FOR A CHANGE

VOLUME 3 – NUMBER 1
JANUARY 1990

US ethics campaigner page 12

BREAKING WITH ADDICTION

Sober truth from a million drunks

Volume 3 No 1
JANUARY 1990

FOR A CHANGE

- focusses on the wave of change engulfing the world, how it affects us and how we affect it, what's going wrong and, more important, what's being put right.
- addresses the full dimension of change — in structures so that they serve society, in attitudes so that we serve each other, the change that comes as people turn to God.
- believes that this is fundamental to peace, justice and the survival of the planet.
- was born out of the experience of Moral Re-Armament that such change is possible.

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EAR TO THE GROUND

by Echidna

Mosaic Muddle?

It would be tragic if at this decisive moment in history, destructive nationalism were to reassert itself in Europe. That ugly beast has caused the death of millions. The European Community, though not yet a paragon of unselfishness, represents at its best a recognition that nations have to learn to act together.

'The Europe of the 1990s,' writes London's *Daily Telegraph*, 'is less likely to be a unity — more a mosaic.' But a mosaic which has no unity isn't worth much.

Many world problems cannot be solved individually or even regionally. They demand a global response....

Words and deeds

On the environment, above all. The public is becoming impatient with the imbalance between words and deeds in official policies. Observe, for instance, the following contrast. In a speech at the UN Mrs Thatcher calls for 'a vast international cooperative effort' to save the global environment. The very next week, a British government energy forecast predicts that Britain's carbon dioxide emissions will increase by 37 per cent in the next 15 years — despite the fact that the government is committed to reducing them by 20 per cent.

We can't have it both ways. We in the West can't sustain our extravagant lifestyles and take the radical measures required to save the planet. We need leaders who will both tell us this truth and take the costly steps needed to make sure that their own targets are reached.

No CFC, see!

Not that it is just up to our leaders. The borough council in Tokoroa, New Zealand, has written to about 100 Tokoroa businesses asking for their cooperation in phasing out the use of fluorocarbons (CFCs). But the council will not introduce a bye-law on CFCs, relying instead on the goodwill of the community to support the move. Will it work? We'll see!

Springs of Prague

As we go to press, we are witnessing on our TV sets huge demonstrations in Prague's Wenceslas Square.

Brian James of the London *Times* detected 'a mood of forgiveness', which made the rally 'less a reprise of Bastille Day, more a Brazilian carnival at the moment of triumph in the World Cup'.

Why so little recrimination? One hint came from a pensioner there: 'Every time we applauded at their meetings we lied. Every time we obeyed what they said with politeness, we lied. Every time we filled in one of their forms or posted votes in the elections that had no meaning, we also lied. I am an old man. If I die tonight I would be happy that in Czechoslovakia there will be no more deceit.'

Talking turtle

One of our readers, on holiday in Greece, was handed a leaflet in English from the Sea Turtle Protection Society of Greece requesting cooperation in not disturbing the habitat of endangered sea turtles. 'Dear friends,' it read, 'A new conscience, as well as a completely new morality, is necessary in order to bring about radical change in our today's civilization which seriously damages our feelings, bodies and our hearts. This is very clear to everybody, but everybody seems to ignore it. Morality is not a product of our brain; morality is a child of love. Love, respect for our environment, does not exist inside brain analysis, or in a brochure with some directions or information. It is here, in front of us, inside us, everywhere, but only when there is no desire for power, money or glory.'

This echidna wouldn't mind doing his bit for the endangered turtles — especially if it involved a spell in a small taverna overlooking the Aegean!

Generosity of heart

A year and a day after the Palestine National Council announced the foundation of a Palestinian state, there was evidence of a generosity of spirit which may help to bring peace to the Middle East. The family of an Israeli soldier shot dead by Arab gunmen donated his heart to a Palestinian Arab from east Jerusalem.

Uncommon practice

In Argentina Horacio Benitez, a young veteran of the Falklands-Malvinas war, is tackling corruption. One of the small businesses which he and other ex-combatants set up makes detergents, which are sold at the government controlled price of 11 australs per bulk unit. A price rise to 17 australs was announced. When this happens the common practice is to withhold sales until the higher price comes into effect. Benitez and his friends, however, decided against doing this. Two weeks later a retailer gave them an order representing three weeks of their total production.

Something for all

I found the following in a company's house-magazine: 'If you find mistakes in this publication, please consider they are there for a purpose. We publish something for everyone and some people are always looking for mistakes.' Have my editors thought of that one?

Public and private

My 1989 award for 'Chump of the Year' goes to the British Conservative MP Sir Nicholas Fairbairn. In a pathetic article in the London *Times* he argues that a politician's private conduct in sexual matters has no connection with his public life. And why, he asks, should the private

IN MY VIEW

Andrew Stallybrass

Peoples are breaking out of the straitjackets of the past, from Central Europe to Southern Africa. Hope for change in hopeless situations is rekindled. After decades of glacial movement, of cold war and frozen divisions, a bracing touch of thaw is in the air. The European continent is in a state of flux. None of us can see more than a step or two ahead, or guess at the events that the next week may bring, let alone the next year.

The Church of England Newspaper talks of 'the need to ask if and how the hand of the God of history is at work in these events'. Nations which already have some of the privileges of democracy must watch with sympathy the efforts to transform atheist materialist socialism from within. Into what? Not all of the generation of idealistic realists who've been willing to risk their lives to bring change are going to be seduced by a different form of institutionalized self-interest.

Democracy is a big word, much abused and misused. 'People's Democracy' has become a cynical synonym for the abuse of human rights and bureaucratic inefficiency. Yet our Western liberal democracies are marked by weariness, scandals and drugs. The word seems little understood on both sides of what used to be called 'the iron curtain'.

Democracy originated in the classical Greek city states, and meant the rule of the citizens, the right and duty of all to play a part in making the decisions that affect the community. 'All' in those far-off days excluded women and slaves. But modern democracy is based on a belief in the value of every individual human being — and the faith that in an environment of truth people will make the right choices.

No one society has achieved the fullness of this great ideal: a nation where all feel needed, encouraged to give of their best not for themselves alone, but for the whole. Here East and West have more to learn, are both alike in need.

It would be a great tragedy if the spiritual appeal of the prophet voices to the East were drowned out by profit voices in the West. ■

lives of politicians be scrutinized in a way which others in public life, such as sportsmen and entertainers, do not have to bear?

The answer was well made in a subsequent letter to the same paper. 'Politicians put themselves forward,' wrote Alexander Millar, 'as people who can be trusted to make promises and keep them. It may just be that a man who has no scruples about deceiving a woman, whom he knows and to whom he has made a solemn and sacred promise, may have few qualms about deceiving a mere voter whom he doesn't know. As the mere voter I think I am entitled to know and to take such deception into account before I vote. I don't vote for sportsmen or entertainers.'

Having said that, I think Sir Nicholas deserves a fair answer to another of his questions. Why do we of the general public so often not apply rigorously in our own lives the personal standards we rightly expect from our leaders?

The skis the limit

91-year-old Kari of Oslo starts each day with some physical exercises and a long walk. For she wants to keep in good shape for her skiing holidays.

Sad to say, when Kari was 87, her children forbade her to climb apple trees to pick the fruit. But no-one dares take her skis away.

There's hope for me yet!

Edward Peters

In this issue

by Michael Brown

Breaking with aa

AA's experience

Embedded in the sidewalks of Hollywood Boulevard are large bronze stars, each inscribed with the name of someone who has made his or her mark in the movie industry. But Hollywood is even more marked by the real life drama and sordid addictions of many of those same people.

On the other side of America, Washington DC is a city addicted to the pursuit of power — heady stuff for lawyers, lobbyists and legislators craving their piece of the action. But with 76,000 known drug addicts and 72,000 alcoholics, and close on 400 murders last year, there's another side to Washington. And when the teenage children of two National Security Agency psychologists are arrested for major drug dealing, the problem cannot be simply dismissed as the blight of poor inner-city districts. A Black community leader says he sees plenty of expensive Cadillacs from wealthy suburbs cruising to meet the pimps and pushers in city streets on Saturday nights.

In September last year, George Bush used his first nationally

My name is John. I'm an alcoholic...

'I had the good fortune to win a gold medal in the 1960 Rome Olympics as an oarsman. But I contrast that with a series of alcoholic lows culminating in a disastrous day in May 1985.

After a decade of no drinking after college, I began to drink beer and wine in the early Seventies. I graduated to good bourbon whiskey and, as the years went by, my consumption grew. It became evident to my family that my drinking was a problem by the early Eighties. It didn't affect my work (so I thought and I fooled myself, saying that I only drank at night, after work, on a weekend). My personality began to change after alcohol use, and I became a critical, verbally abusive individual, especially to my wife and kids.

It came to a head when a business venture collapsed in the mid Eighties losing us several hundred thousand dollars. I began drinking heavily every night and became, to use my son's words, 'a vicious, cruel son-of-a-bitch that no-one wanted around'.

On a particular day in May 1985, after I'd consumed most of a bottle of scotch, my wife confronted me for probably the several hundredth time in the last years. I flew into a blind rage and began throwing dishes at her. My 25-year-old son intervened and tried to restrain me. I attacked him with my fists and threatened to kill him. Fortunately he's my size and 25 years younger, so my drunken attempts at fighting were rather ineffectual. My wife got on the phone to call a friend, got the operator by mistake, and the operator heard the fighting in the background and called the police.

By the time they arrived, I'd cooled down and was packing my car to leave home (I'd no idea where I was going). I was oblivious to Washington State's domestic violence law that requires at least one of the participants in a family fight to go to jail. I was the obvious candidate and first thing I knew I was handcuffed in the back of a police car.

Soon I was in a cell with 30 to 40 others, furnished with a cement floor, two wooden benches and a filthy toilet in the corner. My cell-mates were auto-thieves, drug-pushers and other drunks. It was a long way down from the Olympic victory podium in Rome.

I was angry with myself, guilt-ridden and humiliated beyond anything in my experience. I was also angry at my family, blaming them for my predicament by saying they had over-reacted. It was typical drunk thinking — rationalizing and minimizing your actions and blaming someone or something else. The drunk is the last person to see himself as he is.

'A method of living that can guide you'

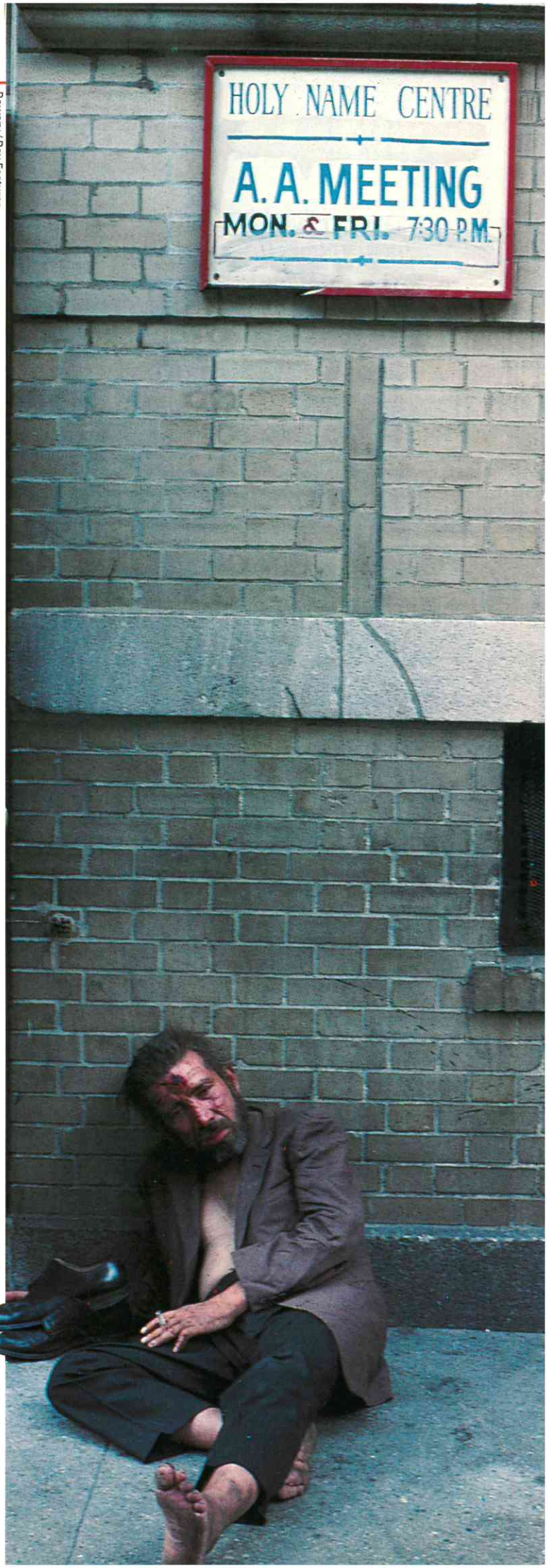
I was released the next morning on my own recognizance after the authorities had determined I would not harm my family. I took a taxi home, not knowing what to expect, but fully aware that this was not just another 'incident' I could talk my way out of.

My wife greeted me coolly and said, 'I've found a treatment centre that can take you today — will you go?' My mind was clear enough to realize I faced a critical choice: either I chose to go into treatment or I would lose my family forever.

Two hours later I entered a recovery centre for a 28-day programme. Half the 120 people taking part were alcoholics, the other half cocaine and heroin addicts. They came from all walks of life — millionaire businessmen, housewives, musicians, firemen, policemen, high-school kids, lawyers, longshoremen and teachers.

The programme was intense and we learned in detail about all aspects of alcohol and other drugs and their terrible cost. The basic philosophy behind the treatment was the Alcoholics Anonymous 'Twelve Step programme': you admit

Addiction



Bowery / Rex Features

televised address to the American people as President to declare war on drugs. He had good cause to. Drug and alcohol abuse costs the US double what it cost to fight the Vietnam war at its height — around $150 billion a year goes on the law enforcement system, health treatment, lost productivity and taxes, according to the National Institute on Drug Abuse.

To wage that war, the President committed a record $7.9 billion for a comprehensive national strategy. Immediately critics in Congress sent up a cry that it was not nearly enough.

Continued on next page

you are an alcoholic and are powerless to change and you turn your life over to God as you understand him. It also means taking a fearless and honest moral inventory of your life, putting things right where you can, living one day at a time and listening daily to your 'inner voice' to give you direction.

As I began to do this I began to see the terrible destruction my drinking had wrought, not only on myself, but on my family and friends. It was a spiritual reawakening, available only after my ego had been laid bare and stripped away by an absolutely honest look at my recent lifestyle.

This simple programme not only lets you deal with alcohol, it lays out a method of living that can guide you through the rest of your life.

As I began to get honest with myself and my family amazing things began to happen. My oldest daughter had left home at 15 and had been deep into drugs and alcohol for several years. She and her boyfriend came to see me in the recovery centre. My change affected her in that she took an honest look at herself and realized how much trouble she was in. One of the great moments of my life was when a few days after I graduated from the treatment centre, she and her boyfriend went in. It's changed all our lives and in a few months time my daughter is getting married (different boyfriend however).

The four years since these events have been rich and growing times. All has not been sweetness and light, however, as the rest of the family had to come to terms with their bitter feelings towards me and also realize that I was still a human being with difficulties, even though I quit drinking. But the healing process has been a marvellous thing. The family is together as never before. I've built a new career heading up a non-profit organization that restores wild salmon runs in the Northwest. In fact its success has been due to the involvement of dozens of recovering drunks — loggers, commercial fishermen, Indians and longshoremen, many of whom are in AA.

My challenge is to hold true to the daily ritual of taking time in quiet to listen to God and then to act on the thoughts I get. Sounds simple, but the actual practice is incredibly hard. The old negative thoughts and resentments rush in en masse if given a chance. I can't let them in for long. For me it's a matter of life and death. If I let the old ways of thinking come back, sooner or later the booze will likely return and I'm right back where I was that awful night in jail.

AA is a powerful force at work in today's world and may well be one of the great spiritual movements of our time. It has given new life and purpose to hundreds of thousands. I owe my life, my family and my sanity to it.

'...in McMurdo Sound, Antarctica, in jungle villages of Papua New Guinea, in sweaty factories in India, in 114 countries altogether'

Continued from page 5

Smugglers' aircraft still fly across southern borders with impunity; and a new, more dangerous, chemically synthesized drug known as 'ice' coming in from Asia is threatening a new epidemic.

Governments grapple with the imperatives of bigger prisons, better law enforcement and education programmes. But clearly these measures by themselves will not cure addiction here in America. Nor can Colombia's desperate war against its drug barons, which has cost the lives of 200 judges.

There are 23 million 'current' drug users in the US, said the President. 'To win the war against addictive drugs like crack will take more than just a federal strategy,' he said. This is a war that has to be fought by everyone, 'neighbourhood by neighbourhood, block by block, child by child'.

Killing himself

The outcome of the war is uncertain, but in the search for some hope and effective measures, the experience of Alcoholics Anonymous is worth a hard look.

In a church basement, just a few blocks north of where the President was speaking, 40 or so — mostly men in their thirties and older — meet for one of the many regular AA meetings every day in the nation's capital. Police sirens and crowded streets seem distant for a moment as a black woman starts to speak: 'I'm May, and I'm an alcoholic.' With unaffected pain May tells how her first child, born when she was 16, is now 'killing himself' with drugs; how at 17 she married a man who 'taught me how to drink hard', and how she fed him hot chilli spiced with poison after he had beaten her; how she crashed her car and burnt down her home while stoned. When 'guilt ate me up alive', she turned finally to AA. Sobriety did not come quickly — but there she is this evening, having been fully sober for several years. 'I like the person I'm becoming,' says May confidently.

More than a million drunks, like May, have been brought to recovery through Alcoholics Anonymous. Currently some 1.6 million members participate in 76,000 groups worldwide. But no-one doubts that this is just a fraction of those who attend meetings. It does not include Al-Anon (for families in chaos caused by alcohol), nor the streams of other desperate people who have been helped through the expanding list of self-help groups which have borrowed AA's principles and experience: Narcotics Anonymous, Mistresses Anonymous, Gamblers Anonymous, Overeaters Anonymous, Schizophrenics Anonymous...

Alcoholics Anonymous itself takes neither credit nor responsibility for this growth, but stays true to its primary purpose: 'to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers'. And the alcoholics keep coming: in McMurdo Sound, Antarctica, in jungle villages of Papua New Guinea, in sweaty factories in India, in 114 countries altogether. The church which George Washington attended hosts an AA meeting every lunch-hour. Some 1,100 US prisons have AA groups, and the list of 1,800 weekly meetings in New York tells its own story, through the names of groups such as *Harlem Renaissance, Never Too Late, Grupo Libertad, Sober Vietnam Vets* and *Hi! and Dry* (who meet in a yacht club).

Pain splashes out

More than 2,000 meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous take place in Los Angeles each week — not to mention those of Cocaine Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous — and many of them are jammed with people in the entertainment business, reports Benjamin Stein, a Nixon speech-writer now working in Hollywood. 'An entire generation that came of age in the Sixties and Seventies, that thought that cocaine, alcohol and pills were the inevitable accompaniment of work in "the biz" are now recoiling from the disorder that drugs have wrought in their lives,' Stein wrote in *Newsweek*. He should know: he was one of them.

In 1988, Hollywood actress Carol Burnett and her daughter, Carrie Hamilton, flew to Moscow for some *glasnost* cooperation on alcohol addiction, which the Soviet leadership has identified as a major social problem. In 1985, Chairman Gorbachev introduced tough measures, including a 40 per cent cut in state alcohol production, which resulted in a 35 per cent drop in alcohol-related crime. Yet with 20 million who are alcohol-dependent, the Soviets readily admit that it has not turned the tide of addiction. In response to the two women's TV and radio interviews, *Pravda* reported an 'enormous amount' of correspondence: 'Human pain continues splashing out in the letters to the editor... an implicit referendum about the way to make our society sober.' Four AA groups sprang up in Russia. In Poland there are 300.

What makes AA so effective? How does it work? It is founded, in the words of the American Public Health Association's Lasker Award, on the 'novel principle that a recovered alcoholic can reach and treat a fellow sufferer as no-one else can'.

So Amy, who had a 'vodka diet and a prog-

Continued on page 14

'Dr Bob' Smith (left) and Bill Wilson, founders of Alcoholics Anonymous

How AA beg

An old drinking partner remembers him taking 'a tumble down the stairs' of a New York subway, clearly more than a little tipsy: 'The old brown hat stayed on; but, wrapped up in that long overcoat, he looked like a collapsed sailboat. His face lit up when he fished out of the heap of clothes an unbroken bottle of gin.'

This was Bill Wilson, a tall, garrulous Wall Street hustler who had struggled through the 1929 market crash only to be wiped out by alcohol. His wife, Lois, kept them financially afloat with a meagre-paying job, while he sank steadily.

Then Wilson had a visit from an old drinking friend, Ebby, who had broken out of his alcohol habit through a spiritual experience found in the Oxford Group, a Christian fellowship which later developed as Moral Re-Armament. Wilson had never seen Ebby sober before.

'In no waking moment could I get that man or his message out of my head,' said Wilson. So when in 1934 he landed back in a detoxification hospital — for the fourth time — and Ebby called in, Wilson asked him to repeat that 'neat little formula' that had helped him stop drinking. Ebby gave it to him neat: admit

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THE TWELVE STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

1 We admitted we were powerless over alcohol — that our lives had become unmanageable.

2 Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

3 Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him.*

4 Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

5 Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

6 Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

7 Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

8 Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.

9 Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

10 Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

11 Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God *as we understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

12 Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

The Twelve Steps reprinted with permission of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc.

you are beaten, talk it out with somebody else, make restitution to the people you harmed and pray to God.

Wilson had no time for anything pious. But after Ebby left that day he sunk so deep into depression that he prayed for anything that would bring release. 'The effect was electric,' Wilson wrote later. 'The room lit up with a great white light.... It seemed to me, in the mind's eye, that I was on a mountain and that a wind not of air but of spirit was blowing. And then it burst upon me that I was a free man.'

From that day in December 1934 Wilson did not touch a drink. He stayed sober by attending two Oxford Group meetings each week and by trying to save every alcoholic he could at the local hospital — without any success.

Six months later, Wilson went to Akron, Ohio, chasing a stockbroking venture. It failed. Lonely, resentful, almost broke, on a Friday night in the Mayflower Hotel lobby, he heard the clink of glasses and laughter in the bar and was sorely tempted to join in. Gripped by fear, he grabbed a phone to call a Church minister listed in the hotel lobby, in the hope of finding someone from the Oxford Group. The clergyman gave him ten names. Nine were out or could not see him. The tenth was Henrietta Seiberling. He told her, 'I'm from the Oxford Group, and I'm a rum hound from New York.' She invited him round to her home.

Final binge

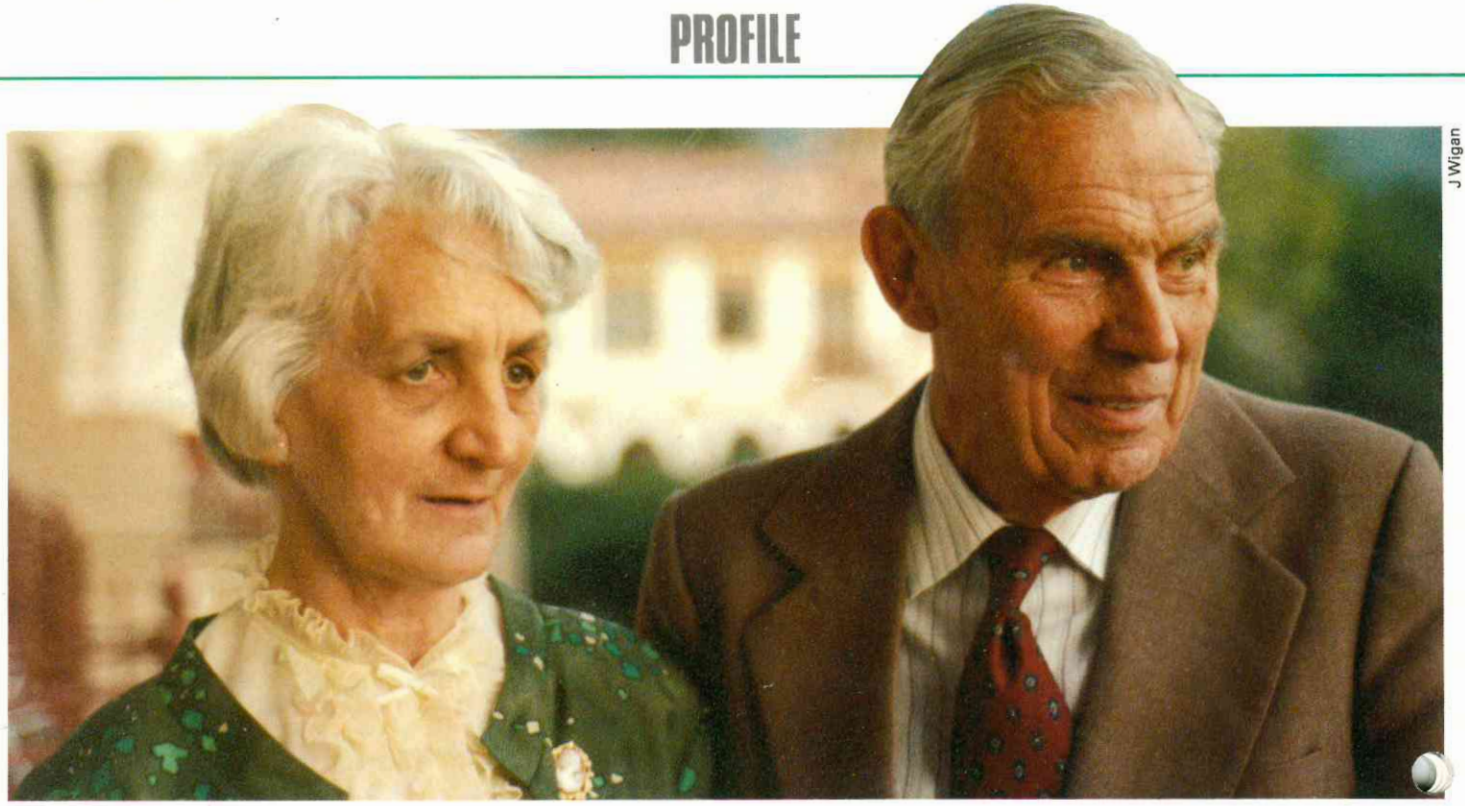
Mrs Seiberling had for several years been trying to help an Akron surgeon, Bob Smith, beat an alcohol dependency that was ruining his practice. So when Wilson phoned, she asked Smith round to meet Wilson. Dr Bob, as he became known, arrived with a wife, a teenage son and a hangover.

The two alcoholics talked for five hours, with Wilson starting by saying he needed the help of another alcoholic to stay sober. The Smiths invited Wilson into their home and he spent most of the next three months with them. On 10 June, 1935, after a binge that took three days sobering up, Dr Bob had a beer to steady his nerves for an operation — the last drink of his life. That was the day, they reckoned, that AA started.

Wilson and Dr Bob worked separately to build their self-help groups. In New York, drunks just moved into the Wilsons' home. After two years Wilson and Dr Bob met again and counted 40 men who stayed sober, 'some of them grim last-gasp cases'. They realized that 'the chain reaction, one alcoholic carrying the good news to the next, could conceivably one day circle the whole world'. They decided to set down on paper their principles and experience. And so came into being what is known as 'the Big Book'. Now, 50 years later, five million copies have helped people all around the world.

The title of the book is, in fact, *Alcoholics Anonymous*. The term was used for the first time on the cover and it sprung out of Wilson's small New York group, who described themselves as 'a nameless bunch of alcoholics'.

Dr Bob died in 1950, having personally helped 5,000 alcoholics find sobriety. Wilson struggled financially all his life. He turned down a well-paid job in a detoxification hospital, because the drunks living with him resented him becoming a 'professional'. He died in relative obscurity in 1971, 'the greatest social architect of the century', in the words of Aldous Huxley. ■



J Wigan

Working for a new South Africa

Thirty-seven years ago George & Joey Daneel decided that racism was a sin against God. They talk to Mary Lean.

George and Joey Daneel are children of South Africa's Anglo-Boer War, which pitted a small pioneer community against the full might of the British empire. His father, a country pastor, was arrested by the British during the war; hers was one of the commando who captured the young Winston Churchill, then a war correspondent. In their lifetime they have seen their people, the Afrikaners, rise from poverty and powerlessness to become one of the most entrenched ruling minorities of our century. Yet they look forward to the day when their stranglehold on power comes to an end.

As far as the Daneels are concerned, apartheid is a sin — not only against South Africa's black majority, but also against God. Because of this, they believe, constitutional change by itself is not enough. A new South Africa also requires moral and spiritual rebirth of its people. For 36 years they have devoted all their time, without salary, to working for this.

In the Seventies, before such things became more common, Daneel organized Pretoria's first live-in multiracial conference and called for national repentance in the Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church (to which 90 per cent of South Africa's cabinet ministers belong). Now, aged 85 and 75, the Daneels live in Windhoek, capital of Namibia. He still plays tennis twice a week and is as busy as ever, broadcasting on radio and encouraging friends of different races and parties.

Daneel grew up in the Cape, one of nine children, two of whom did not survive infancy. His mother died when he was 12 and four years later his stepmother was killed in a flu epidemic. When his father married for a third time, George's great-grandmother commented, 'Poor Marthinus, he spends all his money on wedding rings and coffins.' George studied for the ministry at Stellenbosch University and became something of a national idol when he played rugby for the South African Springbok team in 1928 and 1931.

As a Dutch Reformed minister and a rugby star, Daneel was prominent in Afrikanerdom's two religions — but he was perplexed by his failure to pass his faith on to his fellow sportsmen. In 1928, the year he won his Springbok jersey, he heard about the changes happening in people's lives as a result of a campaign of the Oxford Group (later Moral Re-Armament). He cycled 40 miles to find out more and was presented with a challenge to root out the moral compromises in his life — a process which freed him, he found, to help his colleagues.

Meanwhile Joey was growing up 'on horseback' in Ermelo in the Transvaal. They met in Boksburg, where she was teaching and he was acting as assistant minister, and married in 1940. By then he had enlisted as a chaplain with the South African army. In their first five years of married life, Joey reckons, they spent 11 months together.

As senior South African chaplain, Daneel tended the dying and wounded at El Alamein. Holed up in the Appenines during the Italian winter he ferried artistes up and down the treacherous passes to provide concerts for the troops. At the end of the war, the South African forces were stranded in Italy for six months until British troop ships were free to carry them home. Daneel and his colleagues set up a School of Religion, offering the troops one week courses to prepare them for civilian life.

He returned home in 1946 to a small daughter and a post as Dutch Reformed Minister in Grahamstown in the Cape Province. Over the next seven years two more daughters were born. The Daneels seemed set for a useful if uncontroversial life, ministering to the needs of their comfortable white congregation. Then the thunderbolt fell.

In 1953 the Daneels attended a conference in Lusaka. Because it was multiracial, it could not be held in South Africa, now five years into National Party rule and the policies of separate development. Among the other South Africans who

took part was William Nkomo, first President of the radical Youth League of the African National Congress.

For the Daneels, it was a new experience to meet black people as equals. 'My parents were devout Christians,' says Daneel, 'but we never shook our Coloured servants by the hand. When they came in for family prayers in the morning they had to sit on the floor. They weren't allowed to sit on the chairs that we used.'

There in Lusaka, Daneel says, God broke through his blind spot. 'The conviction came to me that the way we as a white people had lived was the cause of black people's bitterness and hatred towards us. It was not just a wrong relationship, it was a sin against God.' He apologized publicly to the black people at the conference. 'I realized that the relationship between black and white was the biggest issue in the country.'

For two years Daneel had been wondering whether he should devote all his time to Moral Re-Armament work. This was a bone of contention between him and Joey. 'How could George be so wild and irresponsible, I thought. To give up his salary when we had three little children! Every time the subject was mentioned we were suddenly poles apart.' The issue cast a shadow of fear over her life. 'I existed but I did not live.'

In Lusaka, while George was facing up to his racism, Joey was struggling with her numbness of spirit. 'It dawned on me that I had accepted Christ as my saviour, but I had never accepted him as my master.' She decided to give him full control of her life, whatever this meant, and found that her fears began to lose their grip. She told George about her decision and, fired by his new convictions about South Africa, they decided that he should resign.

Back in Grahamstown they broke the news to the congregation and church authorities, packed up their belongings and headed for Pretoria, fortified by a gift of £5 from a stranger — 'it was worth a lot more in those days'. Today, in their tiny flat in Namibia, they still live on 'faith and prayer', with friends dropping by with gifts of fish and vegetables.

Shortly after his return from Lusaka, Daneel went public with his new convictions at a multiracial meeting in Cape Town's city hall, speaking beside William Nkomo, who described how he had relinquished his hatred of the whites. The meeting caused a sensation and was so packed that Joey had to sit on the stairs.

Over the next years from their new home in Pretoria — seat of South Africa's government — the Daneels threw themselves into organizing multiracial meetings and conferences, working closely with Nkomo and other African friends. To people of all races, their message was the same: if you want to see change in South Africa, begin with your own life and attitudes.

This work incurred the displeasure of Hendrik Verwoerd, the architect of apartheid, and his successor, John Vorster. Verwoerd wrote to Daneel slating Moral Re-Armament for 'not operating on the principle of separate development': 'Frustration must inevitably follow for the black intellectual when he does not find the equality in everyday life which you give him in your mixed organization.'

Chance to speak out

Some years later, Daneel wrote to each member of Vorster's Cabinet. 'I said that the policy of the government towards black people needed to change if we were ever going to find peace in the country.' Vorster summoned him for an interview, which appears to have been a collision of two immovable forces. 'I was able to put my convictions, but he contradicted them in no uncertain terms.' Years later, after Vorster retired under a cloud of scandal, Daneel heard second-hand that he had remarked, 'Daneel was right'.

In 1972, Daneel's local church chose him to attend the Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church and he seized the chance to speak out. Tailoring his message to an audience steeped in the Bible, he argued that just as St Peter had broken with Jewish tradition to visit the home of the Roman, Cornelius, so the white church must break with the tradition of separateness and superiority. The speech was received with cries of 'Go to Mozambique!' A motion by another delegate, Professor Ben Marais, calling for the church to open its doors to all races also fell on deaf ears. But 17 years later the Synod is now urging congregations to do just this — with mixed success — and has condemned racism as a sin.

Undaunted, Daneel went on two years later with African colleagues to organize an international, multiracial conference in Pretoria. 'We realized that we couldn't, as in the past, just meet together in the day and at night return to our own areas — we should live together.' Such a radical proposal had to be cleared at Cabinet level, but permission was granted.

'I wanted to shout'

The conference took place over Easter 1974 and drew 400 participants of all races from South Africa, other parts of Africa and overseas, to the excitement of the South African press. At the opening meeting Daneel announced the national anthem. The whites present got up expectantly, waiting for the first chords of the Afrikaner national hymn 'Die Stem'. But the packed hall, led by a choir from the black township of Atteridgeville, burst into the African anthem, 'Nkosi Sikelel'i Afrika' (God bless Africa).

All through these years, Joey was hardly able to walk. She had been born with a malformed hip cap, which over the years wore away, leaving her in terrible pain.

The climax came one day in the early Sixties when they arrived home from holiday. 'We were so hot after the 10 hours drive. We all piled out of the car and onto the tennis court. That evening I seized up. I couldn't shift my legs.' When she went to the specialist he said, 'How did you ever walk?'

'For 15 years I had to hang onto George and use a stick, he had to receive our guests, make the tea. Our home help had to dress me.' In 1975, the year after the Pretoria conference, she had a hip replacement operation. She remembers her first solo venture into the street and across the road. 'I wanted to shout out, "Hey, listen! I can walk! I can walk!" '

At the age of 60, Joey regained the use of her legs. In 1982, at the ages of 68 and 78, they packed up their belongings and headed off to Namibia. They went for six months, but they are still there today, eagerly watching the independence process. Before the elections in November they helped to draft an advertisement in the press calling for Namibians to accept God's authority and to build a country based on human rights and a readiness to forgive and ask forgiveness. When black Christians from one party held a prayer rally in Katutura, outside Windhoek, in November, Daneel was the only white minister prepared to take part.

The greatest need in South Africa today, Daneel believes, is for whites to learn to work with black people as equals. 'The government wants to include other races, but they want to do it in their own way, on their own terms, which will never work.'

Sometimes, says Joey, the process of change seems 'so slow'. She describes an incident when, during an ecumenical conference, they took a black friend to a white Dutch Reformed Church. 'Suddenly during the service it hit me that he was the only black man in the congregation. He said afterwards that he was in fear of being thrown out. I was in such a state. Is this what we do to a fellow human being? I apologized to him, I just didn't know what to do.' She is near to tears. 'I don't know what to say to you about the future because we don't seem to want to change, but we will have to.'

They make no claims as to what they have achieved in Namibia. 'I believe God sent us here for his purposes,' says Daneel. 'We've obeyed every step he's shown us and as far as the future is concerned we can leave it in his hands.' It makes a good summary of their lives. ■

Rex Features

Berlin, November 1989: 'the happiest people in the world'

Scene at the wall

Friedemann Kohler, a student of East European history in West Berlin, writes shortly after the breaching of the Berlin Wall:

As a boy of ten I visited my aunt in East Berlin. Our complicated crossing through concrete blocks, watch towers and barbed wire made a deep impression on me and I began to draw a picture of the Berlin wall. My aunt's comment was, 'Why don't you draw lots of people weeping?'

During the 28 years since 1961 this monstrous piece of architecture has caused many tears. It separated families and friends. It posed a deadly threat to anyone trying to cross it illegally.

The older generation on both sides of the wall may have kept their hope that it would not last for ever, though many became bitter. We of the younger generation had somehow learned to live with it. It was a wound, yet anger and hurt seemed futile. In West Berlin graffiti artists defiantly used the wall to create the longest mural in the world.

Young East Berliners avoided talking or even thinking about the wall. One friend of mine said that the division became most real when he had to say goodbye to Western visitors at the 'Palace of Tears', a glass pavilion at the Friedrichstrasse checkpoint. 'They were going to a place where we weren't allowed to go,' he explained.

In recent weeks there have been more tears in Berlin: tears of disbelief, relief and joy, as East Germany opened its borders.

Promise tested

The way in which it happened bears witness to the wit and quick reaction of Berliners on both sides.

When the East German government announced the new freedom to travel on the evening of Thursday, 9 November, they probably did not expect people to test the promise so quickly. But so many East Berliners rushed to the border with their passports or identity cards that the guards threw open the gates and let them pass with hardly any control. As they took the decisive step into the West, some rubbed tear-filled eyes, some had serious faces, others could not help bursting into laughter because it all seemed so absurd. The symbol of division lost its terror within hours, or even minutes.

West Berliners were quick to greet their brothers. At about midnight we gathered in large crowds at the check-points on the wall, waving, cheering, shaking hands and hugging complete strangers, uncorking bottles of champagne.

There was a party atmosphere. East Berliners spent a night on the town. Their small Trabant cars threw smelly two-stroke fumes into the air like victory flags. Over the following days the joyful scenes continued. Walter Momper, the Mayor of West Berlin, exclaimed, 'We Germans are today the happiest people in the world!' More crossings were made. There were more tears when a huge crane broke a hole in the seemingly impenetrable wall at Potsdamerplatz, Berlin's busiest square before the war.

Since then Berlin and the whole of Germany have been experiencing an exodus of almost biblical dimensions, but with most of the East Germans returning home after a brief visit to the West.

I remember with humility the source of the miracle of the open border. It is not a victory of Western politics and a superior economy. Nor is it the generosity of a Communist regime trying to strengthen its weakening position. In their demonstrations for freedom and change, the East German people have suddenly found a self-confidence and fearlessness that they have not shown before. ■

Community building from Bradford to Pakistan

Inter-faith relations are high on the agenda of the churches in the Yorkshire city of **Bradford** where, a year ago, local Muslim leaders publicly burnt Salman Rushdie's book, *The Satanic Verses*. Prompt action at the time by the Anglican Bishop of Bradford, **Robert Williamson**, in calling together the city's religious leaders, helped to defuse communal tension.

A year on, the city is picking up the pieces from the 'Rushdie affair' which threatened to shatter community relations. White schoolchildren still taunt their brown classmates with cries of 'Rushdie, Rushdie!' — 'without knowing what it means', says a religious education teacher in one inner city school.

Changes in the law?

In November, the Archbishop of Canterbury, on a visit to Bradford, called for an end to 'religious discrimination'. Now he and the Archbishop of York have convened a joint Christian-Muslim working party to look into possible changes in the law, such as outlawing incitement to religious hatred.

One of the party is **Philip Lewis**, Bradford diocese's community relations chaplain. He points out that it was the churches who, above all, came to the defence of the Muslim community over the Rushdie affair — even if, in Lewis's view, 'some of the Muslim responses to Rushdie's book were unwise'.

Bradford Telegraph and Argus

...ders of Bradford's Muslim and Sikh communities talk with Dr Robert Runcie, ...e Archbishop of Canterbury.

The strength of Muslim reaction 'was not just about *The Satanic Verses*', says **Ishtiaq Ahmed**, Vice-Chairman of Bradford's Community Relations Council. 'It was about a community trying to find its place in a strange and perceived hostile environment.' The book was the product of a system that was 'anti-faith and devoid of moral values'. Certainly the city's Muslim population would not have reacted the way they did had they felt more secure.

It is a point that Lewis understands: when it comes to racial justice, 'a liberal agenda ... secular society has left out God and the need to be sensitive to religious sensibilities,' he says.

Lewis and Ahmed were part of another joint Christian-Muslim initiative — at the time of the Rushdie affair — which, they say, is still having its positive effect on Bradford's community relations. Twelve Bradford citizens from both religious communities made a three-week visit to **Pakistan** — birthplace of many of Bradford's Muslims — with the express purpose of forwarding Christian-Muslim understanding in the city.

For Ahmed, the visit helped to 'take away a level of mistrust that can grow' between Christian and Muslim. It was possible to 'come together where we have a common enemy' — such as poverty and unemployment, still at 'frightening levels' for both blacks and whites in Bradford. 'If we can't help people at a practical level in their day to day living then they will not see our faiths as being relevant.'

He had been impressed by the work of the Columban Fathers — a small Catholic mission in Pakistan who have been working to alleviate the lot of some of Pakistan's poorest communities, including bonded labourers.

The problem of inter-faith dialogue is 'not where we have things in common but where we differ', adds Ahmed — a point echoed by Lewis. For Lewis it was 'facile' to suggest that Christians and Muslims could unite in 'common cause' against secularization without also recognizing differences of belief. 'When some Muslims call for Salman Rushdie's death because of his apostasy and blasphemy,' he says, 'they also have to recognize that the founder of our faith was put to death under the pretext of blasphemy.' Christians were never likely to support the death penalty for apostates, 'simply because of the history of our religion'.

Yet he took great heart from the biblical story of the apostle Peter's welcome to the gentile Cornelius. It was not for Peter to call profane what God counted as clean. As Lewis comments: 'It would be a poor thing for the world — and certainly for the Church — if the Holy Spirit confined its activities to within the Christian church and its members.'

Michael Smith

Second Opinion

Dennis Wayor

by Michael Henderson

I once was present at a memorable lunch in a German castle. We were at a small table in a large dining room, with a white-gloved footman behind each chair. The food was excellent. But what was remarkable was the conversation, the interaction of the host, Prince Richard of Hesse, and his main guest, Max Bladeck, a coalminer from the Ruhr. The royal prince, a son of privilege, a descendant of Queen Victoria, and Max, who had been 25 years in the Communist Party right through the Nazi regime, had broken down the 'middle wall of partition' between them. Forsaking their class prejudices, they were looking forward to what they and those of their respective backgrounds in Germany could do together for the post-war world.

That lunch came to mind as the news flashed in of another wall coming down. A German official, Hans von Beesten, phoned me. He represents the Federal Republic in Seattle. He had just been home and was very moved by all that was happening. As one who has lived in Germany and often been to Berlin I could understand. Referring to the 'expressions of love and affection' he said, 'I've never seen anything like it.'

One hundred and ninety-two people had been killed trying to get through the Berlin Wall, he reminded me. 'But these Germans did their revolution successfully without throwing stones, simply by going.' They were expressing something fundamental about freedom. 'It's not just an exceptional day-to-day event. It is a clear-cut goodbye to Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. It is 1789, it's the French revolution. And there'll be no Napoleon to bring Communism back.'

Curiously, as I watched the spontaneous joy of those November days, as I heard older Germans in our community and around the world say, 'We never thought it would happen in our lifetime,' the lines of Wordsworth about the French revolution came to mind:

Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
But to be young was very heaven!

We cannot, however, live on dreams. We have to deal with realities or, as NATO planners would put it, the capabilities not the intentions. And the euphoria of Potsdamerplatz has to be set against the tragedy of Tiananmen Square. 1989 was a year that demonstrated people's power but also people's powerlessness. There are still millions whose daily existence hangs by a thread. But there was born this past year just a glimpse of a world where resources might be put to better use, where rivalries could be put aside in larger tasks.

The new reality in central Europe is, I know, a worry to many. And caution, though criticized, may be wiser than bravado. At that lunch in Schloss Kronberg nearly thirty years ago the two men were as different in their experiences and backgrounds as the Federal Republic and the Democratic Republic have been since World War II. Yet perhaps they represented in microcosm a reunification of Germany to which the world would respond. If the Germany of Marx and Engels is gone, perhaps it is time for that of the Maxes and the Richards?

Michael Henderson is an English journalist living in the USA.

Congressman counters corruption

by T Willard Hunter

Thomas S Foley, Speaker of the US House of Representatives, hailed legislation expected to become law by the end of 1989 as 'the most extensive revision of ethical standards (in government) in the last 20 years'. But Charles E Bennett, the acknowledged father of ethics legislation in Congress, voted against it. The reason: the ethics package is tied to a 40 per cent salary hike by 1991.

'We are already adequately paid,' says Bennett, the Democratic Representative for Jacksonville, Florida, who has been in the House for 41 years. 'Besides,' he adds, 'we're living off the backs of our children. We'll pay the increase by borrowing, not from taxes.'

Bennett adds, 'The only pay raise I could vote for is one that put us (the Congress) under the cost of living index which others get, but then it should not be retroactive. The truth is that the benefit of public life is the joy of doing something worthwhile, the chance to serve your fellow man.'

Charlie, as he is affectionately known in the House, has a well-earned reputation for being a stickler on financial matters. He receives a substantial disability pension for polio he contracted during service in the Philippines in World War II, but returns it to the Treasury each year.

National furor

Pay increases are never popular in the constituencies. Earlier this year a national furor defeated a proposed 50 per cent pay increase. But this Bill, sweetened with needed ethical reforms, seems destined to pass. Ironically, Bennett supports all the reforms in the current legislation, including a requirement that honoraria get passed on to charity. Indeed, many provisions are based on bills Bennett first introduced. But he deeply regrets one omission from the Bill — it does not stop Members, who are seeking election to leadership positions in the Congress or the party, from passing on campaign contributions to other Members.

Bennett had in fact introduced legislation banning the practice in 1987, after he had lost a contest for the chairmanship of the powerful Armed Services Committee against Les Aspin (Wisconsin Democrat), who liberally shared campaign funds with House Democrats. Bennett denies his opposition to such contributions was 'sour grapes', however, a claim born out by his 30-year effort to promote ethical standards in government.

In 1958, Bennett authored a 'Code of Ethics for Government Service'. It contained ten principles and was the first officially adopted attempt in Congressional history to provide Members with written guide-lines. It has since been updated and passed again — unanimously — by both Houses. President Carter signed it in 1980. Among its points are:

'Any person in government service should:... put loyalty to the highest moral principles and to country above loyalty to persons, party, or Government department;... never discriminate unfairly by the dispensing of special favors or privileges to anyone, whether for remuneration or not; and never accept, for himself or his family, favors or benefits under circumstances which might be construed by reasonable persons as influencing the performance of his governmental duties.'

In 1967, Congressman Bennett introduced legislation which created the House Ethics Committee, now called the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct. He chaired it for the first year but was then replaced. 'They probably figured that anyone who would raise the ethics question would be too strict,' he says with his famous grin. However, he later served two more years as Chairman.

In fact Bennett's interest in ethics goes back to before his entry into Congress. Known as a card-carrying Christian, he was an early member of the weekly House Prayer Breakfast. After a personal experience of faith, which helped him find answers to 'some worrisome personal problems', he began to think about the necessity of having a morally strong country, and also the necessity of the individual playing a part in it. 'It was after this,' he says, 'that I began to persuade Congress to face the ethics issue, and face it on the record.'

Many Americans are worried that so much of politicians' funds come from special interest groups who are buying accessibility to legislators — and, no doubt, expecting them to look favorably on their aims. Bennett has made clear his policy of returning gifts. Yet the fact of political life in the US is that getting elected costs money. If you are not on television, you do not exist.

Six years ago, Bennett found that his election opponent, unlike himself, was able to finance TV appearances, using money from Political Action Committees (through which companies, labour unions and pressure groups support candidates they hope will be sympathetic to their views). So, since then, he has been distinguishing between 'gifts', which he won't accept, and officially reported 'campaign contributions', which he will. The difference, he says, is that candidates are required to account for the latter publicly, for all to see.

He recalls with amusement the daughter of a member of the Florida state legislature telling him, 'My daddy is ethical like you. He will never accept payment for a vote unless he was planning to vote that way anyway.' But Charlie says that no PAC campaign contributor has ever asked him to vote one way or another on any measure. If they did, he would decline.

The enormous cost of television time is one of the reasons that 'money is the mother's milk of politics'. Although Bennett himself has never spent more than $30,000 in a campaign, some House Members are now spending $1 million in running for a two-year term.

Bennett is now considering proposing legislation to make free television time available to candidates.

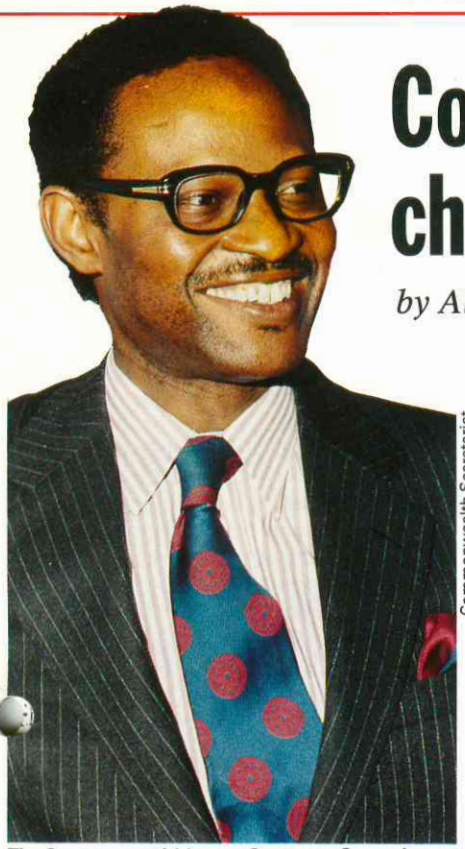
Lord Acton's dictum of a hundred years ago — power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely — still holds good. Bennett's initiatives for ethics in government are designed to oppose that tendency. ■

TW Hunter

Charles E Bennett, the 'father of ethics legislation' in the US Congress

Commonwealth choices

by Allan Griffith



Commonwealth Secretariat

The Commonwealth's next Secretary-General, Chief Anyaoku of Nigeria

What will the Commonwealth of the Nineties look like? Its members, almost all former British colonies, span the globe and the rich-poor divide. The media regularly predict the demise of such a haphazard grouping, and as regularly are disappointed. Orchids and brickbats were both in evidence in the opening speech of Dr Mahathir, the Malaysian Prime Minister, the host and chairman of the 40th Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, in Kuala Lumpur, late last year. Yet a blend of straight talking and fair dealing ensured a clear-cut choice for a new Secretary-General to replace the veteran Sridath Ramphal. Chief Anyaoku of Nigeria was unanimously elected in a secret ballot. Surely one of Africa's most distinguished diplomats, he is well-placed to exploit an impending era of conflict resolution.

Pacific focus

Chief Anyaoku and Mahathir will play an important part in shaping the future of the organization: after debate on the environment, economics and drug-related issues, the leaders agreed to set up a study group to look at the reshaping of the Commonwealth to face the challenges of the 1990s. Mahathir, one-time critic of the organization, will chair the group, which reflects the changing balance within it. The Pacific is set to become the focus of world economic power, and four Pacific rim countries, Malaysia, Singapore, Canada and Australia, join Jamaica, Bahamas, India, Nigeria, and Britain in this study group.

The question arises of the relationship between the Commonwealth and the world's greatest single economic force, Japan. Here the Commonwealth must define its global tasks in such terms that Japan can play a part.

One such area is the Commonwealth experiment in education using modern 'distance learning technology'. Launched at the previous Vancouver Commonwealth meeting, a new agency, under its president Dr James Maraj, aims to make high quality education available to millions. Here Japanese technical skills may help to make this dream come true, and hi-tech companies like Toshiba are already taking part. Funding will come not just from other Commonwealth governments but from international agencies and private sources — and the programme will not benefit member countries alone.

Global agenda

Another big question mark is the relationship between Commonwealth and United States policies, as the world moves into a new era, free from the worst ideological divisions of the cold war. President Bush's recent speech at the United Nations contained a full recognition that the US must work on the basis of a 'global agenda', including disarmament, the environment, and economic development. But the Commonwealth has earned itself something of a reputation as a pace-setter in mobilizing international co-operation on social and economic issues. Tucked away in the final communiqué of the Commonwealth meeting was a reference to reviving efforts to create viable commodity agreements. This is an issue that the USA has walked away from in the past, but President Bush's acceptance of a global agenda should indicate a commitment to make the international economic system work on a more equitable basis.

Mahathir's dramatic reversal of roles, from critic to shaper of the future, reflects a determination to introduce a new realism. Here he can exploit the Commonwealth's natural assets. As he said in his final press conference, 'It is no longer a sort of genteel association for people who speak English.'

The issue of white supremacy in Southern Africa — the last legacy of Empire — has dominated the media's treatment of every Commonwealth summit for the last 20 years. Now perhaps with the independence of Namibia, and the recent developments inside South Africa itself, we can look forward to the Commonwealth meeting in Harare, Zimbabwe, in 1991 in the hope that it can devote more time to this wider scene. ■

Stacy Carr

People who live in dream houses...

To prove that I am not just an inveterate whinger, I won't bore you with the countless properties we viewed; the excellently situated house with practically no roof and very few floor boards which husband fell in love with; instead I'll come straight to the exciting part. We had found our dream house, we'd got our mortgage and had settled a date for moving.

The survey revealed some evidence of damp. 'Better have this checked,' we thought. The owner was quick to produce a guarantee of necessary work having been done; the estate agent was quick to produce an estimate for the 'minimal' work still needed. We were quick to distrust them both and have independent surveys conducted. The result? All the companies, who it must be faced make their living out of other people's damp, claimed that there was indeed some treatment needed. The problem? They couldn't agree where.

The survey also revealed woodworm, so we arranged to have that treated. Nothing is really a problem when you have found your dream house. Not even having to take up all the carpets.

I remember thinking it curious, between coughs and pauses to wipe the fine black grit out of my eyes, that carpet manufacturers do not make more of foam-backed carpets' self-destructing qualities. After a mere month it would seem, the foam backing cleverly turns into a pile of dust which once released coats everything in sight, clogs the vacuum cleaner and makes it nearly impossible to put the carpet back evenly. Still, nothing is a problem when you've found your dream house.

Not even getting the telephone reconnected. Did we want to be in the directory? 'Yes please.' 'What name?' 'R and E V Waters.' 'Sorry, we can only take one name.' 'Oh,' I said, seeing the chance for a rare feminist coup, 'make it E V Waters then.'

I'm not sure I ever managed to placate husband. He still thinks that if the number isn't under his name everyone will assume we aren't on the phone. And there was another problem. When the bill came three days later it was addressed to Mr E V Waters. Still, no one expects moving house to be straightforward.

Ellen V Waters

Continued from page 6

ressive terminal disease', learned that 'instead of picking up a drink you pick up a telephone' to call another AA member. Now working at a mental health clinic in Washington, she uses her free time to attend an AA fellowship each day at 7am ('They are my family') and at least three evening meetings a week, as well as 'sponsoring' (befriending and guiding) several alcoholic women. 'Passing it on' is one way she stays sober. She cheerfully agrees that AA substitutes one sort of dependency for another, but argues that it is better than being dead. Using one of AA's slew of slogans, she says it is a matter of staying sober just 'one day at a time'. Amy does not regard her dedication as unusual: it is 'service' in gratitude for what AA has given her.

AA's effectiveness is also due to the very nature of its organization. At local meetings, there are no leaders — chairpersons serve in rotation, and a 'trusted servant' with six month's sobriety or more takes a turn as secretary. Anyone can start a group, AA supplying only its principles and support. 'Two drunks trying to stay sober and a pot of coffee is an AA group,' grins one lady, holding her steaming mug.

AA's world headquarters in New York, called the 'General Service Organization', is dictated to by decisions from the grassroots through regular conferences. It is as if the whole structure of the organization is an expression of the principle of 'anonymity', which, as one AA member puts it, is simply 'a quest for humility'. No-one mentions his or her surname. The last public statement of 'Bill W', one of the founders, made it clear: 'If I were asked what... was most responsible for our growth as a fellowship, I would say the concept of anonymity... a discipline which has brought protection for the newcomer, respect and support of the world outside.'

'Many therapists in the health industry have tried to evade this spiritual factor.'

But the essence of AA is in its Twelve Step programme, which is so simple, said an alcoholic academic, that 'intellectuals have the greatest difficulty understanding it'. With a laugh, she quotes the KISS slogan: 'Keep it simple, stupid'.

The very first Step confronts much of modern behavioural psychology. Using the language of the two founders and the experience of their own recovery from alcoholism *(see page 7)*, it states: 'We admitted we were powerless over alcohol — that our lives had become unmanageable.' Such an admission of profound need, insists AA, is the key to liberation. 'Surrender is what it's about,' says May, the speaker in the Washington DC meeting. 'There is power in letting go.'

Few people come wanting AA, noted another member, 'They come because they are desperate.' That is why AA does not want the legal system 'sentencing' addicts to go to AA meetings. 'If you're not there to change your life you won't stay for long.'

But the Second and Third Steps are even more controversial: accepting that there is 'a power greater than ourselves which can restore our sanity', and the decision 'to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understand him'. The remaining Steps go progressively deeper into a spiritual process, six of the steps mentioning God or a 'higher power'. Soviet officialdom naturally choked a bit over such precise references to God. But AA does not demand belief in any specific terms — much to the chagrin of some 'old-timers', the AA fellowship now embraces New Age yuppies on classy $100-a-day 'coke' addictions, Buddhists and Hindus, as well as humanists and gays.

Many therapists in the health industry have tried to evade this spiritual factor, while accepting AA's self-help principles, claimed a staff member. 'But the empirical data doesn't suggest any critical mass of recovered alcoholics in any other environment.' Group therapy meetings without God just leave you with 'group depression', says one alcoholic. Gordon Grimm, a Lutheran chaplain in a Minnesota alcoholic rehabilitation centre says, 'Spirituality is about getting involved with one another, a deep contact with oth human beings.'

The Twelve Step philosophy is radical and simple. It offers a way out for desperate people and desperate societies — for drug addicts, but also for those ready to admit that fear, materialism, power, hedonism are addictions poisoning our societies too. For though we rightly expect tough government action against the pernicious spread of drugs, in the final analysis the answers must lie with curing the addiction and demand behind the epidemic.

The 'empirical data' is there. The sober truth proved in the lives of a million recovered drunks (and as many again with other addictions) is that liberation is available — for those who are desperate, and honest, enough to reach for it. ■

Anti-alcoholism posters from the Soviet Union where there are 20 million alcohol-dependent citizens

by Jean Brown

Birds on the wing

I was never a cute chick or a gorgeous bird. No wolf whistles ever ruffled *my* feathers, a fact that caused me both anguish and relief!

Perhaps I *am* something of an absurd bird. When my son, born in Bombay, was 18 months old, we visited an Indian school. In the biology laboratory, one of the schoolgirls crowding around asked this fat little Australian, 'Where's your mummy?' Without hesitation he pointed to a stuffed monkey on top of a cupboard.

Some years later my daughter, aged three, was asked if she wanted to be a lady when she grew up. She replied, 'No, I want to be like my mummy!' I could sympathise: I never wanted to be a lady either.

I am a pro-life, pro-male, pro-marriage and pro-spiritual feminist. I'm a feminist in the sense that I can see that the Western world has been deprived of the feminine in both men and women, and so deprived of gifts of intuition and nurturing, of putting people before things, of a horizontal rather than hierarchical mind- and spirit-set. Suppressed in countless ways for countless centuries, the bird is now flexing her wings and emerging from various cages to help correct the imbalance and the fragmentation that are evident in society.

Our earliest myths and fables have woven a tapestry of fantasies, creating maps for the human spirit. One is a repeated theme familiar to many from childhood: the rescue of a princess from a tower where she is held captive, from endless sleep or from imminent death, by a prince who discovers unknown strength and courage in overcoming a great variety of obstacles. Only in the union of prince and princess does the kingdom find peace.

Within every individual, the masculine and feminine aspects undergo similar processes of patiently being, of daringly doing, to develop wholeness. The psychologist, Carl Jung, called the masculine in women the 'animus' and the feminine in men the 'anima'. All of us at times suppress or deny or give undue power to a part of ourselves, often through fear. But there is built into us the possibility of balance and completeness. This is not only true for individuals but also for society as a whole.

The ugly sister

Those famous fairy tales include another element. More often than not, the creative feminine is plotted against by a jealous, hardened 'other' feminine — the wicked witch, the ugly sister, the angry queen. And she too is a part of us, to be recognized, understood and disempowered.

For many women the perceived route to success is in a masculine mode. For many men the perceived route to failure follows the feminine. Growing up and longing to be a success, I had an identity crisis. It took a long time for me to become reconciled to myself as woman. Husband and then children played a major part in affirming that. But it took even longer for me to grasp something of the unique contribution of the feminine beyond the purely biological: to discover that the gifts of feeling, intuition and subjectivity were not just soft options to be confined to the kindergarten, but essential ingredients in decision-making processes in every sphere of human thought and activity. This vision, for me, was not merely an invitation to the exercise of power, which can be abused or creatively used by women as much as men, but an invitation to meaning and worth. It had less to do with roles and everything to do with purpose and dignity.

As the world haphazardly struggles to avert further environmental disaster, healing the wounded feminine in men and women will play a part in repairing our relationship with Mother Earth. The often aggressively left-brain orientation of Western society has a creative and scientific dynamic. But it also has a propensity for conquest more than compassion, for possession more than partnership. It has left this 'earth of our being' in an incredibly fragile state.

The feminine needs to be employed to avert our global suicide. And what gives me hope is that the Holy Spirit of the Creator God, Ruach (feminine in the original Hebrew) is also Bird... dove, and has healing in her wings. ■

Photo: Tom Huston

GUEST COLUMN

by Geoffrey Lean

M Noble

Labelling decades is, I suppose, harmless fun — and a handy way of signposting history. And it is strange how often the time spent circling the sun tenfold acquires a special character of its own.

Perhaps it all began with the Naughty Nineties, one hundred years ago. Since then we have had the Swinging Sixties. And, I would contend, we have just rung out the Egoistic Eighties.

This was the decade when self-interest became sanctified. We were told, on the highest authority, that 'there is no such thing as society, only individuals'. The old and discredited 'trickle-down' theory — that the rich have a duty to get richer, and that wealth will 'trickle-down' to the poor — was disinterred and made the basis of national and international policies.

For those economic revolutionaries who seized their chance to put their ideas into practice, the decade was, no doubt, the Exciting Eighties. For most of those who benefited they were the Easy Eighties. But for at least half of humanity they were the Excluded Eighties, even the Embittered Eighties.

Unmitigated disaster

Washington's excellent Worldwatch Institute has recently published a devastating end-of-term report on the decade. It shows that the share of the world's people living in absolute poverty — lacking enough 'to meet the most basic biological needs for food, clothing and shelter' — rose in the 1980s for the first time since the Second World War, reversing 30 years of improvement.

'For industrial nations,' concludes the report, 'the decade has been a time of resurgence and recovery after the economic turmoil of the Seventies. For the poor, particularly in Africa and Latin America, the Eighties have been a period of unmitigated disaster, a time of falling earnings and rising debt, of falling food supplies and rising death rates.'

More than 40 Third World nations had lower per capita incomes at the end of the decade than at the beginning. The average Latin American grew about ten per cent poorer, the average African 25 per cent more destitute. The poorest people did worse still.

One in every three Peruvian children ended the decade stunted by malnutrition. Child deaths from hunger in Zambia doubled in the first half of the Eighties, while life expectancy fell across the continent. UNICEF concluded last year that 'at least half a million young children have died in the last 12 months as a result of the slowing down or the reversal of progress in the developing world'.

The stage seems set for the Needy Nineties,

'A devastating end-of-term report on the decade'

the Niggardly Nineties or even the Nasty Nineties. But perhaps not. For, coinciding neatly with the turn of the decade, there really is a sense of change in the air.

The Eastern European spring, suddenly breaking out in the very autumn of the decade, provides the most obvious sign of the new beginning. As the old enmities crumble with the Berlin Wall, the people themselves are setting a new agenda for the Nineties.

High on that agenda is the state of the world's environment. Ecological protest lies at the very foundation of the Eastern European popular movements, from Estonia to Bulgaria, from Krakow to the Danube. Despite the assertions of some Western politicians, the new East is not simply wanting to ape the old West's Eighties materialism. They are seeking a new dimension altogether.

At the same time, there are the first signs that the world's leaders may be attuning themselves to the new decade. In the last eighteen months the effect of pollution on the world climate, the so-called greenhouse effect, has leapt from near the bottom of the international agendas to near the top.

Last March a first-ever environmental summit of leaders from both developed and developing countries, meeting in the Hague, agreed that nations would have to surrender some of their sovereignty to meet the crisis. The issue dominated the communiqué of the latest western economic summit. And another series of top-level meetings about it begins in Bergen, Norway, in May.

There is every reason for concern. Emissions of carbon dioxide and other gasses threaten to cause the most abrupt change of climate in the history of civilized man, raising sea levels and disrupting world harvests. Entire low-lying nations could disappear, along with one third of Bangladesh. The American Midwest — on which 100 nations depend for food — is expected to dry out, causing harvests to crash.

The crisis simply cannot be tackled by pursuing individual, or even national, self-interest. It requires an unprecedented degree of international cooperation. With a few exceptions, no one country can do much by itself to cut global carbon dioxide emissions. There has to be international agreement, which requires a new deal for developing countries.

Third World countries will not agree to restrict their use of fossil fuels or to stop felling their rain forests — the two main sources of carbon dioxide — unless they are helped to develop in less damaging ways. Rich countries, too, will need to develop sustainable styles of growth.

Negotiations about what to do about the greenhouse effect will inevitably turn into talks about development. The old North-South dialogue, effectively abandoned for a decade, will have to reopen on a new basis. And this, in turn, offers the hope that the growing destitution of the world's poorest people will at last be tackled by developed and developing countries alike.

It's a tall order. Some countries have begun to align their policies to the new agenda, but some of the most crucial ones have yet to produce any deeds to match their leaders' words. Vast changes will be necessary, and the world may well fail to meet the challenge. One way or another, the issue will be decided in the decade that starts this month.

What chance for the New-leaf Nineties?

Geoffrey Lean is the Environment Correspondent for the 'Observer', London.

Next Month...

Lead story: 1990 is the 150th anniversary of New Zealand's Treaty of Waitangi between Maori chiefs and the British Crown. *For a Change* investigates how much the Treaty has been honoured.

Profile: Henri Ziegler, father of the European Airbus.

Guest column: Claud Morris, editor of *Voice of the Arab World*.