

FORA CHANGE

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*Defender of
Brazil's Indians p16*

**Canada faces
breaking point**

by Michael Smith, St Petersburg



Flame of faith

It is like a football crowd. The young people in their denim and leather jackets, the *babushki* or grandmothers in their woolly hats and scarves, all stand shoulder to shoulder in the 18th century Orthodox Cathedral of St Nicholas for the midnight Easter mass. Each holds a thin brown candle, creating a shimmering sea of light. They crackle like those joke birthday cake candles that won't blow out. The flame of faith has not been extinguished after 70 years of state atheism.

I have arrived from London five hours before, and my host has brought me straight to the heart of Holy Russia.

Catherine's ceiling

Valentina Bielkowskaya, who has invited me to St Petersburg, is curator of Catherine the Great's Palace in Pushkin, 15 kms to the south. The magnificent white and gold rococo building, with its 300-metre facade, was occupied by the Germans during the 900-day Siege of Leningrad of 1941-43.

After the war, it was a matter of honour, even under Stalin, that the palaces of the tsars should be restored to their former glory. One wing of the Catherine Palace is still not open to the public. Here, three elderly artists are working on a vast painting on the ceiling, destroyed during the German occupation. We climb three tiers of wooden scaffolding to meet them. It will take them four years to restore the ceiling, from a black and white photograph of the original. They are paid a pittance for their work. Remember their names: Boris, Yuri and Ivan, three Michaelangelos.

Tourist's dream

Valentina is worried because the city authorities are threatening to close down such museums if more tourists don't come to cover the costs of running them. The first priority, at a time of appalling food shortages, must be to feed the people, argues city hall.

Understandable, indeed. Yet St Petersburg is a tourist's dream. Visit, for instance, the Hermitage, Catherine the Great's art treasures in the Winter Palace, and see paintings by Leonardo, Rembrandt, Fra Angelico, Renoir – one of the finest art collections in the world. Or hear exquisite opera singing in the Kirov or Muscovsky theatres where, incredibly, tickets cost as little as six roubles (six US cents). And tourist dollars will help the economy. Mayor Sobchack can offer me a job any day: promoting his city.

Topsy-turvy

Queues form down the streets when sugar, bread or butter come into the shops. Till recently there was coupon rationing for such basic items. Cheese is a luxury at 200

roubles a kilo. A student gets 500 roubles a month. The average Russian spends 70 to 80 per cent of his 1,500 roubles (\$15) monthly salary on food. But in other respects prices are topsy-turvy. Rent, gas, electricity and telephone for a four room apartment costs 100 roubles or \$1 a month. When people are used to such subsidies, introducing market prices and privatizing property will be a nightmare.

Survivor of the Siege

Janina, aged 78, can remember far worse times. She was in her late twenties during the Siege of Leningrad. Even today she cannot talk about it without tears in her eyes. Over 600,000 people died of starvation. Hitler wanted to 'wipe Petersburg off the face of the earth'.

Janina remembers boiling her husband's leather belt to make a soup so that they could stay alive. He was a truck driver bringing in vital supplies over the icebound Lake Lagoda, under constant enemy shellfire. Thawing ice plunged many drivers to their death. Today the survivors of the siege are honoured citizens, given priority in housing and pensions.

Joi de vivre

A group of young 'believers' are meeting in a small apartment. How did these sons and daughters of communist parents come to their faith in God? Helen, a petite 18-year-old with sparkling eyes, is a student of music. Three years ago she went to church for the music, she says. There, her friend Peter encouraged her to be baptized. She never told her parents, but her father guessed. At first he was furious, but then pleased by the change in her, especially when she started helping around the home. Her favourite composer now is Bach.

Our hostess, also Helen, says her interest in philosophy led her to read about theology. She says, simply, 'The Holy Spirit brought me to the church. I had many personal problems but they all melted away. Now I can hardly remember what those problems were.' She is echoed by Mikhail, a bus driver, who says, 'I came to it through the Holy Spirit. Then I saw all the world through different eyes.'

They exude *joi de vivre* and their priest tells them they will change the life of Russia.

Flags and stripes

It is May Day. In the public square in front of the Winter Palace, the Communist Party is holding its rally with red flags unfurled. In previous years the Party crowded the whole square. This year, several hundred occupy a third of it. A demonstrator wants to sell me his red flag for \$20. 'Too much,' I tell him.

Around the corner, something is happening which would have been illegal two years ago: a band is playing the Stars and Stripes. ■





COVER: Maple trees in Ontario
photo: Ken Straiton,
Rex Features

FOR A CHANGE

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

For a change in Russia

One of the stories that has run and run over the last few years is the collapse of communism in eastern Europe and the long, hard struggle to replace it with something better. Without the access to information provided by the free press and the many radio stations broadcasting along the Iron Curtain, these events would probably never have happened. Now the press can play an equally vital part in shaping the attitudes that will help sustain democracy.

Three years ago a Russian emigré publisher encouraged us to send *For A Change* to nearly a thousand libraries across the Soviet Union and eastern Europe and then to publish a special Russian edition of the magazine for wider distribution. He felt that the ideas and values we express were desperately needed there.

In 1990 we sent 5,000 copies of the Russian edition to the then Soviet Union. We received hundreds of letters of appreciation, offering support and asking for further editions. 'Now we Russians have to learn how to live,' wrote one reader. 'Political reforms can be made by governments, but each individual needs to change himself.'

'Our shops are empty,' wrote another, 'but the emptiness in people's hearts is even greater.'

We are now planning to produce a second Russian edition on a bigger scale. It will feature articles by Russian journalists, as well as translations from the English language editions. It will be printed in Moscow and sold at an affordable price in roubles.

But roubles can't cover the translation and production costs – nor the cost of continuing to send the English edition to libraries across eastern Europe. These costs will be carried in Britain and we are launching a special fund to cover them. One of our Russian readers, a writer and artist from Moscow, has started it off by sending us a painting to sell, but much more is needed.

We would be grateful for your contributions. Cheques can be made payable to *For A Change Russia Fund*, 12 Palace St, London, SW1E 5JF.

The Editors

- examines the changes engulfing the world, what's going right as well as what's going wrong.
- focusses on people, many motivated by faith in God, who are making a difference to the world around them.
- explores the changes needed in attitudes and actions – as well as structures – which are crucial to peace, justice and the survival of the planet.
- was born out of the experience of Moral Re-Armament and draws its material from a wide range of sources.

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A NOTE ON MORAL RE-ARMAMENT

Moral Re-Armament was launched in 1938 when Europe was rearming. Frank Buchman, MRA's American initiator, called for a programme of 'moral and spiritual rearmament' to address the root causes of conflict, and work towards a 'hate-free, fear-free, greed-free world'. Since then people of all backgrounds and traditions have been active in this programme on every continent.

MRA is open to all. Its starting point is the readiness of each person to make real in their own life the changes they wish to see in society. A commitment to search for God's will in daily life forms the basis for creative initiative and common action. Absolute moral standards of honesty, purity, unselfishness and love help to focus the challenge of personal and global change.



Canada faces breaking point

The cartographers have never been so busy. Following the disintegration of the world's largest country, the Soviet Union, the second largest, Canada, is now perilously close to break-up. Richard Weeks reports from Ottawa on Canada's constitutional crisis.

Normally I am not one to take to the streets with a placard. But last June, as talks on ratifying the Meech Lake constitutional accord faltered, I found myself doing just that. With Québec threatening to leave the confederation, our country's future was at stake.

Feelings run high on both sides of the debate. Incidents which hit the headlines include English-speaking bigots stomping on a Québec flag, the burning of a Canadian flag on Québec's national day, omitting to sing the National Anthem in French at a constitutional conference and hockey superstar Eric Lindros refusing to play for a Québec team. Meanwhile an English trucker has been posting signs across the country declaring '*mon Canada comprend le Québec*' (*comprend* meaning both 'understand' and 'include'), while a Québécois has put out a statement that 'my Québec includes both native and French'.

On 1 July Canada celebrates its 125th birthday as a confederation with many Canadians wondering how much longer

their country can hang together in its present form. As former Chief Justice Brian Dickson said recently, 'What was hitherto unthinkable is now thinkable — the break-up of a proud and glorious nation, the envy of every other country in the world.'

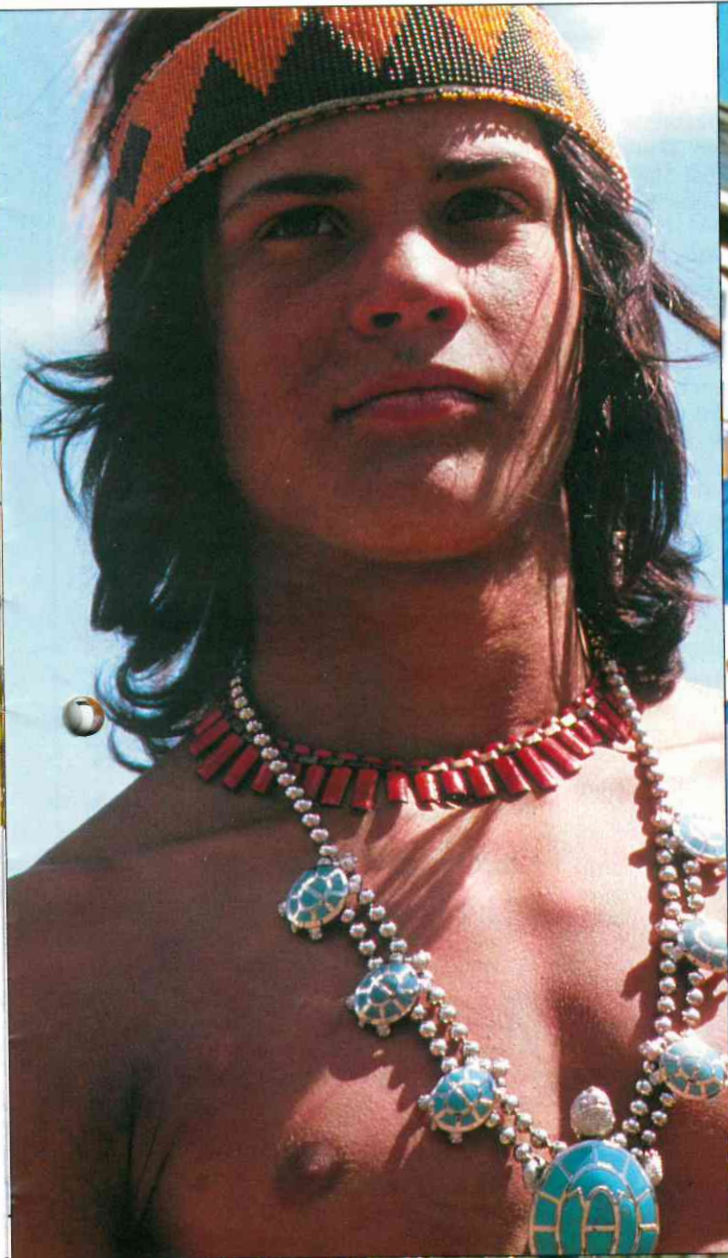
How has Canada come to this when, according to the United Nations, we have the best living conditions in the world? Mackenzie King, a former Prime Minister, said that 'if some countries have too much history, Canada has too much geography'. Yet, though Canada's shape and size seem to defy logic, history must take some of the blame.

In the main entrance to the Grand Seminary in Québec City hangs a huge map of the diocese of New France. It covers the whole of North America except for Virginia and New England. Such was the vision of the founders of French Canada in the 17th century. But then Britain and France, ignoring or using the original inhabitants, fought for control over the continent, deciding Canada's fate at the battles for Québec in 1759 and Montreal a year later.

Today a community of six million French-speaking people in Québec (and another million outside) struggles to preserve its culture and language amid a sea of 250 million English-speaking North Americans. A report published last April points out the fundamentally differing visions of Canada. While Québec sees itself as one of Canada's two founding and major cultural groups, other provinces talk about Canada's multi-cultural heritage and see Québec as just one among ten equal provinces. How to reconcile these differing views is at the heart of the crisis.

My first memory of Canada was at age five, gazing up at the enormous locomotive that was to pull our train the 3,000-odd miles to Alberta. This railway was the artery that kept Canada's lifeblood flowing from coast to coast. It stretched from the Atlantic provinces, through Québec and Ontario, across the prairies and, by an amazing feat of engineering, through the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific coast.

We came, as thousands have done before and since from all parts of the world, to this land, vast in size and opportunity.



Can Canada find space for all its people?: First Nations (top), English-speaking (bottom), and French-speaking.



Canada faces breaking point

Memories include Indian chiefs in full regalia at the Calgary stampede, a bear being drummed out of town, a friend riding to school on a husky, and summers that were as hot as the winters were cold.

My father's work took us back to England after only two years. An English school erased my Canadian accent, but I hung onto my citizenship not knowing quite why until I was given the chance to return in 1971, this time to Québec.

I arrived there little more than a year after the murder of Québec's Labour Minister and the kidnapping of the British Trade Commissioner by the FLQ (Front de Libération du Québec) – events that led Prime Minister Trudeau, at the request of the Québec government, to send troops onto the streets of Montreal.

I began to learn something of the injustices that lay behind these events. For instance, at that time Trois-Rivières was 98 per cent francophone – but most of its major industries were run by the anglophone minority, some of whom had never learnt French, requiring instead that their workers speak English.

During the Sixties Québec's 'quiet revolution' had brought far-reaching changes opening the way for greater participation in economic development. The Parti Québécois was

swept to power in 1976 promising a vote on independence. But the 1980 referendum asking for a mandate to negotiate sovereignty was defeated by 60 to 40 per cent. (A recent poll has shown that the result would be reversed if the same question were asked today.)

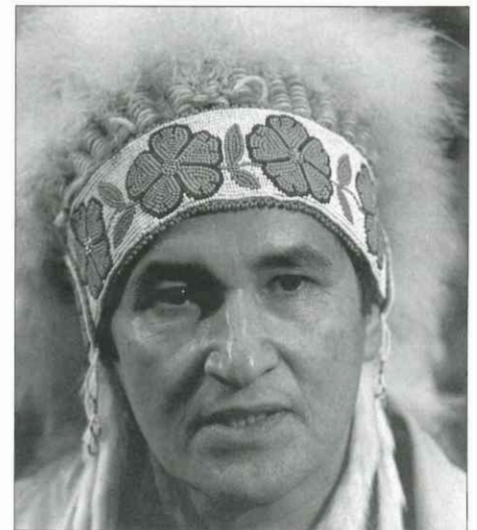
At the time, fear of the economic consequences of separation together with a promise by the Canadian government of renewed federalism played a big part. But hopes of this new federalism were dashed when the 1981 accord, establishing a Charter of Rights and Freedoms and breaking the remaining link with Britain, went ahead without Québec's support. This was seen as a betrayal.

The situation was not seriously addressed until 1986 when a new pro-federalist government in Québec proposed five minimum requirements for keeping the province as part of Canada: recognition of Québec as a distinct society, greater control over immigration, the power of veto, a limitation on federal spending power and participation in Supreme Court appointments.

A year later Prime Minister Brian Mulroney piloted a meeting of the premiers of Canada's ten provinces at Meech Lake to what seemed a miraculous accord. It would, said Mulroney, bring Québec back into the constitutional family 'with honour and enthusiasm'.

The snag was that the constitution allowed three years for approval by provincial legislatures. During that time, elections in three provinces returned governments opposed to the accord. As the 23 June 1991 deadline approached, provincial premiers met again to try and salvage the deal. An eleventh hour agreement raised hopes that the accord could be ratified in time.

It was not to be. Canadians sat spell-bound or dumb-founded as Elijah Harper, an Indian leader and member of the Manitoba legislature, eagle feather in hand, calmly denied the unanimous consent required for debate to proceed.



Ovide Mercredi:
'If you can create friendship that changes everything else'

Assurances that aboriginal and other concerns would be addressed later were to no avail.

While the Québec issue has dominated the constitutional agenda for two decades, the aboriginal people, Indian, Inuit and Métis (those of mixed race) have been indignant that Québec's demands were being tackled ahead of their own. Four constitutional conferences from 1983-87 attempted to deal with their concerns, but without success. Canada's 'First Nations', as they are now called, seek the recognition of their inherent right to self-government.

At the same time 'Outer Canadians' from the Atlantic and the west have felt bitterly that their lives are being run from the political and industrial centres of Ontario and Québec thousands of miles away. They want a greater say through an elected and effective Senate, with some pressing for equal representation for all the provinces.

Gordon Robertson, one of the country's most respected constitutional experts and the senior public servant responsible for federal-provincial relations from 1963-79, was himself raised in the west, in Saskatchewan. He says that the profound sense of grievance goes back to the days of the first settlers. Manufactured goods had to be bought from Ontario and Québec, where they were produced in a protected market, while the settlers had to sell their produce on the open international markets. 'Everything that was hazard fell on the western farmer and everything that was protected was for the benefit of



Brian Dickson, former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, addresses the 'First Nations and the Constitution' conference in Ottawa in March.



R Weeks

Joe Clark: 'Aboriginal self-government was here before the rest of us arrived'

somebody east of Winnipeg.'

The day after the death of the Meech Lake accord, hundreds of thousands of flag-waving Québécois surged down the main boulevard in Montreal, counting on sovereignty as a sure thing. Others, with bitter memories of being left out in 1981 felt that Québec had once again been rebuffed by the rest of the country. Québec premier Robert Bourassa announced he would boycott further constitutional talks.

The action of Elijah Harper in Manitoba was the prelude to Québec's own 'Indian summer' in which Mohawk warriors, disputing the sale of traditional burial grounds, faced first the provincial police and then the Canadian army across the barricades at Kanestake and Kahnawake.

The failure of the accord meant that the debate over Canada's constitutional future had entered a new and challenging phase. Some felt that the country had been saved from disaster, others that the best chance for a solution had been thrown away.

Widespread cynicism and disillusionment with politicians led to calls for greater involvement by ordinary Canadians. In response a Citizen's Forum was set up, followed by a series of five constitutional conferences to study the federal government's 28-point proposals released last summer.

These 'Renewal of Canada' conferences brought together opinion leaders, members of the parliamentary commission and a small group of 'ordinary' Canadians. I attended the third, held in Toronto, on 'Identity, Rights and Values'.

Given the chance to meet, interact and

listen to each other, participants moved in their positions over the three days, though the clash of interests between Québec and the aboriginals was evident. Aboriginals explained their fear that their rights would not be adequately protected within a 'distinct' Québec. As Zebedee Nungak, a leader of the Québec Inuit, put it, 'We don't want to be out-distincted.'

A participant from British Columbia said that she had begun to understand the true nature of Canada for the first time. Lorraine Duquet, a lawyer from Québec was delighted by the openness she found towards her province. Eric Maldoff, founder of the Québec English rights group 'Alliance Québec', said that all must be ready to forgive past mistakes. 'Can we agree on a partnership of care?'

The conferences have been watched by surprisingly large audiences on TV. Gordon Robertson, the first to call for 'generosity of spirit' in constitutional matters, feels they have had a real impact.

One of the recommendations of the Toronto meeting was that there should be a conference on First Nations and the Constitution. This finally happened in mid-March. In the days leading up to the conference two things of great significance to the aboriginals happened. First the Canadian parliament adopted a motion recognizing, 107 years after he had been hanged, 'the unique and historic role of (Métis leader) Louis Riel as a founder of Manitoba and his role in the development of confederation'. Then, the day before the conference opened, Joe Clark, Minister responsible for Constitutional Affairs, offered the four main national aboriginal organizations a full part in future constitutional talks – something they had been requesting for a long time.

In his historic speech to the conference, Joe Clark acknowledged that aboriginal self-government is not new. 'It was here before the rest of us arrived,' he said, 'It was taken away. Intentionally or unintentionally, with malice or without, the identity and culture and confidence and dignity of aboriginal people were ground down. What is remarkable is that so many aboriginal Canadians have overcome these circumstances and conduct themselves with such dignity and strength. That is a tribute to them, not to us.'

Ovide Mercredi, a Manitoba Cree lawyer influenced by Gandhi's principles of non-violence, was elected National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations in June last year. Before his first meeting with Joe Clark he asked the elders for advice. After

Gordon Robertson: 'Everything that was hazard fell on the western farmer'

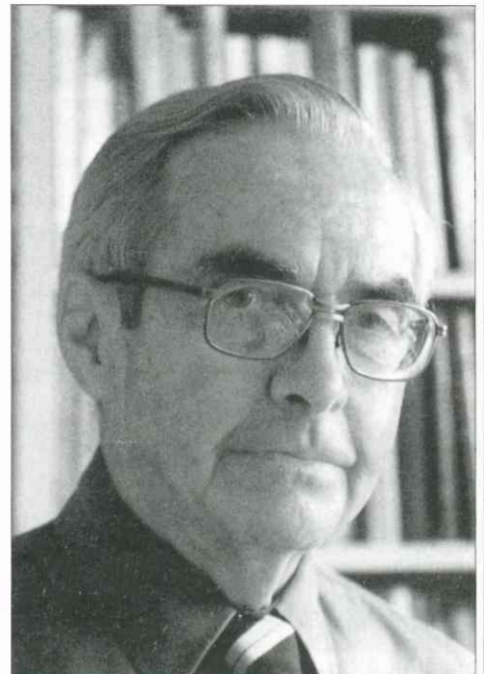
prayer and reflection they sent a message to the two leaders: 'You need each other. You must lift each other up.' Though relations between the two men have often been distinctly cool, this thought has never been far from their minds. In an interview, Mercredi said he thought that friendship could achieve more than power or politics. 'If you can create friendship then that bond changes everything else.'

Meanwhile the growing clash between aboriginals and Québec province is proving an important factor. In the event of Québec voting for independence, Cree and Inuit in northern Québec would almost certainly opt to stay with Canada – making it unlikely that the boundaries of an independent Québec would stay as they are.

Québécois are looking at two main options for the future – renewed federalism or sovereignty within an association. Few are proposing outright independence with no continuing link. Parti Québécois leader Jacques Parizeau hopes that citizens of an independent Québec will retain their Canadian passports and the Canadian dollar. Claude Béland, head of Mouvement Desjardins, a Québec financial institution counting 5 million members, wants Québec to vote for sovereignty – and then negotiate to rejoin a new confederation.

But Joe Clark feels that while Canadians in other provinces are ready to invest generosity and goodwill in the renewal of Canada, it would be unwise to count on that goodwill in dealings with an independent Québec. Robertson agrees: 'The sovereigntists seem to assume that people will be rational in the face of events that will be deeply emotional. I think we would have a series of furious confrontations over allocation of assets, the extent of the debt that Québec should take on, citizenship and boundaries.'

Robertson believes that the moves towards European unity have given Canadians the idea that there is a way of having





Canada faces breaking point

both sovereignty and all the gains of economic cooperation. 'I think this is to misread events,' he says. 'What is happening in Europe is that sovereignty is being steadily diminished by member countries as cooperative aspects increase. The limitations on individual countries are approaching, if they haven't already exceeded, limitations on the provinces of Canada.'

Meanwhile the process continues. Meetings between provincial and federal governments are taking place with 16 groups now at the table, including the First Nations. Québec is saying it will rejoin

negotiations if and when the other parties accept the five basic conditions of the Meech Lake accord. The province has legislation committing it to hold a vote on sovereignty by 26 October, but premier Bourassa has said he is ready to change that if a new offer were to come from the rest of Canada. The federal government also has plans for a national referendum.

It is entirely possible that I will once again find myself in the street waving a placard. But it takes more than demonstrating to bring meaningful change. It is not possible to build sufficient guarantees and protections into a written constitution to satisfy everybody. Guarantees for one group raise fears in another. The gap will have to be bridged by trust.

Pierre Jeannot, President of the Council for Canadian Unity, says in the April issue of *L'Actualité*, 'Throughout the globe there is a growing desire for the recognition of linguistic, cultural and ethnic identities, but at the same time a necessity for economic and political coming together. The renewal of the Canadian federation would be proof that these two tendencies can be harmonized.'

With generosity of spirit, Canadians can provide that proof. After all, sovereignty, as Québec journalist Lysianne Gagnon writes, is really a buzzword for respect. ■

Karen Elliott reports from a movement that is helping drug-abusers to make it

A place to recover

When Sam was six, he was given his first few sips of beer. By the time he was a teenager, he had become an alcoholic after years of stealing from his father's bar and mixing drinks in little bottles.

'We ran around trying to be grown-up and rush things,' says Sam. 'Being so addicted to alcohol, I have always felt like a prisoner.' Now 37 and the father of two sons, he's 'ready to reverse everything and learn how to live'.

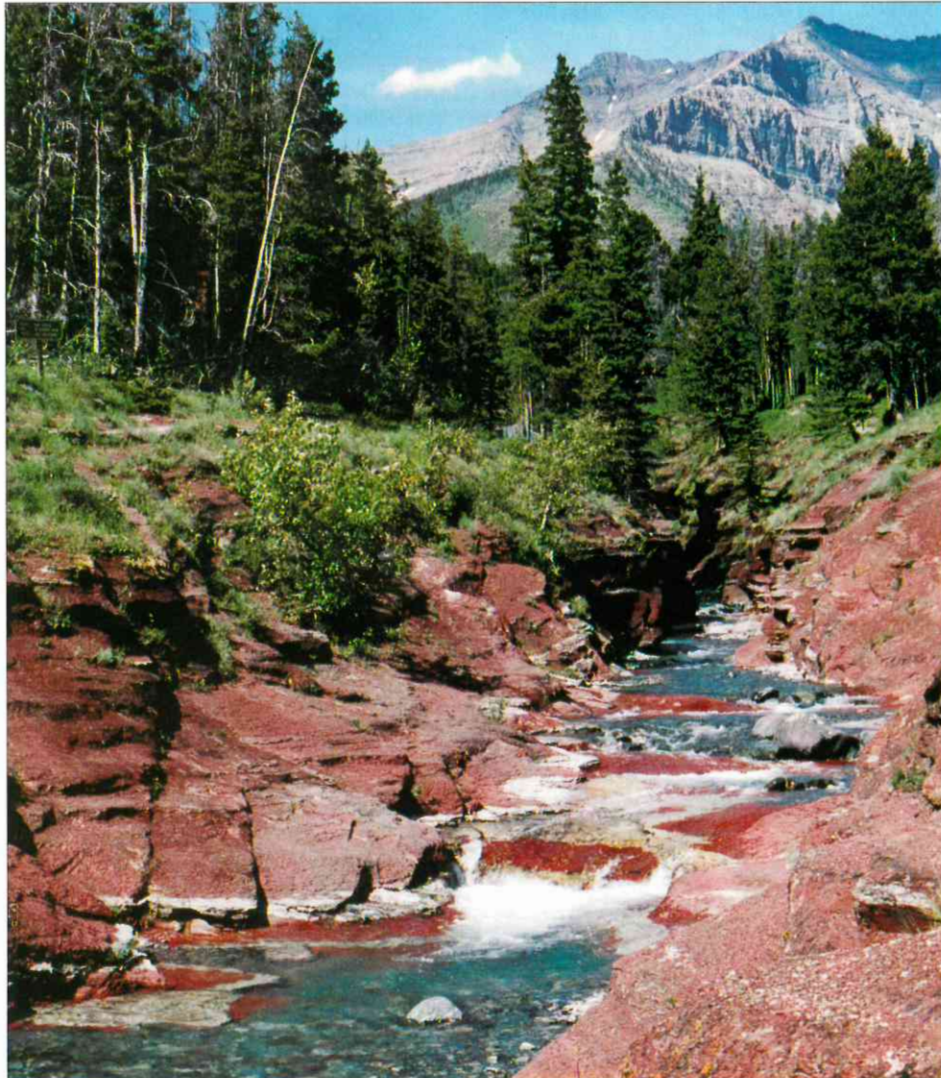
For Sam, who has been sober now for 11 months, learning how to live has meant moving in with six other men in Garrison Street, a quiet neighbourhood in north-west Washington, DC. The men live in one of 378 self-supporting 'Oxford House' homes for recovering alcoholics and drug addicts.

Oxford House Inc provides a sober and healthy environment for over 3,700 men and women around the United States. The name came from the Oxford Group, now known as Moral Re-Armament, which inspired Alcoholics Anonymous (AA).

The Oxford House programme was founded in Maryland in 1975 by residents of a 'halfway house' for alcoholics who were trying to get back into society. One of them was Paul Molloy, until this July Oxford House's chief executive officer. He recalls their decision to run the halfway house themselves when the county announced its closure: 'The county officials honestly didn't believe that the inmates could run the asylum. They said, "Just wait, it will be a drunk house before you know it."'

But with a \$750 loan from a fellow member of AA, the first Oxford House residents proved the critics wrong. They ran their house democratically without a counsellor, manager or cook. Within six months they had saved \$1,200 and decided to rent another house so that other recovering addicts could benefit from the same experience.

Unlike the halfway house that Molloy came from, the Oxford Houses do not limit how long someone can stay. Residents must pay a regular amount to cover household expenses, and one relapse to



Red River Canyon

in Washington, DC, on a
thousands of alcoholics and
back into society.

ice to together

drugs or alcohol results in expulsion. Without the staff that would run a half-way house, the residents share responsibilities for their home, elect officers and hold weekly 'family' meetings to discuss the needs of the household.

Today, the houses remain self-supporting but, as a result of the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988, there are state-established funds to make loans to groups of recovering people who want to start new homes.

The Act increased interest in the programme and states around the country were soon inviting Molloy and his colleagues to set up homes.

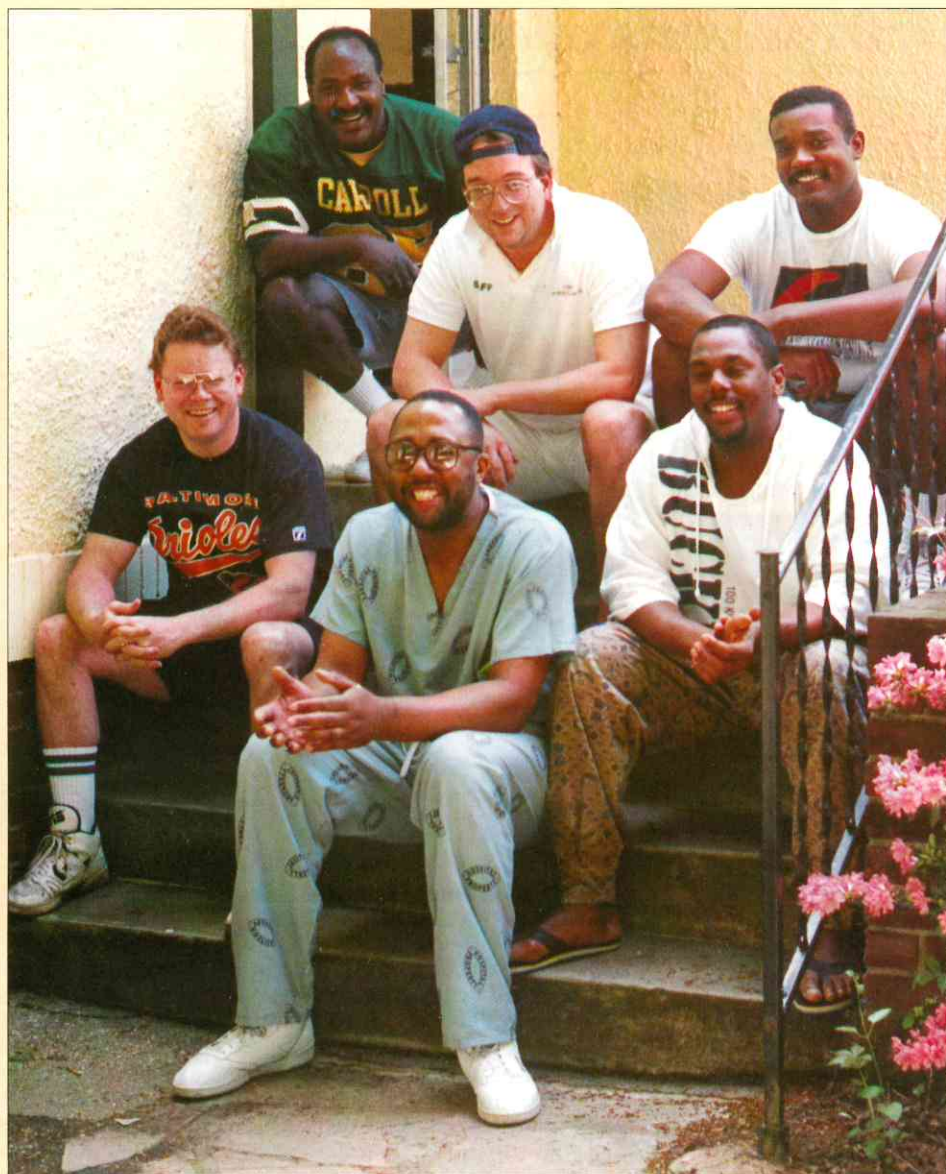
'We can get a men's home up and running in three weeks, but a women's home takes three months,' says Molloy. He explains, 'There is a different method of socialization and it takes recovering women longer to get the knack of pulling together as a household.' The one attempt at a mixed home failed.

A group wanting to form a home must apply for a charter which requires it to be democratically run, financially self-supporting and alcohol- and drug-free.

Currently, Oxford House spends one and a half million dollars a year and sends 25 representatives around the US. Molloy estimates that the programme could easily expand four-fold. He's now going to devote himself to finding members for a resource board and raising new funds. But the strength of the programme is not in the bank accounts held by each house, but rather in the commitment to change and to help one another made by each resident.

The relapse rate has fallen from a high of 20 to 7.9 per cent in the last four years. But despite the success of the programme Oxford House field representatives still meet opposition in new communities.

'The most discouraging thing is that racism is alive and well,' says Molloy. After being harrassed by neighbours four women in an Oxford House in New Jersey received an out-of-court settlement. Molloy has found that there is less racism in AA, Narcotics Anonymous and Oxford House than in the community at large because drug addiction and alcoholism



Residents of the Garrison Street Oxford House, Washington, DC: (l to r, back row) Bill, Mike, Sam, (front row) Doug, Fred and Craig.

are 'colour blind'. 'Blacks and whites have this common understanding of going to get a fix in the middle of the night. It's their common commitment to say, "Hey, I want to change that behaviour."'

A former wife-beater, alcoholic, lawyer and Congressional committee staff person, Molloy is convinced that he would have relapsed were it not for the commitment to change that he shared with his fellow Oxford House residents in the mid 1970s. It is that same shared commitment that is the cornerstone of the programme some 17 years later.

'For me, staying clean is a life and death issue,' says Doug, who drank and used drugs for 17 years and now lives in Garrison Street. 'Living here makes life easier for me, because there are so many people that are trying to do the same things.'

It is clear that there are threads that hold this group of men together - how to love, respect and be honest with themselves and each other; recognize the grace of God, think of others first and accept their individual powerlessness.

'Oxford House is a place where we are blessed to be able to live. It's really a miracle,' said Craig, another Garrison Street resident. A former Army communications specialist, he was discharged after testing positive for cocaine use. 'It's about having a tangible place of recovery. What's kept me on the road is not the things that I have acquired materialistically, but a power greater than myself.'

'There are a lot of risks involved in making the right decision,' Sam adds. 'But to me it's like a real adventure because I made a lot of wrong decisions. Through the grace of God - which I am not used to saying - he's allowed me to recover from my past relapses.'

'I've always known what I wanted, and wanted it right away,' says Doug. 'Drugs and alcohol always worked pretty fast to fix my problems for a short period, but in the long run they don't do that. It's not going to get better overnight, but if you stick with it, things get better and it's gotten better than I ever imagined it could be.'

**WE
ARE
MAKING A
DIFFERENCE**



Vauxhall, Liverpool: before and after

● 'We do it better together,' say the members of the Eldonian Community Association of Vauxhall, Liverpool. After years of being talked down to, written off and mucked about, they have shown what local people can do to regenerate a depressed inner-city area.

In the late Seventies, Vauxhall was dying. With the decline of the Liverpool docks and the closure of the local flour and feed mills, bag factory and Tate and Lyle sugar works, unemployment hit record levels. Slum clearances dispersed the population and the second Mersey Tunnel and a new ring road sliced through the neighbourhood.

In 1978, the city government announced plans to destroy 4,000 tenement flats – and warned that local rehousing could not be guaranteed. At that point the people of Vauxhall made their stand. They formed the Eldonian Community Association, named after a local street, to keep the community together and provide decent, affordable homes.

With the help of central government – alerted to Liverpool's problems by the

riots of 1981 – two housing cooperatives were set up. Since then over 400 new homes, a garden centre (providing jobs and training) and sheltered housing for the elderly have been developed. Plans for a sports complex, new supermarket, village hall and day nursery are well advanced. Over 500 families who were moved out of Vauxhall in the Sixties hope to return to the area – and 650 more homes are planned, in association with



Marta Heroldová

government and the private sector.

The development has won an award for the 'best community group in Britain' sponsored by the Royal Institute of British Architects and *The Times*. Each family was involved in the design of its own home, and in drafting tenancy agreements and housing policy. For instance, the tenancy agreements state that the association will repossess the property of any member legally convicted of drug-dealing.

'We can boast the lowest crime rate on Merseyside,' says prime mover Tony McGann, who describes himself as a 'forklift driver who was thrown on the scrapheap'. 'We have a great relationship with the police. We have a healthy budget. Repairs are done in an hour. In other areas rent arrears run at 4 to 5 per cent. Here it is less than half a per cent. People have a stake in managing the site.'

Ecologist Marta Heroldová welcomed the freedom the 'velvet revolution' of 1989 brought to her country, Czechoslovakia. But she was horrified by the hardcore pornography which flooded onto the streets with liberalization.

'If young people think the things they see in these publications are normal, they are spoiling their lives from the very beginning,' she says. With a group of friends, she decided to take action.

Years of dictatorship had left Czechoslovakians apathetic, she says. 'Every decision came from above; people just had to follow without objecting. Many say, "Why should I do anything?"'

In spite of this, she and her friends wrote an open letter to the government,

protesting against the conversion of sex, 'one of the most beautiful gifts to mankind', into 'an item of greedy business'. They collected 6,000 signatures and believe that the letter influenced the law passed last year banning the distribution of material which undermines the integrity of the human being.

'Now there is much less pornography in the streets,' she says.

● You've heard of the 3Rs – reading, writing and arithmetic. Here come the other three – responsibility, relationships and respect for life.

Coming to a classroom near you soon, *The Other 3Rs* is a new teaching resource devised by two British teachers, Ann Rignall and Joy Weeks, and published by the Family Education Trust.

'Teachers were crying out for resource material for personal and social education and religious education,' says Joy Weeks. 'They wanted material that was flexible and which was not afraid to put forward the proposition that moral values exist.'

The Family Education Trust had been looking for someone to produce such



Joy Weeks

material for several years before they came across Rignall and Weeks, who had collaborated on a similar venture while doing voluntary work in India in the Seventies. Ann Rignall, a former geography teacher, went on to edit *Polestar*, an international broadsheet for teachers; Joy Weeks, a former drama teacher, to run the schools programme at the Westminster Theatre, London.

The Other 3Rs consists of nine modules, three on each R, and is designed for 12-15s. The approach is cross-curricular – each lesson stands by itself and can be used by any teacher who finds it appropriate to their subject. Themes are explored

through discussion, questionnaires, drama, art and research projects, with worksheets lightened by cartoons.

Adults fail young people, Ann Rignall says, by not offering them a satisfying purpose for their lives. 'They go onto drugs, for instance, in an attempt to find something which fulfils their longings. We want to make them think about what sort of world they want to live in – and what they can do to create it.'

'The most difficult thing has been knowing how to frame the questions,' says Joy Weeks, 'particularly when it comes to family issues, where we try to be relevant, but at arms' length,

so the students are not forced to overexpose themselves. The aim is to offer propositions to be experimented with, explored and decided upon, not to try to force a point of view on closed minds. We want students to ask themselves what they can do about the issues raised.'

Pre-publication trials in schools have brought a good response, and the first three modules – dealing with responsibility – are already in use in the classroom. A module on family relationships is about to appear and will be followed by ones on peer and community relationships and on respect for oneself, others and life, at a rate of roughly one a term over the next 18 months. ■



Ann Rignall

TURNING POINTS by Paul Williams

'Och, the Almighty's unusually verbose this morning, Sir!'

This comment, delivered in a broad Scottish accent by the Company Sergeant-Major on a British army base in Sudan, was to set Jim Baynard-Smith's life on a

new course. He has devoted much of the 40 years since to working for and in Africa.

The Sergeant-Major's statement came in response to a questioning glance as Baynard-Smith, a junior officer, passed the Company Commander's office. 'It was well after the time when the daily defaulters' parade should have ended,' he explains, 'yet the men were still lined up in the heat outside.' Jerking his thumb good-naturedly at the closed door the Sergeant-Major confided that Major F-S was 'at it again'.

What the Major, closeted with his three Platoon Commanders, was 'at' was a reviewing of the merits of

each defaulter's case. It was rumoured that an even higher authority was consulted on these occasions – that of God Almighty. The door would remain closed for as long as it took to reach agreement on each man's case.

Intrigued, Baynard-Smith summoned up the courage to quiz the Major about his beliefs. The older man told him how his home had nearly broken up because of his drink problem. A transformation, starting with a decision to cut out the booze, had saved his family and set him on a new path. 'When he finished I was silent,' says Baynard-Smith, 'wondering whether I would ever find

the courage to let God run my life.'

The Major lent him two books that helped to put his decision in the wider setting of a world in need and of others trying the same experiment. 'In due course I was led to heal the breach in my own family where dishonesty and distrust had threatened to split us asunder.'

Later, Baynard-Smith's commitment to try to restore for historic wrongs took him back to work in Sudan and Eritrea.

'And all because of the intriguing remark of that Sergeant-Major, happily sweating it out before marching them in!' ■

THE PEOPLE'S LIFEBOAT

As a young man, Bill Jaeger swapped the pulpit for the smoke-filled rooms of the international labour movement.

He talks to Mike Lowe.

At 80, Bill Jaeger still has the slightly mischievous air of someone who refuses to lie down and be categorized. His short, stocky figure in a battered hat is a familiar sight at labour conferences the world over.

Jaeger has never held any official position or title. Yet Francis Blanchard, former Director-General of the International Labour Organization (ILO), speaks warmly of his 'moral support'. Other friends include PP Narayanan, President of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, British engineers' leader Bill Jordan and the leaders of the new East European unions. Rather than organizing labour, Jaeger, a full-time voluntary worker for Moral Re-Armament, is in the business of befriending and inspiring it.

If that sounds simplistic, then I should explain that Jaeger sees friendship as more than being on someone's Christmas card list. To him it means a transforming relationship, being ready to listen, encourage and challenge, as well as to learn. Peter Sutcliffe, press chief at the ILO, compares the appearance of Jaeger's sturdy, rolling frame in his office to that of a lifeboat. 'That beaming smile under those quiet, friendly eyes banishes one's paltry preoccupations, lifting one's sights from the surrounding waters to the sun-lit horizon.' Another friend says, 'Bill always seems to believe in me more than I believe in myself.'

He is a mine of information, reading four to five newspapers a day, as well as countless magazines and labour bulletins – and has a nearly photographic memory. His garage houses not a car but ceiling-high heaps of books and papers. His wife,

Clara, recalls nearly losing him on their wedding night to a pile of congratulatory telegrams. 'I knew then that my most serious rival was going to be the printed word.'

His readiness to meet anybody – whether white South African trade unionists at the height of sanctions, members of the IRA or PLO, or East European officials during the cold war – gives him insights that cannot be gained from books. 'His curiosity of spirit is boundless,' says Blanchard, 'as is his generosity and compassion for all who suffer.'

There is also his sense of vision. Jaeger is convinced that anyone can change direction and have a part in creating a better world. Most people keep their ideals in the closet, afraid to expose them to the harsh world of reality. Jaeger wears his on his sleeve.

The thick northern accent points to Jaeger's British working-class origins. He was born in 1912 in a tiny terraced house in Stockport. His father was a cabinet-maker and his mother ran a hat shop, which occupied half the downstairs part of the house.

'There was tremendous unemployment, tremendous bitterness,' he says. The factories opened between five and six in the morning and, as nobody owned alarm clocks, a 'knocker-up' was paid to wake the workers.

He won scholarships to Stockport Grammar School – where he became head-boy two years running and conducted the school orchestra – and to London University to study theology. He planned to become a minister in the Baptist Church.

In his first term at college he ran into

some fellow students who were involved in the Oxford Group, later Moral Re-Armament. They maintained that the first step towards a new world was to set one's own life in order, with the help of God and of absolute moral standards.

'I was captured by their concept,' says Jaeger. He had observed in Stockport that when people went into politics they often forgot the people who put them there. 'I realized even then that economic change was not enough. You have to deal with people so that they live what they talk about.'

'The very first night after I'd met these students I got a pen and paper and filled four pages with things I could do better. He was amazed when the next day another student came to him with one of the same problems. 'Because I'd made a fresh start, he decided to give it a try. That built up my faith.'

On graduating, Jaeger felt God calling him to work unpaid with the Oxford Group in London's East End, which had become a battleground between rival gangs of fascists and communists. It was in some ways the kind of pastoral work he might have done as a minister but the strategy and language were different, tuned to an age where opposing ideologies were competing for world domination.

Jaeger and his colleagues got to know some of the gangs – and the mayors and aldermen of the different boroughs. Dramatic changes began to take place in people's lives and thousands were reached – attracting national press coverage.

They were formative years. To this day, Jaeger rarely sounds like a Baptist minist-



ter. To communists he may speak of Marx's vision of the 'new man', to right-wingers of the need for individuals to take responsibility. But the source of all he says is his deep Christian faith and his discipline of spending time each day 'getting in touch with God'.

Jaeger's stories tend, like the man himself, to be larger than life. He once bumped into someone from the Middle East at a conference. 'I met your Foreign Minister,' said Jaeger, introducing himself. 'I am the Foreign Minister,' came the

reply. 'Exactly,' continued Jaeger, unfazed.

In America during World War II he met John Riffe, an organizer of the International Steelworkers Union of the US and Canada, whose fondness for women and whisky undermined his authority. Riffe got the point of starting the process of change with himself. The same week he helped resolve an eight-week strike.

Over the next 11 years Riffe, says Jaeger, was 'up and down', but their friendship continued. 'You cannot afford

to be puritanical and self-righteous. This man had had a terrible background. As one of the pioneers of American trade unionism he'd been shot at and imprisoned a number of times. Those things do something to a man's heart.'

In 1953, Riffe decided to run his life on a new basis - asking God for help and direction. A few weeks later he was appointed Executive Vice President of the CIO, which later merged with the AFL to become America's largest union federation. Riffe always attributed his appointment to the decision he'd made.

Recent years have taken Jaeger to China, following a friendship spanning nearly 50 years. In 1944 he met Zhu Hsueh Fan, a young postman from Shanghai who had started up China's trade union movement, at an ILO meeting in Philadelphia. On Zhu's return to China, Jaeger lost touch. When Mao dissolved the unions, China couldn't attend the ILO, and Jaeger didn't write because of the risk to Zhu.

When China rejoined the ILO after the cultural revolution, Zhu, now Vice-President of the People's Congress, told the delegation to look out for Jaeger. Since then Jaeger has visited China twice and got to know many Chinese working abroad.

He is moved by the suffering the Chinese have experienced, particularly during the cultural revolution. 'People have to find a way of healing the past so as not to be governed by it.' He always makes a point of acknowledging Britain's terrible treatment of China during the opium wars.

Jaeger's approach to the Chinese is typical of his indefatigable optimism. But after Tiananmen Square isn't he open to charges of naivety?

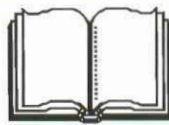
'We spoke about human rights wherever we went in China, concentrating on the points where we felt they were ready to listen,' he says. 'If they feel you're not anti-Chinese you can talk to them. You can't condemn a whole country or a whole political machine. When you start with yourself, looking realistically at the things going on in your own heart, you learn how to read people.'

Jaeger doesn't write-off people, or countries. Unlike those who are politically motivated he doesn't drop people if they are demoted or sent for 're-education'. 'I know I've made mistakes,' he says, 'but I've never lost my belief in what a person can become if he's in touch with God.'

'I've seen evil in many forms, whether it's Nazism, communism or the selfishness of capitalism. They have all destroyed the moral fibre of people. In my youth I saw what poverty and hunger can do to people and it gives you a compassion.'

For sixty years, this philosophy has taken him where angels, or politicians, might fear to tread. 'We are building for the next 20-30 years,' he likes to say, bustling off towards his next appointment. He may be 80, but he's not going to let that slow him down. ■

P Carr



BOOK REVIEWS

THE MAN WHO GAVE INDIA HER WINGS

*Beyond the last blue mountain
A life of JRD Tata*

by RM Lala

Viking Penguin India

This is a lively and sympathetic biography of one of modern India's great men. As former head of Air India and chairman for 52 years of the country's largest industrial conglomerate, JRD Tata is a household name in India.

His achievements have been immense. He was India's first pilot, receiving Licence No 1 in 1929. He set up Tata Aviation Services with four employees and piloted its first flight in a de Havilland Puss Moth, carrying mail from Karachi to Bombay. He landed on Juhu beach as there was no airfield.

In 1948, he launched Air India International which by 1970 had 10,000 employees in 54 countries. When it was nationalized, 'JRD' continued as unpaid chairman for 25 years until Prime Minister Moraji Desai removed him.

His industrial achievements were built on the foundations laid by his great-uncle, Jamsetji Tata, after whom the steel town of Jamshedpur is named. When JRD took over as chairman of Tata and Sons in 1938 it had 14 companies. Fifty years later Tatas controlled 95, including the two largest private-sector companies in India – Tata Engineering and Locomotive Company and Tata Iron and Steel.

Though on good personal terms with socialist Prime Minister Nehru and his daughter Indira Gandhi, JRD disagreed with them fundamentally on economic policy. His often difficult relationship with government is one of Lala's recurring themes. The politicians regarded private industry with deep suspicion and sought to control it by licensing or outright nationalization. JRD, however, believed that the public and private sectors should work together for the

good of the nation. He warned of the danger of 'concentrating enormous power in the hands of a small political-cum-bureaucratic minority', and considers he could have done far more for India if given a freer hand.

Lala seasons these major themes with lighter recollections. Sooni, JRD's French-born mother, was an excellent cook. Knowing this, two British generals obtained an invitation to dinner during which one of them, used to army food, asked for salt. Sooni burst into tears at this slight to her cooking. The other general rebuked his colleague, 'You are not fit to eat in a pigsty.'

JRD emerges as an attractive, if sometimes prickly, personality, interested in people. One key to his success has been his ability to pick good men and leave them to get on with the job; another his relentless fight to maintain standards. On one Air India flight he spent an hour checking that the paper was correctly installed in all the toilets.

He understands his Parsee faith as emphasizing practical service. Organized religion he dislikes. He has gone on record as saying that 'no success is worthwhile unless it serves the needs of the country and is achieved by honest means' and 'that good human relations are essential to the success of any enterprise'.

Alan Faunce



JRD Tata

The Swordbearer: John Knox and the European Reformation

by Stewart Lamont

Hodder and Stoughton, London

Knox, the firebrand of the Protestant Reformation in Scotland, said outright what others might have thought privately. He dared to call his betters to account – a dangerous occupation in the sixteenth century.

Lamont does his best to make us, if not like Knox, at least understand him better.

'He was a much nicer person than his public image,' asserts Lamont. Despite his reputation as the scourge of queens, he was fond of women's company and married twice. His preaching could be inflammatory – he not only set Protestantism alight in Scotland but also sent out his congregations to indulge in mindless acts of iconoclasm. But somewhere beneath lay a genuine personal faith.

His legacy to the Church of Scotland was one of independence of thought and a bias towards the people rather than the rulers. Scots who seek greater self-determination for their people today can claim a direct line back to Knox's outspoken stand.

Paul Williams

An African Elegy

by Ben Okri

Jonathan Cape, London

This slim anthology of poems is woven from the same visionary loom as Ben Okri's first novel, *The Famished Road*, which won last year's Booker Prize. Many are poems of anguish that lead the reader into the thick of his country, Nigeria's, problems. The reader is left in the 'heat mists', upon beds of trash in city backstreets, with beggars and three-legged cats and discarded political blueprints.

After a storm of traumatic visions, the title poem rings out like a bell in the middle of the book:

*We are the miracles that God made
To taste the bitter fruit of time.*

We are precious.

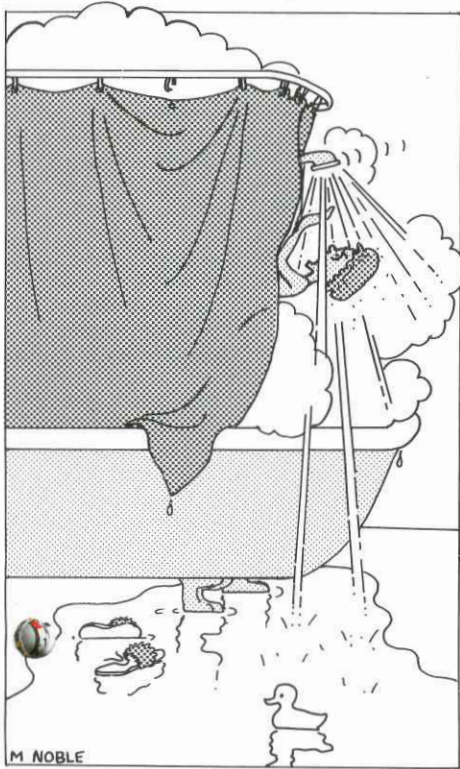
And one day our sufferings

Will turn into the wonders of the earth.

Okri manages to transform anguish into hope because he holds a profoundly religious view of life. 'Poetry touches us where religion is inseparable from the wholly human,' he says.

Alan Channer

Plumbing the depths



For the truly adventurous spirit, there is nothing like a British shower. So here, for visitors, is a brief guide to British plumbing.

The shower is usually one of two types. The first is a plastic hose, which you attach to the bath taps. There is a hook higher up the wall to hold it in place. Do not be put off by the feeble trickle from the showerhead. A really impressive spray will be shooting out from where the ill-fitting hose is clinging to the bath taps, giving your knees and the bathroom floor a good clean.

We have the other kind of shower in our flat. It has a steel hose, welded onto the bath taps, that you can attach to the wall. If you want the water to come out of the showerhead instead of the taps you press a button. This usually reverts automatically to the taps, once you've switched off. However, you may try to run a bath only to find yourself under a monsoon. In my experience this only happens when you

are fully clothed.

British plumbing is a give-and-take experience. The water pressure in the bath taps varies according to the use of taps elsewhere in the house. It is advisable to negotiate with everyone in the house not to use any water till you emerge.

For if someone in the building flushes the loo, it uses the entire cold-water system and allows the hot water to devote itself to removing the outer layer of your skin. You should reach for the cold tap at this point and turn it on full. This provides a very pleasant interlude of about two minutes during which your body will begin to lose its vermilion hue before the cold water, having done its duty, can return with renewed vigour to turn you into a glacier.

Less predictable than a bath, more bracing than a sauna, the British shower will take your breath away.

Victoria Park

Letters...

From Frau Kristin Weber-Fahr, Fulda, Germany

With reference to 'No home, no hope' (Vol 5 no 1), Frankfurt-am-Main has the highest crime rate of any German city. There are many homeless. Stadtdechant Gref, who is the Roman Catholic priest in charge of the parish of the main cathedral, says that this is not only a challenge to Christians, but also a tremendous opportunity.

Gref keeps open house for the homeless from 8 am till 8 pm. His parishioners and colleagues from the Protestant St Catherine's Church in the town centre help. Pastor Gerhard and Gerlinde Schwoebel keep St Catherine's open at night during the cold season, so that some 500 homeless can sleep on the upholstered benches.

When the national TV station wanted to film High Mass and the procession on Corpus Christi Day, Gref was worried. The huge open-air altar on the Romerberg in front of the town hall would have to be prepared the night before, as would the decorations and altars along the route of the procession. All the young punks and vandals would find pleasure in destroying them. No police force could stop them. Then the TV programme would show all the mess, suggesting that the church had no power to deal with criminal elements.

As Gref walked across the Cathedral square, a voice called, 'Hello, father! Why do you look so serious?' It was Willi, one of Gref's best friends amongst the homeless. When Gref told him, Willi said: 'No problem. We homeless will guard your altars and the carpets of flowers.' And that is what hundreds of them did. Not one small flower was destroyed. The TV programme was a success and Willi and his friends were in the Cathedral during High Mass.

From Mr Hugh Elliott, Croydon, UK

May I add a paragraph to Alan Channer's stimulating lead story on Africa in your April-May issue? Having recently returned from journeying to see friends in Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia, I am more than ever impressed by the qualities shown by Africans under suffering and great hardship. Though at the level of national government and in the cities there are sometimes horrific stories from Africa, at the level of family, village and clan life, there is much that we in the West need to learn from – the capacity for laughter, warmth of heart, care of the elderly and spiritual sense which readily turns to the Almighty. Africa needs us – in far more generous aid – but in a deeper sense we need Africa.

From Dr Mary Innes, Lusaka, Zambia

From the vantage point of someone born in West Africa and living in Central Africa, the cover title ('Will Africa flourish?') seems cruelly and tragically inappropriate. For the many African countries currently blighted by the age-old curse of drought, and being decimated by old killers like malaria and the new horror of AIDS, the only appropriate question to ask, I regret to suggest, is 'How can Africa survive?'

In Zambia, AIDS has spread through at least 30 per cent of the adult population. You can get it by living an immoral life, but more often than not, just through being someone's wife or husband. In the last month I have watched one employee die before my eyes of a killer disease, and know four other friends who carry an imminent death sentence. Life here is a dawn-to-dusk funeral cortege. The only constructive comment I can offer is that without a total onslaught on decrepit health services, and a transformation in promiscuous lifestyles, all hopes for the future of Africa are horribly irrelevant.

The editors welcome letters for publication but reserve the right to shorten them.

Orlando Villas Boas entered the Amazonian forests to conquer – and stayed on, for 40 years, to preserve. In the process he has survived 250 attacks of malaria, two nominations for the Nobel Peace Prize and has saved 18 Indian tribes from extinction.

In 1943, as young men in search of adventure, Villas Boas and his brothers Claudio and Leonardo joined the military expedition which opened Brazil's interior to exploitation.

They struck out from the river Araguaia, on the border of Goiás and Mato Grosso, towards Manaus. As they went, they cleared emergency airstrips in the jungle so that planes could fly safely overland to North America, rather than having to skirt the coast. 'We cut six hours off the flight from Rio to Miami,' Villas Boas says with some pride. They were followed by road-builders, settlers and gold-prospectors: 42 cities now lie along their route.

The exploration took 15 years, covering 1,000 miles of forest paths and 600 miles of uncharted river, and culminating in the construction of an airstrip at the geographical centre of Brazil. By then the priorities of the Villas Boas brothers had changed. For they had discovered that the heart of Brazil was inhabited.

Their first contact was in 1944, with the Xavante, who attacked them for 11 months. Then they arrived at the Xingu River, 'the most interesting indigenous area of Brazil'. Villas Boas was astonished by the stability, order and complexity of the societies they encountered. 'I belonged to the generation which thought the Indian was like an animal, roaming free, killing all he met.'

These societies, the brothers quickly realized, were extremely vulnerable – both to deliberate attack from white colonizers and to unintentional infection. When Columbus sailed, Brazil had an estimated indigenous population of five million. Since then massacre, slavery and epidemics have cut their numbers to 250,000 – less than 0.2 per cent of Brazil's present population.

'We have killed off a million a century,' says Villas Boas. 'Brazil is in debt to the Indians, and this debt is not being paid.' June's Earth Summit in Rio should have 'rung out with the cries of a people that is dying'.

The brothers' experiences overturned the government's policy of integration, he says. He dreams of a system where Indian and settler populations relate to each other as one people to another, each from within their own culture. 'That would be fantastic,' he says, but in the same breath admits that it is 'impossible', because even the most sensitive outsider 'conquers the Indians for his own ways'.

This being the case, does he regret his expeditions? 'No, because we were a kind of buffer between the Indian who was completely unprepared for civilization and civilization itself.' Since 1943, Brazil's



Indians of the Xingu: (inset) Orlando Villas Boas

In Brazil's struggle to develop, the Indians have meets Orlando Villas Boas, a colonizer who cha

The cries dying pe

population has more than trebled. 'If the 18 nations who lived on the River Xingu had not had a policy of defence, they would all have disappeared.'

That defence was the Xingu National Park, established in 1961 after 10 years' campaigning. It covers an area larger than El Salvador and is populated by some 6,000 Indians, speaking 11 languages, and living 'totally in their own civilization', apart from a hospital and medical services provided by São Paulo Medical School. Since the creation of the Park, the life expectancy of these tribes has risen from 17 to 41 and their population has doubled.

Leonardo Villas Boas died shortly after the Park opened, but Orlando and Claudio worked on, racing to reach new tribes and bring them into sanctuary before more predatory influences could reach them. There were long months of waiting, in the claustrophobic green of the jungle, for the Indians to make contact; the heartbreak of epidemics, when tribes simply gave up hope and waited to die; and the struggle to persuade age-old enemies to live in harmony alongside each other.

They had to come to terms with a central contradiction, well illustrated by their attempts in 1967-9 to contact the warlike and elusive Kreen-Akrore tribe before two roads were driven through their lands.

Adrian Cowell, the director of a British film about the expedition, describes the dilemma. 'Unless we reached the Kreen-Akrore before the road, they would be finished by bullets and disease,' he writes in *The Decade of Destruction*. Yet, even then, 'we all sensed in our bones that the Kreen-Akrore were doomed'.

In 1969, the expedition's money ran out before the tribe approached their camp. In the next three years the roads advanced. When the Kreen-Akrore eventually made contact in 1972, their lands were threatened by thousands of goldminers. 'Once contact was made, the goldminers moved in,' says Villas Boas. 'It was an immediate disaster. We brought all the Kreen-Akrore who survived to the Xingu Park.' All the brothers could do was mitigate a process which, from the tribe's point of view, would have been better unbegun.

Today Brazil's Indians speak for themselves. As the tribes of the Xingu began to make peace, they found common cause and, in 1980, won back part of the Park which they had lost in 1971. Cowell believes they were the first of Amazonia's forest peoples to act together in this way - and one of the inspirations for the founding of Brazil's Indian Federation in 1980.

Now aged 77, Orlando Villas Boas lives in São Paulo, with his wife and two children, and is working on a book about the 1943 expedition. He has followed the recent struggle to establish a park for the Yanomani people in the far north-west of

Brazil, but considers himself an expert only on those peoples who live south of the Amazon, in the Xingu valley. When we met he had just received news that goldminers evacuated from the Yanomani lands had arrived on the borders of the Xingu Park.

Orlando and Marina Villas Boas met in the Xingu, where she worked as a nurse; married when he was 55; and stayed there until 1984, when the children's education demanded their return to the city. Their collection of Indian artifacts is on loan to Japan for five years, but Orlando's decorations hang in a case by their front door - the Founders' Gold Medal of the Royal Geographic Society among them. The military dictatorships of the time would not allow Villas Boas to receive his medals abroad, for fear of what he might say. He describes with relish how on one occasion he cabled his apologies, 'I am sick by order of the government.'

Forty years in the Xingu have given him a deep respect for the forest and its peoples. 'The Amazon forests have existed for half a million years, dying and springing up again,' he says. 'They represent a potential treasure which modern technology can teach us how to live with, using the riches without destroying them. In my view the only way to save the ecology of the world is by strict laws and eternal vigilance on the part of governments.'

The Indian in his own village, he says, is 'a marvellous figure, stable, happy, funny'. He tells of the young white visitor who forgot to bring any gifts for his three Indian hosts, split a bar of soap between them and was disgusted when, in return, they broke an arrow and gave him a piece.

In the village each child, man, woman is an entity in themselves,' says Villas Boas. 'They have their absolute dignity and no one can interfere with that.' A father, asked why he does not educate his child, may respond, 'I don't know that he wants to be taught.' One old man compared his people to trees: 'Many trees together make a forest; many Indians together a village. One tree does not help another to grow.' The old man, he explains, is not suggesting that parents should neglect their children, but that each individual is complete in himself.

Naturally, he says, there are things whites can learn from the Indians - their respect for nature, for one. But he hesitates when I ask him what he has learnt himself. 'It's difficult, because their values are so different from ours... You long to have their quietness, their peace.'

'I learnt that you can live very well with very little,' interjects Marina. 'If you count up all the things they need to live, it wouldn't be more than 80.' In contrast, says Orlando, Mappins' department store in São Paulo offered 450,000 items in one of its sales. 'We live with too much superfluity.'

So, if he had another life, would he choose to come back as an Indian? This time there is no hesitation. 'I'd prefer to come back as a millionaire,' he replies, and roars with laughter. ■

...een the losers. Mary Lean

...ed sides when he heard

... of a
... ople

Now we are 60



Dennis Maylor

by **Michael Henderson**

It was a shock eight years ago when a student got up to give me a seat in a crowded local bus. I was particularly galled that it was a young man. I could only console myself with the evident fact that the student was a polite Asian and that he probably took me for a professor.

In Peter Howard's play *Happy Deathday*, the old man says that young people can never appreciate what it means to be old. You don't feel any different, you just know that people begin to look at you differently.

I always regarded Peter, to whom I owe a great journalistic and spiritual debt, as not

only a lot wiser but a lot older. It brings me up with a jolt to realize that he was four years younger than I am when he died.

Columnist Calvin Trillin put forward a theory a few years ago that the midlife crisis some people go through in their 40s is caused by the discovery that people of their own age are being put in charge of things. They know these people, and what they know frightens them. Trillin describes an old army buddy of his who was almost sent home from hospital before his appendix could be removed because every time a surgeon came into his room he

started shouting, 'I demand to see a grown-up.'

It is said that you realize your age when the policemen start to look younger than you. I have reached the stage when it is the prime ministers who not only look younger but in most cases are.

As the years begin to speed up, I think I go along with the perspective of two Frenchmen. Maurice Chevalier, I believe it was, who said, 'Old age isn't so bad when you consider the alternative,' and André Maurois who described growing old as 'a bad habit which a busy man has no time to form'.

Recently Liz Taylor turned 60. I have always felt close to her since we were both young English children in America during World War II. I remember well the excitement of her movie *National Velvet*. But the closest I have ever got to her was that I knew two of her boyfriends. Which, considering how many husbands let alone boyfriends she has had, isn't very close. So I wasn't one of the thousand guests who took over Disneyland to celebrate her birthday.

Celebration

I had a more modest but nonetheless satisfying 60th celebration which my wife managed to organize secretly without too many clues awakening my suspicions. When one Oregon political figure phoned I answered and he asked for her. He said to her, 'If Michael wonders what my call was about tell him I was canvassing support for Tsongas.'

Of course birthdays depend a lot on your perspective. The 95-year-old and the 90-year-old who came to the party must have wondered what the fuss was about. Whereas my daughter is feeling frightfully old and finding it difficult to cope with the fact that a few weeks ago she stopped being a teenager.

Among the cards I received was this reassuring note from friends in Canada: 'So what if you're another year older! All your friends still love you... and even the Historical Society is beginning to be interested.'

Let me close with the helpful perspective of a recent Ann Landers *Gem of the day*: 'At age 20 we worry about what others think of us. At 40 we don't care what they think of us. At 60 we discover they haven't been thinking of us at all.'

Michael Henderson is a British journalist living in the USA.

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by Chris Evans

A Marriage



Rex Features

*When first we kissed
We shared that present moment,
Savoured it like expensive wine.
Its novelty and magic kept us awake at night
Our pulses racing
However many miles stood between.*

*Before long we had sworn to share the future,
To form an arch – the top still leaning in to kiss,
Each side dependent on the other's firm foundation –
To try to stand where many people could pass through.*

*When children came that future had a face –
Two mischievous faces –
That shared the space until then ours alone.*

*And now increasingly we share the past as well.
Our kiss still tells of present and of future
But also of the things we've lived together.
The storms and tremors, ups and downs,
The things we got into
Or had to get out of,
The places, the people, the thoughts.
Not my past, and not yours, but ours.
A joint account for both to draw on freely.*

*Sometimes I want to live them all again,
Like a gourmet in the middle of a feast
Who regrets the courses he has eaten and can no longer taste.
But that is not of this world.
Perhaps the next.*

*Meanwhile, the feast itself is on.
And many people must walk through our arch.*

The politics the press neglects

The press and parliament have been my life. I walked out of the school gates into a newspaper office, and was never out of one for the next 40 years.

Not that journalism was my first career choice. I always wanted to go to sea, but that was out once I had to begin wearing glasses at 14. Then a war correspondent turned up at school and gave a talk. I was hooked at once, and the seduction was completed by Philip Gibbs and his portrayal of life in *The Street of Adventure*.

However, there was not a whiff of Fleet Street glamour in my first reporting job. With the aid of the office transport – a cream and green Speedwell bicycle – I pushed my way about five kilometres to the local saleyards to cover the weekly sheep and cattle sales. However humble and mundane, it was an important service. One learnt how to collect facts and report them accurately – and woe betide you if you got the prices wrong, or mixed up the lots that had been sold.

This experience stood me in good stead when, early in my career, I was pitched into politics – first as a gallery reporter covering parliamentary proceedings, and then as a political correspondent.

Just as I began work in the press gallery of the Australian National Parliament in Canberra, friends helped me see that my personal life had a bearing on my work and creativity. I found a faith in God, got my life straightened out and began to form a conviction about the role the press could play in keeping the nation responsibly informed. There have been rough patches, but I have held to that approach ever since.

Life on a major daily morning newspaper is highly demanding, and also addictive, especially when one is in a position to direct editorial policy, as I was.

In endeavouring to assess where press and parliament stand today, I have a number of concerns. When I began writing about politics, parliamentary debates were a feature of the day's news, and important legislation received due prominence, along with any significant political manoeuvres. Readers were kept up to date on parliamentary decisions and the formulation of policies likely to affect them.

Personality cult

Now, however, the personality cult is the mainstream force in daily politics. The media, at least in Australia, present politics as clashes of personalities – who is gaining ascendancy over whom – and national issues become obscured.

Recently the financial editor of a major Sunday newspaper took the unusual step of writing to MPs asking them to alert him to significant legislation coming before parliament, and speeches that might elucidate the issues involved. He explained that the paper's press gallery



by John Farquharson

staff no longer provided such coverage.

Politicians and the media feed off each other, of course, and total objectivity is not obtainable. But in an atmosphere of adversarial politics, journalists tend to participate in the political debate and even direct it, rather than leaving such participation to the editorial columns, which are designed to express the opinion of the newspaper.

Too often a journalist sets himself up as critic and judge. This is partly because of the influence of TV on news presentation. Minority groups, protests and demonstrations get undue prominence at the expense

'Politicians and the media feed off each other'

of an accurate account of the conflict of ideas. It comes down to whether media people see their role as serving society by fulfilling their watchdog function in a remedial way. For by simply focussing on problems, deficiencies, failures and threats without fighting for the necessary action to put them right, the daily news becomes permeated with cynicism.

I am not suggesting a return to a 'recording angel' style of reporting: with judicious selection and skilful presentation, parliament can still have readership appeal. Nor does this mean being in the pockets of government or other authorities. Essential independence has to be maintained, but not with the media pretending to be wholly

neutral critics on a pinnacle above society. Such a stance has the effect of constraining them from discharging what should be their more fundamental task of informing the electorate.

Widespread cynicism, almost bordering on contempt for politics, has become evident in Western democracies. Yet now, if ever, is when the West needs to demonstrate the efficacy of freely elected governments. In both the Eastern bloc and the corruption-ridden anti-communist dictatorships of South America people are turning hopefully to democracy. Disillusionment will set in rapidly if all we can offer is the blame game, or, as one commentator put it, 'punching-bag politics'.

Is it any wonder that there is a mounting cry for politicians to lift their game and let people see that they are tackling problems facing their countries seriously and responsibly rather than just point-scoring off each other? Regrettably, the attitude of the press being what it is, politicians still see personal attacks as the best means of obtaining publicity.

Favoured tactic

A recent report on parliamentary standards commissioned by the state government of Western Australia observed, 'The growing practice of attributing ignoble, dishonest or even corrupt motives to one's opponents is helping to destroy the prestige of parliament faster than any other factor. Real parliamentary debate should almost invariably be a discussion concerning what is right. Unfortunately, the favoured tactic has become to argue in the dimension of who is right, claiming always that my side is right. This approach, which requires less intellectual effort than an analysis of facts, often produces uproar or sterile mutual recrimination. Not surprisingly, viewed from outside parliament it is seen as childish and incompetent.'

Press and parliament have obvious limitations, but their roles must be enhanced if we are to offer a better future to our own people and those emerging from repression and closed frontiers.

John Farquharson was Deputy Editor of 'The Canberra Times' and one of its editorial executives for over 20 years.

NEXT ISSUE

Lead story: For a Change ventures into the shanty-towns of Rio de Janeiro where the *favelados* struggle against lack of resources, bureaucratic indifference and the allure of the drug barons.

Profile: President Chiluba of Zambia.

Guest column: Alf McCreary, award-winning Belfast journalist.