

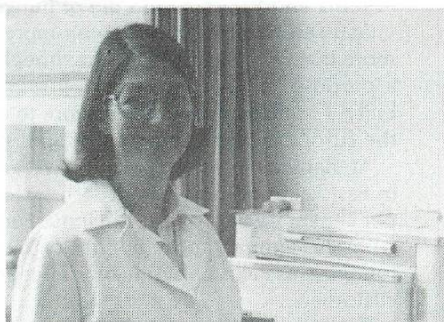
THE PREMIERE of *Un soleil en pleine nuit* (a sun at dead of night) launched the first session of this summer's MRA conferences in Caux, Switzerland.

The one man show by Hugh Steadman Williams and Kathleen Johnson, originally produced in English as *Poor man, rich man*, sets the life of St Francis of Assisi in a modern context. The French mime-artist, Michel Orphelin, uses song, mime and monologue to portray the joy and simplicity of St Francis's relationship with God.

'Why is it that all the world runs after you?' one of the followers asks him. In a song St Francis replies that God chose the most insignificant, inadequate man He could find—so that His greatness would be clear.

What happens when people let God direct them was illustrated during the session by people from many countries. Here we carry a flavour of the meetings, and an extract from a book which tells of Caux's impact on world affairs:

## BREAKING THE ICE IN THE ARCTIC



L. Wolvekamp

by Kristina Nelson  
Sweden

LAST OCTOBER I went to the North of Norway, above the Arctic Circle, to work in a hospital for six months. After eight years working full-time with MRA I felt I needed to refresh my practical nursing experience.

I arrived in late autumn—for two months it was dark when I woke in the morning, it was dark all day, and at night when I went to bed, it was still dark. For the first month I felt very unsure of myself—I had everything to learn; and I was conscious of being Swedish—Norwegians sometimes have strong feelings about my country. Also there was tension between the staff of my ward and the operating theatre staff.

When the sun returned I went skiing, and broke a rib. This meant that I could not make beds, so I was put in charge of coffee-making.

I discovered that we were drinking the patients' coffee, rather than buying our own. I felt this was wrong—particularly at a time when the hospital was in financial difficulties.

'I can't just go and tell my colleagues what I feel,' I thought. 'I'm new and I'm Swedish.' With a friend I prayed that I would know what to do.

I used to get up at 5.30 in the morning to spend time in quiet with God before going to work. One day, during that time, I knew that I should talk to the sister in charge.

She called a staff meeting next day. At the meeting I told everyone what I felt. I had seen the suffering that corruption caused in Asia. I felt that corruption in our own

countries was just as wrong and if we were dishonest even about small things, we were part of it. And I offered to buy a thermos for the staff's coffee to pay for the coffee I had drunk.

To my surprise everyone seemed relieved that I had raised the issue and next day coffee was bought for the staff.

The next day also the matron called me and thanked me for my courage. She started to talk about the lack of teamwork and other things that were worrying her. We had more meetings with the staff, and strong feelings were expressed. I began to wonder what I had stirred up.

Then I heard that the sister in charge of my ward had given in her notice because she felt the situation was hopeless. There is a desperate shortage of nurses in that part of Norway and her resignation could have meant the closure of the ward.

The matron of the hospital called a meeting of the staffs of the ward and the operating theatre to persuade the sister to stay, but to no avail.

### Hard to leave

My six months were coming to an end and I found it hard to leave with things as they were. One day, in the early morning, the thought came to me, 'If it is right for you to stop working now, it may be the most helpful thing for the situation.' This proved true. Knowing that I was leaving, people talked more honestly with me than they had previously.

Before I left I invited the staffs of the ward and the theatre to meet the doctor and his wife with whom I was staying. Everyone came except those on duty. We had a joyful time. The wife told them how we were learning teamwork in the home. I showed slides of India and told them of my experiences there.

At the end of the evening I was moved to see that people who had been enemies travelled home together. But my greatest joy was that before I left the sister in charge of the ward told me that she had decided to take back her resignation and give the job another go.

# NEW WORLD NEWS

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## Peeling the onion

FELIX JOSS, who was for 25 years Manager of the St Gallen Transport Corporation, Switzerland:

FOR THE LAST TWO YEARS I was in office, I worked at creating a system that would enable the Corporation to pay for itself, ending the deficit which such corporations invariably have. Finally I worked out a scheme which was accepted by the authorities at all levels. It was the first such scheme in the country. All it needed was approval in a referendum of the local population.

Then, three days before the referendum, a journalist on a widely-read newspaper strongly attacked the scheme. In spite of our answers he kept on attacking. In the referendum the proposal was rejected by a small majority. My two years' work lay in fragments.

I was furious. I wrote letters to the paper's board of directors and did everything I

ONION contd on p2

Felix and Loni Joss



L. Wolvekamp

ONION contd from p1

could to blacken the name of that journalist.

Then a visit to the Jura opened my eyes. In this part of Switzerland there are separatists who want to break their region away from the Swiss confederation. This schism goes through many families. It is much on my heart, and I went there to try and bring healing.

There I realised that a man who is full of bitterness and hate cannot help others. I returned home, and asked forgiveness of the journalist for my hate.

Some time later the authorities brought up my proposals again. My apology, I realised, had helped to relax the atmosphere, and we could talk rationally about them. This time they were accepted with a two-thirds majority.

But the change God works in us is like the layers of an onion. Scarcely had this matter been dealt with when I saw that for years I had been nursing another grievance. It was against a friend through whom I had fallen off the track I was trying to follow. Now I saw what this bitterness had done to me. I saw it as if I had been on a bicycle ride, and the chain had suddenly broken, making me fall off. I had got up again and walked on—but I wasn't going as fast as if I had mended the chain and cycled.

## Beyond Europe

I realised that the main fault lay not in his pressure on me, but in my losing my sense of direction when I was with him. I had to apologise to him. Never again, I decided, would I do something which I was not convinced was God's will; but I would be a true comrade to those whom God put me to work with.

Not long after this, a friend of mine asked my wife and I, 'Should you go and work overseas?' This was a shock to me, for my thinking did not stretch far beyond the Swiss frontier, and certainly no further than the European continent.

My reaction was to say, 'Only if it is God's will'. My friend left me to think it over. And then God gave His guidance. It has taken us twice to India, and we are shortly returning there for a third time. We have found the work fascinating—always much to learn and yet, underneath the differences, people's

natures are just the same, and they can find answers in their lives as we can.

In India another layer of the onion came off. For years I had cherished the embers of bitterness in my heart towards my mother, who had often dominated our family. Early one morning I saw how much I was to blame, for I should not have let myself be dominated, especially after I was grown. I asked God's forgiveness. Some days later, in a time of quiet, I had a sense that my mother, dead 30 years, knew of this step.

## LONI JOSS:

WHEN WE RETIRED I thought I would have an easier life and wouldn't have to look after such a lot of people. We thought of touring.

When a friend asked me what we had in mind for our retirement I told her. She replied, 'Well, when you have perhaps 10 or 15 years to live, you need to think how to use the time.' Thinking about this, we decided to put everything at God's disposal. This is when we had the thought to go to India.

At first we said, 'Let us put it aside. If it is God's will, He will show us again.' He did. For a long time I didn't accept it. But one night I was awakened from sleep, as if someone said to me, 'Is that all the trust you place in me?' From then on I knew this was the right course.

My children wanted to be sure that my heart would stand up to the journey, so I went to the doctor. To my astonishment my heart, which had previously been enlarged, was normal again. For us and our children that was confirmation.

We went first to Delhi. One afternoon I was alone in the house. As a typical Swiss housewife, always busy, I thought, 'Good heavens, I'm missing an opportunity.' And I started busying myself. Then everyone came home. I said to one of them, 'I feel so useless here.'

The Indian replied, 'Oh, no, no. In India we are delighted when people with grey hair come. You don't have to do anything. You just have to have an open heart.'

To learn to sit and have an open heart was very new to me. But I found that I could use so many of my experiences with people. And I learned too that there are precious values in India which we in the West need.

## Swiss bridge

by Christoph Keller

WE HAVE four languages in Switzerland, but fortunately only one army.

I come from the largest language-group, German. When I went to work in Sweden last year, where I continually needed someone to translate for me, I understood how the minority can feel.

When I returned to Switzerland, I went to my military service. In our company there were not enough NCOs in the French-speaking section and we were asked who of the German-speaking NCOs would join

them. It was four years since I had learnt French at school, and I thought the French-Swiss too different from us to work with.

In a time of quiet, however, I realised that after my Swedish experience I knew a little of how they felt, and that I should help to build a bridge. So I volunteered.

I told the section I was German-speaking, my French was very limited and I needed their help. It was amazing how much they taught me, and how well we worked together.

In a week I will receive my commission. I have written to the Commandant at the officers' school offering to serve again with French-speaking Swiss.

## WORLD JUTE

Robert Carmichael, the former head of the world jute industry, looks at the impact of the jute price crash on world jute prices which, through the efforts of the West to see a way towards a new economic order.

In the book *Robert Carmichael and the Jute Industry* the successful industrialist, he ran into many difficulties. New agreements worked out with the European jute growers in 1961, 'We have a responsibility to countries like India and Pakistan.'

In this extract from the book he tells how the industry has prospered when many people are seeking how to survive.

IN 1951, I was in India and Pakistan on an economic mission with a dozen industrial colleagues. One morning, during the hour of silence with which I start each day, a surprising thought came to me, 'You are responsible for the millions of jute growers in India and Pakistan who die of hunger.'

As I returned to France, I felt more and more that God had given me this thought for a purpose. A first step in taking responsibility, I realised, was to set to work to unite the European jute manufacturing industries.

At that time all the world's jute was grown in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh), while 65 per cent of it was processed in India. Europe, with an annual consumption of 500,000 tonnes, was Pakistan's only other important customer.

The French jute industry formed an association and, after a series of meetings with the 14 interested European countries, the European Association of Jute Industries was founded in 1954 and I was named President.

## A fair return

As I explained at these meetings, its mission was to help bring about a sound world jute economy—to give a fair return to the jute growers of India and Pakistan, to the middlemen, including the packers and carriers, and to the European and Asian manufacturers; and to provide a good product at a reasonable price.

To get the Europeans to accept this programme was the difficult task of the next few years. What I had learned at Caux was of great help in winning certain men, little by little, to these ideas. In 1959 in Stockholm, at a stormy meeting—in which I threatened to resign—I was at last commissioned to start talks with India and Pakistan.

I made a series of journeys through these two countries to convince not only the governments, but also the exporters and the jute industrialists, of the need to stabilise the price of raw jute.

One morning in my quiet time I wrote down, 'Leave for Pakistan as soon as possible, without knowing where you will go, whom you will see or when you will return.' Though I felt that I needed to know the country better before starting negotiations, I also knew that this thought did not come from me.

At this time, besides my work with the French and European jute industries, I

# AGREEMENT—THE BEHIND-THE-SCENES STRUGGLE

of the French jute industry, was the principal force behind the 1965 agreement pioneering the way for other commodity agreements, helped the industrialised economic order with the Third World.

*lui-même*, published after his death, he tells of the impact on his life when, as a moral Re-Armament. It transformed relationships in his family and led to 500,000 French textile workers. But it did not stop there. As he said in a speech 'I can no longer live simply in our own corner of the world. As Europeans we have a duty to Pakistan.'

It is how he made that thought practical. His story has added relevance at a time to implement the Brandt report, *North-South: a programme for survival*.

represented the French textile industry at Common Market meetings. And I had numerous other activities. In spite of this, I set out for Pakistan ten days later.

Twenty-four hours before I left, I had the thought to take with me an MRA film made in the port of Rio de Janeiro—*Men of Brazil*. It tells the story of how a few workers rid the port of union rivalry and start to root out corruption and dishonesty. In surprising ways, this film took me all over Pakistan.

I first showed it in Karachi, to the Governor of the Bank of Pakistan. At the end he said, 'It is extraordinary that you should have brought this film here at this moment. It is exactly what the country needs. You should show it to the Cabinet.' Five ministers of the government saw it. Afterwards the Minister of Industry said that the film ought to go to the whole country. He proposed that I join him in Dacca, the capital of East Pakistan. Ten days later I showed the film there to the Provincial Governors and 300 top civil servants.

The Minister for Industry, surprised at the remarkable reception given to the film, invited me to his home in Chittagong, the principal port of East Pakistan. Here, I showed it to 2,500 students and to 400 dockers.

During this month-long journey I met Pakistanis of many different backgrounds and began to understand them. As in Europe, I encountered fierce opposition from some industrialists and from people who wanted to play the market. But during the next five years I was able to get a number of those I had met to see the need for an agreement with the West and with India on a stable price for raw jute.

## Fierce opposition

In 1965, the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations succeeded in getting a world agreement on the stabilising of jute prices. Instead of the agreements which had been signed and then broken, this one aimed only at fixing general objectives, leaving a committee to decide each year the terms to be implemented.

A meeting was held in Rome six months later to fix the prices and conditions of the agreement.

I knew that several countries had signed only because they were convinced that such an agreement could never work. Britain, I knew, opposed any agreement on principle.

Also, speculators in Pakistan had brought pressure to bear on the Head of State and had had the Minister I knew replaced by a man who would do their bidding. And the Pakistani representative had instructions to prevent the agreement from working.

As for those from continental Europe, my German colleague had succeeded in convincing most of them that the Indians and Pakistanis could not be trusted, and that I should be directed to do nothing to bring agreement.

The conditions, therefore, were not favourable. I had the thought to arrive in Rome a day early and to see the FAO man who was organising the meeting.

During the conversation we both had the same unexpected thought which, next day, helped to overcome the opposition of Great Britain.

## Breakthrough

Over lunch I met the Pakistani delegate. I told him of the instructions that I had received from my colleagues and asked how things were going with his Minister. His feelings burst out—the instructions he had been given, he said, went right against the interests of Pakistan, especially of those who grew the jute.

I was then able to tell him of my innermost conviction: if God had allowed the agreement to be signed, it certainly need not meet defeat at the last moment; if we were ready He could show us how to agree.

That afternoon we met in restricted session to work out a suggested price to submit to the full committee. During this session I said that our aim was to fix a fair price and that there were two ways of going about this. Either we could do it the old way, where those who wanted a low price asked for half the price they expected and those wanting a high price responded by asking twice as much as they expected; the resultant bargaining invariably produced a wrong price. Or we could lay aside our official positions for a moment, and seek together, man to man, for the right price. If we agreed to try the second way, I said, I had a proposition to make.

This was accepted. I suggested that we might ask the man who, because of the importance to his country of their jute production, seemed the best person to tell us honestly what he thought was a fair price.



Robert Carmichael

D C Thompson and Co

There was no doubt, I said, that this man was the Pakistani representative.

There was a long silence, then the Pakistani delegate said that if everyone agreed that there would be no official record of what was about to be discussed, and that he would not be held to the price he would indicate at the plenary session, then he was ready, as an individual and an expert, simply to give this price.

Everyone agreed. He then stated a price which corresponded so nearly to that which all those present recognised as fair, that the German delegate said that he did not understand what was happening. The price mentioned seemed to him so reasonable that, as the representative of the German Government he could not do otherwise but accept it.

Within a few minutes the 20 delegates had all agreed.

## Wider repercussions

At the plenary session the next day this proposal was approved by all the countries except Pakistan, whose delegate explained that as he had not received instructions from his Government to give his agreement, he had to oppose it. He indicated, however, that in view of the remarkable unanimity expressed, he would do everything possible to get his Government to accept the proposition. This came five days later.

Such were the events that allowed this agreement to be implemented. It was a surprise to those who did not know what had made it possible.

This settlement was put into effect and brought substantial advantages to the workers of Pakistan and India. In 1968 the Director-General of the FAO was able to say that jute had shown the way to a new type of international agreement with much wider repercussions as it was beginning to influence other industries such as hard fibre and rubber.

## Living vulnerably

**Esther Amaudruz**  
University librarian, Switzerland

MY FATHER was the first man in our village to have a radio. He taught me to read the newspaper. My mother taught me to read the Bible. I remember crying over a picture of a child who had lost her home and parents in the Spanish civil war and in my heart I decided I would do something that such things could not happen again.

Last spring I was suddenly told to take on a new job, starting the next day. For the first time in over 30 years of professional life, my superiors had not consulted me before deciding.

It meant learning a new, very demanding job in a short time. I heard that two or three people had refused it, and I felt I had been chosen because my bosses knew that I was too old to leave and find a job elsewhere.

A storm raged in me—a feeling of being impotent to do anything, and a fear at taking on such a task with so little strength. I felt exploited.

At my wit's end, as I knelt in my room, three thoughts were given to me. The first was not to let anything destructive use my vulnerability, whether my own thoughts or other people.

Secondly, I thought of a book I had read where a woman, dying of cancer, had

decided 'to do honour to her Creator' in the way she lived. I realised, through my distress and incomprehension, that what happened to me did not matter. What was important was that God, whom I had decided to serve, should live in me.

Finally, I decided to give my best to the things I was involved in at the time. I had a part in preparing the world congress of Business and Professional Women which was about to take place in Switzerland. And as a Swiss I felt a commitment to the work of Caux—for many years I have given money and holidays to work there—and felt this a priority.

### Flesh, not stone

I simply had to accept that I was no heroine. I needed help. I went and told my director that I could not do my predecessor's job alone. After investigation he arranged help for the heaviest months.

I have decided to let God use my vulnerability; to live with a heart of flesh, not stone; to say what I believe, even if it means I stand alone. At first people may laugh. Then suddenly one of them starts to talk about real things—her family, perhaps, or what she feels about being single and having a child.

I have found the new job has brought me close to colleagues who I did not get on with before. I have discovered treasures of the heart, care, availability, human warmth, touched with humour. And I am finding relationships of trust.

## Switchboard connection

**Frédéric Chavanne**  
France

WHAT HAS MADE my faith grow? Taking on a task beyond my capabilities, which I have felt God meant me to take on.

While at university and military service, I asked myself how I could give my colleagues the ideas that had transformed my life. But when I thought about particular people, I wondered, 'What on earth could I say or do that would interest him?' I saw that I was not fully available for God's leading—I was held captive by my dreams and doubts. I prayed to find God's will.

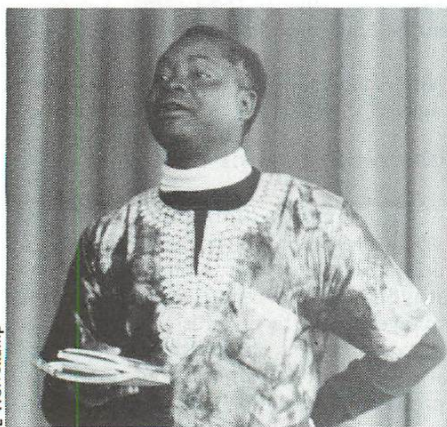
As a Christian, I realised my first responsibility was to help other Christians to deepen their commitment to Christ's ways. As I tried to do this I made real friends, and learned a lot myself.

I learned that I must not compromise the foundations of my faith. At my military base, I was trained to operate the telephone switchboard. While I was learning the job, a colleague suggested that I raise the charge for the officers' outside calls.

Because I had decided to live by absolute honesty, I replied, 'You can do what you like, but don't ask me to do such things.' The man called me all sorts of names and said that I was stupid not to take this chance. But I stood my ground, and he let the matter drop.

Later on, however, my colleague agreed that the only consistent attitude was one of honesty. We began to find a respect for each other, and the relationship between all of us who worked the switchboard became quite different.

## 'Just a beginning'



**REV ELKANAH FOLORUNSO, an Anglican priest from Nigeria: 'Caux is an opportunity to meet God in a new dimension. It gives us the chance to look into ourselves when things go wrong, rather than outwards to find faults. I have prayed to God to be used anew in fulfilling His plan. This is just a beginning.'**

## Dream ladder

**Annette Auger**  
a nurse from Blois, France

TWO YEARS AGO I took part in Peter Howard's play *The Ladder*. The play presents us with the choice whether we will let ambition and indulgence control us, or whether we will obey God. This year the idea came to me to put on this play in Blois.

I was scared and did not know how to go about it. But in a time of quiet I had the thought, 'Don't sell this city short. Have a big vision. It's not for your glory but for God's.' At that moment something clicked inside me. And the dreams that I had gradually happened. We saw the mayor, the bishop and many others in positions of authority and told them all about it.

I realised how much God wants to take us and use us. And I learnt much as I worked with other people. He is very exacting about the care we have for one another, and He means us to fight the moral battle for our communities. He wants us to have the joy of working for Him. Through the play a seed was sown, and it will germinate. I must be faithful in looking after it.

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