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# NEW WORLD NEWS

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## GUERRILLAS STUDY MANIFESTO

THE ZIMBABWE ELECTIONS are coming to their climax. In this propaganda-battered city, stickers and leaflets deck trees and telegraph poles, there are nightly appeals on TV and radio, and a helicopter booms slogans every evening from the sky.

In the midst of this, the largest-circulation Sunday paper, *The Sunday Mail*, carried a new kind of manifesto on February 17. It was a full-page 'Call to Action' signed by 15 representative men from all over the country—a call to every man, woman and child—of every party or of no party.

'This is not a political manifesto,' they state. 'It is a call to rise above our conflicts and sufferings and launch the new Zimbabwe in unity and peace.'

'Africa is not meant to be torn apart between the ideologies of East and West,' they go on. 'Africa can show the world how to live. And Zimbabwe, at the heart and

centre of Africa, can lead the way: the way to close the gap between rich and poor; to unite the races in a common task; and to inspire both socialists and capitalists to work together for the good of all.'

Among those signing the manifesto are farmers, black and white, from Mount Darwin, Bulawayo and Mashaba—including the President of the African Farmers' Union; a former head of the Rhodesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs; a headmaster in the African township of Mabvuku, Salisbury; a senior Chief from Sinoia; a stores supervisor from the Midlands; a black student and two young whites serving in the security forces.

They say what they have decided:

- 'To forgive what others have done to us, and ask forgiveness for what we have done to others—which is the price of the reconciliation we seek.'
- 'To live every day the way we want others

to live—with standards of absolute honesty, unselfishness, clean morals and care for one another.

• 'And to help our leaders to do the same. Such a decision cannot be made for us by others—the British, the Russians, the OAU, the Commonwealth, the United Nations or anyone else. We must make it ourselves. In this way we can all start to build the Zimbabwe of tomorrow.'

'We sign this call on behalf of many throughout the country who have taken this step.'

The publishing of this manifesto marks the launching of a new effort to 'saturate the country with Moral Re-Armament'. Champion Chigwida, shift supervisor in a Salisbury factory and one of the signatories, was interviewed last week by the *Salisbury Herald*. 'Everyone is calling for peace and freedom,' he said. 'We want to help our people to pay the price for it.' He also announced widespread use of the MRA all-African film *Freedom*. 'It has been shown to thousands of people, with excellent results,' he said.

**ZIMBABWE contd p4**

## Who's responsible?

by Gordon Wise

IF A NATION does not have sufficient people who are prepared to be responsible for the way things go, anarchy or dictatorship ensues.

The question for every man and woman of faith is, 'Am I taking all the responsibility God means me to take?' It is a question that tests how close the Cross is to the centre of my life. Because taking responsibility means constantly letting God cross out my will and obeying His.

Being responsible means responding to fresh challenges. The level of my concerns this year ought to be greater than last year. If I don't stretch, I shrink.

My attitude to my community and my country should be to reach out in spirit to all whom we elect so that, in a sense, we share their burdens. Rajmohan Gandhi from India,

who has taken on the task of moral and spiritual re-armament, once told me that he had decided before God to be as responsible for the way his country was run as the Prime Minister of the day.

Such a decision changes one's attitude to everything. When things go wrong, my response is not to blame but to ask God whether there is anything I can do—or someone I know can do—to get the matter resolved.

My contribution may seem slight. I may see little beyond praying for the situation, and concerning myself with the needs around me—of the family next door or my neighbour on the bus. We need to do this because this is the way God means us to live. But it is curious how often such an encounter leads further—and one finds oneself led to a policy-maker in an area of crucial concern.

This seems to happen especially to those who carry these concerns on their hearts. God may show us, or may have shown, some area of life for which He means to hold us accountable at the end of the decade, such

as a new spirit in education, a new purpose for industry, a new concept of the role of the media, or the right functioning of local or national government. This will only happen as people in that field find Him as a reality in their lives and take that experience further.

For me, it has meant spending most of my life in lands other than that of my birth. For others, it has meant rarely leaving their country or community. But when God gives a mandate, we must never drop it.

Being responsible for the way things go is not self-important, for a moment's honesty about myself brings an overwhelming sense of my inadequacy, measured against Christ's criteria. Any bold and constructive initiative I take has to be cradled and carried through in God's adequacy, not in my own.

It does not necessarily mean being part of a particular (or spectacular) action; but it does mean living in such a way that each person I encounter is helped towards the next step of character growth. And such that

**WHO'S RESPONSIBLE? contd p4**

'The only limitation could be our refusal—or reluctance—to take the responsibility God asks of us,' wrote Gordon Wise on page 1. Perhaps the greatest limitation is fear—can I cope? Will I know what to do? What if I make mistakes? How will I find the energy and courage to keep going when things get tough?

The fears are universal. But all around are springs of renewal—even when the world is darkest. Here people who have accepted God's calling to responsibility—some recently, some long ago—describe their sources of inspiration.



## Rhapsody in green

**BRIAN BOOBYER, a former rugby international, lives in Oxford with his wife Juliet and two sons. Many students have found the beginnings of faith in their home. Recently it has been the launching pad of the play 'Columba', which was written by Juliet with Joanna Sciortino, and which toured Scotland in the autumn.**

WHEN I WAS 12 a teacher at school used to take us for walks on Sunday afternoons. As we went, he gave a name to every bird, every sound. I can remember him pointing out the first migrant to arrive in the spring of 1940—a willow warbler. It was 13 March.

Every journey, every walk, every early morning has been different for me because of that man's enthusiasm for nature.

The message of nature is newness. Every tree is different, every leaf. Every moment is new.

I love walking through a wood, watching, listening, aware that what I can see is only a tiny fraction of the teeming life around. Wytham Wood near Oxford has stood through the centuries. It feels very old, and yet it's new. Nature is always like that.

Wytham has a message of its own—'Slow down'. A tree rebukes a busy, burdened spirit. To look at a beach or an oak is a feast for the spirit.

Different kinds of birds nest at every level of an oak. Over 500 varieties of insect feed exclusively on it. Flowers and vegetation grow easily underneath. It lasts for centuries, providing shelter and protection. There is no impatience about it—the first acorn takes about 70 years to arrive.

Sounds bring back memories. In Wytham Woods there are wood warblers in the summer, and I love their high-pitched song. I remember hearing them in profusion on

the edge of the Dartmoor Nature Reserve some years ago, and among beech woods near Presteigne in mid-Wales. But most of all my mind goes back to where I first heard the song: bicycling up the hill between Marlow and Maidenhead 37 years ago. The moment is still vivid to me.

Nature is perfection: the nest of a long-tailed tit, lined with hundreds of feathers; a beech tree beautifully dressed in light green in early spring; the cry of a curlew: a carpet of bluebells; sunrise. 'Earth's crammed with heaven and every common bush afire with God,' wrote Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

Late one summer evening I went out with an American friend to find the nightingales in Wytham Wood. He took a tape recorder. We also took a friend who thought it was ridiculous to go out on such a venture at midnight. The nightingale did not let us down. At one point in our recording of its song you can hear the cynic saying, 'Fantastic'.

Recently I've seen geese flying through the sunrise over Cromarty Firth: divers at Scapa Flow: crested tits in the Spey Valley: ospreys near Aviemore: crossbills in the old Caledonian Forest: gannets galore on the

Bass Rock: fulmars gliding through the old ruined cathedral at St Andrews—all magical sights.

The boatman who took us out to the Bass Rock said that there were 30,000 gannets on the Rock, and about 10,000 went out every day to fish. It has stayed in my mind ever since: 10,000 gannets out at sea, fishing—the very idea of it!

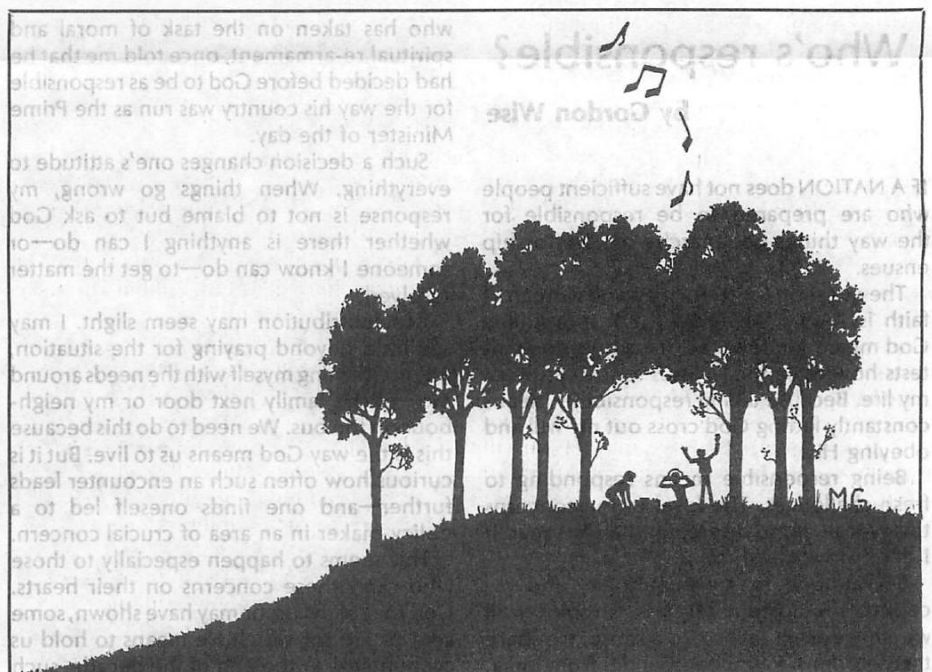
The great naturalist, Richard Jefferies wrote of the 'sublime extravagance of nature'. 'Every blade of grass, each leaf, each petal is an inscription speaking of hope,' he wrote. 'Seeds by the hundred million float with absolute indifference on the air. The oak has 100,000 more leaves than necessary and never hides a single acorn. There is nothing utilitarian, everything is on a scale of splendid waste. Nature flings treasures abroad. Prodigality and superfluity are stamped on everything she does.' Nature is an expression of the lavishness of God.

But she is unobtrusive in her profusion. The branches of the apple tree are in bloom everywhere, not just at the sides, but also at the top, where nobody sees them but the swallows. They do not grow for human admiration. They remind me of the carvings in cathedrals; mostly unseen and author unknown.

Nature is newness, perfection, renewal, lavishness, unobtrusiveness, and also permanence—like mountains, streams, rolling plains.

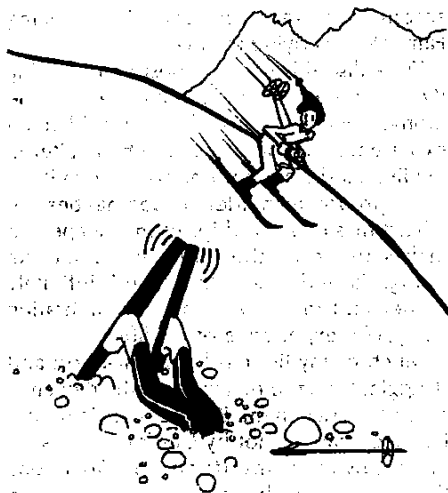
Recently I was on a plateau, above Panchgani in India, looking down on the valley and across the Western Ghats. Venus was in the sunrise and the first birds were singing, the 'whistling schoolboy' with its four clear notes, the robins and the bulbuls. Permanent, perfect.

'Little flower,' wrote Tennyson, 'if I could but understand what you are, root and all, and all in all, I should know what God and man is.' 'Nature is God's writing and can only tell the truth,' wrote Henry Drummond. Nature reflects the glory of God.



# Skiing is believing

by Angela Cook



SKIING, breadmaking and gardening—an odd mixture of activities perhaps, but all have at some point helped to fill the empty reservoirs of my faith.

In skiing I have enjoyed a freedom from the fear that has often prevented me from enjoying life to the full. Through its speed and rhythm and its majestic scenery I have learnt again to value my place in God's loving and generous plan.

I have discovered too that the obstacles on the ski-slopes one instinctively tries to avoid—the hillocks and hummocks—can give just the right impetus for a speedy turn. Skiing in dense cloud has taught me the need for good technique; a knowledge of the basic rules which, once mastered, can turn skiing into the unknown from a terrifying prospect into an exhilarating one. And you can't take yourself too seriously when lying face down in the snow!

A similar cure for self-importance comes

with breadmaking. I know that the yeast alone is responsible for a risen loaf. I can assist it, but no more. Dough has a quality of warmth and life that makes me appreciate my ability to see, touch and smell. This same dough allows me to knead out any frustration or anger I may feel. The joke is that the more I pound it, the lighter the loaf it gives.

Gardening can change my desire for speedy results and effective activity into an appreciation of God's time-scale. It slows down my frantic thoughts until I can see again: see that a plant is content to flower whether it is noticed or not. I am reminded that God does not force seedlings to grow; just gives them plenty of sunshine and rain and waits for them to blossom.

All three have at times helped me to understand a little of the breadth, freedom and joy of God's plan for His creation. Perhaps that is why they have helped to fill the reservoirs of my faith.

## 'Though I never may be well'

**HUGH AND BRIDGET ELLIOTT** have lived adventurously. Hugh's work took them for many years to Nigeria, where he was in government administration before and after independence. They were in Ethiopia when revolution broke out there. In recent years they have worked to build trust between people in all sides of the Rhodesian conflict—in Britain and Rhodesia—and to inspire a determination to work for a just solution.

Bridget is an artist, who has exhibited at the Royal Academy. Four years ago she suddenly contracted an illness which has left her unable to stand or walk, or write, and only able to talk with difficulty.

Hugh writes: Bridget said at first, 'God seems to have taken away from me the three things I enjoyed—cooking, painting, speaking'—and this on top of the pain and discomfort and frequent spells in hospital. Yet not long ago she said, 'In spite of many black moments, these years have been some of the richest of my life. I would not have missed them.'

How would we cope? There were many fears—especially when Bridget fell and broke her hip. Yet we have never once been left unaided. Friends from all over the world, volunteers, some of them nurses, have come to help us and always enriched our home with laughter and care.

At no point have we known what to expect in the course of this illness. None of the specialists knew. I have wavered between hopes of a miraculous recovery and resignation to accept death and parting—especially last December when she was close to death. How hard it is for an administrator not to know! We have decided that God means us to accept each day as His gift. After all, that is what many dissidents in Russian or Ethiopian prisons go through.

The times when we are feeling low force us to turn to Christ and depend on Him.

How much I have depended on activity, or results! Now it has become a matter not of 'doing' but of 'being'. Bridget said after a tough spell in hospital, 'I am beginning to feel God wants me to use my weakness. I have often wished I could either die or get well. But I can honestly say that this illness has brought me closer to Jesus. Perhaps He can use me as I am.'

We have had setbacks. But we have had to pick ourselves up and then turn to prayer—for other people and situations.

We have learnt to persist. When I am tempted to retreat from the work God has called me to do into isolation at home, the thought has come constantly, 'Do not retreat. Give Bridget maximum care and comradeship, but move out to meet people.' She has backed me marvellously.

And the world has come to our door as never before. We have had some of the richest times ever with friends from Britain, from Africa, and many other places. Bridget is often only able to say little, but that little sticks in their minds. To a Nigerian friend we have known for many years she said, slowly and laboriously, 'I have come to the conclusion that life is very short. If we had fought as we should for God's will to be done in our countries, they might not be in the state they are in today. We have to decide what is the priority in life.' He went away very thoughtful.

God has given much more than we expected. Bridget has just written this poem:

Jesus, sinner though I be,  
Have forgiveness, Lord, on me.  
When self-pity grips my mind,  
I'd pray for suffering mankind.

Though I never may be well,  
In Thy power and love I'll dwell,  
In my heart hold up to Thee  
The travail of humanity.

When friends arrive to see us here,  
They say they sense the Spirit near.  
It's not our virtue—no, not mine!  
Jesus, my companion be.

## Wordsworth reading

by Catherine Hutchinson

ONCE IN THE SMALL HOURS of the morning my flatmate was startled to hear me chattering to myself in the next room. I had just bought a paperback of medieval French verse.

I love poetry. I am never happier than when sprawled in an armchair thumbing through the pages of an anthology, enjoying the juxtaposition of unexpected images that convey meaning far beyond the individual words. And in the frenetic 80s I am easily drawn to the peace of Wordsworth or an Edward Thomas countryside.

Yet the poetry that has meant most to me has been that which has given words to things I have felt but have not known how to express.

When I was first introduced to the opening lines of *The Hound of Heaven*:

'I fled Him down the nights and down the days;

I fled Him down the arches of the years...', the 'I' was not just Francis Thompson, the poet, but myself—the part of myself that was still fleeing Him—and as in the poem this was for fear, 'lest, having Him, I must have nought beside'.

A few months later, with the help of friends, I allowed God to catch up with me. It meant honesty about the 'me' I had repressed. Yet taking the decision was far easier than I could have imagined. And rather than limitation and constraint, I found freedom.

Since then I have often turned to George Herbert. As a young man, Herbert decided to use his poetic gift for sacred purposes. He also decided to become a priest, but only achieved this at the very end of his life, after disappointment at Court and years as a deacon. It was during these last years that he wrote his happiest poetry. Yet, despite his tussle with ambition, and his regret at turning so late to his calling, his faith speaks clearly today, confirming that, whatever we may do, God is still there bidding us welcome.



# Self-effortless

by Edward Peters

EIGHTEEN OF US recently spent eight days on what might be called a 'retreat'. It was a response to a deeply felt need for a closer friendship with God.

On the day we set aside for silence I settled down to pray and seek what God wanted to say to me. After a fair while of thinking and writing, I suddenly began to get some quite unexpected thoughts—about my relationship with my parents. 'You have never let yourself be open to feel the love they have for you,' I wrote down. 'They love you dearly, but you have refused to be a real son to them. You have been determined to

prove that you can manage without them. You have been too proud to accept their love.'

I saw how deeply hurt I had been at school by the way I was bullied and teased. I had found it difficult to make friends. There came a time when unconsciously I had shut myself up inside and determined that I was never going to be hurt again.

'You've had a closed heart,' I wrote. 'Because you have refused to be loved, you have been incapable of loving. You have judged everybody and everything. You have been gripped by the lust for being right. You have been the slave of rules.' I began to understand that the passion to be right and the arrogance of so many of us British have their root in a stunting of heart power.

This closed heart of mine not only conditioned my relationship to my parents and to others. It has governed my attitude to God.

That morning I saw that the people who crucified Jesus—not the crowds in the square, but the religious leaders—were exactly like me. On the outside they appeared 'good'. They were exemplary in their devotion to rules and observances. But their hearts were

closed and so they could not accept the love Jesus offered them. So they sent Him to His death. I have sent Jesus to His death again so many times through my pride and refusal to accept love. Yet even when I was killing Him, He was dying for me.

To realise this was the most painful thing I've ever been through. But then, at the moment when I felt such a louse, I had an experience of God's love which has altered my life. And I did nothing to deserve it.

My predominant idea of God has been of a hard master who whips us into shape and makes us do all the things we don't like doing. To understand that God is infinitely tender and loving was the most liberating and joyful experience of my life.

Much of my life has been self-effort and struggle, trying to match up to the demands of God as I saw them. But the strain in my life has been caused not by God's demands on me but by my demands on God. To accept that I am not worthy of God's love, nor of His calling—and never will be—takes away the strain. I'm slowly beginning to learn that it is not my capabilities and virtues (if any) that are most useful to God, but my open heart, my inadequacy and my need of Him.

## ZIMBABWE contd from p1

This is the film which, at the request of Jomo Kenyatta, independent Kenya's first President, was shown to nearly a million people on the eve of independence there. Written and acted by Africans, it is set in an African country approaching independence and portrays the struggle for freedom from hate and greed as well as from colonial rule.

The message of the manifesto, and of *Freedom*, is being discussed far and wide. Last week came word of a group of guerrillas studying the *Mail's* full page in the bush. 'These young men have worshipped their guns for so long,' said the man who brought this report. 'They know they must now find something different. Reading the page, they told me, "This is what we want for our country".' A shopkeeper in a Midlands tribal trust land confirms that in his area it is the most militant young men who have shown the greatest interest in the Call. 'People are hungry for reconciliation and unity,' said a Bulawayo housewife. 'They are coming to me and asking about the standards of Moral Re-Armament.'

In Gatooma, the head of an agricultural office told a black civil servant how impressed he had been by the civil servant's handling of a recent meeting. 'I saw your name on that page in the *Mail*,' he went on. 'Now I understand what it is about. Please send me more literature about Moral Re-Armament.'

The head of a national farmers' organisation said, 'I am going to learn that manifesto by heart. It says what no one is saying—and what needs to be said.' Since its appearance

letters asking for more information have come from many parts of Rhodesia. People in Bulawayo bought space to print the manifesto on a half-page in their own *Sunday News*.

The cost of these newspaper advertisements is being met by contributions from many people across the country.

## Shona

At the same time, showings of the film *Freedom* are multiplying. Last week a Bulawayo nurse showed it to a crowd of 500 near her clinic. A white army officer, in a district where a bus was ambushed with serious loss of life, telephoned for the film to show to his troops and in the villages. Churches and youth groups are asking for it. To reach wider into the tribal lands, a group of volunteers has begun recording the dialogue of *Freedom* in the Shona language; and a Ndebele script is in preparation.

'We shall be using the message of *Freedom*, and giving the challenge of the manifesto, to our people for years to come,' said an African farmer whose family and farm have suffered much in the war. 'With the four standards of Moral Re-Armament, God cured my own bitterness. We must give that experience to our people.'

The stories of some of those who signed the manifesto can be read in *Darkness and Dawn in Zimbabwe* by Hugh Elliott. Available from Grosvenor Books, 54 Lyford Road, London SW18 3JJ, price now 40p, with postage 55p; 10 copies £1, with postage £2.30.

## WHO'S RESPONSIBLE? contd from p1

over, say, a decade, nations will have been enriched. It does not mean doing everything, but being ready to do the necessary thing; and, in any case, to see that it gets done—even if I do not feel very well qualified.

A senior advisor to a head of government, who has served the democratic cause well in crisis after crisis, said to me the other day, 'The thing which attracted me to Moral Re-Armament many years ago was the experience that God had a plan for my life and I could work at finding and following it. We must not let ourselves be overwhelmed by our sense of our own imperfections. We all need to be open to a call to be concerned with affairs of high state.' And he added, 'I am not talking about politics but about how to help the statesmen. I have experienced the dynamic effect of people who concern themselves with what these men carry and help them to think for the world, not only for their own little area.'

The point is not whether we are called to a specific task or to take a more general responsibility. The only limitation could be our refusal—or reluctance—to take the responsibility God asks of us.

As we enter the 1980s, we need to reassess our readiness to be really responsible. It requires courage and foresight to predict the shape of things to come in this decade. Experts predict it will be turbulent. But it could be triumphant. We could work out new ways for mankind. This readiness to let God stretch us is the most important single decision each of us can make. And it satisfies.

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