for India, and to me it was really a shock. I talked it over with our 23-year-old son, who not only agreed with the student in question, but had even advised him not to take up this challenging and well-paid position in the private firm.

It was shocking because it clearly shows that there is a general mistrust among ordinary young people towards our society. Young people are searching for a more human society and we have got to realise this and take

the consequences. If we wait too long these young people may very easily become victims of political ideologies which may be destructive and which may create much more of a dehumanised social order than the conditions in our present one.

What to do about all these problems? I certainly do not have any magic formula of my own. The student from Jamshedpur who spoke to us at our opening meeting gave us a key word when he said that after having met MRA he had realised that in order to change the world he had to start with himself. This in fact is the fundamental idea of MRA. We have got to start with ourselves. Moreover we have to start in the homes and in the primary schools in order to establish good relationships in high schools and in universities.

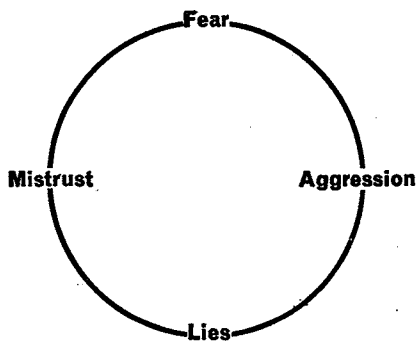
One of the great difficulties in our schools today is that teachers and pupils feel a tremendous pressure put on them. Who is mainly responsible for this pressure? You and I as parents may be very responsible if we are ambitious about the future of our children. The children are the most precious gift we have from God, but we may be very selfish and indeed unjust to them if we incorporate them in our collection of status symbols. We may be easily possessed by our wish that our children shall make a good career and make money. We may start by encouraging them and end up with pushing and nagging.

Let me give you an example from my own life. We have three children. A boy aged 23, studying medicine, another boy aged 19 still in high school, and a 12-year-old daughter in primary school. The big brother always knew his will and is planning carefully for his future. In this way he won his parents' trust once and for all

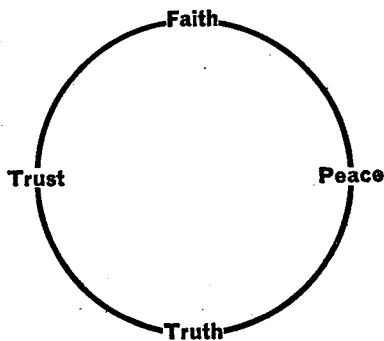
and was left alone to make his own decisions. Not so with the boy who was four years younger. It may be difficult enough to have a brilliant brother, but even worse when you have ambitious parents as well, or at least an ambitious and scared father. My mind was haunted at one stage with school failure, narcotics and so on—everything totally unjust. But I was so afraid that I started to put him under control. That is dangerous, because if I had not been freed from my fear I might have driven him into all this.

Fear is dangerous and destructive because when you are possessed by fear both your brain and your heart are paralysed and you therefore act without control. No wonder that the words most frequently used by Jesus when addressing people were, "Don't fear". Let me illustrate this by two circles:

THE VICIOUS CIRCLE



THE GOOD CIRCLE



I am glad to say that all these burdens were relieved from us during our visit to Caux, the MRA centre in Switzerland, in the summer of 1972. My wife and I, our younger son and daughter went there, and fortunately I realised all these dangers during our stay there. I woke very early one morning in Caux and wrote a letter to our son telling him all the truth and asking him to forgive me for being dominating and oppressive and for being pushing and nagging. I wrote the letter in French. My knowledge of French is very limited but I used this language because I had the feeling that God had to give me every single word. What a relief. My fear was gone. The effect on our family was striking. My son and I came into a good circle. He stayed some time longer in Caux and changed. He is determined to serve God and what he does after high school will be his own decision now.

This is the story about caring for your children in the wrong way. I do know that many and worse problems may occur from neglect of your children. My advice is: do care for your children but do it in an unselfish way.

You will certainly say by now that I have gone off the point of my speech. I started off with problems in universities and now I have ended up in telling you about my own family. As a matter of fact I think we must start there, long before the individual is about to enter high school or university. We must look upon our children as individuals with particular gifts and needs, individuals who are going to develop into independent human beings, who have their own tasks to perform. We have got to realise that all human beings are different and that we have got to be different in order to be able to function in our society. I sometimes wish that everyone would think like I do, but fortunately it is not so.

Young people have, I am afraid, a feeling that their education is like a narrow canal through which everyone who wants to be successful in our society will have to pass. If you fail to get through you are stuck. This causes frustration, aggression or apathy. In order to create satisfied people with the right motivation you must start in the home and continue through kindergarten, primary and secondary school.

A teacher at this conference said that he has excluded the words "problem child" from his vocabulary. I agree. Instead we should talk of children needing more care and trust. We need to create balanced and confident individuals with high moral standards and with the broadest possible vision. There is hardly any short-cut to favourable conditions for the students in universities. But structural changes in educational institutions may also be necessary.

Students' democratic rights

I have experienced that students are fighting for what they call democratic rights, for instance in governing bodies at the universities. Establishing new rules for one of our new universities, the students demanded to have fourteen members in the governing body. This was in my opinion justifiable, but the students demanded that these members be elected by a plenary meeting. That I could not admit, because this would mean that a small number of extremists would bring their tea and bread to the meeting and would talk until 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning before the election would take place. At that hour only the extremists would be present and only extremists would be elected.

I therefore decided that a general democratic principle should be used in the election. Each faculty or department should nominate and elect their representatives by a secret ballot. In this way a just representation could be secured. If we want a democracy we must stick to democratic principles and not be fooled by tricks. We must realise that democracy is not just a question of structures but of your attitude *to* and respect *for* your fellow-man. Maybe we should educate ourselves for democracy.

My last remarks will be on some of my experiences as Minister of Education and Cultural and Ecclesiastical Affairs in my country. Shortly before my appointment I had come to Caux and found faith in God. Turning to the circles in the diagram, one will appreciate how important it is to have good relationships in your family when taking up a task like this. The most difficult thing when you are a Minister is to make decisions and it is essential to be in the good circle when you are going to make them.

In my opinion it happens far too often that political decisions are taken under the influence of fear. The main words in the two circles are those written on the top. Faith is very important in order to be able to listen to your Inner Voice. In fact it is impossible to obey what the Inner Voice tells you if you do not trust God. In a job like this, guidance from God is absolutely vital. The fields one is expected to cover are so wide that one cannot possibly go into every detail. When one also takes into consideration that one's decisions are having an effect on almost every individual in the country one is grateful to share this responsibility with Almighty God.

I cannot go into details for many reasons. What goes on in the Norwegian Cabinet is not supposed to be dis-

closed until 40 years later! However, guidance and previous discussions with friends in MRA meant very much to me when the really difficult decisions were to be taken. You may know that Norway decided to take 50 per cent of the shares in the oil pipelines from our oil-fields in the North Sea to England and Germany. About a week before this decision was to be taken Mr Wolrige Gordon, then M. P. from Aberdeen in Scotland where the pipeline from the Norwegian oil-field will come ashore, came to Oslo. We met and had discussions together. He said that God has put the oil in the earth and he knows the right way to get it out. This thought was a great help to me when dealing with these questions in the Cabinet.

One additional fact I should like to mention. During this difficult and challenging period I had a clear feeling of how important it is that people are praying for you. It gives a feeling of trust and vigour that is incomparable to anything I know. I think that praying for each other is very essential and it is in my opinion the very best expression of love and care for our fellow-men.