

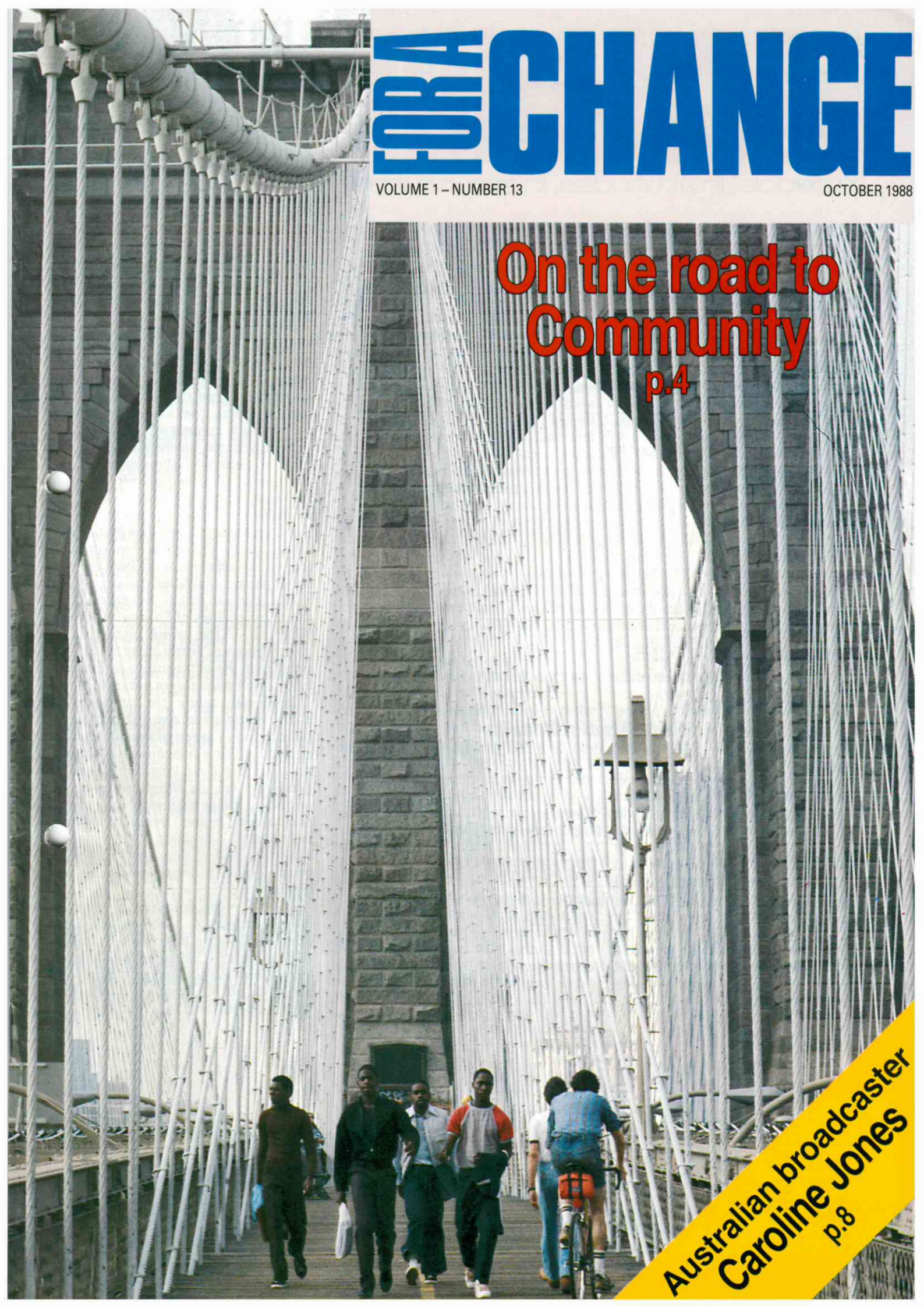
# FORA CHANGE

VOLUME 1 – NUMBER 13

OCTOBER 1988

**On the road to  
Community**  
p.4

**Australian broadcaster  
Caroline Jones**  
p.8



# FORA CHANGE

in people, in attitudes, in structures

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Joggers on Brooklyn Bridge, New York.

(Photo: Rex Features)

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## EAR TO THE GROUND



by Echidna

As we began work on this issue the theme of its lead story — community-building in the inner-city — came home to us with a bang. Our accountant was mugged in broad daylight on her way home from work. She was left with a black eye and no handbag.

Next day she received a phone call from a complete stranger who had found a handbag in the garden beneath her own block of flats and took the trouble to make several phone calls to track its owner down. The money and credit cards had gone, but our colleague was relieved to get back her personal papers and belongings.

The saga illustrates two sides of life in the inner cities of Europe and North America — the crime and violence which frightens many away to the suburbs, and the extra-mile neighbourliness which encourages others to stay.

Ironically, while the problems of Third World cities are linked to overpopulation — seven of them now have over 10 million inhabitants — urban decay in the First World is linked to depopulation. As those who can get out do so, those with least buying and tax-paying power remain behind. Investment declines, employment decreases and so does the local authority's ability to provide housing and services.

Look for the community spirit in North America's cities in our Lead Story, take part in an international conference on 'Change in the Cities' in People and Places, and visit Bradford, England, on the frontline of Muslim/Christian relations in World Look.

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FOR A CHANGE

## National repentance

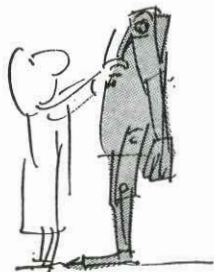
Sergo Mikoyan made headlines around the world earlier this year when he wrote in an article for a Soviet newspaper that there could be no forgiveness for those like his father who had personally assisted Stalin in his exercise of power.

Even more striking than this admittedly untheological statement was his assertion that guilt does not die with the generation which perpetrates the crimes. He suggested that his contemporaries — though not personally involved — bore responsibility for failing to condemn what they knew to be wrong. It was time for national repentance.

This powerful challenge finds an echo in a recent interview with Michael Cassidy, a widely respected churchman who leads the National Initiative for Reconciliation in South Africa. 'There may be the first dawns of realization amongst some of us who are English,' he asserts, 'that we have as much complicity in the build-up of apartheid as the Afrikaner. If we want the Afrikaner to tell the black that he is sorry for what he has done, then I wonder whether the British won't have to mount a mission of apology to repent towards the Afrikaners for what the British did to them in the early part of their history. I believe there would be great power in a symbolic act of that nature.'

## Bull's eye

A reader has brought to our attention a recent quotation from Britain's Labour Party leader, Neil Kinnock, which she considered appropriate to the theme of this magazine. Addressing the Fabian Society, Mr Kinnock is quoted as saying, 'We who commend change to others must be ready to change ourselves.' Bang on target, Neil.



## And another

And, come to that, Academician Ivan Frolev, Mr Gorbachev's special adviser on philosophy, isn't so far off the mark either. 'We must bridge the gap between words and practice,' he told the 18th World Congress on Philosophy in the English seaside city of Brighton. 'Often the most enthusiastic words about justice have been uttered just when we have departed most from its practice.' He got down to nuts and bolts by asking that 'no engineering project be begun without moral consideration, weighing up the negative effects it may have on human beings'.

## Duty free

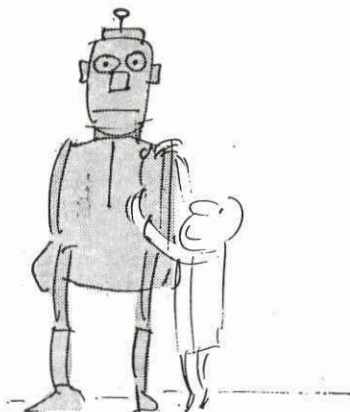
Being of a non-conformist turn of mind, a letter in a British newspaper caught my interest when it took issue with the notion that 'sexual activity is to be taken for granted among everyone from their teens to their sixties'.

'There is a widespread belief that someone who is not engaged in regular sexual congress must have "problems" which need "treatment",' asserts the writer, a 33-year-old. 'Sexual activity has been transformed from a want to a need, from a need to a "right", and from a "right" to a duty without anyone seeming to notice the transformation.'

He continues, 'I find the practice of celibacy far less difficult than those who have never tried it might think.'

## In touch with death

I came into contact with death in an unusual way last month. During an international conference, in the middle of a dining room packed with two or three hundred people, a 54-year-old man who was a personal friend of many of those present (including myself) collapsed without warning under a massive heart



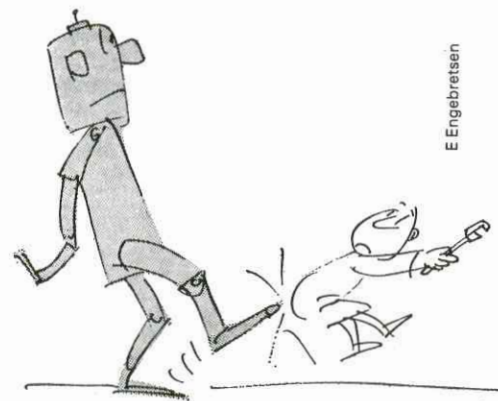
attack. While doctors fought unsuccessfully for nearly an hour to save his life — unable to move him — that dining room became a place of amazing peace; everywhere you looked people seemed to be praying.

In the days that followed, a new depth entered the discussions of the conference; the petty or the trivial would have been out of place. The courage of the man's wife and young children was stirring. They sat in the front row during a memorial meeting held on the morning of the funeral. As well as the tributes from old friends, I will long remember the prayers of two generals — one a Muslim from Egypt, the other a Christian from South Sudan. One of them described death as 'a call from God to come back to his paradise'.

## The Polish yuppie

In our mailbag has come a letter from Poland appreciating the article on yuppies in our June issue. 'For us in Poland this is not only a new but a very exotic phenomenon. It rarely happens here that a young man is given a prominent position with genuine responsibility. The most likely candidate for an important post is a senile clerk.'

Our correspondent then offers us his description of a Polish yuppie. 'He is 35, balding, formerly a hippie fan (he has an East German *Hair* record at home), now a regular church-goer. He has a job at an institute, but he is not very keen on it, for the salary never approaches six figures (even in terms of the local money). He takes a lot of part-time jobs instead and thus his working hours approximate those of a true yuppie. And referring to one of the themes of *For a Change's* article, he is exploited by society, which gives him very little money, but simultaneously he exploits it by giving it very little work.'



E Engebrætsen

# On the road to Community

*Deep in the cities of the western world lies a wasteland of crime, violence and deprivation. Or does it? Catherine Guisan Dickinson gives another side of the picture.*



R Corcoran

Day after day I saw them sitting in the hot summer sun: nice-looking, quiet teenagers chatting aimlessly on an empty inner-city street. 'We should find work for them,' I thought. By that night it was too late. A gun fight over a necklace left one young man dead, another seriously wounded.

Meanwhile at my beautiful upper middle-class church, discussions on 'community and reconciliation' revealed guilt and concern. Why weren't we able to meet the human needs we saw around us? For many of us it was a question of time and energy — some were single parents, others had only their spouse as a support system. Few felt able, at the end of a hard week, to reach beyond their immediate family.

For the modern city dweller, nostalgia is tempting. Where are the wonderful meals gathering three generations around a festive table? Where are the caring neighbours who listened to endless childish chatter and watched over our games?

But isn't this nostalgia a middle class luxury — and reserved to natives at that? After all, the cities described by Zola and Dickens were no havens of peace and comfort. In her autobiography Swiss writer Anne Cuneo describes how in 1946 her widowed mother came from Italy to Switzerland — my own country of birth. She

quotes her mother: 'I quickly realized that an Italian in Switzerland could only be a worker or a servant — I did not even have the right to rent a flat.' Material conditions have improved, but Mother Teresa can still talk of the poverty of our modern western cities: 'a poverty of the spirit, of loneliness and of being unwanted'.

In the past, there were close-knit communities within cities — America, for instance, had her Little Italys, Germantowns and Chinatowns. Black communities, isolated in their ghettos, had a strong sense of identity. Today traditional patterns are breaking down. Each year an estimated 20 per cent of the American population moves house; one in two marriages end in divorce and over 50 per cent of women work outside the home. In Europe the statistics are similar. Half of the households in Paris, for instance, are made up of one person.

The challenges facing my city of Minneapolis-St Paul, a thriving metropolis of over two million, are typical. We have lovely suburbs and elegant residential areas close to downtown. But not far away is the inner city, where few live unless forced to by economic necessity. There you see boarded-up houses, rental units in disrepair, open drug traffic on the sidewalks, children and teenagers left to their own devices. And even in the affluent suburbs you can find children

whose parents are too busy to talk to them, struggling single parents, drugs and teenage pregnancy.

This is not a crisis of finance or generosity. Charitable contributions in the States hit a record \$93.6 billion in 1987. These gifts financed museums, parks, hospitals, homes for abused mothers and their families, the Red Cross, inner city renovation, anti-drug programmes... And millions of hours are given by both private Americans and corporations to charitable causes, shelters, foodshelves, churches, community action programmes. So what is missing?

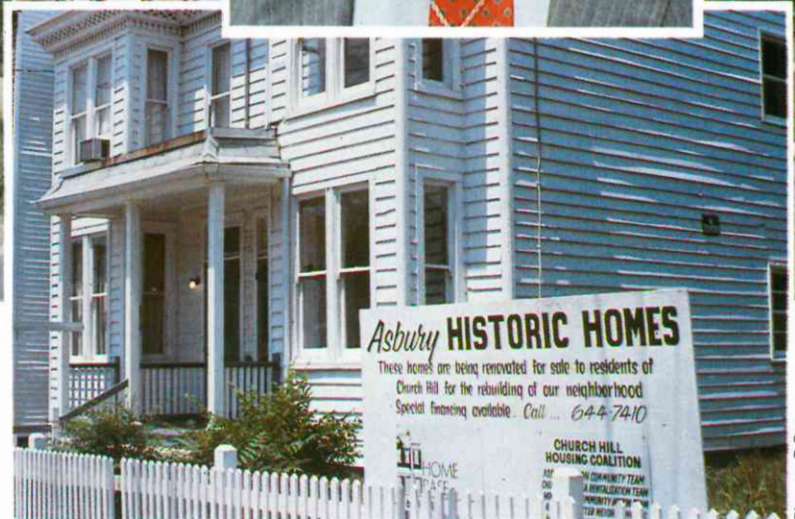
I asked this question in Richmond, Virginia, a city which has seen a revolution in its power structures over the last decade. A century ago Richmond was the capital of the southern states which went to war over slavery. Power remained in the hands of the white establishment until 1977, when a black majority was elected to the city council. Attitudes and structures have had to change.

Susan Corcoran lives in one of the few integrated middle class neighbourhoods of Richmond with her husband, Rob, and their three small sons. The oldest two go to public (state) schools. She feels that parents who leave such areas on account of their children are misguided. 'People remain one step away from involvement because of their children,' she says. 'They fear the drugs, the crime, the poor quality of education and move away. They do not realize they could make a difference and that they are actually shortchanging their children by raising them in a ghetto of privilege.'

## Energy for change

The Corcorans use their home to bring together people of different races and economic strata. 'Very often the problem in our cities is not the people who obstruct reform, but the conflicts between the people of good will who are trying to make a difference,' says Rob Corcoran. They have produced a video called *The Courage to Change* which documents the revolution which has taken place over the last decades and features people who are at grips with the city's continuing problems.

Al Smith, Director of the Office of Human Rights Advocacy, uses the video to inspire his co-workers. His staff of 17 serve as a liaison between Richmond City Council and 77 volunteer commissioners in developing policies to serve the needs of the population. They have worked, for instance, on equal access for the handicapped to public facilities, and are pioneering means of harnessing the skills of senior citizens, such



Ben Campbell, director of 'Home Base', a non-profit housing corporation which renovates houses then sells them to neighbourhood residents at cost, bringing home ownership within reach of those who would otherwise be unable to buy

as spelling competitions which partner each child with a retired person.

In Smith's view, the gap between social policies and actual results is caused by wasteful administration. Only a third of the dollars involved actually goes to the needy, he says. 'Too often maintenance of jobs is the highest priority; delivery of service comes second. There is also "turfdom" — competition between agencies. We cannot legislate intent. We have the resources but in order to have the will, hearts have to be changed.'

Ben Campbell, a pastor who helped to found both the Richmond Urban Institute — a cross-community citizen-level forum — and the non-profit housing corporation Home Base, agrees. For ten years, he says, he and a group of young black and white leaders struggled to change the city. 'But our numbers did not grow and I became convinced that the energy for change was not present. The love of God in our souls is the only lasting source of energy. We need people to go through spiritual healing so that they can work for a long time at hard problems.' I met him at Richmond Hill, a former convent overlooking the city, which he is transforming into an urban retreat centre, 'a quiet place of reflection and prayer offered to all'.

'In the last ten years I have been radicalized,' says Campbell, who used to work at the most influential Episcopal church in town. His analysis of American realities is harsh: 'even though the economy is growing, the poor are getting poorer'. He puts part of the blame on tax codes which subsidize highways at the expense of city public transport and encourage the growth of suburbs where only the better-off can afford to live. 'These people share in city

resources without bearing the cost, as their much lower county taxes only support schools for their children. Warehouses which used to provide entry-level jobs for the poor have also been relocated in the suburbs, out of reach.' Cuts and changes in federal taxes under the Reagan administration have meant, he says, that cities have less money to spend on housing, public transport and other social programmes. 'Of course the average person does not feel any guilt over this,' he says. 'He is just happy to pay less taxes.'

Both Campbell and Smith perceive a longing for change, even in the hearts of the most privileged. Smith cites the young business people who have moved into the inner city and provide jobs. Campbell finds courage in the fact that out of his six full-time staff members, four have chosen to be volunteers and 350 households contribute regularly to the needs of Richmond Hill.

These insights from Richmond match the 'three R's of Christian community development' advocated by John Perkins, a black minister and activist working from Pasadena in California: Relocation, Reconciliation, Redistribution. Perkins' own experience, related in his book *Justice for All*, underlines the importance of 'living among those I feel called to serve so that their needs become my needs'.

When my husband and I moved to the Summit-University neighbourhood of St Paul we were not making a conscious relocation — in terms of income we fitted the profile of the typical resident. We knew we

would find poverty, but we had not reckoned with crime. Seven years, three burglaries and two break-in attempts later, we had to decide whether to call it quits. We prayed, we consulted friends. A deep sense of love had developed in us for the area, its children and adults. We felt needed; we remained.

The next summer high-profile drug dealers from California settled next door. When I challenged their abusive language, they threatened me physically. By then we had learned that evil must be fought early before it grows too powerful. Thanks to close contact with the police and the involvement of neighbours, the drug traffic ceased. Two months later the troublesome visitors disappeared.

Meanwhile Nick and Vicky Davis, a black middle-class couple who had stayed in the area out of conviction when most of their peers moved out, were taking a similar stand against other 'crackhouses'. They received threats and their house was attacked. William Wilson, our representative on St Paul City Council and its Vice-President, says such citizen action has been a key element in the decline in the number of crackhouses in the area.

Fighting crime only removes an obstacle to community building. Perkins' second theme — reconciliation — plays a more positive role. The importance of family unity in the fabric of the community came home to us when, apparently out of the blue, three of our neighbours' marriages broke down. For the

*Continued...*



Jacqueline Pellerin likes to say that it is her North American Indian blood which has given her the tenacity to fight for her community in Trois-Rivières, Canada, for the past 18 years. She has been at the heart of an urban restoration which the city's Mayor, Gilles Beaudoin, describes as 'almost miraculous'.

In 1970 the inner-city area of Hertel was due for demolition. 350 families, many of them with between 12 and 22 children, lived there in the heart of Trois-Rivières, surrounded by the port, a paper mill, a textile factory, the prison, the cathedral, a convent and the City Hall. Unemployment stood at 39 per cent, education levels and church attendance were low and crime rates high. The buildings were run down and there was a considerable fire risk.

The city authorities seriously considered demolishing the district and rehousing its inhabitants elsewhere, to create space for more lucrative development. In opposition the local people formed an action committee, with Pellerin as its president. They came up with a counter-proposal, based on a survey of the needs and wishes of the residents. It recommended that the city, together with the provincial and federal governments, fund the renovation of 31 houses and that those houses which could not be salvaged be replaced by 100

## City's new heart

low-cost units, including a residence for senior citizens.

It was at this point that something changed in Jacqueline Pellerin's approach. She visited Northern Ireland, where she discovered situations even more painful than her own, but also an inner strength and a larger perspective. While in Europe she took part in an international conference for Moral Re-Armament and returned home saying, 'We must renovate houses, but also people'. She set to work to provide work and leisure activities and to strengthen the ties of trust and friendship with other leaders and with the authorities — a sharp contrast to her past adversarial approach.

'My role,' she said, 'is to serve as a bridge between the professionals and those who are to benefit (from their services). We help them to do their work better.' Her

new spirit surprised the municipal authorities, who were still studying the situation with the provincial and federal governments, and helped to create credibility for the community's proposals.

In 1976, the city government accepted the citizens' proposals and funds were made available. Housing units were tailored to match the needs of the families — who could even choose their own neighbours. By 1984, when Pellerin was named one of Quebec's ten personalities of the year, Mayor Gilles Beaudoin of Trois-Rivières could say that Hertel had become a district to visit rather than one to avoid. Now a book has appeared on her work, written by a Hertel resident\*.

'I tried to carry out the mission which God entrusted to me, to go and look for the riches in the hearts of people,' says Pellerin, who had only four years of formal education. 'My diplomas are the hearts of people. My four children are happy and we are close. I am now no richer than when I began. I live on welfare like the others. In a fruit cake there are many ingredients: each one counts.'

Laurent Gagnon

\**'La soeur volante et son quartier'* by Michel Belisle, published by Jean Richard, Trois-Rivières.

...Continued

next three years, out of eleven households we were the only intact family not on welfare.

But reconciliation has to go beyond the home. When a girl of another race hit our son with a baseball bat, there was potential for an ugly racial confrontation. At school I was met by anxious staff and excited children. In the infirmary, however, all was calm. The girl had apologized, my son had forgiven, all within minutes of the incident.

Reconciliation can also reach whole communities. Minneapolis-St Paul has the largest urban population of Native Amer-

icans after Los Angeles. The Governor proclaimed 1987 'Year of Reconciliation in Minnesota' to mark the 125th anniversary of the 1862 war between Dakota Native Americans and the US government, in which 500 people died. As a result, 38 Dakota warriors were hanged in the largest mass execution in US history and women and children were deported, many of them dying in the process. Today there are still far fewer Dakotas in Minnesota than in 1862.

The Year gave an opportunity for symposia and exhibitions, as well as dozens of smaller events in schools, churches and study groups

around the state. An editorial in the *Minneapolis Star and Tribune* put their purpose well: 'Change can often come from confronting and acknowledging unrecognized truths. Minnesotans of every ethnic extraction still hurt from that blood-letting clash of cultures. A need remains for Indians and non-Indians to defuse resentment and rectify injustices that continue to harm the entire community.'

David Larsen, elected tribal Chairman for the Lower Dakotas, was 'pleasantly surprised' by the year: 'I was able at last to tell our story in our own words.'

Left: Jacqueline Pellerin turns the first sod for the Hertel project, flanked by (left to right) Gilles Beaudoin, Mayor of Trois-Rivières; Denis Vaugois, Member of the Quebec National Assembly; Pierre Samson, Quebec Housing Corporation; Federal MP Claude Lajoie  
 Right: 'Brooklyn Kids', New York

Frances Fairbanks, Executive Director of the Minneapolis American Indian Center, belongs to the Ojibway nation. Her parents never taught her their native language for fear she would suffer persecution at school as they had. 'Today,' she says, 'our people are suffering because of action taken against our fathers or grandfathers. I have felt tempted to hate, but prayer has helped me control my reactions. Colour or culture should not be a barrier and we are the ones to break it.'

Fairbanks feels that the Center, which is financed by public and private agencies, represents a step toward restitution. 'We are busy here trying to help people survive in the city,' she says. The Center serves an urban population of several thousand Indians, but also blacks and whites, with a wide range of services, counselling and support groups.

Perkins' third principle for community development is redistribution. 'God provided the earth for all mankind,' he says. 'We must commit ourselves to living with less so that we can share more.'

Some, like Ben Campbell, advocate a look at the federal tax system, to redistribute incomes and change economic structures. Innovative welfare and social security policies are needed. But, with Americans' love of individual freedom, private initiatives will have to come to the aid of public policies if the cycle of poverty and neglect is to be broken.

In the business of community-building most of us will remain anonymous except to our closest friends. Those who relocate to areas of need in order to serve will face financial sacrifices — for instance, in the uncertain resale value of their homes.

Others, still living in privilege, are playing their part. Take Jewish businessman Eugene Ingber, for instance. In 1981 he promised 61 Harlem sixth-graders that he would pay their college costs if they would stay on at school. They could come to him at any time for advice. Nearly all of them finished high school — a host of businessmen around the country have followed his example. Now, in the public arena, the New York State Legislature have approved a scholarship programme which will pay state and city university costs for anyone with an income under \$18,000. It will cost some \$70 million in the first year.

Three men who have harnessed their professional expertise to the task of community building illustrate the diversity of approaches available. The work of architect James Rouse, be it a waterfront harbour or a bridge overarching the street separating two communities, is inspired by the need to make cities livable. Christian psychiatrist Scott Peck has written a book, *The different drum*, which attempts the leap from personal growth through small communities to world peacemaking. It has led to the establishment of a non-profit Foundation for Community Encouragement. And *Washington Post* columnist William Raspberry regularly



Linda Sole

confronts his readers with the realities faced by urban minorities and reports on countless individual initiatives.

Back in my neighbourhood the trash is piling up again, blowing onto my flowers. The Vietnamese couple next door have just suffered a burglary and are moving out. The police car we saw over the fence the other day was there because an eight-year-old girl had been murdered, reports my son.

Community-building is long-term work.

Many burn out. But strangely enough, in the midst of anger and questioning, I feel peace and joy too. My fate is welded to this community and I do not want to escape. I have become part of the invisible chain of people around the world struggling to free themselves from the bondage of injustice, poverty and immorality. Our strongest link is a joyful affirmation of life, an enduring determination: 'Thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven.'

## Room at the Inn

The average American lives only a few pay cheques away from homelessness, says Linda MacFadden, one of the initiators of America's first college-based shelter for the homeless. She speaks from experience — she has been on the streets herself.

Homelessness in MacFadden's home town of Portland, Oregon, has changed over the past ten years, she says. With the decline in local timber and computer hardware industries, unemployment has climbed, particularly among seasonal workers. 'We are no longer dealing with just the mentally ill, transients or single people, but with whole families.'

In 1986 a committee led by the Mayor of Portland came up with a plan for church-based shelters, staffed by volunteers, to fill the gaps in civic services. Six new shelters opened up — five of them at city churches. MacFadden's college, Warner Pacific, offered rooms in a student residence for the sixth — Bethlehem Inn. It opened in January 1987.

The Inn provides emergency night shelter for 12 people at a time and is run by students — MacFadden was its first programme director. Two students a night act as hosts, while local churches and the community help with funds and hot meals. Some tenth of the college's students are involved.

Families stay until they find jobs and have saved enough for the down payment

on rented accommodation. MacFadden reckons that some 75 families — with a couple of hundred children — passed through the Inn in its first 18 months. Some have since returned to help.

For the student volunteers, mostly from comfortable homes, the experience has been an education in such 'dynamics of homelessness' as 'no address — no school, no phone or transportation — no job'. They also say that the work has developed their faith.

MacFadden herself is no white-gloved Lady Bountiful. For five years she stuck with a man who was battering her. 'There was a lot of alcohol and, in his case, drugs.' When he became violent she took refuge in women's shelters, but found a predatory atmosphere there, with women taking advantage of each other.

Eventually she left the relationship: 'I realized I could not help him unless I was living the way Christ wanted me to live.' She slept on the floor at work until she could afford a home. Slowly, she got back on her feet, returned home and started college.

Alongside her work at Bethlehem Inn she has also been volunteering at Raphael House, a shelter for battered women run by a religious order following a Greek Orthodox model. On her first visits she was impressed by the 'support and love and nurturing' there — and startled at the presence of men, banned from most women's shelters: 'we want to show that family relationships can be good'. Now graduated, she hopes to join the order and work full-time at the shelter.

Mary Lean

by Peter and Rosemary Thwaites

In the Sixties, Caroline Jones was one of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation's bright young television reporters. In the Seventies she became nationally known as anchorwoman of the main TV current affairs programme *Four Corners* and as presenter of a popular daily programme on Sydney radio, *City Extra*. Then in the Eighties, the acknowledged 'first lady' of Australian broadcasting suddenly left her career at its summit.

In 1987, after a five-year gap, she returned to the ABC, hosting a new radio programme, *The Search for Meaning*, in which Australians of many backgrounds describe their roads through life and their spiritual discoveries. Jones now asks her guests where they find happiness, what part God, prayer and meditation play in their lives and about their experiences of love, beauty, suffering, death. 'But to ask questions like that,' she told us, 'you must be prepared to answer them yourself. This particular programme can't be done by a reporter reaching in and pulling someone inside out, like a vulture picking away at a carcass, in the name of objectivity.'

Media-watchers have been astonished by the success of such a programme, 90 minutes a week nationwide. David Millikan, the ABC's head of Religious Broadcasting, believes one reason is its effect on many of the participants. 'People come back and say, "That's the first time anyone has taken me seriously. You've started a process in my heart that I've been unable to stop." They feel encouraged to think about things they've not had the opportunity to express. People married for 20 or 30 years go to air and talk, and sometimes the most fascinated listener is that person's spouse! We're all interested when prominent figures are asked about their private beliefs. We see them in a new light. The inner journey is often more exciting than the public figure.'

In the programme's first 18 months some 200 people have appeared on it. It is not so much any virtue in them as their honesty that strikes home. The president of the militant Teachers' Federation, for instance, talks about facing the death of her husband at an early age. Or a slightly eccentric millionaire stockbroker describes his intellectual atheism, the misery of wealth and his longing for peace of heart. Former Prime Minister Sir John Gorton says that his greatest moment was not gaining power but returning from war service, his face seriously scarred, to find that his wife's and family's love for him was unaffected.

Stephen Godley, the programme's producer, says, 'Where someone is talking about themselves, you can't help but listen. Contact with another person's search can only help your own.'

So former Police Commissioner Ray Whitrod, one of Australia's 'honest cops' in a society increasingly aware of deep and pervasive corruption, talks frankly about his faith, as does Barbara Mackay, widow of a murdered anti-drugs campaigner. A Communist building workers' leader tells of finding in the conservation movement a struggle transcending class barriers.

A programme on the theme 'What is love?' begins with an interview with a young prostitute, describing her job in a matter-of-fact way and the illusions and degradation that go with it. She is followed by an elderly couple who have worked through many problems including alcoholism and whose marriage has stayed the distance, and finally by some words from Mother Teresa. Aboriginal leaders like Ken Colbung or Burnam Burnam break through the widespread stereotypes of Aborigines to be seen as big-hearted human beings. A leader of the refugee Lao community, Tianethone Chantharasy, extends thanks that his family and countrymen have been given a new home in Australia.

Caroline Jones grew up as a child in quiet New South Wales country towns. It was wartime, and until she was six her father seemed only a 'tall, handsome stranger' on his brief visits home on leave from the army. Caroline shared a little weatherboard

cottage on the main street of Murrurundi with her mother, grandmother and aunt. One man's army pay did not go far and they were supported by friends who lived on neighbouring properties. Her grandmother was active in the local church, and Jones remembers her as 'the epitome of the Christian life — kind, selfless, sociable, accepting of poverty and hardship'. Home life was happy, especially after her father returned. Jones is grateful today for her upbringing. From her accountant father she learned 'determination, humour, a sense of justice'. Her mother, a journalist, was artistic and creative.

Church-going, however, played no part. 'At home there was no talk of religion. It was implicit that we were Christian, I suppose. There was adherence to a strict moral code. Any lying would be punished. The phrase "to have faith" was used, and "do unto others as you would have them do unto you".'

Jones changed schools a lot as the family moved around. She loved sports and did well in class. 'Achieving well academically was easier and more understandable than the turmoil of personal development, about which I spoke to no one. I was pain-

# Broadcaster's loaf of bread

fully shy and most afraid of appearing foolish. My camouflage was clowning and polishing a quick wit with words.'

School was followed by studies at three universities, though without graduating, a brief marriage that ended in divorce, and some extensive overseas travel.

By 1964 Jones was in her mid-twenties and working as a receptionist in Canberra. A friend thought her voice sounded good on the paging system, and suggested she apply for a job with the ABC, which was then holding auditions.

She started as a television announcer. 'I took to it like a duck to water. I could hardly believe my luck — a square peg in a square hole!' The small Canberra office quickly gave her experience. She was a reporter from its inception with *This Day Tonight*, the long-running daily current affairs show, and in 1972 won a Logie award for a story on poverty and poor accommodation in inner-city Sydney. To her own surprise and gratification, she found herself being built into a 'media personality'. It all provided a welcome 'safe place' for a naturally shy person. Further awards followed. Less welcome recognition, however, came in 1980 after an exposé of corruption in local councils, when Jones and one of her colleagues received ugly threats of violence.

During those years she made an important creative discovery. 'I came to realize there was great value in listening to people. Often I had a sense of being a channel, of myself and so many others united as we listened to the guests speak. There's a great power in listening — just being there. It's something we can all do for each other. It was one of several keys to the beginning for





glimpse the true meaning of love as an offering of ourselves to others with no defined return or result anticipated. What I saw in teachers and sisters was not martyred, selfless service. It was unaffected naturalness, happiness and fulfilment.'

At 'personal development' courses she saw her 'egotistical' behaviour more clearly. 'I discovered that my efficiency was a two-edged sword. Helpful for getting things done, but also a weapon which can be used unconsciously to keep others from growing, to intimidate others.' She started to attend church with a Catholic friend. Then, to her own surprise, she asked the parish priest if she could become a member.

'I experienced the deepest sigh of relief, like a lone sentry who has been left on guard for too long, tense with alertness and apprehension of danger, finally relieved of his lonely post,' she writes in a forthcoming book. 'It felt like coming home. I felt the deepest peace. I began to live more in the present moment, without anxiety for the future. I began to accept whatever happened, even when it was difficult or fearful, as having some wholesome or teaching purpose for me. Quite simply, I was happy. None of the practical details in my life had changed but I was now seeing them in a new light.'

At Easter 1985 she received Communion for the first time. 'On that day I acknowledged that I wanted to try to live as a Christian. If someone had suggested two years earlier that this would happen, I would have been absolutely disbelieving.'

Movingly and at length she describes what she found: 'a new ability to see what is wrong with you, to accept it, to own it, and to get on with making a loaf of bread anyway. Suddenly to find you have clear opinions on matters formerly disregarded, a new sense of values in place of an old objectivity. It's like a marvellous joke of which I've only just got the point. It feels as though there *are* answers even though I can't remember them all.'

Nearly two years later Jones accepted Millikan's invitation to return to the microphone in

*The Search for Meaning*. He admits that his idea for the programme was considered 'brave' when he first put it forward at the ABC: 'The only thing that got it to air was the fact that Caroline was doing it. She is the great aristocrat of Australian radio. When I first called her up, she said: "I've been asked by almost every person of importance in the media to come back and do various sorts of shows. I've said no to them all. Why do you think you have anything different?"'

Today Jones herself feels she is in the right place at the right time. 'I find receiving and reading the letters — 2,500 in the first nine months — an overwhelming experience. I've been in broadcasting 25 years and I've never seen anything like it.'

The programme has not escaped criticism. One listener wrote to the ABC upset that it was becoming a vehicle for the 'Christian lobby'. Some Christians objected when atheists were interviewed. The occasional interviewee has been found 'vacuous'. Jones's non-judgmental interviewing approach usually works well — as in Aesop's fable when the warm sun gets a man to remove his cloak after the ferocious wind has failed. The risk, however, is that hypocrisy may occasionally go unchallenged, as spiritual phrases can be used to disguise ulterior motives.

Caroline Jones is quick to oppose any suggestion that her new outlook on life has made her a zealot. 'I'm still a reporter — a professional, interested listener, not a bigot! My guiding star I suppose is: "Better to light one candle than curse the darkness." I've done a lot of cursing the darkness. I don't know how effective that was. But to shine light into darkness must be powerful.'

me of a consciousness of a spiritual dimension to life.'

In 1981, however, Caroline realized she was in a crisis. There was hollowness amid success. 'All my energy went into my work. I felt widespread affection from the community, but I was finding it increasingly difficult to maintain personal relationships. I began to lose sight of who I was. I felt very lonely.'

She sought counselling. Some years earlier she had lost her much-loved mother in tragic circumstances. 'I ran from the sadness into intensive work. Much of the energy that had enabled my single-minded drive to achieve could be seen as a scourge of self-punishment, and a flight from fears repressed.' She was relieved of her burden, but also of her drive. 'To my amazement, within a few months, I had given up everything in broadcasting.'

The next five years began with despair. 'With outside activity withdrawn, there was nowhere to look but inside. It felt terrible.'

For a year she stayed with a Christian family in the country. It was the first time in 25 years that she had lived in a family home. There, too, there was a grandmother 'who never forced her faith on me but just lived it buoyantly before my eyes'.

Back in Sydney she read for the first time books by Christian mystics and those of other religions. She helped to look after handicapped children and met the Daughters of Charity who care for intellectually impaired women. 'The cheerful, sensitive care of the sisters and teachers for their residents brought to life for me the illustrated passages from Christian scriptures hanging from the walls. I recall the dramatic impact of looking from the written word to the human action being played out in front of it. "Love one another as I have loved you." Suddenly I began to

## Cities, scientists and shifting perceptions

For more than 40 years the village of **Caux**, above Montreux in **Switzerland**, has played host to an extraordinary range of visitors. Rich and poor from all continents, ambassadors, politicians, religious leaders and ordinary people have been drawn to the Moral Re-Armament centre for conferences.

In July this year the French national daily *Le Monde* reported from Caux on the occasion of MRA's 50th anniversary. '(MRA) is neither a humanitarian non-government organization, nor a brotherhood of lay church people, nor a club for international good works, but all of these at once. Moral Re-Armament offers a conviction, almost more than an action — that the gap between "the intimate and the global", as the philosopher Gabriel Marcel put it, is not so very wide. In other words, that there can be no social or global "revolution" without personal "revolution".'

The author went on to describe some of the people he met in Caux, observing 'the teaching of Moral Re-Armament: one example of the fight against corruption is worth more than a thousand moralizing speeches on the subject'.

This year's themes included a training week for young people on 'setting new trends', a dialogue of scientists on 'the preservation of creation', a meeting of people from Asia, Africa and the Pacific and conferences facing the problems of health care, cities and the Japanese, European and American trade imbalance. 'Change in the cities — a consultation' drew over 600 people from places as diverse as the shanty towns of Rio to the prosperous city of Osaka, from divided Berlin to the slums of Delhi. The variety of initiatives presented at this conference made it a high-point of the summer.



C Spreng

(Left to right) Sir Stanley Bailey, Chief Constable of Northumbria, Marie-José Sublet, French Member of Parliament and Mayor of Lyons, Hari Shukla, Senior Community Relations officer for Tyne and Wear

### Trust on Tyneside

**Sir Stanley Bailey**, Chief Constable of **Northumbria**, says that his police force is the busiest in the whole of the United Kingdom. But an experiment in cooperation has led to remarkable successes in crime-prevention. The scheme got police, local environment departments, the probation and social services, local business representatives, schools and voluntary organizations to work together. Over an 18-month period home burglary was down by 23 per cent, other burglaries by 51 per cent and thefts of vehicles by 23 per cent.

Sir Stanley stresses the importance of trust. 'Without it,' he said, 'individuals, agencies and communities are unlikely to make the effort to produce that joint approach which begins the process of change.'

Relationships with the public *have* to be good for successful policing, he points out, 'unless we in the police are going to outnumber and outgun everyone'. Of police failings he says, 'Unless they are made somewhere else or are created in a laboratory, our policemen and policewomen come from the community. They are full-time on the job everyone should be doing part-time. Though we all like to think we are essential, we achieve nothing without help from others.'

The delegation from **Newcastle upon Tyne** accompanying Sir Stanley illustrated the cooperation achieved there. It included two local government councillors, **John Jordan** and **George Gill**, who is also Chairman of the Northumbria Police Authority; **Michael Shaw**, Treasurer of the Police Authority and Director of Finance for Gateshead; **Hari Shukla**, the Senior Community Relations Officer for Tyne and Wear,

spokesmen for the Indian, Chinese and African communities, and members of the host community involved in community relations.

### Atlanta drug squad

**Major Julius Deric** of the **Atlanta** (Georgia) City Police had another problem on his mind: drug abuse on a scale 'never seen before'.

Major Deric is in charge of narcotics prevention and intelligence for Atlanta's 1.5 million population. He fears most for the young blacks. 'We could lose a whole generation,' he says, 'just when they should be inheriting all the gains for the black people we fought so hard to obtain.'

A big concern is how to prevent former addicts who have been 'dried out' from returning to the streets. Facilities for long-term rehabilitation are too costly for them. The problem is compounded by the increasing

number of teenage pregnancies and by homelessness. Even though Atlanta was booming, he told the conference, 'there are 5-7,000 homeless on our streets'.

The police are meeting with community groups on all these problems and are cooperating with a charity, 'Coalition for the Homeless', by transporting homeless people to the nearest shelter. 'We must all be our brother's keeper,' he said.

### Slums of Rio

**Jorge Roberto Ribeiro da Silva** became President of his local Residents' Association at the age of 29. His hillside Camarista Méier district of **Rio de Janeiro** is home for 30,000. It is a mixture of the poor and the middle classes.

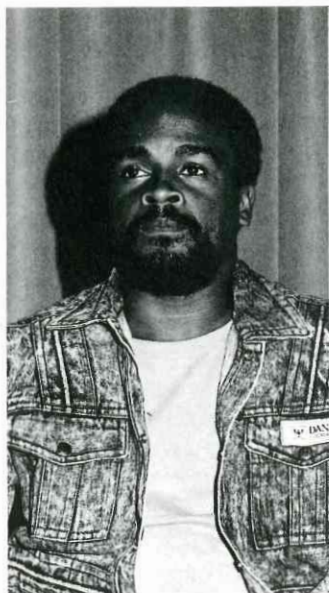
Da Silva decided to get involved with the community because of the desperately run-down state of the main primary school. He felt that it had given him a good start in life but now was distressed to find leaking pipes and crumbling walls. Within months of his joining the association, volunteers were at work in the evenings and at weekends repairing the school.

Soon after he was made president, da Silva met another community leader, Luiz Pereira. Pereira's work in bringing moral change to his community had led the favela (shanty town) to re-house itself with government help. 'He had been able to bring a new spirit into many of the favelas that surrounded us,' da Silva told the conference. 'Soon I was working with him. Through meeting him I completely changed my approach as president. Previously I would stay in the association office waiting for people to come to me. I decided to do things differently — to go and meet the people in their homes rather than leading from a distance. I



Major Julius Deric, Atlanta City Police

C Spreng



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soon found they had plenty of ideas of their own.'

A new spirit began to spread. Some of the old leadership of the association, who had been cheating people on the title deeds to their homes and land, publicly asked forgiveness.

Four years later a new community centre, built entirely by volunteers, is nearing completion in the heart of the area. Among other things it will house a full-time community worker.

## French common concern

**P**atrick Boulte believes in putting his money where his mouth is. With other professionals in Paris he gives regularly from his own salary to finance part-time jobs for the long-term unemployed.

'Common Concern in the Face of Unemployment' started with just ten people in Paris and now has 700 professionals in groups all over France who give either their time, their money or both. The part-time jobs are created using the skills or specialities of the unemployed to help with various charities. A bookkeeper, for example, had worked for the Red Cross, a seamstress with a charity needing uniforms, a manual worker in a hospital garden, a storekeeper for a food bank. Being part-time, people are both motivated to find a full-time job and have the time to look for one. Some of the professionals in each group spend time supporting those in the jobs created and helping them in their search for full employment.

## Trade catalyst

**W**hen Philips Electrical Industries produced an



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Lebanese from four different communities in Mediterranean dialogue (left)

in-house report accusing Japan of 'targeting' an attack to wipe out whole branches of European industries, **Dr Frederik Philips** got worried. 'In the past, wars have broken out over lesser things than trade friction,' said Philips, former head of the Dutch electrical giant. With a covering note he circulated the report to 20 of his Japanese friends. The result, in 1986, was the first of a series of round table talks in Caux.

Two years later *The Japan Times* was able to report on the round table's progress. Under the heading 'Shifting perceptions at Caux' an outline is given of meetings in Japan and the USA as well as Caux. Japanese participants, including **Ryuza-buro Kaku**, President of Canon Inc, took the unusual step of writing to their Prime Minister, prior to hosting round table delegates. They urged a shift in policy which would mean 'working to help the world to live together in peace and prosperity' as well as expanding domestic consumption. 'The purpose of the round table was to begin working as a catalyst in a conflict-ridden world,' writes *The Japan Times*.

The third round table took place at the end of August this year. By now friendships have formed and the initial frank confrontations have given way to constructive plans. A group will go to India to include people from the Third World, the Americans will work to shed their 'casino mentality' as it was bluntly put, and act to deal with their twin (federal and external) deficit. The Europeans have pledged to work to prevent the EC from going protectionist after the internal barriers come down in 1992. Meanwhile the Japanese have stimulated their domestic market and the trade surplus is going down at a rate of \$11 billion per year.

At the heart of the talks is the belief, expressed by **Olivier Giscard d'Estaing**, one of the organizers of the forum, that 'we are not fatalists'. 'We can change things,' he said. 'We do have enough faith.'

## Creative dialogue

**T**he preservation of creation' was the theme for two days of dialogue in Caux convened by **Cardinal Koenig** of Vienna. Scientists, politicians, industrialists and lay people brought together differing viewpoints on science, technology and the environment in an atmosphere of searching for 'what is right, not who is right'.

**Professor Eduard Kellenberger** of Basel University and **Dr Paul Laufs**, a member of the German Federal Parliament and spokesman on the environment for the Christian Democrats, were among those who outlined the threat to creation.

A young researcher described 'accepting' life on a Pacific island, a far cry from the industrial west. For another the role of faith began to enter the equation. Academics from Africa and Eastern Europe outlined their specific problems. And an industrialist put forward his case, asking for 'across the board' legislation that would still allow him to compete.

The group unanimously agreed to meet again next year.

## Around the Mediterranean table

**A**n idea born two years ago over a breakfast table between lawyer **Ramez Salamé** from Lebanon and a Member of the European Parliament, **Giovanni Bersani** from Italy, is growing to sturdy infancy through a series of 'Mediterranean Dialogues' held in Caux.

At the first dialogue, which took place in July 1987, Bersani outlined his vision for cooperation between the EC and the non-European countries bordering the Mediterranean. Such cooperation could effectively lead to a 'Mediterranean community'. A year later, Bersani and a colleague from the European Parliament, **Jochem van Aerssen**, were able to report that Europe was interested in the idea and that the institutions of the European Community were moving in that direction.

The conference looked at the common roots from which a Mediterranean society could grow. Representatives from Tunisia, Cyprus and Malta spoke of the common heritage shared by the region, thanks to the three monotheistic religions sprung from the tradition of Abraham. The parliamentarians suggested the possibility of a future 'Congress of Mediterranean peoples' like the 1948 meeting in Utrecht which opened the way for the formation of the EC.

For such a Mediterranean society to become a reality it was clear that citizens at the grassroots level must get involved. The Lebanese delegation, in which four different communities were represented, gave examples of how, in times of great tension, ordinary people had effectively helped in bridging the gulf between their communities.

Hope was expressed that initiatives will be taken at every level so that what van Aerssen called 'the Mediterranean family' becomes aware of the spirit that must animate it.

'This awareness', said a participant, 'requires a turn-around in our spirit, an openness to others. Then we will be receptive to the plan which can bring us together as servants of one Creator.'

by Michael Smith

## From Kashmir's hills to Bradford's mills

When spectator stands caught fire at Valley Parade, Bradford City's football ground, 64 people died in the flames. The city and all of England mourned. That was three years ago.

Last July a crowd of 10,000 gathered at the rebuilt grounds in happier circumstances. They were there to welcome Archbishop Desmond Tutu of Cape Town. All the city's religious communities took part in a service on the theme of justice. Muslim leaders were among them — a symbol, perhaps, of the growing partnership between Bradford's churches and the city's 55,000-strong Muslim community.

Today Bradford finds itself, in microcosm, on the front line of the world's Christian-Muslim encounter. Bradford's churches are taking a lead in a dialogue that could be a pattern for other cities with large immigrant populations.

'Above all,' says Philip Lewis, a lay community worker with Bradford Anglican diocese, 'the churches' role is to keep the issue of racial justice on the city's agenda.' He lists the issues that require justice: the 'notorious' Asian youth unemployment, housing that is woefully inadequate and overcrowded, and job discrimination. White school-leavers, he says, have a three times better chance of getting a job than their Asian classmates — even though their academic achievements are much the same.

Lewis is echoed by Councillor Mohammed Ajeeb, who in 1985-86 was

Lord Mayor of Bradford, the first Asian in Britain to hold such a post. The churches, he says, are 'offering themselves as allies to the Muslim community'.

The rise of Bradford's immigrant population goes back to the 1950s. Immigration was encouraged to fill menial jobs, shunned by the British, that in those days were going begging in the city's woollen textile mills. Young men began to arrive from Kashmir, in the aftermath of India's partition, many with the intention of returning to their families — a far cry from the picture often painted of immigrants coming to 'take over' the jobs of the British.

A watershed, however, was the 1962 Immigration Act, which put a guillotine on the immigration of wives and families. Husbands could no longer keep their options open — they had to decide once and for all whether to bring their families to Britain or to return home. Thousands flocked to Britain to beat the ban.

### Multiracial controversy

Now 70,000 people, or 15 per cent, of Bradford's population are of Asian or Afro-Caribbean origin. The Muslim community, the majority from Pakistan, live within a four-mile radius of the city centre, many in immaculately kept rows of terraced houses. Here, says Ishtiaq Ahmed, Chairman of the Community Relations Council, a new generation has grown up for whom 'Pakistan is as alien as Bradford was to their parents'. He himself came with his parents from Rawalpindi 20 years ago.

Ahmed believes that Bradford holds the greatest Muslim concentration of any British city. Two mosques are being built at each end of Lumb Lane in the district of Manningham. A third is in use and there are some 50 'house mosques', mainly in converted terraced houses or warehouses.

Pressures were bound to arise and three years ago the storm broke when a local headmaster, Ray Honeyford, claimed that white children, in the minority in some inner city schools, were the ones being most deprived. The resultant anti-racist marches brought Bradford's multicultural education into the national headlines for weeks on end.

Honeyford has since left and things have settled down again remarkably well, according to Ahmed. But the controversy also had a counter-effect: it forced the city council to look at its education policies in the light of Muslim demands. *Halal* meat is now being served twice a week in schools; restrictions on school clothing have been eased to meet Muslim customs; and some 300 teachers have been drafted in to teach English to the children of immigrants who speak only their mother-tongue.

Other demands persist, such as the one for separate schools for boys and girls. It is a thorny issue that has to be recognized, claims Councillor Ajeeb, adding that the Muslim community have 'electoral influence and political clout'.

'It has taken 30 years for the city to recognize Muslim demands,' says Ajeeb. There has been no serious racial violence over those years because the Muslim community has played its part in local and civic affairs, he asserts. 'The home background of discipline for the children also plays a very important role,' he says, though he fears that discipline is eroding under 'negative Western influences'. To stem such influences there are over 40 *Madrassah* — the Muslim equivalent of Sunday schools — where parents send their children every day to learn the Quran.

But many fear the tide is against them. The older generation of Muslim Asians are deeply



The 'immaculate terraced houses' of Bradford's Muslim community

M. Smith



Religious leaders outside the £4 million Jamiyat Iabligh Ul Mosque: a community putting down roots

Graham Wood / The Times

disturbed about the secularization of their young — and by the fact that their own mullahs are losing touch with them, says Philip Lewis. In this situation, Muslim leaders see the Christian churches as allies against secularization. They send their children to church schools and one inner-city Catholic school has a 90 per cent Muslim attendance.

When the Inter-Faith Education Centre was opened (see box) a Muslim friend urged Lewis to ensure that a committed Christian was put in charge. Muslim leaders fear indifference among the Christian community as much as among their own young, Lewis commented.

Lewis sees his role as 'a go-between to

break down misunderstanding between Christian and Muslim'. He speaks Urdu, having lived in Pakistan for six years where he was part of a small Christian community. So he knows what it's like to be in the minority. 'On certain issues I have more in common with a devout Muslim than a secular neighbour,' he says. 'Our shared belief in God is our meeting point, though it is also our point of difference over the expression of our belief.'

As well as in education, the churches have played a constructive role in other fields, he says, such as on the Community Relations Council and in providing teams of volunteers to teach English to Asian women.

Ishtiaq Ahmed of the CRC says there is still an 'inner confidence' among the Muslim population that has helped to prevent serious disturbances. And though the pressures are just as high as in the once volatile areas of Toxteth, Brixton or Bristol, 'what matters is that Bradford has come to terms with those pressures in relative harmony'.

How long that confidence will last is another matter. By the year 2000 there will be 90,000 Asians in Bradford, of which over half will be under 16. The values they absorb and the jobs available to them will be crucial — as are the bridge-building initiatives being taken by the churches and others of the host community.

## For Eid and Easter



David Jackson

David Jackson runs the Inter-Faith Education Centre housed in a former infant school near the city centre. Opened in 1985 by Lord Mayor Mohammed Ajeeb, it is a notable local government initiative aimed at implementing the city's new syllabus for religious education. Its small staff, representing all the religious communities, also offers to take separate assemblies for different religious groups — so far pioneered in some 30 schools.

The syllabus rests on three main planks, says Jackson: 'a shared belief in God — however expressed, a common desire to provide the best for the children we all love, and an understanding that religious nurture is the first responsibility of the family and the task of the school is to bring all children to an understanding and appreciation of the meaning of religion'. The overall aim, he adds, is to encourage equality of respect for the individual believer.

The centre enables teachers 'to be aware of the often unconscious cultural assumptions we all bring to multicultural matters', says Jackson. It has been a focus for a variety of religious festivals: from Easter to Eid; from the Sikhs' Baisaki to the Hindus' festival of Di-

vali. Not that all this has gone without opposition. Jackson, a Roman Catholic, admits that he has been accused of heresy by some of his more conservative friends. But he has no qualms about taking part in other peoples' forms of worship while maintaining the integrity of his own faith.

Fears that separate school assemblies for different religious groups would be divisive have proved groundless, he adds. 'You cannot have a false unity that does not acknowledge differences. On the contrary, all speak of the value of a scheme which seems to enhance the sense of community, "faith-pride" and belonging shown by the pupils.'

Julie Smith is in charge of religious education in a middle school that has a 50 per cent Muslim attendance. She speaks highly of the help she has received from the Inter-Faith Centre. 'Separate assemblies,' she says, 'have raised the self-esteem of all the children in the school and have had a profound effect on their attitude to each other. They have helped the children to be more interested in each others' faiths, rather than forcing the minority into the majority's mould.'

## Twenty years at the top by Sir Garfield Sobers Macmillan

**S**ir Donald Bradman, cricket's greatest run-maker, describes Sir Garfield 'Gary' Sobers as cricket's greatest all-rounder. For non-cricketers this means that rather than being a specialist, Sobers was good at everything — at run-making as a batsman, at wicket-taking as a bowler, at fielding and as a captain. Now Sobers tells his story in a remarkably honest book.

I first met Sobers when we played on opposite sides in the 1958 Hastings Cricket Festival. I was playing for an England XI and Gary for a Commonwealth side. One shot he made in that match is indelibly fixed in my mind. I had never seen anything like it. It sent the ball straight out of the ground and into the road beyond. It wasn't a slog but a stroke of exquisite perfection from the high backlift, through to the explosive power of bat on ball, to the follow-through which ended with the bat over his shoulder and down his back. It was a shot of total commitment — no vestige of hold-back or of hedging his bets.

I next met him some 25 years later, over breakfast with a number of West Indian players. He gave me a rather startling analysis of his motives for excelling on the cricket field — which he reiterates, in different words, in his book.

'I enjoyed the social side of cricket so much that it was to become my main motivation to do well,' Sobers writes. 'Late nights could continue by maintaining a consistently high level of performance... One of my most satisfying innings was the 150 not out in my final Test appearance at Lords. What most of the 25,000 crowd who watched did not know was that I failed to go to bed the night before!'

What had happened, I wondered, to the shy young man I had met after the match at Hastings? Sobers gives us some hints.

A year after that Hastings game, he writes, he was driving his great friend and brilliant Test colleague Collie Smith down to London and the car hit a lorry and Collie was killed. Sobers was fined for driving without due care and attention. He writes, 'It was the saddest episode in my life and has been on my conscience ever since.' Before that time, he said, he had not drunk a lot.

His book is as absorbing to read as his cricket was to watch. He emerges as a man slightly apart, in the same way that such other great cricketers as Grace, Hobbs, Hutton and Bradman were men apart. They were all players who set trends rather than fol-



Sir Garfield Sobers

lowed them. Sobers has a chapter called 'Playing it my way'.

His book is full of illuminating insights, both on himself and on the game. We see him playing cricket with his brothers 'every waking hour', a 'lucky' baby, born with five fingers on each hand. 'I was never coached. We learned from watching good players.'

His comments reflect on some recent controversies — such as players' behaviour off the field. He quotes the advice he received as a young player from West Indies captain, Sir Frank Worrell: 'I don't mind what you do in your room. Don't do it in public.' Good advice, one wonders, but not good enough?

Money has replaced love of the game as an incentive for playing, he writes. 'Yet fewer boys want to take up sport. I find it strange.'

He also discusses the issue of 'walking' — when a batsman knows he has been caught out and leaves the field without waiting for the umpire's verdict: 'you either have a principle or you don't'.

Cricketers, says Sobers, are entertainers. 'If they bore people they are killing their own profession.' His cricket never bored people. Nor will his book. ■

*T C Dodds*

## A Brief History of Time by Stephen Hawking Bantam Press

**S**tephen Hawking is famed especially for his work on the mysterious black holes in the cosmos, regions of space where gravity is so strong that nothing, not even light, can escape. He is famed too for the way in which, confined to a wheelchair by advanced motor neuron disease and speaking through a computerized voice system, he has risen above seemingly insuperable handicaps. An interviewer some years ago put it

nicely: 'Much of the most outstanding work on black holes has been performed in the head of a remarkable Cambridge physicist. The work *has* to be done in his head.'

The book under review is a best-seller. Written for the non-mathematical layman, it contains only one mathematical equation (Einstein's  $E = mc^2$ ). Its subject is ultimate physical reality, the issues that absorb the interest of those who work at the advancing frontiers of physics and cosmology. Besides black holes, it deals with the big bang from which the universe expanded, the fundamental particles and forces, uncertainty, the nature of time and the prospects for the unification of physics in a 'theory of everything'. All this is discussed with a simplicity and lucidity that are an achievement in themselves, derived no doubt from a professor's need to explain things to his students.

Nevertheless, the book is by no means always easy going. Each sentence is a model of clarity, but the reader must be prepared to meet many unfamiliar concepts, some of them bizarre, and to follow the arguments through long sequences of separate steps. It could not be otherwise. The kind of knowledge that Hawking imparts cannot be acquired on the cheap.

### Ultimate triumph

Hawking adds to the interest by describing how new ideas and theories arose, narrating his encounters with other scientists, some times across the world.

In his introduction to the book Carl Sagan, Professor of Astronomy and Space Sciences at Cornell University, says, 'This is also a book about God.' Hawking refers at the outset to God's role in the universe and returns to that theme at various points in the last few chapters, where he writes about the origin and fate of the universe. He speaks, for example, of the need for theories 'that are self-consistent and allow the existence of structures as complicated as human beings who can investigate the laws of the universe and ask about the nature of God'.

Hawking is not alone among physicists in expressing such thoughts. Those trying to understand ultimate reality and the origin of the universe are indeed often drawn in that direction. Hawking goes so far as to say, in his last sentence, 'If we find the answer to that (ie why we and the universe exist), it would be the ultimate triumph of human reason — for then we would know the mind of God.'

I was left wondering whether Hawking ever goes beyond the idea of a creator God to that of a God who loves his creation. ■

*Alwyn McKay*

by Digna Hintzen



# Good soil for growing

Any gardener who spots a beautiful plant in someone else's garden is keen to find out where to get a cutting and what soil it will flourish in. On a recent visit to South America I marvelled at the enormous bushes of hibiscus and other flowering plants which we in northern Europe carefully tend in pots on our window-sills.

But it was really another kind of flowering that struck me, as it has before in Colombia — that huge, mountainous, fast-developing nation with shores on two oceans, of which Panama used to be a province.

It is the plant of faith I am referring to, a plant which many would gladly possess. How often one hears, 'I wish I had that kind of faith...'

One of the many enterprises based entirely on faith which I have seen in Colombia's capital, Bogotá — with its six million inhabitants of whom half live in slums — is the home of Luis Eduardo and Amanda Martínez. They call it the St Gabriel Foundation.

Luis Eduardo grew up in a village. In this village the priest was a person of great importance, so as a boy Luis Eduardo decided that he wanted to serve God as a priest. In his third year at seminary he went out to do field work. He felt drawn to the abandoned children roaming the streets of Bogotá, so he and a friend found jobs, rented a flat and took three of these boys in.

By the time they had to return to seminary they had seven boys. They told them they would find places for them in other homes. But the boys had felt loved and cared for as individuals and refused to be put into institutions: some were put in and ran away.

It was then that Luis Eduardo went away for a week to find out what God really wanted him to do with his life. He faced the appeal of being an honoured priest. Finally it became clear to him that his mission lay with these boys. This was four years ago.

In the meantime Amanda, a joyous, curly-haired young woman, was working as an accountant and sharing a flat with another girl. One Sunday night she returned to find the place stripped: no trace of her flat-mate or any of her possessions. All she had left was her weekend bag. This jolted her. Why had it happened? What was she meant to do? She had been helping at St Gabriel in her spare time. Now she went back and decided to make it her life's work.

Their marriage provided the street boys with a real family; they now even have a step-brother, aged two. The Martínez aim to return the runaway children to their parents; often there is only the mother, and they have to help her with her negative attitude to her child. Luis Eduardo works part-time as a teacher, Amanda finds that being a mother of 15 keeps her busy around

the clock: 'But I feel fulfilled.'

They have lived in various rented apartments. 'But when the owner asks how many children you have and you tell them "15", no one wants to rent you anything!' Now, thanks to a gift, they have been able to make a down payment on a place of their own. The owner is still occupying one room, until the last instalment is paid. This rather worries Luis Eduardo — where will the money come from? But Amanda smiles reassuringly: 'We have never lacked a thing since we started. God has been so good to us. How lucky we are that we have enough to eat.'

Is a sense of need, of suffering, the soil in which faith grows? Have we in the West, with our welfare states, put concrete where in other continents there is open soil? Or is it rather the concrete round our hearts which keeps us from exploring the needs around us? Does our obsession with security stunt our growth? To many Colombians, Europe — with its one-child or no-child families — is a place to be pitied.

Surely we don't have to wait until we are faced, like Colombia, with the triple threat of poverty, drugs traffic and guerrilla war before we undertake humanly impossible tasks which will allow our faith to develop?

Photo: W Harbeck

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Photo: W Harbeck



by Russi M. Lala



R Kapadia

Russel Pinto was a drug addict and even sold his mother's wedding ring to satisfy his craving. Cured today, he runs India's first Rehabilitation Centre for addicts. I asked him whether he had discerned any common pattern among them. He replied, 'In most cases the boys were keen on having time with their fathers but did not get it.'

Darius Forbes is a managing director in the Indian city of Pune. He and his wife have two sons, who graduated from Stanford University with flying colours. Unlike most successful Indians they did not settle in the States. When I happened to comment favourably on the upbringing of these two men, Forbes replied, 'My wife and I made sure that we spent enough time with our children every day.'

When I look back on my own life, I realize that perhaps the greatest gift I received was to have parents who gave me all the time I needed.

When I was five or six, my father was a successful solicitor at the peak of his career. With his dark glasses, his balding forehead and his black lawyer's coat, he looked a formidable figure when I peered above his large desk top. But the awe he inspired in the office melted away every night after supper, which he would devote to me. I must have worn him out asking for Sohrab and Rustom stories, but he would always turn up with a fresh one. Thirty years later, when I asked where he had read them originally, he said he had made them up as he went along. Aesop's Fables and stories of the Indian Emperor Akbar and his wise vasir, Birbal, were my favourites. Story times ended when I was in my teens. Then he would paint before my bewildered eyes the portrait of Falstaff or tell the story of Lancelot and Guinevere, quoting at length from Tennyson.

William Wordsworth's nephew was among those who had taught his generation English literature at Elphinstone College, Bombay. He had an abiding love for literature and a remarkable memory which he kept alive by quoting his favourite lines. Extended passages from Tennyson, Shelley and Keats were not infrequent.

As a child he had me fascinated with Dr Samuel Johnson 'drinking oceans of tea' and touching every alternate lamp-post as he ambled along the streets of London. Goldsmith, living in the garret to keep his creditors away, became an object of my childhood sympathy. In my early teens he would read Macaulay's *Life of Johnson*. It proved such a hit that we went on to his *Lives of Goldsmith and Addison*.

## *Perhaps the greatest gift was to have parents who gave me all the time I needed.*

Father probably enjoyed reliving his college days as much as I did listening to him. It was only decades later that I realized that the most precious thing he gave me was himself. He always had time for me.

But life was not all poetry. A tragedy had meanwhile struck our family. Mother had left home. I was the only child, then 10 years of age. It was decided that I would spend week days with Mother and Saturdays and Sundays with Father. The scar of the separation was somewhat healed as I was amply reassured of the affection of both my parents.

The main difference between them was a friend of Father's who, Mother claimed, was prompting him to neglect his legal practice, and leading him astray on money matters.

This character, by promising my father a fortune in the future, was liberally helping himself to Father's current assets. After Mother left, Father sold his car and shifted house, and I sensed that Mother had a point. About a year after the separation, Father called me one Sunday morning and said solemnly that he wanted to tell me something important. 'My son,' he said, 'I am sorry. I won't be able to leave you any money. That man has deceived me.' Father indicated that he had run through not only his own wealth but also what my late grandfather had intended for me.

It must have been very difficult for him to say that to his 11-year-old son. Though I could say little in reply, my heart went out to my father. Decades later I tried to

fathom at what point in life I ceased to fear him. I think it was that moment of his honesty. He was no longer an awe-inspiring figure but as frail a human as I was. He became my friend because he was honest with me.

We had some happy years together as I went through college and after. His cheerful nature returned, though thereafter his legal practice never recovered. There was just enough money but it was never plentiful. We had one brief period of disagreement but it soon passed.

The separation and divorce had cast a shadow over Father, and at times I could sense he was bitter. As he neared 80 he relished saying brief prayers with me. One evening I drove him to a quiet seafront, and after a prayer ventured to ask him for the first time whether he was still bitter. He turned to me and said, 'No, son, not any more. It's no use being bitter.'

At 80 he fell seriously ill. He was in a coma but regained consciousness. Doctors feared his brain might have been affected. To test Father's memory I asked him whether he remembered his favourite lines from Shelley:

Oh lift me from the grass!

I die! I faint! I fail!

He continued:

Let thy love and kisses rain

On my lips and eyelids pale.

My cheek is cold and white, alas!

My heart beats loud and fast; —

Oh! press it close to thine own again,

Where it will break at last.

Five hours later he died.

Father left no material possessions of consequence, but he left me treasures untold. ■

*Among Russi M. Lala's books are In Search of Leadership and The Creation of Wealth. For ten years he was Editor of Himmat Weekly in Bombay.*

## Next Month...

**Lead story:** The men who light up New York: For *A Change* visits a pioneering trade union in the US electrical industry.

**Profile:** Hari Shukla, Senior Community Relations Officer for Tyne and Wear, England.

**Guest Column:** Simon Scott Plummer, Diplomatic Correspondent and Asia Specialist at *The Daily Telegraph*, London.