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FREEWAY

"Why not let God run the world?"



When you play chess in a team there is often the chance to walk about and see how your colleagues are getting on, usually in the middle of a game when your opponent is thinking.

Standing aside looking on, gives a whole new perspective. Life is like that as well. Sometimes we need to stand aside and take stock; particularly at turning points like the end of school, or the end of university when looking for a job.

A child-like view of God is of Him standing over us watching every move we make. As a chess player watching a friend, you can sometimes sense what move he will play next, but you are powerless. You can see a trap or a brilliancy if only he makes the right move. It is very frustrating, the waiting, the hoping, and then the relief - or the desire to scream. It's the same as a football spectator - you can see the guy on the left with a clear chance at goal, but will the man with the ball see him...?

I often think of God in this way. He sees what we do, knows what is ahead and knows which is the 'right' of two options. I'm not sure about Him pulling his hair out in frustration, but you can imagine the difference when we ask Him, through prayer, a time in quiet, or simply waiting a bit longer and not being so hasty.

The beauty of chess is that often your opponent choses the wrong move as well and you get another chance. And that is also true of life of course. When we look back and see how life has developed, we can see sometimes where we made a mistake and got on the wrong track - but also where we joined up again, where God gave us another chance.

The Editors

Life on the Farm

by Angela Willoughby

BROADWATER FARM is a council estate in North London which accommodates c5000 people from many different social and ethnic backgrounds. Even before the disturbances in 1985 culminating in the death of a policeman, the Farm had acquired the reputation through the media as a 'nightmare estate' because of the social problems generated by the lack of proper facilities, unemployment and poverty.

In the early eighties, a process of community development began that would eventually make the Farm a better place to live. In 1981, the residents founded the Broadwater Farm Youth Association whose aim is "to show that ordinary, grassroot people, working through positive and united community action can have a direct influence upon the decisions which affect their lives and environment." Over the last ten years the residents have worked for this vision despite negative media coverage.

Murals stand out against concrete

I visited the Farm in December to find out more about it. First impressions are deceptive, because from whatever angle you approach the Farm, you can't see it until you are almost there - almost as if it has been hidden on purpose. As I walked round the estate for the first time, I was struck by the brightly painted walkways and fences, the beautiful murals which stand out against the concrete, and the colourful array of flags in Nation Square, which represent every nationality on the Farm. The only reminder of the Farm's history is the serene garden in remembrance of those who died.

My first stop was the "Broadwater Farm Youth Association Co-Operative" which was founded in 1985 to "promote economic activities and to create employment for local residents." I immediately felt at home in the cheerful and relaxed atmosphere of the office. Although



everyone was busy, they all took time to make me feel welcome, tell me in detail about the Farm and to show me around. I visited everywhere from the day nursery, where children of all races played happily together, to the youth club where they were preparing the pensioners' Christmas Party. I met teachers, architects, builders and even visited the local council offices. I found everyone very open and willing to discuss all aspects of Broadwater Farm, its problems and its progress.

Unshakeable determination

Beneath the relaxed surface of life on the Farm you quickly become immersed in the daily struggle that the residents are faced with: the day nursery had its funding withdrawn while I was there, the continuation of the Christmas bus service was being fought for, as are all the projects, like the shopping precinct, enterprise workshops, a recording studio and a minicab service, to name but a few. All the amenities that we take for granted in most communities in Britain have to be fought for on Broadwater Farm by the residents themselves. It seems that despite setbacks their cheerful determination is unshakeable, and it is due to their commitment that the Farm is in the forefront of community development in the inner cities. The crime level has been reduced by 70%, jobs and training opportunities have been created, recreational and social facilities are being built, vandalism has been wiped out, and the whole environment has been improved.

"Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world."

(Shelley)

"Hatred ceases not by hatred at any time. Hatred ceases by love."

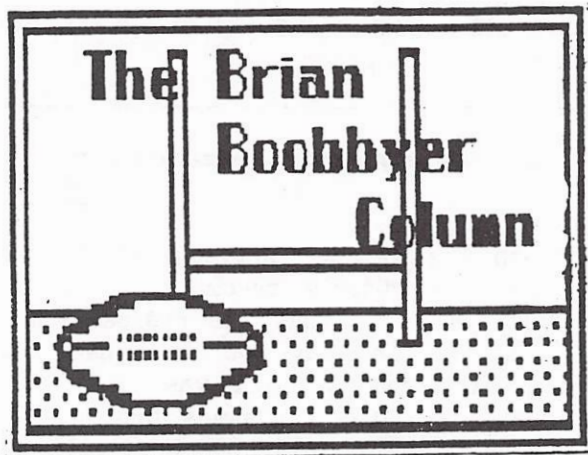
(Buddha)

Peter Howard: 25 years on

"ONE MAN 100% COMMITTED TO GOD is better than 99,000, 99% committed."

So said Peter Howard. And he lived that commitment as fully as anyone I've ever known.

He died exactly 25 years ago. I remember the day well. It was my birthday. I heard the stunning news in London after an evening play, and got home to Oxford late. There was a telegram from Peru, where he and his wife were making an official visit. It said: "Happy Birthday, Peter and Doë."



I shared a room with Peter Howard at the Connemara Hotel, Madras, India, in 1953. The lizards on the wall, I remember, seemed rather large and frightening, but I soon got used to them. I rose each morning at six for a quiet time. Peter rose at four for the same purpose, and to begin his letter-writing. The rest of the day was full of engagements, except that about 2.30 pm he had a nap and then wrote his wife - each day.

It was for me a remarkable two weeks. I learned the truth of the verse in Mark's gospel, which Peter often used, "salted with the fire of the discipline". This was also one of Mahatma Gandhi's favourite verses.

All-outers are not easy people. They remind me of Gothic architecture dynamic, attractive but not always symmetrical. There was nothing cut and dried about Peter Howard. He was unexpected, unpredictable and very, very, very good company.

He used to say that being honest does not make you right. But it does mean that you live in the light and let in the light, and the light is God. Leadership in his mind meant the complete readiness to make mistakes. In fact, he said, the more all-out you are, the more mistakes you're liable to make, because you're not God. I reserve the right to be wrong, he said.

All-outers

He wrote about 15 plays. Personally, I find all of them good and some great. I remember seeing 'The Hurricane' and 'The Ladder' for the first time as a double-bill. That remains for me the most powerful theatre evening of my life. These plays are being produced today but I would also say they are waiting to be rediscovered.

"I write with a message," he said, "and for no other reason. Do not believe those who say the theatre is no place for a man with a message of some kind. Some writers give their message without knowing they do it. A man who writes as if life had no meaning is the man with a strong message."

"My plays are strong propaganda plays. I write to give people a purpose. The purpose is clear. The aim is simple. It is to encourage men to accept a growth in character which is essential if civilisation is to survive. It is to help all who want peace in the world to be ready to pay the price of peace in their own personalities. It is to end the censorship of virtue which creates a vicious society. It is, for Christians, the use of the stage to uplift the Cross and make its challenge and hope real to a perverse but fascinating generation."

It was once said of Henry Drummond that "his love had the temper which is jealous for a friend's growth and had the nerve to criticise". Peter had that rare quality and encouraged you to care for him in the same way. This is a

delicate and dangerous expression of love. Christ made enemies because he told people the truth. Saying nothing is much easier and costs nothing: but the result is that people easily choose the second-rate road in life when a spur in the flank might have sparked greatness.

Saying nothing is much easier

"Passion is good but passion needs firm friends at its side to see it is passion guided by God. If we live that, I believe 'Am I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?' (St Paul) could become the normal salt of our life."

In 1950 he wrote this: "I have been thinking a lot about youth. My heart is very much with them. I feel that many of them, if not most, have never known this deeper experience of the Cross where their self-will is handed over. What you

get is a steely philosophy, garlanded and rendered charming by the attraction of youth which has made up its mind to have its own way on many points, and yells 'Dictatorship!' if anybody tries to stop it. Adults must not be allowed to stifle, smother or stereotype youth. Equally we must change this spirit in some of the young who think it is rendering the world a pioneering service by rebellion and brashness."

I have not mentioned his international rugby - a quite extraordinary achievement with his lame leg - his 15 books, his remarkable journalistic career, his effectiveness on the international scene, and the deep love for his family which made all the more poignant the sacrifice of being away from them so much. But you can read *Peter Howard: Life and Letters*, the absorbing biography written by his daughter, Anne Wolrige-Gordon.

To a conference of American Indians in Albuquerque, New Mexico, he said: "To meet the needs of modern man takes clean hands and a pure heart. It takes pure hearts because the problem is not colour. It is chastity and the passionate commitment 'Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven', so that we live, speak, breathe, work, sweat and fight to help God's will be done in the affairs of men."

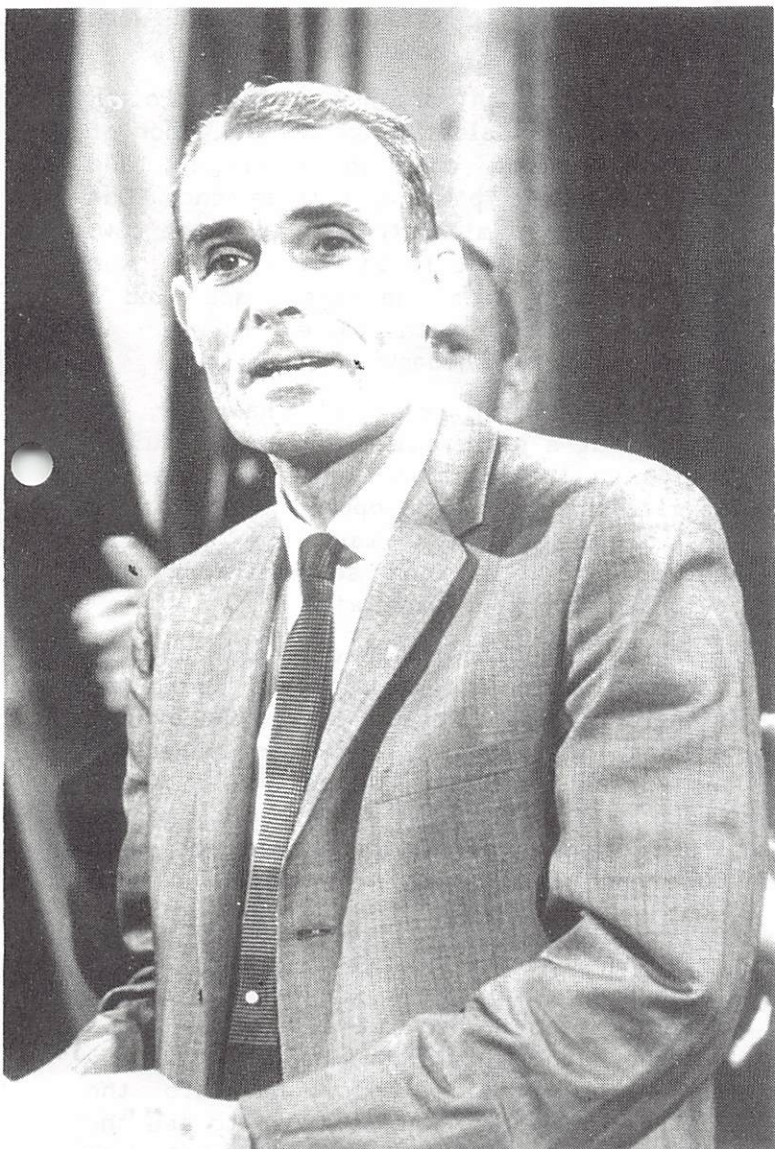
'Who oppose a seeming good'

He read and re-read *The Greatest Thing in the World* by Henry Drummond, and underlined what he saw as the salient passages. Here is one of them:

"The men who get no stimulus from any visible reward, whose lives pass while the objects for which they toil are still too far away to comfort them: the men who hold aloof from dazzling schemes and earn the misunderstanding of the crowd because they foresee remoter issues, who even oppose a seeming good because a deeper evil lurks beyond - these are the statesmen of the Kingdom of God."

Peter Howard was such a statesman.

I remember him with huge gratitude. He had a vision for me far bigger than anything I'd thought of. I remember his courage, his encouragement, his kindness and his blazing faith. I recommend people who did not know him to discover him. I was lucky enough to know quite well one of the great spirits of the century.



Photos by A Strong

To be a pilgrim

by Ian Healey

POLISH CATHOLICISM is powerfully symbolised by the painting of the Black Madonna of Czestochowa. This icon, a portrait of the Virgin Mary reputed to be painted by St Luke, is now in the monastery of Jasna Gora. In 1655 the monastery was attacked by Swedish invaders. It withstood the siege - the only Polish fortification left uncaptured, and the Swedes were forced to leave the country. For centuries afterwards, pilgrims have gone to the shrine to thank the Madonna, acclaimed the Queen of Poland, for miracles in their own lives. Pope Pius XII sent copies of the picture to all parishes in 1966, to strengthen the faith of the people.

As an opportunity to deepen my faith and broaden my knowledge of Europe, I joined three friends on the 1989 pilgrimage from Krakow to Czestochowa.

The four of us met up in Bonn and drove to Poznan. Our first impression was of the great warmth of the Polish people. A youth group in Poznan had prepared a meal for us. But we also saw the other side - an all-night off-licence and much drunkenness in the street. We noted the great contrast in buildings; brightly painted houses and a sense of cleanliness in the market square, but further from the centre of town all was dark and rather forbidding.

The following day we drove on down to Krakow. There in the former capital of Poland we learned at first hand of some of the difficulties of Polish life. We went to a travel office to buy train tickets back to West Germany. Arriving at 2.30pm we expected a short wait, but when the office closed at 7.00pm we were thrown out. It was the same everywhere, there were queues for everything. Although it was inconvenient for us, it is a way of life for the Polish.

The pilgrimage began with Mass in front of the cathedral; 8000 people ready to share the experience together. Mostly Poles, of course, there were also groups from Czechoslovakia, Hungary, France and other countries including the Soviet Union. We split into groups of approximately 600. There were people lining the streets, waving, cheering, crying and weeping. The mother of our friend Ryszard spotted us and came over to hug us: she spoke only Polish, and we knew none - but it didn't matter.



Photo by Ian Healey

After two hours walking we stopped, ate, prayed and met and laughed together. It was thought highly amusing that a tin of meat we bought in Berlin was made in Poland!

There were three British in our group. The organisers asked us to sing a song. The group was linked together by a line of wires and loud speakers, which gave out songs, speeches and prayers. We sang John Bunyan's hymn "To Be A Pilgrim," and were glad to contribute something.

Sleeping brought another taste of Polish hospitality. We slept twice on the floor of people's houses, once in a hayloft, and only needed to pitch our tents once. One farmer gave us milk straight from the cow, and everyone offered tea. It was miraculous to turn one corner and find a street set out with tables covered in white cloths and bedecked with plates.

On the morning of the final day, we stopped at a place called Olsztyn, a ruined castle on the hillside. We held a Mass of Forgiveness. It was an opportunity to clear any ill-feeling that may have built up between 'pilgrims' and so purify oneself before arriving at Czestochowa.

As we neared the town, after six days of walking, there were again people lining the streets. There were flags, banners - smiling, happy faces everywhere. Then we arrived at Jasna Gora. We were welcomed as Group 9 from Krakow. 702 people ranging from 78 years to two months in age, with 60 French and three Englishmen. Our song must have been a hit!!

To get into the monastery you must pass through a narrow gate. It was a symbolic moment. People had made crosses from branches and twigs along the way. Now they laid them outside and went into the Church. There was a great crush to see the painting, but in the small room next door we had time to stop, to pray and to thank God for the whole experience.

WHOLLY NEW

by Axel Nelson

LAST SUMMER I accepted the task of writing some pages for *FREEWAY*. They were to be about the role and motive of the artist. The lines I am now sitting down to write should have been about that.

But something happened on the way to this target. One year ended and a new one was born. And it feels to me more important to write about this.

My wife and I had decided that we would end the year with a group of friends. A few days before New Year's Eve we gathered to discuss our role as a group and the meaning of our own lives.

I went to this gathering to pass on a part of my own common sense. I had found the truth and wanted to share it with the others in order to be seen as bright, enlightened, superior. What I wanted to say was not as important as the fact that I wanted to say something. The truth I wished to present was my logical reasoning that faith was the only way to a better life.

God of reason

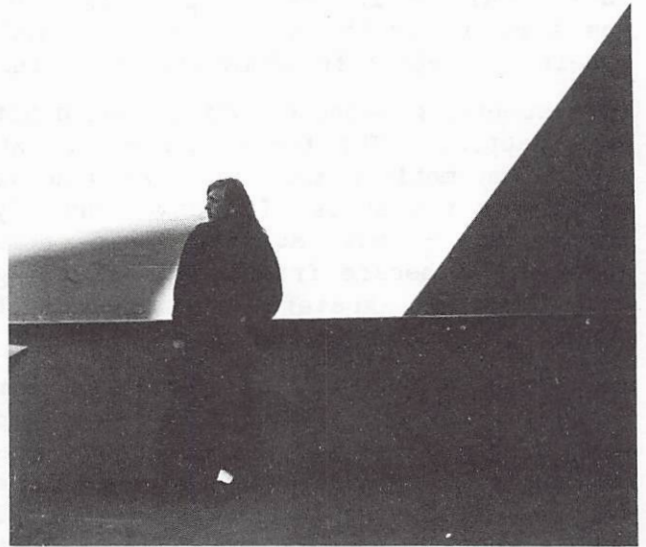
I used what little I had. I thought. With the help of logic, intellect or whatever you want to call it, I concluded that I in particular, and mankind in general, each needed faith.

$$1 + 1 = 2$$

It was a long row of calculations, short tables and graphs going up and down. I don't quite remember how it started, but the conclusion went like this: "because of this we are thinking what effect it would have on what we caused, which is the real cause which has caused the questions which form the basis of a calculation, the thesis, antithesis, syntax and synthesis must become the contrary of sum and ego, that is to say, faith in God.

$$1 + 1 = 3$$

By calculation I concluded that my calculations were of no use. By following the law I broke it, thus fulfilling it.



So much for the intellect. So far so good. It is easy to realise that you don't see anything. For you are then seeing. You see that you see nothing. That is also an insight. Then you are still one of the see-ers, one of the enlightened, a superior. You know. And all knowledge is power. The knowledge that all knowledge is power, is also power. In that way knowledge becomes a road to power, not to truth.

So this is the conclusion: the truth can just as well be a lie. What distinguishes the truth from the lie is therefore the one who has the power. Who is it who decides?

Here knowledge comes to an end. Here logical thinking ends up in a question mark. The conclusion is a question. It will always be here. It always needs pondering. It always needs answering. It always needs safeguarding.

The day we stop asking ourselves who it is who decides, we will have set ourselves up as the answer to the question. Power has made us blind, and we don't see the Truth.

We must believe. We cannot know. If we know the answer, there could never have been a question. And if there is no question, then there is no answer.

We must pose the question again and again. We can never rest with our answer. For those who find the answer must go further, always asking themselves: in whose name do I do this? Do I honour myself or my Lord? Who is it who decides?

With this truth I came to the New Year gathering. The only thing which disturbed my position in the group, I thought, was that I didn't really have a faith myself, or hadn't found my task in life.

So something happened which should not have happened. The bubble burst. I saw myself, my motives and what really drove me. I saw the evils. I became terribly frightened - but at the same time grateful. I became frightened of seeing what drove me, grateful that it hadn't completely got me in its grip.

So in a prayer to God I thanked Him. For the first time in my life I believed that He heard what I said. Deliberately, and as a true believer, I gave my life to God. My future and my ambitions, I put everything into His hands. That decision came into being at the instant I said the sentence: "I only want to see you, God".

The creation

I am,
I have become,
a broken mirror
reflecting God's image.

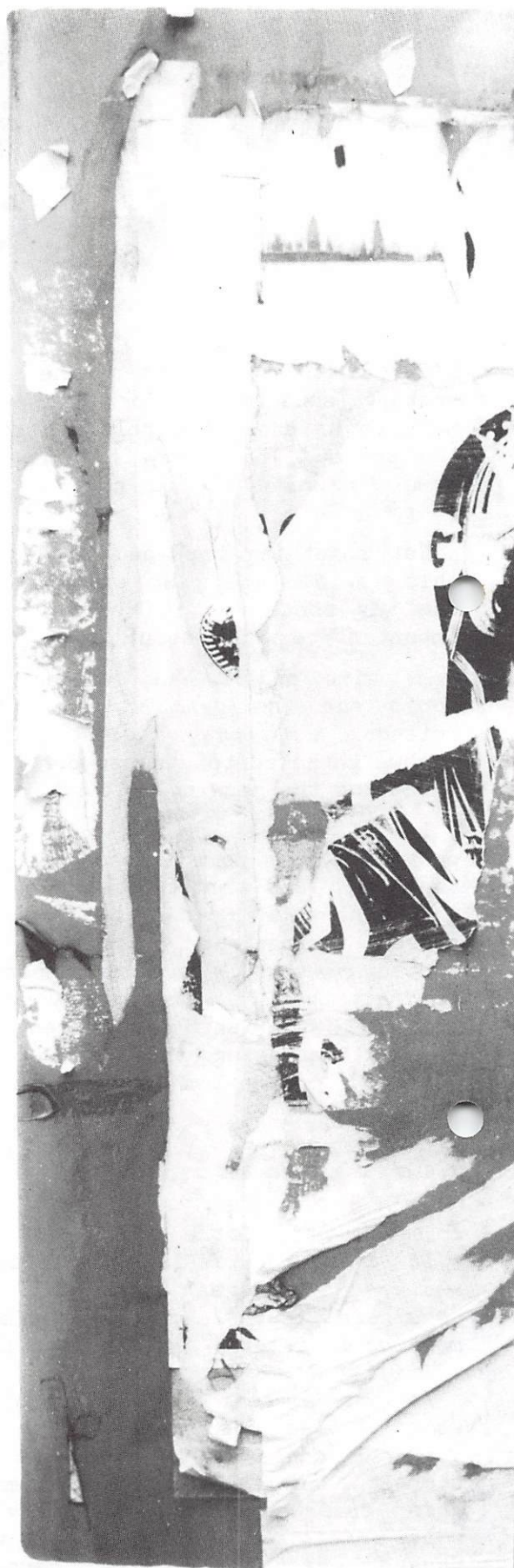
To create
is to pick up the pieces,
to heal.

It can take seven days.
It can take seven difficult years.

To be
means letting it become.

It isn't creating.
It isn't living.

It is one piece among many,
one piece to pick up.



« The Soul »



This is what one calls being born again. It's a bit embarrassing to use clichés, but sometimes they are all that is left. I suppose that clichés spring up because they are true. They are repetitions of old truths.

I was born again. It's true. It had happened before, but never to me.

I had given my life to God. In return I received a faith. What surprised me was that I was not shown a task. I didn't know what I should do. And the temptation was strong to look for signs which weren't there. But no, I was forced to believe in God.

A week with faith, but no meaning!

With God's help I succeeded in just 'being', without taking any rash decisions. Then, after a week, I was sure. It had grown in me - in contrast to the great revelations I had experienced before - that I should write. That was the meaning of my life. Not for ever, but now, today.

I started next day. Wrote a letter to a friend. It had been on my conscience for a long time. What happened was unbelievable! I wrote for eight hours at a stretch without stopping, without being able to breathe, without thinking. It just flowed.

Looking back, with the benefit of hindsight, I believe that it was a result of God's work, plus the fact that I concentrated on telling something to another person. Last year, in my ambition to be another Strindberg, I wrote 15 poems. Now I was producing that number every day. Quantity has nothing to do with it, yet it is part of the point.

For people

*A letter addressed to no one
never arrives.*

*So think about whom you are writing to.
Before it's too late.*

*When alone, you are accountable only to
yourself,
but when you speak, you have someone
else to think of.*

*You're not speaking, you may say,
to anyone in particular.*

*But to speak is to meet,
be it another person or oneself.*

*So think what you are saying,
someone might hear you.*

*And a letter addressed to no one
arrives without content.*

WHOLLY NEW - continued,,

They were demanding days. I tried to be open to God, while at the same time not losing contact with the world. In other words, to continue to aim at quality in my writing, not just content. There is always the temptation to do the opposite. This, I think, is precisely the most difficult art when you are creating: to use the beautiful to communicate.

Concentrated abstraction

Excuse the above.

Excuse the headline.

Excuse me for becoming so personal that I became abstract. I know that the abstract can be beautiful, but it can also take too long, seem too long. It can be so abstract that concentration is lost, it gets out of focus, it becomes abstract. If I want to be abstract I must concentrate, be precise, be abstract, be able to catch everything in my scattered hunt. But never keep it alive so long that it no longer lives when I let it go - be it life or a poem.

For the future I wish to keep the openness I experienced during these days. I have never felt so close to God and to myself. Sometimes I'm afraid that I may lose contact with the world outside. I can only pray to God that He will guide my way. I don't myself know where I am going. But I hope to be part of a larger pattern. That includes meeting people and keeping them in my heart.

So close

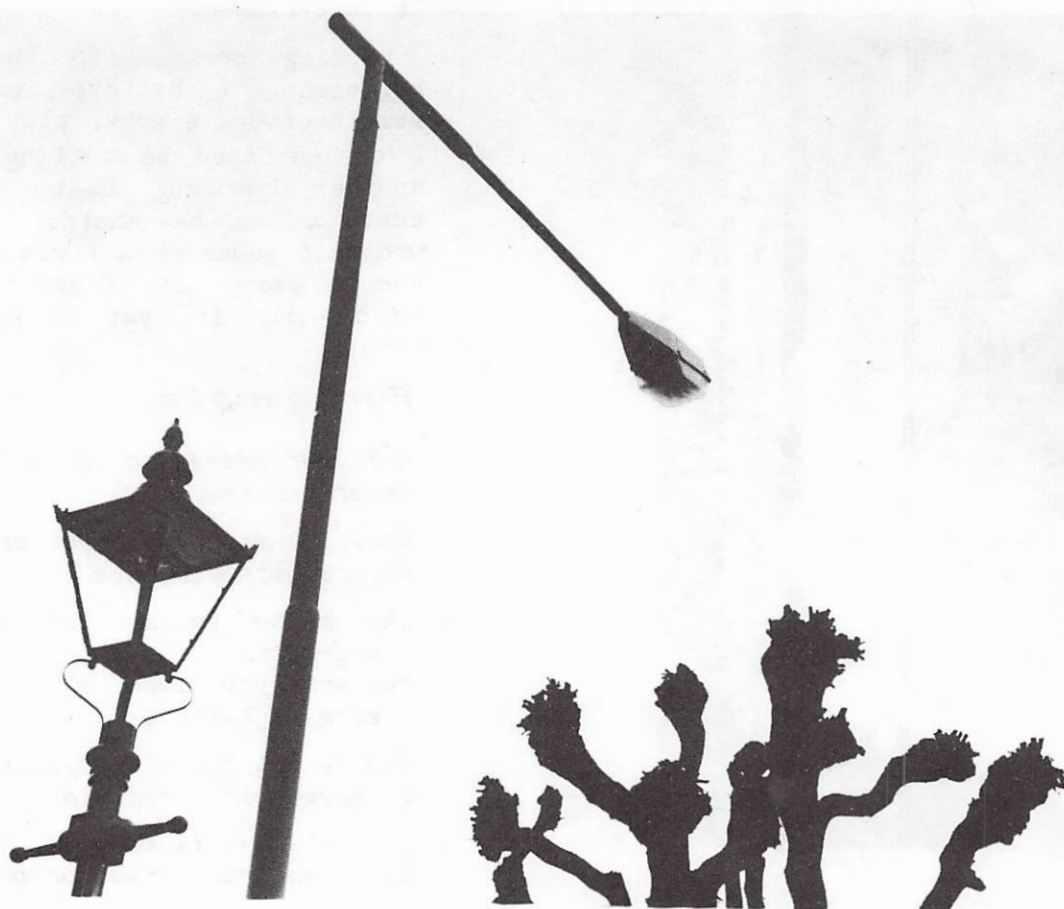
I have never been so close,
have never dared,
have always kept my distance.

Now I'm so close
that I don't really know,
wonder if I'm out of my mind.

I am so close,
but not yet there,
still here.

I am as close as I can come,
without being there.

I am as close
as He wants me to come
while remaining here.



AXEL NELSON comes from Gothenburg in Sweden, but now lives in Oslo, Norway, with his Norwegian wife, Camilla. Axel is freelancing as an assistant in film production. This feature was translated from the original Swedish by Jens-Jonathan Wilhelmsen, and Edward and Elisabeth Peters.

Reflections from a verandah

by Alan Channer (in Malawi)

IN SETTING OUT UPON YOUR LIFE and work, there should be one motivation: to feel called. Drift first in the breeze of uncertainty, but prepare for the winds of that calling.

Being absorbed in your work, whatever its merits, is not enough: an interest without a calling detracts from God.

Our lives are nothing more than our throw at love and faith. So measure your work accordingly. More important than what you do in the world is how you do it.

I find myself set down in Africa, touched by God's provision. I wish I could capture that touch and bottle it forever.

I know I'm called to express love and faith in this context, not so much because the context requires love and faith, as because it engenders them.

I strive to give with an open heart as much as I receive from open hearts; to love with the warmth in which I find myself loved; to shed my troubles as humbly as others shed theirs.

I strive to live each day moving from wonder to gratitude, from gentleness to empathy, from humour to joy. I pray in the sunsets and greet the bright finches and suspend my soul in African smiles.

And so I catch glimpses of life as an appreciation, rooted in a meaning, and find enjoyment merging with renunciation.

There is no hindrance to realizing God's calling but yourself. Stretch it to nothingness, become the pain of doing so, and shed it.

Shed the skin of world-bound form and become the butterfly - floating in the winds of your calling.

by Nadezhda Mandelstam

"Freedom does not just fall into your lap; you have to pay for it. There is a great truth in the lives of the Saints who always had to struggle with temptation... A free man's task is clear; it is not to set aims, but to seek meaning. The search for meaning is made difficult by all the mirages constantly forming round about, and they are very slow to dissolve. The free man sticks to what he thinks is right because he cannot renounce truth, but mirages too are always presenting an outward appearance of truth."

Cocktail Party Phenomenon

by Simon Rogoff

"WHAT'S IT ALL FOR, SIR?" After months of military planning and training, with individual objectives ranging from settling debts to political revolution, even Richard Burton could only utter a disappointing, "I don't know". *The Wild Geese*, an epic film about a mercenary operation in Africa, was on TV. This was the scene of disillusionment, standard in mercenary films, with motives looking pale in the light of many machine-gun deaths.

I was watching in the evening, having just returned from a week of reflection at Tirley Garth with MRA. The bonds and common aims among those I had met had been a refreshing experience following a term at East London Polytechnic. We had thought about and discussed different kinds of revolutions, both political and personal. What surprised me now was how sensitive I was to real violence and its meaning. I am too well experienced at sitting back and relaxing to some full-colour machine-gunning, but my reaction to non-acted human destruction on all scales had changed. On the news I could see more clearly futility and waste, and shock was closer at hand. I say 'was' because we all become desensitised to such things (violence is only one example) as we live constantly exposed to the horrors and waste human kind can inflict on itself. Our view is darkened.

A week later I was back in psychology lectures. I learned about the 'Cocktail Party Phenomenon': in a crowded party environment we can listen to only one person at a time, but if our name is mentioned by someone else in the room, we hear and listen....

But how do we cope with this desensitisation? If we remain unseparated from the world, standing for God in his own creation, we cannot escape it. There is, though, a voice in the chaos that knows our name. The answer I think lies in the phenomenon of the cocktail party, for God knows us by name. See you there?

"Self-isolation, like egomania, is destructive, not only of the individual but of the nation as a whole. It is significant that total absorption in one's own self is a sure sign of mental illness - something to which whole nations may succumb just as well as individuals of them."

Honesty the best politics

Rajmohan Gandhi is an Indian author and journalist. He comes from a distinguished family; one of his grandfathers was Mahatma Gandhi, the other C. Rajagopalachari (India's first Indian Governor General). In the October 1989 issue of FREEWAY, Rex Dilly wrote about Rajmohan's fight for a "clean, united and strong India". Little did we then know that Rajmohan was about to feature in the world's media during November's Indian elections, standing against the Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi, in his own constituency. FREEWAY asked Rahul Kapadia, who was in India at the time, to write a personal account of what happened.

THE 'QUIET CRUSADER', the 'only man with a difference', were two descriptions of Rajmohan Gandhi in the Indian national press. He formally announced his entry into politics by joining the opposition party, the Janata Dal. He was disgusted by the Congress (I) government's blatant misuse of radio and television, and other forms of corruption. "If by an accident of birth," he said, "I was born into the Gandhi family, then I must play my part in bringing back decency into public life."

A month later V.P. Singh, Janata Dal leader and now Prime Minister, announced Rajmohan's candidature for constituency of Amethi in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh. He was to fight this parliamentary seat against Rajiv Gandhi, the Prime Minister.

No place for posters

A few days later Rajmohan launched out on his own with the minimum of resources. Entering Amethi - with its voting population of 950,000 - as an unknown person was going to prove a difficult battle. Every wall was taken up with the posters and slogans of the Prime Minister, who had lavished money on his constituency during the previous five years. A whole forest was painted in the colours of the ruling party, whose banners were also strung high

above the roads. Speaking to the people of Amethi about this, Rajmohan would say, "I felt sad that there was no place for my posters. Then I had the thought that the posters do not give the votes, and if I do not have any place for my posters on the walls, there is space for me inside the hearts of the people of Amethi."

He followed a punishing schedule. He had only about 16 days before the elections to make himself known, heard and understood. He would usually get about four hours' sleep and would be on the road from the early hours of the morning until late at night, along with his wife Usha. During the day he would

Photos by Rahul Kapadia





cover anything between 25 and 30 villages, and address about 25 public meetings. He would often say, "I know that many of you have come to hear and see me because you are curious to know what the grandson of the Mahatma looks like!" While addressing the crowds, he would never use inflammatory language and would never character-assassinate any of his opponents. He did not allow any negative sloganeering by his party workers, but would speak out strongly against the wrongdoings of the Prime Minister and government.

Live as brothers and sisters

His speeches were simple, and he would speak of "honesty not only being the best policy but also the best politics". He would only promise one thing: that whether he was elected or not he would fight for honesty and cleanliness in public life. He would ask the Muslims, Hindus, Harijans and the different communities of Amethi to show the rest of India how to live as brothers and sisters.

One could see the tears of hope welling up in the eyes of people as he spoke, and when he entered the villages old men and women fell at his feet as a mark of respect. There were occasions when Rajmohan relaxed under the shade of a tree drinking tea with the villagers. He would speak to them of his faith in the Inner Voice, and the responsibility of the individual.

Many people from all over India came to help in his campaign, and many who could not come sent money. A group of school children sent their pocket money, poor villagers sent what they could. Two of India's film stars came to campaign for him, as did V.P. Singh and other senior politicians.

As the campaigning ended on November 20th, there was no doubt in the minds of many that Rajmohan would win. What happened during election day - the massive booth capturing, terrorism of voters and the shooting of Dr Sanjay Singh (state General Secretary of the Janata Dal) - only goes to prove that the Congress (I) party was desperate to win this seat at any cost. Sadly, the independent body of the Election Commission was misguided in its decision to hold a re-poll in only a fraction of the polling booths, and so Rajmohan had no choice but to order a full boycott.

During the re-poll and counting, major discrepancies were found, and there is documentary evidence of government machinery and the local police being used by the ruling party for their purposes. For the first time in the history of Indian elections, the Returning Officer (who is a District Magistrate by qualification, and who oversees the election in Amethi) was removed during the course of the election, and the Superintendent of Police was transferred. The whole country cried out in anguish about the rigging.

Battle for character of country

Rajmohan has filed an election petition, but the battle for the character of the country still goes on. At present he is travelling around the country addressing public and private meetings, and challenging the people to tackle the problems the country faces. We in India are glad that V.P. Singh has become the Prime Minister of a 'minority government with majority support', a person who believes in listening to his Inner Voice. Frank Buchman's vision of "countries governed by men who are governed by God" is becoming a reality in today's India.

The MRA Story - 17 by Rex Dilly

Do you think you could write a play?

THE 1950s ARE SIMILAR TO TODAY in so far as there was at that time 'a wind of change' blowing through the world. One country after another in Africa and Asia emerged as sovereign states after years of struggle for independence.

During these turbulent times the conference centres of Caux and Mackinac (USA) were magnets which drew revolutionary leaders from many of these countries. Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe, who became the first President of independent Nigeria, called Caux "an island of sanity" where he came to "find a new perspective".

Many were the motives and tensions within the independence movements - and within those who led them - as well as the continuing struggles with the colonial powers. There were also those who sought to exploit the turmoil to wrest power for their own ends.

Azikiwe had always wanted to be the first Prime Minister of Nigeria. When independence came he was Premier of the Eastern Region. He was offered the Prime Ministership if he would unite with the West against the North. This he knew would eventually lead to a break-up of Nigeria. He turned it down and accepted the figure-head position of President instead.

In 1955 an instrument was forged which was to play a great part in the independence struggle in many lands. A group of Africans from different countries were at Caux, among them members of parliament, students, trade union leaders and politically powerful 'market women'.

It'll only give you ulcers

One morning Frank Buchman called the Africans together. "I spent much of last night in Africa in my thoughts", he said. "I understand that some of you are bitter. I can understand that. But if I were you I would shed it. It'll only give you ulcers!" Then he went on, "Africa is not meant to be torn apart between East and West, but to speak to East and West with an answer. I think it may come in the form of a play. Do you think you could write a play?"

Ifoghale Amata, then a young graduate from Ibadan University recalls, "Thirty of us Africans met after lunch and soon we started quarrelling about what should go into the play. Then someone called for silence. When we pooled our thoughts they



I had a dream

I dreamed that I was walking downtown with someone I called *Father*. I was just a little kid, insecure and dependent.

Father told me that he was going to take me home, and he warned me of the dangerous road we had to follow. He told me to watch him and to stay close. But his legs were longer than mine, and his steps so much bigger that it was very hard for me to stay close to him.

There were all sorts of shops alongside the road and I looked at the nice lights and the tempting advertisements. Because I had only one eye on Father and one eye on the shops, I got further and further behind.

I stopped at the window of a big toyshop. All the toys with their bright colours looked so attractive that I just had to stop and enjoy it. As soon as I turned around to show Father the treasures I had found, I noticed he was gone.

I was lost and felt awfully alone. I had promised Father to follow him on our way home, and not to fall for the many temptations, but I had broken my promise and gone my own way. I sat down and called his name. I felt homesick.

At the same time Father had noticed that I was gone, and he was looking for me and asking people if they had seen me anywhere.

"If you see her, please bring her back to me," he said. Suddenly he saw me sitting on the pavement feeling scared at being alone in that crazy town. He came up to me and took me into his arms.

"Let's go home!" he said.

Annette Overdijkink

» fitted together in a strange way." Amata said, "I have the first act here". Manasseh Moerane, Vice-President of the Black Teachers of South Africa said, "And I have the second". Abayifaa Karbo, a Muslim MP from Ghana said that he would try the third.

They called it 'FREEDOM'

They worked right on till 3 am. In the morning they read to the others what they had written. Amata said, "We spent the next hours fitting the acts together, and at five o'clock we told Frank Buchman we had finished the play." They called it FREEDOM.

The play told the story of an African country moving towards independence. It portrays vividly the reactions of the colonial Governor and the intrigues and counter-intrigues of different tribal-based parties. Freedom is achieved when a change of heart comes to both the Governor and some of the African leaders.

The play was mounted swiftly at Caux and presented to the whole assembly. This was followed immediately by performances in London and other European capitals.

Requests for it came from so many countries that the Africans took it to Nigeria and made it into a feature film. Dubbed into many languages, it has been seen by millions round the world and is still being shown today. The film has often met an eager response in countries which themselves were emerging into freedom.

While Kenya was still under the British, two Kenyans who had been part of the hard-core Mau Mau and had been liberated from their hatred, sought permission from the authorities to show the film to their leader Jomo Kenyatta. Now recognised as the father of independent Kenya, Kenyatta was then in detention. After seeing the film, Kenyatta asked for a Swahili version to be made. This was done and it was seen by a million Kenyans in the months before the first elections. *The Reporter* of Nairobi wrote 'MRA has done a great deal to stabilise our recent election campaign'.

Gabriel Marcel, the French Catholic philosopher who was particularly interested in events in Africa wrote, 'What seems to me absolutely marvelous and providential is the confluence that has come between Moral Re-Armament and the young nations which are being born into freedom'.

Coming events....

Tirley Work Week.

There will be a 'work week' at Tirley Garth from 4-12 April, 1990. An opportunity to participate in a programme of maintenance, and also a time for reflection. If interested contact: Tirley Garth, Tarporley, Cheshire, CW6 0LZ (tel: 0829 732301)

Caux Work Week.

Similar to the above, it will take place from 14-21 April, 1990. For details write to: Mountain House, 1824 Caux, Switzerland.

SHAPING A NEW EUROPE

July 28 - August 5 1990, a session at Caux created by young people for all generations. Please write to FREEWAY for details.

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