



True or false?

- If a woman is liberated she is dominating.
- If she is revolutionary, she is hard, manlike and bitter.
- If she is feminine, she is soft, frilly, exploitable and exploited.
- If she is free, she is a libertine.
- Men don't need liberating.

LIBERATION FOR WHAT?

In 1975, CLAIRE EVANS was told that she had inoperable cancer. She felt compelled to use her last months to write the book she had been considering for many years. The result—'Le Défi féminin', was published in French in 1977—was the fruit of her own experience of liberation. Now an English edition, 'Freewoman', has appeared and was launched in London on June 3 by her husband, Robin Evans.

A Frenchwoman married to an Englishman, Claire Evans came from a family known in France for its fight for women's emancipation. In the week that 'Freewoman' was launched in England, her 86-year-old aunt Louise Weiss, one of those who won the vote for French women, was the oldest candidate to be elected to a seat in the European Parliament.

Spanish and German

When the original French version of 'Freewoman' appeared, the French newspaper 'Le Figaro' wrote, 'For Claire Evans-Weiss the question is less one of freeing woman from certain taboos than of freeing her from herself; less one of searching for self-expression than of taking part in building a humane and brotherly society.'

The last chapter of the book is drawn from Claire Evans' experience of suffering. 'The book is worth reading carefully for this alone as it reveals her generosity of heart and quality of spirit,' commented 'Le Figaro'.

The book has already appeared in Spanish, in Buenos Aires, and a German edition will shortly be published. William Stallybrass, who with Ailsa Hamilton made the English translation, first met Claire Evans when as an English army officer in post-occupation France, he visited the Weiss family in 1944. 'It was through them that I found my passion for a united Europe,' he said at the book's launching.

Here we print an extract from the book:

You can count on the fingers of one hand the values which are more precious to human beings than life, for which they are prepared not to kill but to die: truth and faith; family, and its extension, country; and freedom. The idea of freedom evokes so deep a response that today no undertaking which requires the allegiance of whole populations is carried out without slogans

about freedom. Even in civil wars, one side "defends freedom" while the other "fights for liberation".

The feminist movement is part of this pattern. The catchword "liberation", in many different languages, is on the banners behind which millions of women have started marching, have squatted in ministry corridors and have inundated public opinion with a flood of articles, books and manifestos. There was even a poster in France, advertising kitchen equipment, in which a housewife was throwing her apron to the wind with an air of delight above the caption "Moulinex liberates women".



Claire Evans

Ask the leaders of these movements what they aim to liberate their sisters from, and you will never catch them out. The list is long and varied: from sex discrimination, from male exploitation, from economic exploitation, from the grip of taboos, from the slavery of pregnancy, from the monotony of housework, and so on and on.

And the method of gaining this liberation is simple. You claim rights: the right to divorce, the right to work, the right to free contraception and abortion, the right to a state salary for housework, the right to sexual freedom, and so, again, on and on.

Liberation from what is clear. Liberation for what is less clear. Generally the reply is: to grow, to fulfil yourself, to develop your gifts, to realise your potential. For many women, particularly and perhaps exclusively in the West, "to fulfil yourself" has become

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the aim of existence. This ought to have resulted in a creative explosion, in a joyous blossoming of personalities as varied as the flowers in spring. Let's be honest—is that what has happened? Not in theory, but in the faces in the street and the underground?

A doctor friend said to me, not without a touch of humour, "When a human being is five per cent self-centred, he is ineffective; at fifteen per cent, he is unhappy; at eighty-five per cent, he is locked up in a psychiatric ward. And they want to make us believe that to be totally self-centred, and do what we like when we like, would be a huge advance for mankind!"

But if that is not the goal, what is? How do we find out? And how do we get there?

Demanding rights

A professor spoke once at a meeting of lecturers and teachers which I attended in the north of France. Instead of discussing the serious difficulties which the country was going through, not least in education, he chose to talk about finding direction. "I want to tell you about the most precious discovery I have made in life," he said. "I used to teach by day and then study by night, not to get a better job but to try and find this precious thing whose name I didn't even know then, but which is called 'inner direction'."

He went on, "A compass has a needle which always points in the same direction, whichever way you turn the compass, wherever you put it, even if you throw it away.... This image is relevant to us, because in every living person there is an inner compass. The moment life begins, the sense of direction awakens."

When I started using this inner compass to explore the area of women's liberation, it was an exhilarating and hopeful experience, giving me the impression of a sort of general upheaval of the cardinal points in the landscape.

It made me wonder if we could start by forgetting ourselves and our struggle for a feminine identity, and decide instead what we want to be free for—a goal which would have nothing to do with ourselves and our limitations, and everything to do with the contradictions in the world we live in. Could we decide to become free to create a society

Two faces of freedom



Ailsa Hamilton working with Malcolm Muggeridge, on preparations for the play *Sentenced to Life*.

Channer

by Ailsa Hamilton
co-translator and editor
of 'Freewoman'

LIBERATION IS A NAME for a longing.

Women know this longing. So do men.

It is a longing to be free of all constraint, inward and outward. Our hope is that by being free we will experience growth of mind, of heart and spirit, until we have

accomplished all the dimensions of being human.

Freedom is, I believe, the greatest political and spiritual issue of our age. The fight for freedom has the quality of belonging not only on the battlefields of open and hidden wars and in parliaments, congresses and conferences, but in each person's heart and spirit every day. This double nature is freedom's most difficult aspect, and its most hopeful one. And if women, and men, are to become truly liberated, we have to form these two realities into one whole.

The outward structures of freedom are more than an ultimate political goal. They are the right of every person born. But inward freedom does not depend on them; and without inward freedom they do not last. Political dissidents in our own and other ages have made the discovery that the spirit can be free behind the thickest bars. Meanwhile, more and more rules and regulations harness our privileged Western liberty, to compensate for the results of our restricted spirits.

A lot of my time is spent working in theatre in an unstructured team with no hierarchy. I fully appreciate the liberty to initiate and to be responsible which these circumstances offer. But there are times when fear makes me want to put someone above me so I can depend on them. At other times the creative vision—or some baser urge?—makes me look for someone whom I can tell what to do, so that my splendid ideas are achieved in precisely the same manner in which they occurred to me. Fear and ambition rust the precious freedom. It has to be restored to wholeness by my own renewed liberty of spirit.

Many people in the post-industrial world may soon be free of drudgery. They will have to decide what new things to use their energies for. Perhaps our next goal as a society should be this inner freedom which makes life creative for every single person, whatever the circumstances. And from this might grow fresh new structures which will enhance the lives and fulfil the longings of women and of men.

TAKING STOCK

by Maisie Poulton

I AM FIFTY YEARS OLD.

I am afraid to look at the world.

I am white, I am British, I am a woman.

I believe in freedom for women. Freedom to serve, freedom to love, freedom to create homes, happiness and health—not only for their own families, but for all the families of the world.

But what do I do about it?

Do I think every day of women all over the world, who have been removed from their own homes while their husbands were in detention?

Do I think of the women whose husbands and children have had to flee for their lives

and leave them without communication or consolation?

Do I think of the women who live in daily terror?

Do I think of the women in public life who are responsible for their nations and not just for their families?

Or do I think only of myself—my aches and pains, my work, my shortcomings, my desire for rest, comfort, money and success?

Do I live by my feelings and my inclinations? Or do I live by obedience to the promptings of a Spirit that has nothing to do with what I feel or what I want, and everything to do with the needs of people—not only those I live with, but also those I will never meet?

Do I believe that the wider world needs my care, that I haven't missed all my opportunities in life because I am middle-aged? And am I moved not by a desire to compete with the young but by a genuine care for

everyone—young, old and middle-aged; black, white, brown, yellow or red; scintillating or silly, rich or poor, fascinating or boring, brilliant or batty, difficult, dull or dirty?

Will I open my heart and my ears to listen to what people of other nations, races, creeds, colour and class feel about me and my nation, me and my race, me and my creed, me and my colour, me and my class? Will I accept responsibility for our shortcomings and mistakes and make restitution for them, by the way I live, whoever else does or doesn't?

Am I willing to be a fool for Christ's sake and to risk, more often than not, being merely foolish?

I choose to expect no success but to expect miracles, not for my own benefit, but for other people's sake and for the establishment of God's kingdom in the hearts, lives and wills of men, women and children everywhere.



Submission

by Penny Barnett

MOST PEOPLE QUESTION, at some point, what constitutes a good marriage. For four years I used tears, 'hurt' expressions (called 'sulking' by my husband), to get my way and what I considered my rights as a wife and a woman. These tactics ceased to have much effect within months of our marriage, and even when they did achieve results, left me feeling frustrated and degraded. I did not even consider what my husband felt.



J. Franzon

When I became a Christian, I decided to try and find direction in the Bible. When I read that wives should be in submission to their husbands, I reacted at the thought of losing my individuality, but I felt sufficiently challenged to explore secretly what it meant. I gave it a try, on the basis that God might require it, and not of giving in to male chauvinism.

This meant turning from just pleasing myself to choose to respond more to my husband's hopes and co-operate openheartedly with what he was doing. It also meant cultivating loving attitudes (even when I didn't feel loving) and I began to find that real love only begins when one gives without demanding something in return. Where demand had soured in the past, unfettered giving, which I often find difficult, has brought great happiness, inner peace and purpose.





Free behind bars

by Rex Dilly

I HAVE BEEN in a number of places when political or military liberation has come—in World War II as the Allied armies advanced up Italy bringing liberation to town after town, in Kerala when a popular uprising swept a communist regime from power, and more recently in India when the yoke of dictatorship was removed.

In every case the twin emotions of relief and expectancy were the same—understandably so. But too often the reality hoped for has been illusive. The promise has not been matched by performance. Yet man continues to hope and search.

There is another vivid memory which may hold the key. I remember standing in a Hamburg prison after the war. There the Norwegian patriot Freddie Ramm had spent

the last two years of his life in captivity by the Nazis before he died. From the cell where I stood he had sent a message to his wife: 'Even though I am alone I do not feel lonely. All that we have learned together remains true. I would rather be in prison with God than outside without Him.'

Free time

by Catherine Hutchinson

WHEN I READ *Freewoman* I was captured by the idea that each of us needs the right to be hurt without hurting back, and to serve and work hard expecting no reward. Were these really rights to fight for and cherish so that they would not be lost?

One morning shortly afterwards, somebody told me all her problems and frustrations. When she had finished and I was on

my own again, I realised how strained and frustrated I was feeling myself. I just had to scream at someone—and, as by this time I was on my way to meet another friend, I knew who that someone would be. Then, suddenly, I remembered Claire Evans' challenge to cherish the right to be hurt without hurting back. I was forced to turn to God. And I doubt whether my friend realised what I had been feeling earlier.

Since then I have often thought that if you give your life to God, your time is not your own. It is God's.

This is a point I didn't really register until

Swedish Lib

by Björn Henriksson
Sweden

A LARGE PART of the world has experienced Sweden as a force for moral disintegration. International commercial forces have exploited her example in an attempt to prove that licence can be combined with a high standard of living.

Now, however, a reaction is setting in.

All Sweden's major women's organisations have joined in an assault on pornographic magazines. The oldest and most well-known of these organisations, *Frederika Bremer Förbundet*, recently made a statement on the subject. 'The humiliating and rotten views which these magazines spread,' it said, 'strengthen prejudices and delay the acceptance of women as equal partners in society.'

A national organisation against pornography and prostitution has been formed and has won support from 43 different organisations. The initiator, Carl-Gustaf Boethius, known in Sweden as a spokesman for sex education, describes pornographic magazines as 'cold and barbarous'. 'They have no right to exist and must be strongly fought,' he states.

It seems that dramatic change is on its way in Sweden.

Born free?



one Sunday morning. I had promised to check the telex machine in the office. I thought it would take 15 minutes—but an hour later I was still hard at it and fed up. Bang had gone my Sunday morning.

With my varying responsibilities and doing secretarial work for three people, I have often felt a conflict between what I can do and what others want me to do. When I make up my mind that the criterion is what God wants, and do that enthusiastically, this conflict disappears. Following God's will rather than my own, or other people's, gives life a purpose it does not have otherwise.

Type-set ideas



by Mike Smith

'WRITE US AN ARTICLE on liberation,' the editor said. Liberation? I don't need to be liberated, I thought, in true chauvinist manner.

But then there have been times when I haven't felt particularly free. Like when my friends asked me to come to London to train to operate the computer-typesetter which sets *New World News*.

I can't do that, I thought. OK, I did three

years at the London College of Printing. But I'd graduated from all that sort of thing. And my parents hadn't sacrificed for me to go to one of the best boarding schools in the country in order for me to be a manual worker. No, quite beneath my dignity.... But something seemed to nag at my conscience.

And then came the time bomb, in a letter from a friend. 'You have very set ideas about the road into the future,' he wrote. 'You have gifts and talents. Give them to God for Him to use. Let go your fond ambitions.'

I felt like exploding, but instead decided to pray for Christ's leading in the matter. For the next three days, whenever I opened my Bible I found myself reading about Christ washing the feet of His disciples, or Him saying, 'Whoever wants to be first must be the willing slave of all.' That didn't sound like 'liberation' to me. But perhaps the prayer book was right when it said 'in Whose service is perfect freedom'.

Well, if God was asking me to take up this work in London I had better obey. So reluctantly I dug up my roots in the north of England and dipped into what I thought

would be the cold ocean of life in London. I come from a traditionally conservative background. And had anyone told me, up till then, that I would become an active trade union member I would have laughed derisively. But that, in fact, is what I did. To typeset *New World News* I had to join the print union, the National Graphical Association. It was then I realised that, if I felt this kind of work was beneath me, in effect I was arrogant towards all who had to earn their bread on the shop floor of industry. And that was a kind of class war from the Right every bit as insidious as that actively encouraged from the Left—perhaps the more so for being subconscious.

Being in the union has helped me to understand the dignity of manual labour, the pride that men have in craft skills that have been passed from father to son over generations, and the fear and bitterness that can surface when these skills are swept aside by the introduction of new technologies.

Yes, it has been a liberating experience for me, liberating from the ignorance and narrow preconceptions of my class origins.

Mr-ies of the kitchen

INGRID FRANZON lives with her husband Jan and small daughter in Villa Alnäs, MRA's centre in Stockholm, Sweden. As in many other countries this centre is a home, where a community of families, married couples and single people live and work together, united by a common commitment. It provides a venue for meetings and conferences, and a springboard for action throughout the country.

The practical running of such a centre can be a full-time occupation. Several years ago, Ingrid was one of those responsible for cooking the meals, when the household embarked on an experiment. She writes:

ONE WEEKEND we were meeting with people from other parts of Scandinavia. Someone came up with an idea. Instead of the same people going out and missing the

discussions every time a meal had to be made, why not, they suggested, divide ourselves into three larger groups which could take it in turns to do the cooking and housework.

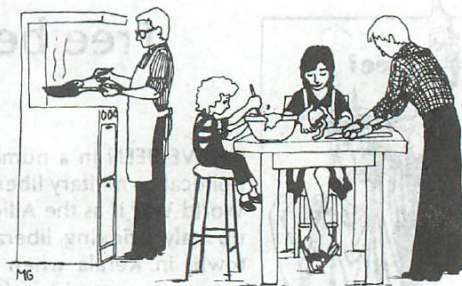
To be honest, I wasn't too sure about the idea at the time! I've always found it easier to use my hands than my brain, and it was often a welcome relief to be able to escape from meetings into the kitchen.

But the idea worked—and it stuck. Six years later we still divide into shifts and share the cleaning, cooking and laundry between us, men and women, young and old. Guests who stay overnight usually want to join in, and feel much more at home through working with us.

We've all learnt different things: 'Others' ways of doing things can be better than one's own.'

'Men are often the best cooks—they don't get as easily distracted as women.'

'Meals are always made for other people—



M6

and that often means doing a caring thing for someone one finds it difficult to care for.'

We found that we got to know each other better as we worked together.

It took me a while to know what to do with the time that I didn't spend in the kitchen any more. But it led to my making many new friends in Stockholm and learning to take initiative outside the home. The vital thing is that we each take equal responsibility for the work God means us to do together for the future of our country, and in the home.

Freed in Belfast

by Linda Pierce

AS I PRAYED with hundreds of others in a crowded Catholic Church in Northern Ireland I suddenly knew that for me—an Indian Catholic—the Mother Church was Ireland. So many of Ireland's sons and daughters have given their whole lives to serve countries like mine that there will always be a strong bond.

The five weeks I recently spent in the North and South of Ireland were rich beyond measure. Visiting Cork, in the South, was like the cherry on the cake for it was once the home of my great-grandmother.

It is hard to be superficial in a city like

Belfast. The sight of armed soldiers in the street reminds you constantly of the war. I met people who were realistic about the situation and at the same time open to fresh ideas. There was surprisingly little bitterness among some of those who had suffered.

One young woman working for a youth development project told me in the course of our conversation that her young brother was serving a 17-year sentence; another brother lost the sight of an eye in the cross-fire on his way home; the eldest brother is in the Royal Air Force and has not been home for many years. There was no sense of hopelessness about her. She seemed to care for her friends and colleagues and for those less privileged than herself.

I met a group of young men and women

who were soon off to India to help build a granary. Many of those going had suffered through the present situation. Their aim was to experience a developing country and perhaps to lend a hand. They were busy raising their fares.

Another group, both Catholic and Protestant, were studying the Bible together and getting to know each other's communities.

During the weeks in Ireland any longings I had for a secure or comfortable future for myself or those dear to me did not seem important any longer. For me it was a freeing experience for which I can only thank the people of Ireland.

I believe God's gifts to the Irish of a sensitive heart and a generous spirit are more than ever needed in our world today.



PEOPLE'S LIB cont'd from p1 where no one is afraid, no one hates, no one grabs what they want—where no one wants to grab because life makes sense and people live with satisfied hearts?

If we want to be liberated for that, the list of what we want to be liberated from becomes rather different. We need to be liberated from demand, from jealousy, from the passion for pleasure or power, comfort or control. We need to lose our fears, our bitterness, our wish for self-justification, our binding habits, our prejudices. We need to become liberated personalities.

We can demand rights as well. But then this list, too, gets stood on its head. We need the right to be hurt without hurting back, the right to serve, to work hard, to expect no reward, the right to look truth in the face without the padding of lies, the right to give gladly, to sacrifice, and the right to the purity that cleans the body social like a great flow of rich red blood.

My list of rights could easily be mistaken for a list of duties. Yet nothing could be more wrong. If these qualities were imposed on us from outside, they could turn into duties. But personal discovery of them, by following the inner compass, reveals that in fact they are absolutely fundamental rights. They are the key to, and the fruit of, true liberation.

'Freewoman' by Claire Evans, Becket Publications, from Grosvenor Books, 54 Lyford Road, London SW18 3JJ. £2.25 postage paid.

'Spy thriller'

THE POWER OF INNER FREEDOM is the theme of Norwegian artist Victor Sparre's book about the Russian dissidents, *The Flame in the Darkness*. 'The Russian dissidents' lesson to mankind,' he concludes, 'is that we must all be ourselves first and so gain the freedom to create beyond ourselves. He who has won inner freedom and become a flame in the darkness has won the greatest victory a man can win, not only for himself, but for all humanity.'

The book is the subject of a thoughtful review in the *Church Times* by Michael Bourdeaux. Victor Sparre, he writes, 'like the artist he is, draws the leading activists as individuals.'

The *Christian World* comments, 'His attempts to avoid the secret police read like a spy thriller.'

'The Flame in the Darkness' by Victor Sparre, Grosvenor Books, £2.15 postage paid.