

"Why not let God run the world?"



WELCOME, new friends and old, to a further year of **FREEWAY**. Many are starting new phases in life after the summer; others return to what they were doing, but with new perspectives, priorities, enthusiasm. In many ways, it is more new year than New Year.

The purpose of **FREEWAY** is to enable all the young people around the world who are trying to live 'the MRA spirit', to keep in touch with each other. This is YOUR newsletter. Please send us a paragraph or two (and photo if possible) about what you are doing, what the important issues are in your country, any new understandings/illumination, any change that God has asked of you. In short, anything that will enrich and encourage our corporate life.

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We have passed through an era in the West, when the word 'moral' represented to many, a prison from which one had to escape at all costs. It had a negative connotation of inhibiting, repressing, preventing, limiting. It was a reaction to the attitude of self-righteous disapproval with which morality had previously been enforced.

There was a time when 'moral' could scarcely be uttered. We may still be in that era, but the word is being rehabilitated. People's minds are gradually opening to the thought that unfettered freedom can have harmful results, and are debating the limits of freedom.

As one reads the papers day by day, one might be forgiven in ones more sombre moments, for thinking that we have lost the art of living together. A community is made up of myriad individual relationships, and if they fragment, the whole body is in danger. If we pursue our own interests ruthlessly, it should be evident that we leave a trail of broken relationships behind us. However, restraint in such matters has been largely unfashionable in recent years.

It's often a question of choosing between short-term benefits with long-term harm, or long-term benefits requiring short-term self-denial. Inevitably the pressure is on to think of the immediate, but the Almighty in his goodness has given us guide-lines which take account of future consequences that we may not be able to imagine at the time.

Perhaps the day will dawn when moral standards, the truths of our holy scriptures, will be seen in a new light: as the essence, distilled over centuries, of what is necessary to maintain human relationships, maintain community - even, as we are now beginning to realise, maintain life on earth.

The Editors

MONEY MATTERS MONEY MATTERS MONEY

We devote these three pages to the subject of MONEY. We thought that, as it is the subject that most people spend most of their waking hours thinking about, our readers must have something to say on it...

What experiences of God's guidance and provision do we have? What are the elements of God's economy? We print pieces by Deborah Knox and Alan Channer, with cartoons by Joanna Hayes, to start the ball rolling. Please send us any thoughts/experience you have on this subject.

View from the tax office

MONEY IS A TOPIC that occupies our thinking to a greater or lesser degree depending on how secure we feel. Some can have a small amount in the bank and use it in the most effective way. Whilst others who have much, can invest a lot of time and energy in determining how to keep hold of it.

Rather than make money the most important thing in our lives - something we could not live without - I believe we need to refocus on the source of our money, and reaffirm God as the provider in our lives. Regardless of who we are, I am confident that God really cares and loves us so much that he will provide the resources (ie money, people, time, energy and support etc) to do his will.

This thinking regards money as a tool which stems from many channels, so that we can focus on the purposes for our lives and do that which gives us greatest fulfilment. It is important therefore to be thankful for what we receive, to share what we can, and to be content with our circumstances.

In my work with the Australian Taxation Office, I found people who invested tremendous resources, in the most ingenious ways, to avoid paying their fair share of tax. I've also seen people who are content with receiving money even if it comes from illegal purposes. And today many have become victims of the credit card, due to the ease with which one can get access to additional funds to satisfy one's wants.

Living beyond one's means is a temporary measure which involves high costs. For me it was a privilege to be amongst the villagers in India who were quite content with their simple living by satisfying the basic needs.

My time at the moment is directed towards an Master of Business

Administration programme at the University of Warwick in the UK. It is my intention to work with businesses which are facing financial and managerial difficulties, so that they can develop a firm foundation to contribute in society.

Having applied last December to do the MBA, I wasn't sure how I would finance my studies. However I prayed that God would take care of the funds and I was able to get a loan from a financial institution based on the fact that my employer had guaranteed my job on return to Australia.

So the 'plan' began with a thought, it involved a lot of hard work to put into action, and more yet to come, but I have a peace of mind that God will always provide for that which he has in store.

Deborah Knox



HIGH TECH MONEY MATTERS EXPLAINED.

Not here for the money

AH, MONEY! I enjoy lying back, stretching and realizing what a relief it is to have so little. Still, I go along with Lydgate (a character in George Elliot's novel 'Middlemarch'):

'Hitherto in his own life, his wants had been supplied without any trouble to himself, and his first impulse was always to be liberal with half-crowns as a matter of no importance to a gentleman. He had always known in a general way that he was not rich, but he had never felt poor, and he had no power of imagining the part which the want of money plays in determining the actions of others. Money had never been a motive ...'

Lydgate was from a family of means. In contrast, my own family has never owned our own home, and my five years of salaried work have doubled our assets. Ah! but our wants have always been supplied by people's giving. So the main thing I'd like to say on money is 'thankyou'.

I admire people in paid jobs, for they bear a great burden. Think of the bank manager who goes through his day with total concern for the inner needs of his clients; whose financial advice is a vehicle to express his love of God; whose joys in the simple beauties of the 'premium reserve' versus the 'special

high-interest saver' are the joys of just being here; - the bank manager who devotes his earnings to building a beautiful life for his family, and who still finds generous sums to give to inspiring causes.

I fear I would get frustrated. 'Why', I would ask myself, 'am I spending my days designing a new "easy-access, special saver account" when it is impossible to serve both God and mammon?'

'Damn! I can't get these figures right.'

'No, I can't see anybody!'

'Get out - can't you see I'm trying to work out the new "easy-access"...'

I fear that keeping God uppermost would become too trying. I'd slip into the familiar attitude that a job is for the money, the status, the world. Why not commit 50% of your life to the world? 50-50 with God - that's fair!

Or take a break from pay, and give a spell of life unequivocally to God. I find it freshening, friendship-building and faith-deepening. You rely only on the spontaneous gifts of friends and on the expenses of subsistence. It can help prepare you for the great challenge - living your faith in the world.

Alan Channer



.... A greater gift.



Prayer before a five-pound note

Lord, see this note, it frightens me.
You know its secrets, you know its history.
How heavy it is!
It scares me, for it cannot speak.
It will never tell all it hides in its creases.
It will never reveal all the struggles and efforts it
represents, all the disillusionment and slighted dignity.
It is stained with sweat and blood.
It is laden with all the weight of the human toil which makes
its worth.

It is heavy, heavy, Lord.
It fills me with awe, it frightens me.
For it has death on its conscience,
All the poor fellows who killed themselves for it...
To possess it for a few hours,
To have through it a little pleasure, a little joy, a little
life...

Through how many hands has it passed, Lord?
And what has it done in the course of its long, silent trips?

It has offered white roses to the radiant fiancée.
It has paid for the baptismal party, and fed the growing baby.
It has provided bread for the family table.
Because of it there was laughter among the young, and joy
among the adults.
It has paid for the saving visit of the doctor,
It has bought the book that taught the youngster,
It has clothed the young girl.

But it has sent the letter breaking the engagement.
It has paid for the death of a child in its mother's womb.
It has bought the liquor that made the drunkard.
It has produced the film unfit for children.
And has recorded the indecent song.
It has broken the morals of the adolescent and made of the
adult a thief.
It has bought for a few hours the body of a woman.
It has paid for the weapons of the crime and for the wood of
the coffin.

O Lord, I offer you this note with its joyous mysteries, its
sorrowful mysteries.
I thank you for all the life and joy it has given.
I ask your forgiveness for the harm it has done.
But above all, Lord, I offer it to you as a symbol of all the
labours of men, indestructible money, which tomorrow will
be changed into your eternal life.

FORTY YEARS AGO, I took the Diploma of Education at Oxford and first met the writing of Sir RICHARD LIVINGSTONE classicist, educator, and vice-chancellor. I have never seen the purpose of education expressed more arrestingly.

'For hundreds of years,' he wrote, the people of the west have been walking through country signposted and fenced by the precepts of a religion which they accepted. The great majority followed the beaten track and kept within the fences.'

'Now we live in a different world,' he wrote. 'The road is still there. But people have broken through the fences, defaced the signposts, and questioned the accuracy of the map. We are back in the moral confusion of the Greek age of the Sophists.'

'All we need are firm standards and a clear philosophy of life which distinguishes evil from good, and chooses good and refuses evil.'

'The quality of civilisation depends on its standards, its sense of values, the idea of what is first-rate and what is not.'

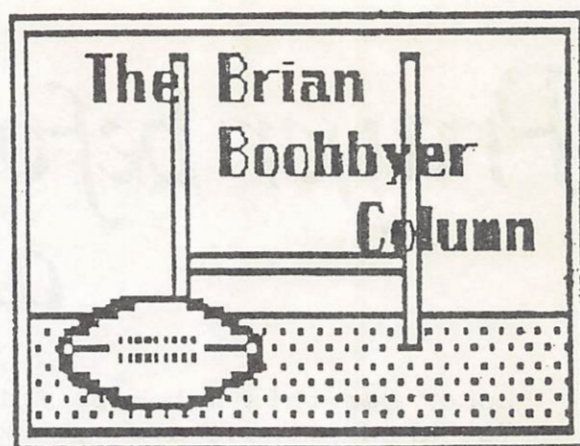
'AESCHYLUS, PLATO, SHAKESPEARE and DANTE of all Europeans have seen furthest and reached highest, and best reveal the greatness of human nature. They meet some permanent need not only of their own epoch but of all time.'

'The true name of education is a discipline by which a man from first to last hates what he should hate and loves what he should love.'

Livingstone quotes PLATO: 'The noblest of all virtues is the study of what man is and how he should live', and goes on to quote the early 20th century philosopher, A N WHITEHEAD: 'Moral education is impossible without a habitual vision of greatness'. Livingstone adds, 'No profounder statement has been made about education since PLATO'.

These thoughts mainly come from Livingstone's book *Education for a world adrift*.

I remember Churchill's phrase, 'The rut of inertia, the confusion of aim and the craven fear of being great'. In his *Great Contemporaries*, written in 1937, he wrote 'Courage is rightly esteemed the first of human qualities because it is the quality which guarantees all others'.



I suggest that the root of greatness is unselfishness, the quality that enables people to grow around you and not diminish.

There is an old saying that if you're 5% self-centred you are ineffective, 10% self-centred you are unhappy, and 85% self-centred you are locked up in an asylum.

One of the great educators of the 19th century was EDWARD THRING, headmaster of a Boys School in the village of Uppingham, near Leicester. I went to the same school half a century later, and his statue looked at us in the school chapel.

In 1862 he wrote: 'I feel jaded, badgered faithless and hard. I long to plunge into some fierce reality instead of holding on in patience and power, instead of the long restraint.' What a splendid expression, 'the long restraint'.

Here are some of his remarkable observations:

'Nothing is more obtrusive in school than obtrusive religion'.

'The business of a school is to train up men for the service of God'.

'May God make me a prophet'.

'For the young the best is just good enough'.

'Of all the problems which the training of boys present to parents and teachers, the one of dealing with impurity in thought and word and deed is the most perplexing. I suppose everyone is acquainted with the current lies about the impossibility of being pure.'

The means under God in my own case was a letter from my father; a quiet simple statement of the sinfulness of the sin, and a few of the plain tenets of St Paul saved me. A film fell from my eyes at my father's letter. All fathers ought to write such a letter to their sons.'

'In my morning Bible lessons I have always spoken on occasions with perfect plainness on lust'.

The value of good reading aloud has never been recognised'.

Music is the only thing which all nations, all ages, all ranks, and both sexes do equally well. It is sooner or later the great world bond, the secular gospel'.

'Genius is an infinite capacity for work growing out of an infinite power of love.'

It was Thring, I believe, who introduced the first school gymnasium, and pioneered the full use of music in schools. But above all, he will be remembered for being the first to assert boldly that the dull boy has as much right to have his power fully trained as the boy of talent. 'Everybody can do something well', he said.

GANDHI wrote 'The first step to a true education is a pure heart'. Also 'Show students the way to become fearless nation-builders. They love to think not in terms of a province or a town or a class or caste, but in terms of a continent, of the millions. They are the hope of nations.'

The great Scotsman of the last century, HENRY DRUMMOND, said, 'The only greatness is unselfish love'. This puts greatness within reach of all of us. It is not dependent on ability, because we are all different, and some people are brighter than others. Nor is it something that ambition can achieve, because so much of ambition has self at the centre.

Psalm 18 says 'Thy gentleness has made me great. Thou has enlarged my steps under me that my feet did not slip'. I can choose to empty myself so there is room for God and for the world to walk through.

Greatness is greatheartedness.

Of Teapots and Parsley

I HAVE JUST decided to dump the first teapot I ever bought. It has been an essential piece of equipment. And is a very old friend. It dates from 1979, when I started my first job, just turned 20 and wondering what the next decade would hold.

The seventies were a peculiar time in history. The sexual revolution was established, Aids had not yet reared its ugly head. The pill was available. You would have thought the only period in history when sex was uncomplicated would be a real freedom. But it wasn't. Relationships were still their usual fraught selves. Worse, because sex could buy you one. I don't remember loving any of my boyfriends. They were necessary for a social life, essential in order to keep up appearances.

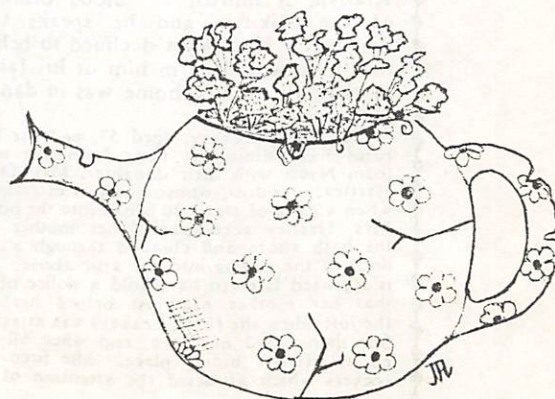
The teapot reminds me of the final showdown I had with this 'freedom'. In my last year at college I met a really nice guy. I invited him to stay for the weekend. I assumed, as with all previous boyfriends, that this would cement our relationship. It finished it. He had been a genuinely nice bloke, who really liked me. I'd pushed things too far, too fast, and he wrote me off as cheap and shallow. I was mortified.

I set off for a new city and a new life, glad of the chance to reconstruct myself. A new me emerged, one that felt more mature, enjoyed life as it came, with whichever friends....

So I bought a teapot, now stained and chipped. It still works but is just not presentable. A bit like me, I can't help thinking. I was definitely soiled goods, but God seems to have found my repentance genuine, he's filled my life with blessings since.

I have been recycled. So shall this teapot be. I shall grow parsley in it.

'The Dormouse'



IN KENYA, in April of this year, a story appeared in the press headlined *Healing the wounds of a violent past*. It reported an extraordinary reconciliation between the daughter of a white man who was buried alive during the *Mau Mau* revolution in pre-independence days, and a man who had planned her father's death.

Agnes Leakey was brought up in Kenya, living with her father and three brothers on a farm which her father had created out of virgin land. He was much respected by the local population who called him *Murungaru*, meaning tall and straight.

The description took on an added meaning of being upright, when he charted a new relationship with the workers on the farm. This followed a deep reconciliation on Agnes's part with her father. Agnes recounts, "One morning, he gathered the farm staff together and spoke to them humbly and sincerely. He spoke of the times he had hurt their feelings in anger. He asked

Healing the wounds
of a violent past

Why we buried Leakey alive

their forgiveness. His words got a warm response and the meeting did usher in a new day on the farm."

But storm clouds were gathering over Kenya. Years of repressed resentment and anger in the Africans, at being treated as second class citizens by the whites, boiled over. The revolutionary movement of revenge, *Mau Mau*, came to birth. Fear stalked the land. The colonial authorities declared a state of emergency. Hundreds were arrested, including Jomo Kenyatta, the leading independence fighter.

Agnes, by that time married to Bremer Hofmeyr and living in South Africa, suggested that her father and step-mother come to join them. After thinking it over for a long time, her father said that he felt that God's plan for them was that they should stay. "If God can use us to bring an answer, we are ready", he added.

Then it happened. Agnes and Bremer were in America. A cable arrived saying that her step-mother had been killed and that her father had been abducted by the *Mau Mau*, and no more was known.

"I was in turmoil", Agnes recalls. "I was filled with hatred towards the black people. I felt that there could not be a God to allow such things to happen. I wept tears of anger, sorrow and pity all mixed up."

Bremer suggested that they might be quiet and listen. "I was rebellious" Agnes says, "But there was nothing else to do, so we were quiet". Then, through all the turmoil, a thought came to Agnes perfectly clearly. "Have no bitterness of hatred, but fight harder than ever to bring a change of heart to black and white alike." It seemed impossible to Agnes, but she says, "It did open a door of hope for the future".

14 OCT 1954
15 OCT 1954

KENYA FARM OUTRAGE

TRIPLE MURDER FEARED

FIGHT IN NAIROBI

From Our Correspondent

NAIROBI, Oct. 14

Kenya has been shocked by a *Mau Mau* raid on the farm of Mr. Arundel Gray Leakey at Nyeri last night in which his wife and African cook were murdered. Mr. Leakey, whose age is about 70, is a cousin of Dr. L. S. B. Leakey, the Kenya archaeologist and authority on the Kikuyu, is himself a "blood brother" of the Kikuyu, and he speaks their language. He always declined to believe that they would harm him or his family or that his isolated home was in danger. He is missing.

Mrs. Mary Leakey, aged 57, and her husband were dining at their farm five miles from Nyeri with their daughter, Mrs. Diana Hartley, a widow, whose home is in Nairobi, when a gang of about 30 broke into the house. Mrs. Hartley accompanied her mother into the bath room and climbed through a trap door in the ceiling into the attic above. She is reported later to have told a police officer that her mother had just helped her into the loft when she (Mrs. Leakey) was attacked. She then heard no more, and when all was quiet, left her hiding place. She fired two rockets which attracted the attention of the

The heart that said no to the logic of hatred

The Story of MRA - no. 24

by Rex Dilly

Then further news came from Kenya. It confirmed Agnes's worst fears. Her father had been buried alive as a human sacrifice to the gods of the Mau Mau. Things had been going badly for the Mau Mau. A so-called prophetess said that the gods were angry and had to be placated by the sacrifice of a good man. That is why her father was chosen.

The days following were difficult for Agnes. She would wake up in the night with bad dreams and imaginings. She and Bremer thought and talked a lot about Africa. She said, "Like many Kenyans, we had tried to be 'good' to our black servants, but we had taken the whole colonial structure for granted and this was the target of the Mau Mau. The land question - why a white minority owned so much of the best lands in the 'White Highlands' - never struck us as a problem. To the Mau Mau it was quite fundamental."

Then one day she had another thought. "You must be responsible for the sins of your race, just as you are responsible for your own wrongs". She thought of the Mau Mau detainees, and how she had heard that the attitudes and actions of the whites had turned them from their Christian faith to violence.

Within a year she had a great opportunity to address one of the first public meetings to be held in Kenya since the Mau Mau uprising. She was part of an international MRA group visiting Kenya. The crowd that gathered to hear them covered a whole hillside. When the African chairman of the meeting announced that the daughter of Murungaru would be the next speaker, there was a gasp from the crowd. What would she say?

She recalls, "I spoke from my heart and apologised for the arrogance and selfishness of so many of us whites that helped to create the bitterness and hatred in their hearts. I said how much

I longed to see God's answer come to Kenya and all of Africa, so that tragedies like this would never happen again, and that I had given my life to this task. A murmur of understanding rippled through the vast crowd. Afterwards many came up to me and said how sorry they were for what had happened to my family. They wanted to join us in taking this new spirit to the country. I was touched by what they said and all traces of bitterness that lingered in my heart were washed away. I felt that they were my friends. We were meant to work together to build something new in the country. For us the day was a healing of the heart."

Several years later at a conference at Caux, Agnes and Bremer were having dinner with a former Mau Mau leader, Stanley Kinga. During his time at the Athi River detention camp, his life had taken a new direction and he had subsequently worked closely with the Hofmeyrs. During the meal he turned to Agnes and said, "There is something I have never told you that I think you ought to know. I was one of the Mau Mau committee that chose your father to be a sacrifice and planned his death."



Agnes Hofmeyr, Alice Baraza of the Kenyatta Foundation, Bremer Hofmeyr

Agnes was staggered and could not believe what she was hearing. She asked him to repeat what he had said. Finally she said, "Thank God we have both learned the secret of forgiveness or we could never sit here."

Since then, they have spoken together at many meetings emphasising the key of forgiveness in reconciliation. They both participated in the MRA conference in Kenya in May 1991 which gave rise to the press story.

(Agnes Hofmeyr's book, *Beyond Violence* which tells her story, has been published in Kenya by the Jomo Kenyatta Foundation, as well as in South Africa.)

Geneva Genesis

AT THE END of the summer sessions in Caux, six young people decided to work and live together in Geneva as a community. One of their intentions is to offer support to those from Eastern Europe who have been in Caux. They have been invited to visit Romania at the end of October.

The six are Christine Jaulmes, France; Andrew Smith, Scotland; Philippa Caughey, New Zealand; Micheline Leclerc, Canada; Raymonde Maalouf, Lebanon and Jeroen Gunning, Holland.

Here we print something of their individual decisions to take on this task.



Christine Jaulmes writes:

For a long time I have been longing for a European team of young people who will take initiatives together, especially working with other young people, and start something completely new.

I feel that I need to deepen my faith and get more disciplined (for the quiet time for example...) and the community life will be a great help. It will be difficult, but through the difficulties we will learn a lot.

It is a big adventure in faith as our project will need money and I must say that this question worries me very much - too much...

By travelling, I would like to reach out to new people, especially the young people simply because I am close to them and it is at that age that you make decisive choices. Reaching out to people is a real challenge to me.

I feel that the right spirit would not be to tell them what to do, but to offer them something to do together. Not to come with solutions, but just to tell them the truth we have found and to encourage them to find this truth for themselves.

Philippa Caughey:

When drawing up a syringe I knew that as a nurse I really wanted to give more to people than physical relief and comfort. Whether it be working in a local hospital or aid in a developing country, this could only come through a change of heart and having a sense of direction and purpose in my life.

Towards the end of the summer working in Caux, I was challenged by moving accounts of experiences and change. I realised that I had been immersing myself in work, filling up my days and leaving no time for facing up to finding a purpose and direction. This was especially obvious when telephoning home and enthusiastically telling them of all that was happening, after which my mother asked: 'Are you growing spiritually?' 'Yes, Mum, when I've got time', was my reply.

I realised that no-one else could take the initiative. It was to be my decision to fight the fear of taking that leap and letting go control of my life: 'Speak God, I'm listening' rather than 'Listen God, I'm speaking.'

It was not easy, a lot had to be put right, including apologies and returning an unlawful student card. I was reassured when I opened the Bible, knowing little of where to look and found, 'To present yourself for God's service, and not to conform to the present world system, but be transformed. THEN you will discover God's will for you.' Having made this commitment, I feel open to God's plan of working with the ever-changing scene in Eastern Europe where we will be both giving and learning.

Andrew Smith:

I was particularly struck by the power MRA has to bring people of my own age to God, giving them a real purpose and a challenge in life, offering a bigger aim than self-concern. When I took part in the MRA youth study course at Asia Plateau, India, earlier this year, I and many others gained a real determination to do something constructive with our lives.

One of my friends said that before he came to Asia Plateau, life had seemed meaningless - after the course he had new hope and a determination to use his life for good. I thought of friends



Andrew Smith and Philippa Caughey

photos: Joanna Hayes

back in Scotland whose lives revolved around personal gain, money and career, and I wished that they too could find a new way of living. I decided that I would love to help people find these answers.

In India I was challenged by the poverty and hardship I saw around me. I felt an appalling sense of responsibility for it. In the hill villages of Gujarat and on the streets of Calcutta, I kept asking myself, 'Why have I been given so much? Why do these people have so little?' I thought, 'You have been given so much because much is expected of you.'

I looked more closely at what I was living for. I knew I was never to forget these Indians. I knew I had the responsibility to use my life and talents to make the world a better place.

Looking back on the last year and a half, I am aware of an amazing experience of God's love leading me through difficulty to finding a purpose in life. For a few years I have suffered from depression and life has been tough at times. Yet since leaving university I have found God caring for me, leading me with simple straightforward clarity to what I should do next, even when I was at my lowest point and felt like giving up. I felt it right to go to India at a time when I was seriously ill and it was logically

stupid to go, yet it all worked out fine. I now feel I can trust Him completely and I cannot imagine what life would have been like if I hadn't followed His direction - I have gained so much and done so much. I now want to pass this experience on to others.

Jeroen Gunning:

Before the summer I had been offered a job with an American management consultancy company. At the last moment they withdrew the offer, but meanwhile my mind was set on making a top career. All my student friends were talking about prestigious jobs, recruiters flattered us mightily, and my main concern was whether a job would give me good prospects for furthering my career.

In Caux I started to dream of a team of young people, totally committed to initiating change, available to Eastern Europe especially - an area close to my heart. Alas this clashed with my other dreams and more so, with my family.

I had just got my Masters degree in Physics and now the chances were best for employment. What to do - follow the heart or the logical sense of security?

I got terribly confused and felt pressurized, until it dawned on me that I had better trust the guiding sense in the silence of my heart - after all I claimed to believe in that.

It was a big struggle to really let go of my precious dreams, but then a clear thought sprang up: 'From now on you must accept insecurity about your future,



Jeroen Gunning

foster it, for it will throw you into My arms. Your longing for security stands between you and Me'. I entered a period of not knowing, not even wanting to know, and I began to sense a wonderful freedom instead of clinging on.

One thought kept nagging me, 'It's not that you don't see clearly, it's just

that you are afraid to take the step.' Then I wrote, 'Are you serious about your conviction that MRA needs to be reformulated? Are you serious about the cry you hear from the East?' All kinds of deep and powerful fears crept upon me, but when I cast them aside, only an all-consuming certainty remained, that I was to work with MRA focussing on Eastern European friends. No excitement, just a straightforward business-like feeling that I can't describe adequately.

I'm glad it was so clear for I needed this basis to confront my family and friends. When home I realised how difficult it can be to step totally out of line and do something unheard of. A regular job is usually easily-defined, but this is fog-all-over! It doesn't help when trying to explain to friends who ask whether I have found a job already. Yes, I have and a great one at that.

Micheline Leclerc:

I was still unclear about what to do. With a friend one morning I read, 'When trials come your way, instead of asking God, "Don't you like me?", ask, "Heavenly Father, what can I learn from this?" If the trial is for discipline, He'll show you. Then you'll be able to thank Him for caring enough to correct you. God's discipline is never cruel but corrective.'

I wanted this sign from God showing the way ahead because I long for His presence along the road. I realised that I shouldn't be fearful of taking the next step for He is always there.

God has given us the freedom to choose but He never leaves us alone. He is a loving Father even in our periods of doubt. Then I felt that I should choose the way ahead, I have been given companions to work with and He will show me more as I walk. Looking around, one realises that the world lives more and more interdependently economically-speaking. Our means of communication makes us live with people from very different countries.

Isn't it then my responsibility to find out what role I can play in my society? What kinds of answers can I give? How do I live in a responsible manner? This is how I came to make the decision to take part in the group in Geneva. This is a big step in faith.

Tea for two (hundred?)

Direct from the terrace, 4pm, Caux, by our Staff Tea Drinker

I SET OUT ONE TEATIME in late August, to meet young people from further afield than western Europe in order to introduce them to the readers of *FREEWAY*.

Having collected my cup of the delicious hot stuff, slopping half of it into the saucer trying to pick up my bun, I met ANTONIA EMAYONI. Antonia comes from Nigeria and has spent the last year in the National Youth Service Corps. This voluntary service for graduates involves travelling to another part of this large country, to gain a wider knowledge of it and serve. Antonia had already established a growing business of her own selling fabric (Nigerians being adept at running up their own clothes), but was encouraged by her father to give a year of national service.

From the south, she was sent north, and one particular task she and her fellow volunteers were assigned was to help oversee local government elections. Election rigging has been a problem in her country, and Antonia was given the job of clerk, ensuring that nobody tried to vote underage, or twice. The threat of intimidation hung over, but Antonia emerged unscathed, glad to have helped because she knows how important a fair election is to a country. Due to finish her service in two months time, she intends to ask to stay on until the next elections are over, for the Senate this time. The stakes being higher, attempts at falsification will be greater.

Then it will be back to her business, hoping that it will go well enough for her to be able to help other students get through their education. She says God gave her the idea for her business, helps her run it, and expects him to give her more to accomplish.

I then wandered over to the cold drinks table, still being thirsty. It was being manned by KAREL KUNA, aged 21 from Prague, Czechoslovakia and CHANTHARASY PHONETHIP aged 29 from Laos, living in France.

I asked Karel first what he thought of Caux. He replied, "Like everyone, I think it's wonderful. I like the desegregation - a group of people who've come together by chance, all ages and all one world

together. I have appreciated meeting them. In everyday life we are segregated, for example the old together, students together. I hope I will be different when I go home. I must improve the relationship with my parents. I have made decisions here about everything in my life. But they're still in progress."

Then I asked Phonethip what he thought. "This is my third time in Caux. I'm a Buddhist. We don't talk of God. We say the 'All Powerful'. I was 16 when I first came here. I just wanted to have fun. Now I want to meet people from other countries. I want to know about MRA more deeply. I find the four standards of MRA (honesty, purity, unselfishness and love) very difficult, and thought I would find everyone here perfect. Instead I now know that everyone makes mistakes but go on doing the best they can. I want to help others when I go home. First my family, then my friends, then nationally and internationally. I'd like to see if I can find one friend who would like to know about Caux and get to know it well."

Being fed and watered by this time, I sat down at a nice sunny table and got into conversation with BASHEER KHASSAWNEH, aged 22 from Jordan, a medical student. He told me, "My faith is first my heritage. Then you practice it. Islam is a comprehensive religion, it touches all aspects of life. You are responsible before God, but also in a direct relationship with God. Islam has beautiful standards. Here I am sent back to the ideal standards of my religion, they are not so different from those of MRA."

I like the nature in Caux. It helps the

process of change. I like the kind of people I've met here - all looking for high standards in common; it's unique in the world, Caux is a place to establish mature and beneficial dialogue between two sides of a conflict.

Caux is a time in your life when you go and sit with yourself and try to negotiate with yourself. You look at your past behaviour and try to improve.

I have met people from all around the world in 12 days. I have heard their beliefs and feelings. I reflect on my people. Are we giving the right message to the world? Do we just shout for help? It would be good to tell the real story. It would be good for the future of all

nations for young people to meet and understand each others problems. Not with pressure or propaganda, but person to person. It was something different for me to meet Croatians and South Africans. It was important for me to meet Americans, because the blockade of the port of Aqaba is crippling our country.

Self-assessment I hope will have changed me. Maybe it will take effect in the weeks and months to come. I want to understand more of Islam too.

I want to tell people about Caux. It is difficult to go to people in a crisis and give them ideas, but I will try. I have learnt a new way of thinking, communicating, and initiating dialogue. It's the principle of walking a mile in another man's shoes. It's something we really need in Jordan."

After that it was time to go indoors.



Letter from Latin America

Doing without walking sticks

THERE ARE SOME MOMENTS in life when you feel tired, beaten and you want to give up everything. It's at such moments that you start looking for walking sticks to make your way easier. When the sticks appear you can have three different reactions:

The first and the easiest, is to take those sticks and walk with them, even if you realise they're slowing you down. You don't dare to leave them as you don't believe you can go on on your own.

The second and hardest, is to reject the sticks and try to use your own strength, even if it's painful.

The third and most usual, is to take the sticks for a while, until you realise they're stopping you, restraining you, taking away your freedom. But you depend on them, so you get angry and you throw them away; now you know you're strong enough.

None of these reactions are good. We shouldn't look for walking sticks. If you're tired the best thing to do is to rest, so you can recover. Keep always in mind that there's strength in you and always will be.

It's good to ask for help, but not to make others the foundations of your life. Not even God is willing to be our walking stick; He wants to be our path, our strength, our light.

Living is not easy, and it's no use trying to make it so. A person who knows how to live, can suffer and be happy at the same time.

We shouldn't let others use us as walking sticks either. We're not helping by slowing them down, and what's more, we risk being thrown away...

Marta Castelli, Argentina

FLY...!

LIFE WITHOUT PASSION is not worth living. You've got to live, to feel, to experience, to explore, to dive into the deep sea of the world, into the pool of your mind. Let yourself be filled with sensations. Breathe in the smell of a new creation. Don't choose the harmless donkeys of routine, but the wild horses of adventure. Dare to fly. Take off and head for the sky. Always higher. Head for the clouds and fly through them to the sun. Have faith. Dare to fly even before your wings are born.

Don't justify your limitations. Trust your strength and make the best of yourself. Wasting your capacities is the worst thing. Dare to live your full self in full communication with the world, with life. Be the best you can be and take the first step today...

Nora Saraco, Argentina

New horizons

MANY URUGUAYANS believe in the need to find new horizons. The present one is often very cloudy, but luckily everything changes in the world. We all need to leave a trace in this world and that's why we risk our lives on behalf of others every day.

Hope is something so awesome that many times we don't dare to live it out and it's a pity how much we lose.

Now, more than ever, young people need unity to change many things. We can't do it on our own. And that's why, we, people from Uruguay, open our hands to all our brothers in the world to create a new man who'll shine with love, who will have the colour of joy and the virtue of courage because he has given himself to others in life.

Ramona Contreras, Uruguay

Descent into isolation

WE SEE SOCIAL VIOLENCE as a manifestation of conflict within family situations.

Hostility between the members of a household stems from a variety of needs, based on the inability to respect oneself.

The absence of self-respect and self-esteem gives rise to aggression, which is the result of insecurity and fear.

So the person sees his own image deteriorate, and begins to feel like a coward in the face of his weaknesses. He starts to realise that he needs affection and above all, understanding from the people who share his life.

But his turmoil, and the fear of rejection, drive him to adopt crutches to cover the distances between his needs and the world of relationships which awaits him, sometimes pressurising, at other times highlighting his failings.

Meanwhile work commitments and social obligations progressively fence in his unstable world of desires and plans, many of which are very distant, and perhaps for economic reasons cannot be fulfilled in the immediate future. Thus he is overwhelmed with a sense of impotence. His friends and even his family put a label on him, a style, and he sees that within that label there is no room for confusion. Inwardly he suffers, and would like to change the facts which gnaw at his existence, but he is weak.

This is the moment when the distance which still binds him to reality is changed into an abyss by fears and disappointments, making it impossible to bridge.

He begins to see that the gap between his hesitant words and a possible encounter with someone can only be filled by directly revealing his weaknesses, accepting his mistakes and perhaps confessing his fears.

He fearfully searches his inner being, and finds only reproaches, hurts and sorrow.

He thinks only of staying on his feet. He must reflect confidence at every step, he doesn't rely on his own weapons to keep going. He becomes proud and arbitrary. He will not accept the evolution of events as they are. He confronts his own contradictions and ends up creating a protective shield which serves only to limit him. He loses his capacity to listen and to communicate with others. He is interested only in himself.

He uses every means to draw attention to his problem and starts to seek relief in shouting and aggression.

He gives orders, directs other people's lives; he questions everything, he feels betrayed and makes enemies.

He may turn to alcohol or drugs which become allies in his struggle against such adversity.

He is mistrustful, he thinks the whole world is against him, he believes he is trapped by demands.

He is disillusioned with all those around him.

He is unaware of the endless schemes his distress has fabricated to reject the help of others.

He thinks every attitude is an attack on his armour.

He no longer needs anybody, and he can give very little; that is why he isolates himself in his discussions.

His threats disguise entreaties. His shouts appeal for affection. But by this stage he thinks that nobody understands him.

He begins the bitter struggle to maintain authority; he will not tolerate advice, he depends on hostility as the only way of being noticed. Others must respect him, whatever the cost; his attitude will make them know the power he still has. This is an attempt to reaffirm his role, to give him authority.

Now he musn't slacken, he cannot falter; he only instils in others the fear which reveals his frustration.

Gabriela Osorio, Argentina

translated by Pippa Faurce

