

# GLOBAL EXPRESS

AN INTERACTIVE QUARTERLY FOR THOSE WHO CARE ABOUT THE FUTURE

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which?

CAREER PATH



One hour off deadline. Don't like writing under pressure. Stress descending. But hey, it could be worse. If I'd been born a hundred years ago I might be down a mine or in a factory, slaving away for a pittance. How lucky we are, here in this office... it's warm, safe, well equipped. And what a privilege it is to have been able to choose our respective career paths. Right now, I wouldn't trade places with anyone. My job is challenging, exciting, rewarding... And what about the others:

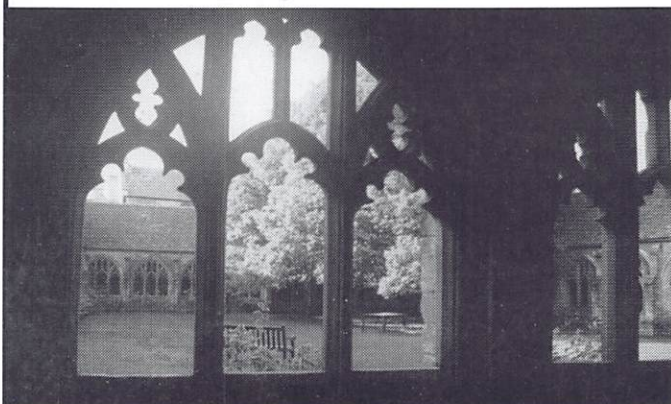
*Lisa, Australia* - Being in England and learning DTP is very fulfilling. I have found a love for computers. I am keen to continue.

*Peter, UK* - My work includes co-ordinating conferences, meetings etc in support of those who are working for reconciliation and the moral health of their countries. I enjoy being part of a team - in touch with people and situations around the world. I am most satisfied when, as a result of our work, someone finds a new direction/purpose in their life and becomes an element of spiritual health in their situation. Even more satisfying is when such a change of heart impacts a wider situation, sometimes to the extent of saving marriages, jobs, even lives.

*Atsushi, Japan* - What I like best is working together with great people who are inspiring and creative.

*Edward, UK* - What I enjoy most about my job is seeing people (incl. myself) changing, growing, developing, blossoming, finding more of their potential. What I appreciate least is having too much to do, so that there is no time to write more!

**Laura Trevelyan, UK**



New College, Oxford, Photo: Lisa Kesby

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## GLOBAL EXPRESS

### seeks to:

- be an independent media service
- establish and support a global network
- be culturally inclusive
- respond to a rapidly changing world
- connect personal and global issues
- encourage personal integrity and responsible attitudes
- encourage people to act on creative inspiration

### believing that:

- you matter
- you can make a difference
- goodness has an image problem and spirituality is marginalised
- sincere communication at every level is essential
- peace is possible if we face the causes of division and injustice in our own lives and communities
- time for reflection is essential to find direction

## Why Global Express?

*Global Express (GE)* was started to link up young people who care about the future. Dissatisfied with what we were being offered by the media, we felt an alternative was needed.

Our aim is to inspire and encourage people to fulfil their potential. In *GE* you can question the way things are, and search for solutions. It is also a great opportunity to make contacts outside your 'comfort zone'.

Most of the *GE* team met through MRA (Moral Re-Armament), which is a world-wide network of people working for personal responsibility and conflict resolution. Ideals of integrity, unselfishness and love, together with a search for inspiration from a higher source are central to this way of life. MRA is a Non Government Organisation recognised by the United Nations. For more information visit: <http://www.mra.org.uk>

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### Global Express goes to:

**Africa:** Kenya and South Africa; **Americas:** Brazil, Canada and USA; **Asia/Pacific:** Australia, Cambodia, Fiji, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand and Western Samoa; **Europe:** Croatia, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Scandinavia, Serbia, Switzerland and UK; **Middle East:** Lebanon and Palestine.



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Not all opinions in GE are shared by the editors!



Photo: Laura Trevelyan

## HOT SPOT

When the idea of *Global Express* was first discussed on a beautiful beach in South Australia, I was too distracted by the beauty of my surroundings to seriously consider being involved in the project myself. However, I did feel in awe of the group of young people who took the bold step to produce the first issue. More out of loyalty to my younger friends than personal conviction, I decided to support the production of the next issue. Bit by bit, the potential of this magazine and the necessity to provide an inspiring and encouraging publication dawned on me and stimulated my continuing involvement.

The challenge of producing a magazine with a small team and of trying to reach a professional standard with volunteers alone, in different countries, has been enormous. Yet, the joy and the tears, the fun and the pain, the highs and the lows - sometimes having to work through the night to meet the printer's deadline - have made it a worthwhile and invaluable experience. It has been a challenge to work with people whose conviction is so tireless and strong.

Since the beginning of my commitment to *Global Express* I have been involved in almost every area of the magazine: administration, editing, choice of articles and artwork, layout and design, writing, photography (incl. the front cover of the Creativity issue), proof-reading, subscriptions, send out and promotion. It has often seemed like madness to be pouring weeks into producing an issue, but knowing how much they have influenced our readers' thinking has been so encouraging. If we don't continue to draw on the positive attitudes and life-changing experiences of others and pass them on through a magazine like this, we may miss the chance to reach people's hearts and minds.

**Christine Karrer, Switzerland/UK**



# WHEN I GROW UP I WANT TO BE...

A train driver, doctor, fireman, nurse... Or on the other hand, what about a career in telephone sales or data technology? How about training to be a chiroprapist or a Feng Shui consultant? The list of possible careers seems endless. Yet, while some are bewildered by the many possible choices, others have no choice because of economic circumstances or the culture they are born into.

Two of my friends say that they always knew what career they wanted - they worked for it and now they are doing it. One is a doctor, the other is a teacher. But for most of us the picture isn't so clear. When I asked a group of people recently what different reasons there were for choosing a career I found their answers fell into three categories:

1. Survival - for ourselves and our families, for enough money for food, clothing and shelter, and if possible at a level which brings dignity.

2. Fulfilling other people's expectations - most powerfully, our parents' expectations, but there are also ways in which our culture holds certain values. The whole area of status, money, possessions and power can come into this area. Being seen to be 'successful' or even useful in the eyes of others can be a powerful force.

3. Fulfilling ourselves by exercising the special and unique talents that each of us has been given. What I find sad is that so many people have so little sense of their own gifts and their own worth that they spend their lives trying to fit into other people's expectations. In Britain at least, too many people look for prestige, salaries, status while feeling more and more miserable and empty inside. What courage it takes to be true to yourself. And yet what rewards...

**Mike Lowe, UK**



Kojo Jantuah, age 6, Tel Aviv, Israel, Photo: Jantuah Family



James Earl Jones, the actor with the sonorous voice, once told the story of "The man who would be rich". Ali Hafed was a man of some wealth but he was unhappy because he did not possess any diamonds. Thus, he sold his farm, put his family into the care of friends, and set off to search the world for diamonds. Before long, he had used up both his money and his strength. Despondent over his failure to find any, he threw him-

self into the sea and disappeared. Shortly after this, the man who had purchased his farm saw something flash in a stream whilst watering his camel. He waded in and pulled out a black stone with "an eye of light" reflecting all the hues of the rainbow. The farm was studded with diamonds! If only Ali Hafed had stirred the stream on his own farm he would have found his heart's desire. The moral of the story is that we can become hugely rich by looking for the diamonds in ourselves rather than elsewhere. By concentrating on the resources we have, rather than those we lack, we have something to build upon.

I spent my early life in Tel Aviv, Israel, where my parents had been posted with Ghana's Foreign Service. After graduating with a Bachelor of Law Honours degree in England, I spent some time assisting a Self Esteem Educational Program at the Richmond Juvenile Detention Centre in Virginia, USA. On my return to England, where I am based, I enrolled on a New York State Bar course in London, with the view to sitting the exam in February '97 in New York City. If the purpose of my visit had been a holiday or business, I would not have needed a visa but because it was for educational purposes I went to the US Consulate in London to obtain one. To my utter dismay I was told that despite my honesty I would not be given a visa. Meanwhile, the rest of the course travelled to the USA surreptitiously as holidaymakers to do the exam.

The story made headlines in the British legal newspapers. By standing up for what is right, hopefully others will be encouraged to do so too, and thereby make a difference. The whole incident has made me look deeper inside. I guess I've begun to dig deeper for diamonds.

**Kojo Jantuah, Ghana/UK**

As a high school student of electrical engineering in my native town Lukavac, Bosnia, my career path seemed to be designed already. My parents and I enjoyed the thought that one day I would be one of the white-coated engineers working at the nearby industrial complex. But gradually I began to feel there was something wrong with this picture,

for my heart was not in it. To end up spending my whole life in a field I was not really interested in was a truly frightening prospect.

English was something I had always wanted to study. Convinced this was my final choice for university, I announced to my parents it would be English or nothing. It caused a revolution in our very traditional family, but my determination was strong enough to

persist until my mother's heart softened and she supported me in trying my luck at the University of Sarajevo. Living away from home is never easy, yet my studies were successful, and my excellent grades convinced my father that this sharp turn against his will was not an escape from hard work but an attempt to pursue my own desires.

In 1992 the dark cloud of ethnic conflict overtook my country. Overnight I found myself a refugee in Serbia. With the help of my relatives I continued my studies at the University of Novi Sad. But my initial enthusiasm and much of my hope in humanity were irretrievably gone. Where was the beauty in studying Shakespeare if only 200 km away, in Bosnia, my father was suffering from hunger and constant shelling? I looked for my own way to protest against the war, and was blessed to combine my fluency in English with my peacemaking beliefs when I got a job with the Ecumenical Humanitarian Service (EHS) in Novi Sad.

My new position mainly involved translation. But my interest in religions and their social impact grew rapidly, together with my admiration for some of my senior colleagues whose strong devotion to humanitarian work sprang out of their personal faith, and aroused a thorough conversion process in me. Soon my work began to include travel, and opened doors for me to explore new opportunities for learning.

I am now at Columbia University in New York, as a Visiting Scholar in their Religion, Religious Freedom and Human Rights program. My next move will take me to the Human Rights Institute of South Africa, where I will be researching the role of churches in the transitional process. In April I will return to my country. My English studies, somewhat forsaken in my search for higher ideals, are waiting to be completed. It is also time to implement in my home country the knowledge and skills I have gained, though I am not yet sure how.

I would never have thought I would do the work I do, but I do it with much love. I have listened to what I felt in my heart - it took effort and a bit of courage, yet it was worth it. Looking back I feel fulfilled, blessed, and empowered to face the challenges my future might yet hold.

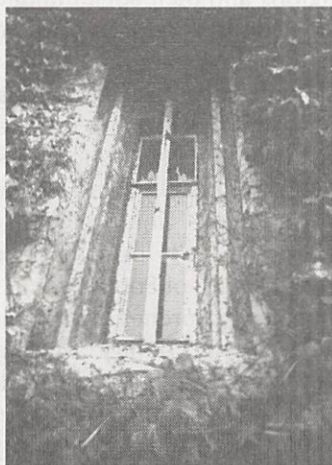
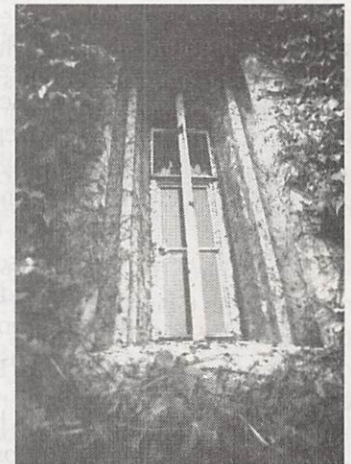
**Tatjana Peric, Yugoslavia**



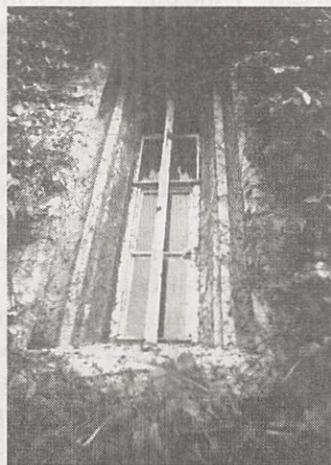
## which career path...

I stand and look out of my window. Every stage in my life, from the house where I grew up, to my university rooms, to my first and second apartments, and now back to university, has its own special perspective, offering me a new chance to look at the world. Every view different, a new world opening beyond, a new me standing and watching. I'm the thread that combines these windows. *We live in a time when it's easy to travel all over the world. Not only can I find the world on my doorstep, via the media, but I can go out and meet the world myself. When I first travelled to another country, I learned that I was, in effect, confronting myself, confronting American life and culture, as well as engaging with my host culture. The doors of the world opened a little wider for me; I could see beyond the shores of myself and longed to continue the journey instead of standing on the threshold.* So I did. I took a teaching job in Japan. My parents and some of my friends couldn't understand why I wanted to live so far away. They thought I was running away from America. But I wasn't running away from America, I was running towards it, approaching it with new eyes and finding parts of it deep within me. I met many young people like myself. We all had various reasons for travelling, and various ways of doing so, but what we had in common was the fact that we were actually out in the world, looking into new mirrors and seeing a different reflection of ourselves every day. *The view out of my window has become clearer. After my travels, after getting an education and living in Japan and England, I finally see a path opening up before me. Writing seems to me the best way to express myself and hopefully to entertain and educate others. Perhaps I would have reached the same decision without leaving America. Perhaps not. But no matter. I've looked out my windows, peered into my mirrors, and because of my experiences I've finally reached a road I want to travel.*

**Anne Schlitt, USA**



Oxford University...



Anne is doing an MA in Medieval History



Photo: Lisa Kesby



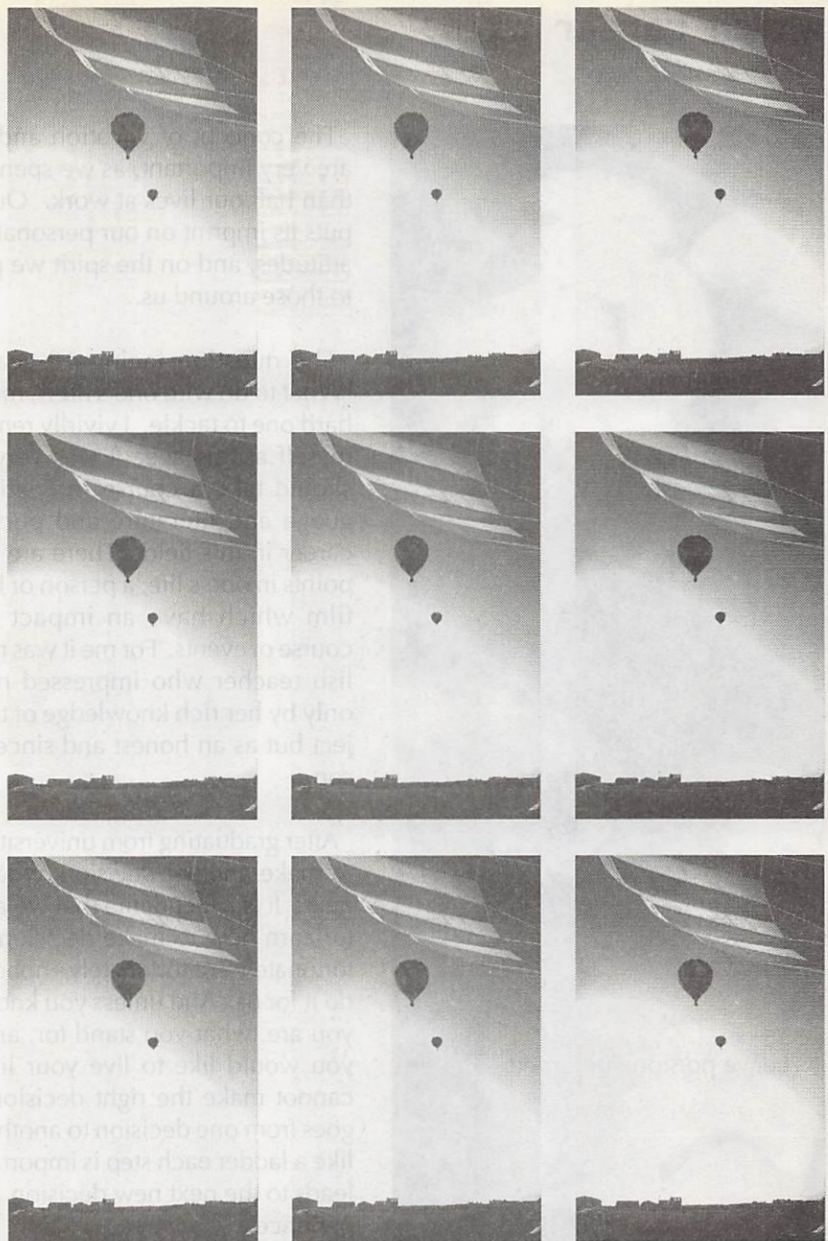
I seem to have fallen on my feet throughout my working life. When I started writing software for scientific experiments the Monday after finishing school, I had no idea it would lead to running a small business and helping disabled children. Whenever an opportunity has arisen to try something new, I have always tried to fit it in, and to understand how it might develop my skills, experience and contribution to other people.

My general inclination has always been towards computers and research; I started programming my first computer at the age of thirteen, and was soon answering questions for the teachers at school who were struggling to keep up with the technology! I always assumed that I would go to university, and after that perhaps do a PhD. Every once in a while someone offers me a new job doing something that I might be good at, so I give it a shot and it turns into a long working friendship.

Although it is nice to have money, I do not choose jobs because of the rate they pay. I see being paid as a sign of respect; the employer would rather have your skills than the money they already have. However, there are lots of people who cannot afford to pay a lot for work but are still worth being involved with. So long as I have enough to survive on, I can go from one exciting project to another.

Having said that I move easily between jobs does not mean that I do not work hard; I have often spent nights working late into morning, especially when working for my own business. I have always found it worthwhile doing a good job. In my field there are falling standards everywhere; computers are so powerful that computer programmers can be lazy and still get the job done. My employers are happier when I produce a good piece of work which they can be confident will do the job. I now have a reputation in some fields for writing programs that crash less often than others. And my advice to someone setting out in the world of work? Find several things that you like doing and are good at. Keep your dreams alive and take a chance doing something that you like!

**Roger Spooner, UK**

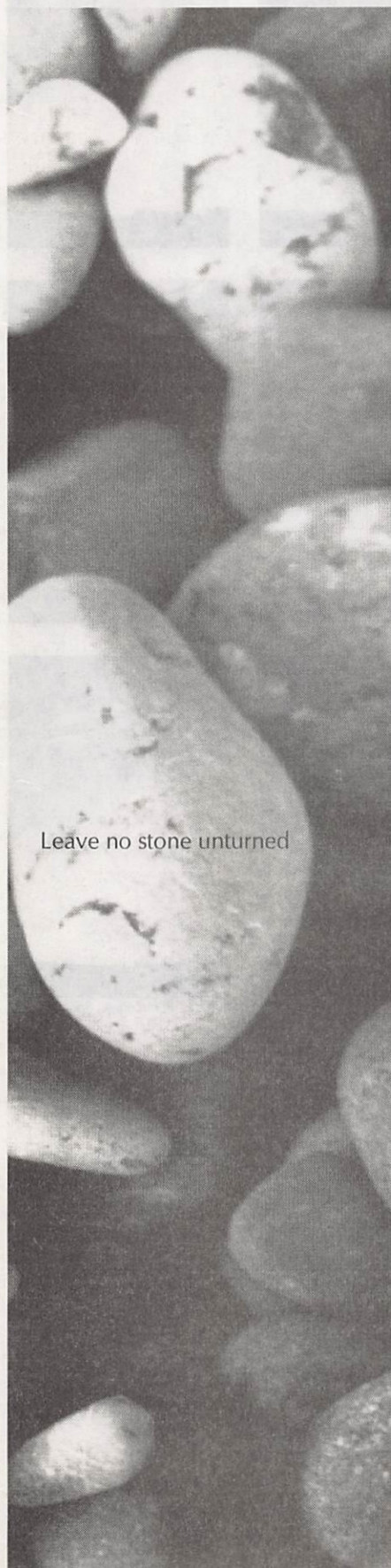


Up, up and away...

Photo: Roger Spooner



## which career path...



Leave no stone unturned

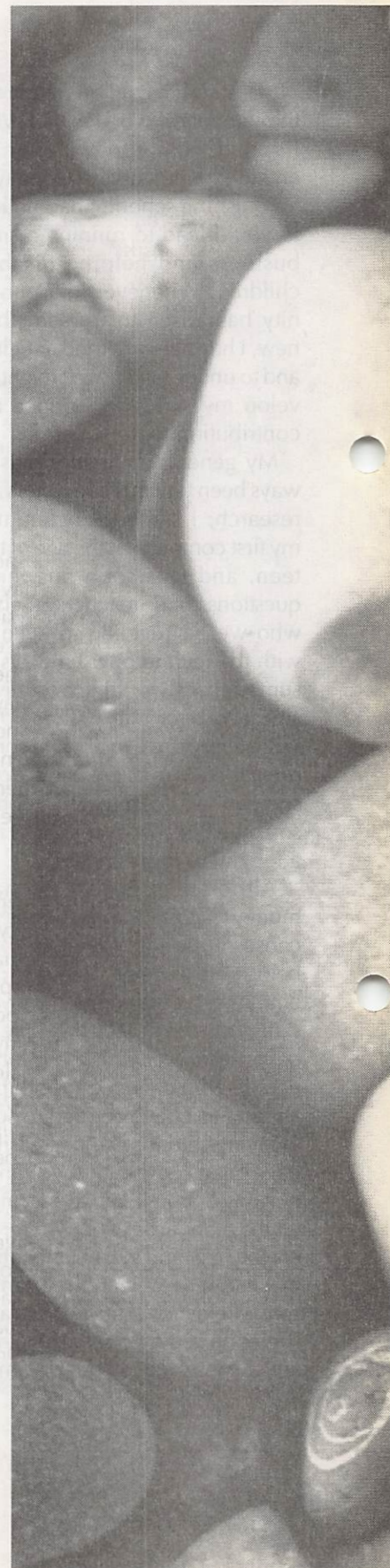
The concept of vocation and career are very important, as we spend more than half our lives at work. Our work puts its imprint on our personality and attitudes, and on the spirit we pass on to those around us.

The question facing 18-year-olds, "What to do with one's life?", must be a hard one to tackle. I vividly remember myself at this age. I was very sure I should take a course in English language and literature and pursue my career in this field. There are turning points in one's life; a person or book or film which have an impact on the course of events. For me it was my English teacher who impressed me, not only by her rich knowledge of the subject but as an honest and sincere person.

After graduating from university, I had to make another decision: what to do next? It is a fact of life that we all have to learn how to make decisions. Unfortunately - or fortunately - nobody can do it for us. And unless you know who you are, what you stand for, and how you would like to live your life, you cannot make the right decision. Life goes from one decision to another, and like a ladder each step is important and leads to the next new decision and experience.

Having got my degree, I took a year off and went to Britain to work for a charity. It has become a life experience thing, moving out from my own small sphere into a huge exciting, fascinating and bubbling world. Then came the realisation that doing something valuable, and working not only for your own sake but for others, does bring inner satisfaction.

While working as an English teacher at university I asked my students to write on the topic 'Why study?'. One of them said that the main reason people study is to make money. I cannot agree with this. Certainly there has to be the right balance but I find it wrong if people choose their career for money and ma-





terial comfort, and not for an interest they would enjoy developing, or feel called to. Money is tempting but very often does not bring soul satisfaction.

I have been struggling recently between what to choose: the big money job or the job I am interested in pursuing. I am glad it has worked out for me to do the latter: translating and interpreting at the Finnish Embassy in Kiev, Ukraine. I believe that if each person searches they will have insights into what is the right thing to do with their life.

**Svetlana Bednash, Ukraine**

I have been in exile for over nine years. In three days I will turn 28, having travelled a great distance - physically, spiritually and emotionally - since I left my country and my family at the age of 18. To some, the distance may seem quite a small one; Thailand and Burma are, after all, neighbouring countries. But the journey back has been denied me because of my political beliefs.

I left Burma in 1988 while an undergraduate student at Rangoon University. I fled to the jungle along the Thai-Burma border two days after a military 'coup' brought yet another disastrous period of extreme violence and chaos to my country. When I think of the struggle of my people throughout our history, I realise that what has happened to us is not something simple and cannot be resolved by simple means.

In 1988, I believed that I would have to spend no longer than a couple of years in exile, working for the restoration of democracy and justice in Burma by fighting SLORC (State Law and Order Restoration Council) troops. How wrong I was!

When we began our struggle, we hated the military so much we were blinded by our hate. Later I would come to learn that simply 'hating' is a

hollow approach that gets us nowhere. Nine years on, my friends and I are still in exile - spread across the globe.

In Thailand I have had a chance to broaden my understanding of Burma and the world. This has happened outside of any classroom. I have also, however, been lucky enough to undertake a Bachelor degree. When it is safe for everybody to return to Burma we will have the mammoth task of reconstructing the country around open and democratic principles. As students in exile, we have a moral responsibility to lead in this process, using the skills we have acquired.

At the moment I am studying a Business Administration degree at a British university based in Thailand. If I had remained in Burma I would not have been able to complete my studies and would probably have worked in my mother's business. I would, by now, be married with a few children to support. I would have been denied the right to think and been forced to concentrate upon basic survival. So, I would not have the same understanding of politics in my country and the rest of the world.

Sometimes I wish that I had remained in Burma. It is such a beautiful and diverse land, and ordinary people treat each other with a kindness that cannot be replaced. But my chance to shape the future of Burmese politics from outside is a privilege that few Burmese inside enjoy.

When I finish my degree I will work endlessly for the reconstruction of Burma. To do this I must first find some stability in myself. When I get married at the end of this month and move to Australia with my wife, I will continue to educate myself, and other people, about the situation in my country. I will continue to think of other ways in which I can work towards change, and to equip myself with the necessary skills to, one day, bring about that change.

**A Nge Lay, Burma**

Photo: Lisa Kesby



## which career path...

In the summer of '95, a national TV station in my country, Taiwan, was looking for a correspondent in Europe. The idea of being a TV reporter was an unexpected one because I am naturally shy. Getting the job was an even bigger surprise... and it's not an easy one!

TV News production is a very speedy process. From the moment the news sources are revealed, until the reporter arrives, does the filming, returns to the studio for voice-over and editing, and transmits the finished work, there may be only two or three hours. There were many times when I was struggling in a traffic jam, with head office shouting down the mobile phone, demanding the finished work. And who could blame them with ten minutes to go until broadcast time?

You also have to be extremely flexible. Being woken at three in the morning and told to go to a far-off country where you don't know a soul was no big deal. From one week to the next I could not predict where I would go or whom I would meet.

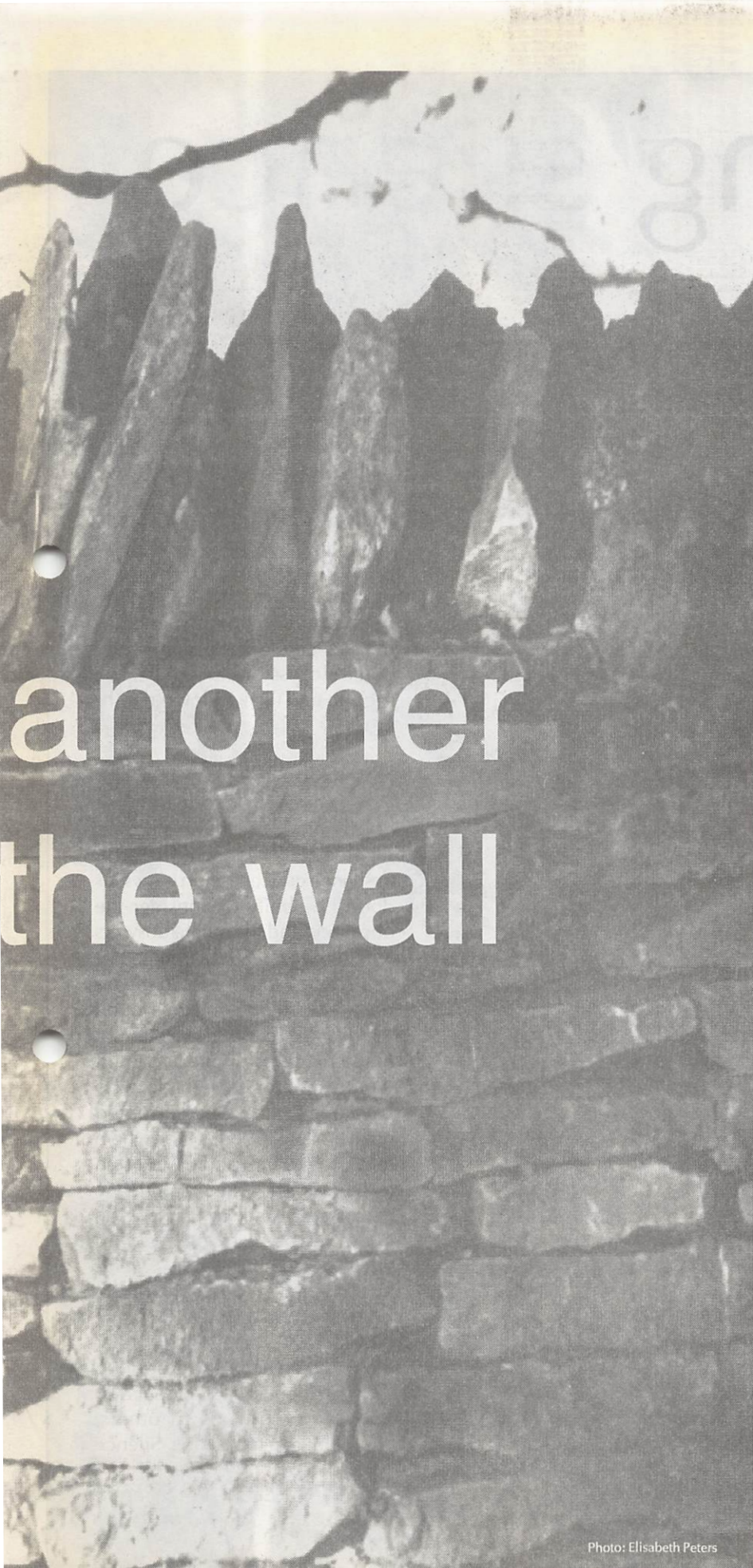
Of course there were many interesting aspects. Every assignment was a new experience. I went to places I had never even dreamt of, and talked to people I never expected to. Most touching was when my excited parents phoned to say something like, "We just saw you on TV. You should wear something brighter next time!"

Such a glamorous job for most young people... still I decided to leave after two years. Why? Even I don't have a definite answer; I just know that deep in my heart I am still searching for the right thing to do with my life. People ask me what it's like to be out of the fast lane. Sure, I miss it in some ways but I don't regret my decision. There is always something else in life, and I look forward to that 'something else'... when I complete my PhD in International Relations.



# Not just brick in





# another the wall

I am a United Methodist Minister from Texas. This year I am serving churches in North East England.

My decision to be ordained was a response to God's call for my life and a response to the injustices of the world. One of my first memories is of sitting on the floor of the Methodist Home For Abused Children in New Orleans, Louisiana, while my parents tutored some of the residents with their homework. At three years old, I began to realize that not everyone lives the same way, nor has the same opportunities or systems of support. Throughout my youth, various experiences in the impoverished inner city communities sensitized me to the needs and situations of others, opening my eyes and heart to those who have far less than myself. I intentionally studied Sociology hoping to make a difference in our world. While I could have chosen to serve others through a vocation in social work, I felt a deep call to offer practical assistance of food and shelter to others, along with the Gospel message of good news and hope, as part of the role as a minister, especially in the inner cities.

Due to the abuse I witnessed in my own denomination, I almost left the institutionalized church for a secular profession. Ultimately, I have chosen to change systemic oppression from the inside out by beginning with the church and attempting to offer a model of faithful living to the world. The church is called to ministries of justice. I have long viewed my role within the church as a voice of reform, insisting that we hold clergy accountable for their actions, support ministers equitably, and challenge the status quo of congregations, as well as reach out to others in need. My mere presence as a female minister continues to challenge many colleagues, people in the pews and the general public.

As a minister, I am privileged to be part of people's lives during intense joy and suffering. My journey, though difficult and painful at times, is one I could never walk away from. I am where God wants me to be.

**Angela Gafford, USA**

Photo: Elisabeth Peters



# talking silence

Our world runs a fast course. There is one technological breakthrough after another. Street violence is on the increase. Personal development is a must, extra job training, enhanced training sessions, we must remain employable. And suddenly, close to home: illness, death, an operation for someone who has had to suffer so much already, the real danger of a suicide. How to cope? An increasing number of people seem to lose the thread. Where do they go with their confusion, their sorrow, their pain?

One of the most difficult things 'to get hold of' is silence. It is a paradox that where on the one hand we seem to gasp for silence, on the other hand we can't be quick enough to turn on the radio or television in order not to 'feel' the silence. Why do we experience silence as a threat, when we could experience it as a tonic to have peace! Who dares to think? Who dares to seek silence rather than someone else's opinion? How do we find that silence? More and more people go on retreats, sometimes with others, often alone.

In silence I first find confrontation with myself. That can be threatening. I can run away from everybody else but not from myself. So often we are alone with confusing feelings of not being understood, of loneliness that sweeps over us. We are confronted with our own helplessness/powerlessness. The listening ear we then need isn't always there. This also happens in moments of sheer joy because things go well, because something beautiful has happened. All of us

need to come to terms with that loneliness, with being alone.

How can you make friends with yourself for life? Because I think that is what is meant to happen. Out of that, something can grow which goes from us to others, impacting society positively. For me faith plays a big part in this. And silence. And here we face the paradox again: as we struggle from confrontational silence to the silence of friendship, we become accessible to others, we seem to find the way towards others.

Children who go to school for the first time have to learn to sit quietly, otherwise they cannot absorb that which is offered to them. In silence concentration grows, as does the ability to consider the questions and formulate answers with what they are learning. We know that the prophets in the bible sought silence and thus found the peace and the security to put their next steps on life's road. It would appear that those who have a faith find it easier to find quiet time with God, a time where they pray to him and try to listen to him. Yet it is my experience that it demands an active decision of the will to be quiet, perseverance to remain quiet, and courage to take that which comes in silence seriously.

Silence can be a source of growing confidence. Confidence in oneself, confidence in others, confidence in the future. Silence can talk to us.

**Lotty Wolvekamp,  
The Netherlands**



I find myself pacing up and down. Shivering, I can't feel any warmth in this room. It's freezing. The further I walk, the darker it gets. I've never been in this cold, unwelcoming place before. How the hell did I get here? Finally, I come to a halt and look around. Not a soul in sight. I hear the loud howl of the wind blowing outside. The shivery feeling comes over me again. I hug myself, hoping for some heat, without success. My hands are frozen.

Suddenly, a bright headlight shines into my eyes. In a split second, a figure appears in the distance. The figure of a boy, a small boy. Strangely, he is surrounded by lights. I cannot see his face, only his back, head down. An angel in black? Shocked by what is before me, fear begins to take over. Despite my fear, I have an urge to say something. Half shouting I ask, "Hey little boy, who are you?" No response. I try again, "Little boy, what's your name?" Still no movement. "Can you please tell me where I am?" Silence.

Anger takes over my fear. Why is he ignoring me? Impulsively I swear, "Say something, you little shit!" Silently he lifts his head. He moves! "Who is this stranger?", I keep asking myself. If only he'd turn round. "Who are you?", I ask again softly. The boy looks down at the floor again and whispers, "I am you". He repeats louder, yet still softly, "I am you". The third time it comes out as a sob, "I ..am...yyou". I must be hearing things.

The boy turns round. He is still looking down as if he has done something wrong. Shame? Something to hide? I reach out to lift his head up but am unable to do so. He is beyond my reach. He knows exactly what I am trying to do. He looks up. Stunned, I freeze. I can't believe it. My little brother? My twin with red eyes? Who...aaaaare...you?", I ask again and again.

Standing still, he stares straight into my eyes. A de-

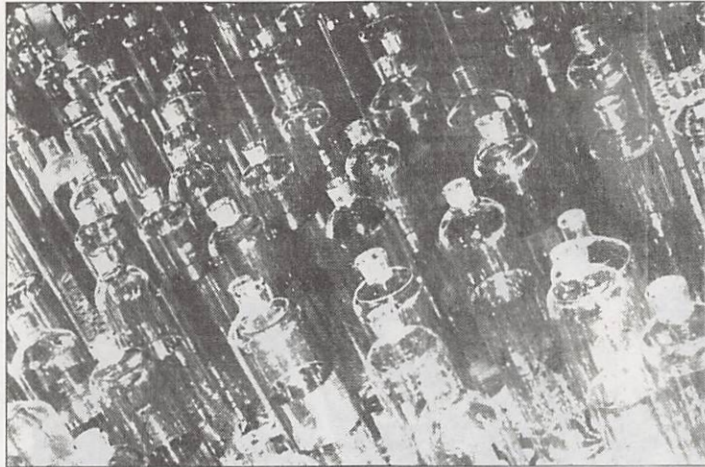


Photo: Laura Trevelyan

termined and strong expression, almost an evil look. His eyes shine. He smiles and breaks into a vigorous laugh. Harder and harder he laughs. He raises a hand and points a broken beer bottle at me. In the

other hand, he holds a torch which shines into my eyes. I cover them for protection against the dazzling glare and turn away.

He yells loudly, harshly, "I am your shadow! Your worst nightmare! And now... death becomes ours!" He starts to walk towards me, the sharp-edged bottle pointing directly at me. He is getting closer and closer. Fear hits me like a storm. I retreat backwards, faster and faster until I am at a dead end against the wall. This is it. There is no escape. Leaning against the wall, I slide down slowly. Huddled on the floor, I hold myself as tightly as possible. The boy is now inches away from me. With an evil look, he lifts the jagged glass above me. I bury my face in my hands and close my eyes.

I open my eyes and the boy has vanished. I find myself sitting on the edge of an unfamiliar bed. I look around. I'm back in the dark room again, except this time, there's a dim light from an old lamp by the bedside. Silence and darkness embrace me. I look around the room again. In the corner stands a small, battered

metallic desk and a chair. It's wet and stormy outside. I am cold. Sleeping breaths fill the night air. I

brush my hair with my cold hand and blink to reality. Flashback to the little, innocent life illuminated by the headlights. If only I'd stuck to the speed limit... if only I hadn't had those last few glasses... if only I could turn back time... But I'm alone now in my single cell.

- A short story by **David Lih**, *East Timor/Australia*

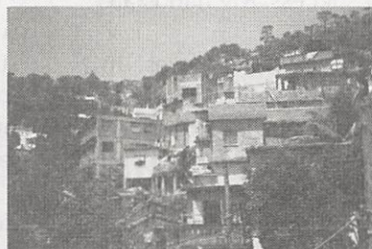
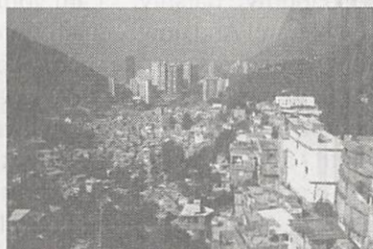
# THE BOY



# BRAZIL



Life in the favelas, Photos: Judith Henderson



My name is Ademar and I come from Rio, Brazil. I am 26 and have studied philosophy and taught English. What comes to mind when I say Brazil? Rainforests, beaches, football, the samba and nuts? Economically, Brazil is about ninth in the world. However, on the other side of the coin

we have big social problems. Two years ago, I faced a dilemma. Should I continue living a comfortable life, in my 'mundinho' (my own little world), trying to make as much money as possible? Somehow I couldn't do that with all those problems around me. That's why I decided to do volun-

tary work - in the 'favelas' (slums) with the leaders and the ordinary people. We weren't giving them answers, but trying to inspire them to help themselves and find solutions to their problems, together.

During one of my meetings with the youth, they realised that violence and litter were big problems in the community. They were challenged to think whether they, in the way they behaved, were part of the problem or part of the solution. The challenge is the same for all of us, wherever we are. It made me think of something I had to face up to - how to be honest with my mother. It was not easy for me but I wrote to her asking forgiveness for the things I had done behind her back, and for the bitterness I felt due to my parents' separation before my birth. This greatly helped our relationship.

I have learnt that if we want to make our community better, the best place to start is with ourselves. Incidentally, I found it easier to go and work in the favelas than to face up to and be honest with my own mother.

**Ademar de Broutelles,  
Brazil**

## FAX-THINK-LINK

The Fax-Think-Link is a gathering of ideas and opinions. Next issue we look at:

**How do you cope with difficult relationships?**

Contact [globalex@mraoxon.demon.co.uk](mailto:globalex@mraoxon.demon.co.uk) or fax the editors at +44-1865-311950, by 15th March, 1998.

This issue: **What would you most like to say to the world's youth?**

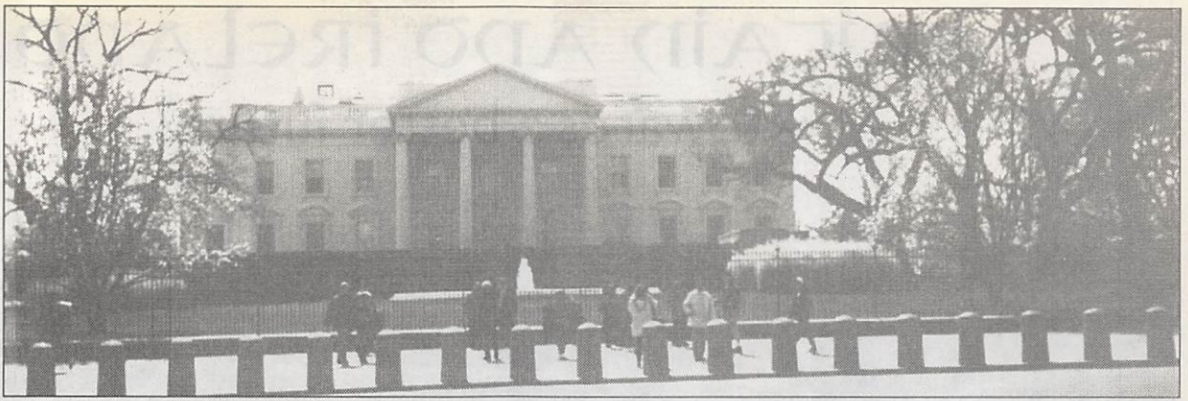
**Mrs Yukika Sohma, Japan**

I was thrilled when Global Express invited me to address the youth of the world. Why? Because you are the future, the tomorrow, and you are capable of building a

better and peaceful world we all crave. You may wonder, what can our individual do? Individual, yes, but when linked with friends around the world you are no longer alone.

Sixty years ago next year, I was at a dead end, thinking I did not count. I longed for peace in the world but was at odds even with friends. A lady came to see me and through her I learnt a new way of living, "to ask God to show where I could change rather than always wanting others to change". She told me to join the growing force around the world of people seeking and living a new way of life. The idea intrigued me. It was not easy for an arrogant and opinionated individual like myself but I decided to give it a try; a new





The White House, Photo: Laura Trevelyan

America, I came to your soil in order to know a part of you. I took a little step out of my comfort zone so that I could behold your greatness and disgrace. I made the journey to the 'Sweet Land of Liberty and Freedom' to feel your heartbeat and oscillation and thereby be imbued with your pulse and dynamic power. My love and my hate for you, brought me to you.

At this precise moment I am in the jewel of your crown, in the city that you have chosen as the symbol and reflection of the principles you hold as fundamental truths, your capital. I have made a long journey, over an almost endlessly deep and wide ocean. Deeper and wider than the eye could ever envision, have I travelled to reach you. 700 kilometres per hour, that is how fast I have been flying to you America.

I wanted to widen my horizon, with the hope of demolishing another wall in my confusing search for wisdom. Wisdom, you beautiful and graceful word.

One of the first people I met was a homeless man by the name of Robert Moore. It was then perhaps that wisdom revealed part of its mystery to me. He had been without a home for over a year. He had lost everything in a material context. But he had managed remarkably well to maintain his core: his dignity, pride and soul.

I sat close to four hours, a stone's throw away from the White House, on a sizzlingly hot pavement. I conversed with what I perceived as wisdom, in the image of Robert Moore. And this, while well dressed people hurried by, staring at a meeting they would not normally be ex-

posed to. Me in my tidy, clean clothes, cross-legged, a Pentax over my shoulder and a Coca-Cola in hand. And this amazing man in his worn out, dirty clothes.

Robert had stacks of books, magazines and newspapers in a carrier bag. When I asked him why, his reply was, "Not having a home doesn't mean I don't have a brain. I am a wisdom and knowledge seeker. I feel veneration towards the written word."

People come and people go. The difference is that some people's footprints never disappear. Sometimes I wonder Robert if you are crying, if you are laughing, if you are alive... What kind of world are we living in that we can travel to the moon, explore space and count atoms but we can't provide a roof for the likes of Robert Moore?

**Zero Akyol, Sweden**

## FAX-THINK-LINK

way opened. It proved to be a fascinating although at times difficult way but it gave me continued energy to carry on.

### **Dr Berkeley Vaughan, 92, Australia**

First of all I would like to say, "Sorry". You younger people have inherited from my generation a very difficult world. In my youth there was virtually no unemployment, and job security was normal at work. Now none can be sure of getting a job or holding it. My world also recognised moral standards, now many are unsure of right and wrong.

What caused the change? Many factors, but largely the rapid increase of the world population from 500 million in

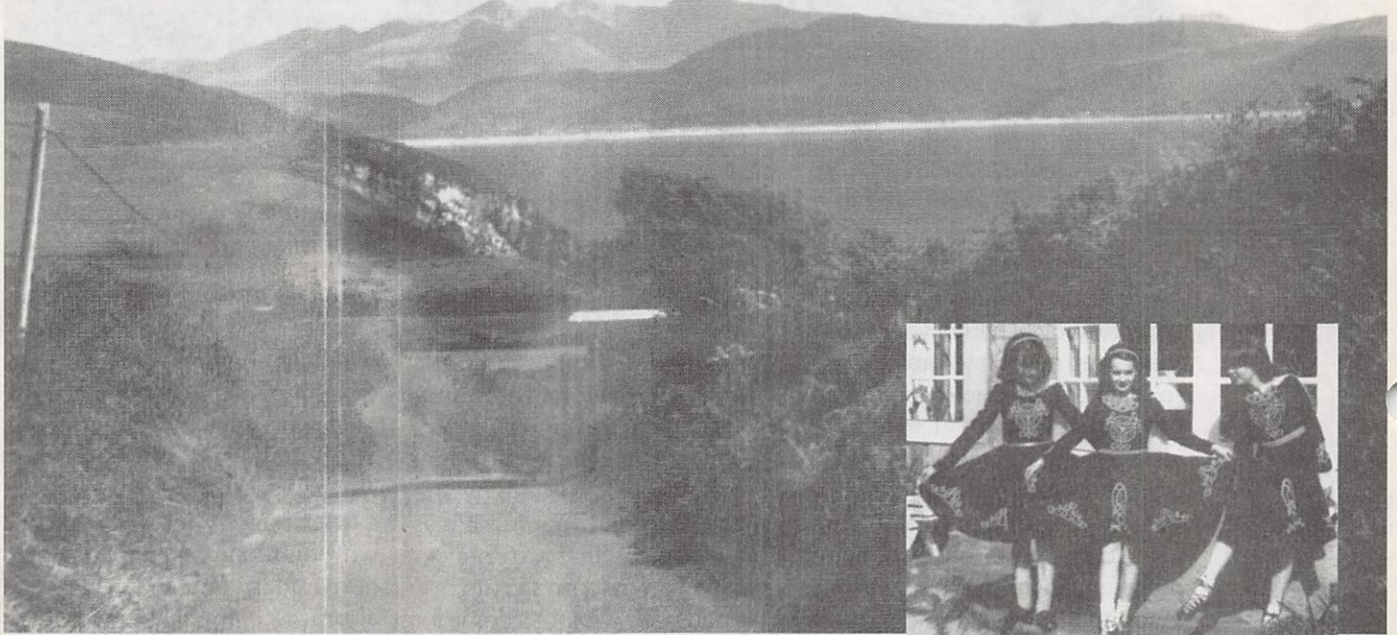
1650, to 1600 million in 1900, to 5750 million (estimated) in 2000, all competing for a share in the world's shrinking resources. Then the wastefulness of modern life: the international addictive drug trade (\$900,000 per minute); the arms trade (\$1.5 million per minute); gambling (\$800,000 per week in Victoria, Australia, alone). Nearly all of these things are unproductive and destructive.

There is a 2000 year old saying, 'Where there is no vision the people perish'. There is no great national purpose today such as there was in the Second World War, when we were all resolved to prevent a collection of thugs from taking over the free world. Where is our national pur-



# BRITAIN AND IRELAND

## - towards a better future?



Co. Kerry, Ireland, Photo: Gail Trevelyan

Irish dancers, Photo: Peter Trevelyan

Ireland is Britain's nearest neighbour. We are bound to it by ties of language, Christian faith and shared history. That history has, to a greater or lesser degree, been painful for eight centuries. Unless some way is found to heal memories, and make possible a fresh beginning, there can be no lasting peace.

In 1992, the IRA exploded a bomb in Warrington, and two little boys were killed. At that time, I pleaded in *The Independent* newspaper for a greater understanding of the history of Ireland. I mentioned the enforced settlement there of

'loyal' Protestants from Scotland and England to the detriment or death of the native Irish, and the ferocity which was used to subdue them. I referred to the catastrophe of the great famine as a result of which a million people perished, and the same number were forced to emigrate. I argued that, by neglect of the famine and by other means, before and since, Britain has used the people of Ireland for its own ends. The enforced partition of the island in 1921 was, in effect, 'the last straw'.

I concluded my piece with these words:

### FAX-THINK-LINK

*pose today? Could the year 2000 be the dawn of the caring society? Why not? The need is great and the means available to all.*

*For years I have had an early morning time of meditation. In the silence, the 'inner voice', which we all possess, often mentions names or situations. Invariably, I later meet the person concerned at the right time or the letter written is just what is needed. Nothing earth-shaking about that, but with thousands doing the same thing the effect is considerable. With millions joining in, the caring society would become real. There would be no need in such a society for the excitement, disillusionment and risk of casual sex; ob-*

*livion through drugs would be unnecessary; suicide would no longer be an option; homes would cease to be merely dormitories and become centres of love and encouragement. Why not try it?*

#### **Dr Charis Waddy, 88, UK**

*A British New Year TV series describes young Abraham Lincoln gangling ineffectually, awaiting (without knowing it) the issue that would concentrate his capacities for greatness. Where today is the hidden potential for a better future? One effective bridgebuilder in Anglo-Irish relations confesses that his clear calling was neglected for 13 years. Are millions*



"It is a fact of Christian experience, but also true to human psychology, that there can be no reconciliation without sorrow and penitence. That is always costly, and to suggest that one nation or people should apologise to another is to invite accusations of naïveté, lack of patriotism, and capitulation to terrorism. Christians, however, have to understand that repentance and reconciliation are the very heart of the Gospel, and you cannot achieve one without the other."

Ireland is imprisoned by its history and its memories. Both need to be redeemed if reconciliation is to be real. None of us can escape the consequences of our history. We have to live with them, but we can seek to understand it better, and thereby begin to heal personal and social memories. In Ireland, it is for the churches to give a lead in providing the resources of vision and hope, to help people to find a new way forward, so that the poor will no longer cry for justice while the well-off plead for peace.

To suggest that sorrow and penitence offer the best way towards healing the relationship between Britain and Ireland (and other areas of conflict whose roots lie deep in history, viz. South Africa, Israel-Palestine, Bosnia, and for that matter, race relations in Britain and in the USA) is not to imply that all wrong is on one side. But it *is* to suggest that, for suffering to be redeemed, someone has to make the first move.

Such injustices can hardly be regarded as our fault, yet we cannot escape the consequences. This is true of present-day Germans in relation to the Third Reich, and present-day Liverpool ship-owners in relation to the slave trade. They and we continue to bear the stain of such events. That is why a proper understanding of history is absolutely crucial. Maya Angelou has written:

History, despite its wrenching pain,  
Cannot be unlived, but if faced  
With courage, need not be lived again.

It is a fact of Christian experience that there can be no reconciliation without sorrow and penitence. It is costly,

but the Gospel can never be less than costly. It has as its fount and origin a crucified Messiah, who was yet able to plead, 'Father, forgive'.

The plain truth is, if we Christians are not committed to the search for reconciliation in all its costliness, then we have forgotten our calling in a fallen world. If the only way involves sorrow and penitence, then we have to ask, repentance for what? In the context of Ireland, I should have to say - as an Englishman - for the English part in producing centuries of pain there, and for my personal complacency in the face of decades of murder and mayhem. In repenting of all that, I am faced with my need to forgive others for words and evil deeds, but also, and more importantly, to ask for forgiveness for myself and for my country. Repentance which disclaims responsibility is not Christian repentance at all. We are to see our own sins among the sins of the whole world. We are to repent of them, not because they harm us, but because they cause suffering to others, whether we see it or not.

I have used Britain and Ireland as an example of the need to begin to deal with the pain of our history, but each may wish to make particular connections. The then President of West Germany, Richard von Weizsäcker, said in 1985, on the 40th anniversary of the Liberation of Auschwitz:

'Whoever closes his eyes to the past becomes blind to the present. Whoever does not wish to remember inhumanity becomes susceptible to the dangers of new infection.'

Sorrow and penitence are the Church's business, but they have a more worldly application. They are valuable in their own right. They provide, in a suffering world, means (and sometimes the only means) to break an inherent pattern of evil, and to make possible new freedom of action. In international affairs, they serve to remind us that politics alone is not enough. In theology we call it the need for redemption. In worldly terms it remains when all else has failed.

**Canon Nicholas Frayling, Rector of Liverpool, UK**

His book, *'Pardon and Peace, a reflection on the making of peace in Ireland'*, is published by SPCK at £10.99.

## FAX-THINK-LINK

*dying because of deafness to destined tasks?*

*The 20th Century - mine - is over, with its gigantic creative and criminal energies. "Division is the mark of our age", was a true insight (Buchman's): splitting atoms, empires, philosophies, families, or just schizophrenia. My lot had little idea of the impossible odds ahead; but we saw a choice. You could risk betting your life on the biggest thing you could see, and having made the decision, stick to it. A global commitment, and within it a calling, individual, unique, accepted from the creator still at work on the unfinished business of the universe. I wish we had done it better. I think you will. Don't let our inadequacies stop you making your*

*essential contribution to your stage in history.*

*The future? Foresight sees union, unity, as the key. Fusion. Healing and common action between civilisations, races, families. These can be tackled anywhere, today and for a lifetime. Good luck!*

**Elisabeth Peters, 45, Sweden/UK**

*I would hug them tightly and say, "All will be well". I might possibly add, "Do seek others' advice and listen to others' experiences - but finally try to follow the absolutely deepest thing in your own heart. That is most likely to be right."*



## Is marriage *outdated*?

**A** mood of reflection about marriage is in the air throughout the Western world, states an article in Melbourne's daily newspaper. Over the last 20 years the divorced population in Australia has increased four times.

About thirty-nine percent of marriages are likely to end in divorce within 30 years. Sixty-two percent of the population find the concept of living together in a de facto relationship acceptable. 1975 and the introduction of unilateral no-fault divorce meant the end of legally binding behavioural promises. It seems that in a world in which everything - from coffee cups to employment - has become disposable or temporary, so has the tradition of marriage. But is it merely a tradition? In a recent discussion in Melbourne, two young couples shared their views on this topic. For Julia and Richard, marriage was not just a traditional ritual to be undertaken in order to satisfy cultural norms. After living together for four years and having a son, they felt there was something lacking in their relationship. It was not a tangible thing, but rather, as Richard describes it, a depth or spirituality which pulled them towards marriage. The decision to marry was a "scary" one for Richard; he had enjoyed the freedom from responsibility which he felt in the de facto relationship. The weeks before the marriage gave him time to consider the commitment he was about to make and he decided he wanted a permanent - as opposed to a "convenience" - relationship with Julia.

Their wedding took place a year ago beside the Yarra River which runs through Melbourne. For the couple, it was a public demonstration of their commitment to each other, and to their son. Marriage ceremonies take place around the world in different ways, but almost always involve this public declaration. In all areas, our society appears decreasingly keen on promises: employers offer little security to their workers, and receive scant loyalty in return. We rarely reply to invitations - is it in the hope that we will get a better offer? But since the wedding, Julia and Richard's relationship has deepened and they have gained a sense of direction. With long-term, mutual goals, they have been able to work more effectively together and to know each other on a new level.

Kim and Nettie also lived together for four years before marriage. For Kim, this arrangement "pulled the sex out of the equation": the couple did not marry merely because they were physically attracted, but rather because of the companionship they enjoyed. For some couples, sharing a space before marriage can provide a valuable chance to reflect on what long-term commitment would mean. For

others, it can be a catch: having lived together, it can be easy to drift into marriage, believing we have thought about the decisions and changed lifestyle that the commitment involves, when often we have not.

Although they do not call themselves "religious", Nettie and Kim hold similar values. Common interests (such as watching the cricket!) are not enough to hold together a marriage, says Amanda Gordon, clinical psychologist. Instead, agreement on a basic set of ethics around which a couple's life can revolve enables them to deal with superficial differences and to negotiate the disagreements which inevitably arise during a marriage.

In our 'me' society it is no wonder that marriage, with 'we' focus, may seem outdated. For Nettie and Kim, the key to their seven-year marriage has been communication. They chose to marry after years of being best friends, able to talk openly with each other about anything. It is sad, but not surprising, that so-called relationships built over the Internet, so often end in disaster. How can there be 'real' communication in a 'virtual' relationship? Amanda Gordon warns that the frenzy of our lifestyles today can leave no time for talking. She suggests setting aside a time, or a "date", with our partner on a regular basis. This might mean rearranging our individual timetables, but after all a successful marriage relies upon compromise. We need to try to look at the world through our partners' eyes, not through rose-coloured glasses!

Nettie and Kim value their independence. In this sense, two have not become one: each has continued with activities they enjoyed, separately, before marriage. Inside their shared life, they are careful to give each other room to move. Kim does not believe their coexistence is fate; he and Nettie are not necessarily ideal partners. However, they have an absolute belief in their marriage, and in each other, that makes them willing to work to make it work!

With computers and other electronic devices that provide us with instant gratification, work over a long period - a lifetime, in the case of marriage - appears a foreign concept, but anything worthwhile requires it. Both couples have found their relationships becoming more precious all the time. Others involved in the discussion talked of learning about themselves through their marriage - coming to acknowledge their own weaknesses, in order to be able to manage these, and to recognise their strengths. In learning about ourselves we become a stronger, more supportive and satisfied society. Most importantly, so much joy can come from sharing our time with the person we know better and better. How can marriage ever be outdated?

**Nicci Long, Australia**





Mr and Mrs McDonald, Clare Valley, South Australia, Photo: Gail Trevelyan

THE LIFE THAT I HAVE

The life that I have  
is all that I have,  
And the life that I have is yours.

The love that I have  
of the life that I have  
Is yours and yours and yours.

A sleep I shall have,  
A rest I shall have,  
Yet death will be but a pause.

For the peace of my years  
In the long green grass  
Will be yours and yours and yours.

Leo Marks

Code poem used by Violette Szabo, the  
British Resistance heroine working in France



# SCATTERED THOUGHTS

Time is a prelude to eternity.

He lives free who can face death. - Karen Blixen

Reach for the moon  
And if you fall, you'll fall amongst the stars.

What makes the universe so hard to comprehend  
is that there's nothing to compare it with.

Greed is the real dirt, not dust. - Buddhist Scriptures

Remember that Thomas Edison found  
over 2000 ways not to make a light bulb.

An attitude of gratitude is like insurance  
for the soul against the powers of darkness.

We don't see things as they are,  
we see them as we are. - Anaïs Nin

There is no excellent beauty that hath not some  
strangeness in the proportion. - Francis Bacon

No-one will ever win the battle of the sexes.  
There's too much fraternising with the enemy.  
- Henry Kissinger

Nobody made a greater mistake than he who  
did nothing because he could only do a little.  
- Edmund Burke

The clouds above us join and separate  
The breeze in the courtyard leaves and returns  
Life is like that, so why not relax?  
Who can stop us from celebrating? - LuYu