

Christian Agency "Up Front", with sleeves rolled up!



Arthur Beals, President of World Concern International, explained the work and aims of the organization at his Sydney meeting. Keen interest was shown, especially in the work of Christian Veterans in foreign countries
(Photo: Ramon Williams)

The President of WORLD CONCERN INTERNATIONAL, Arthur Beals addressed a businessmen's breakfast in Sydney, Tuesday April 3rd and clearly explained the aims and methods of this organization. "We insist on declaring ourselves as a Christian Agency up front, even in countries known to be Moslem, Hindu and even Marxist."

"We are concerned agents, doing the work and will of the Lord Jesus Christ. If we are to help the world we do not give the 'handout' but rather a 'helping hand'."

That "helping hand" could be veterinary workers serving as brief replacements, or for long term commitments, as well as any other program that will "minister to all needs". "We believe in a wholistic ministry," commented Mr. Beals.

WORLD CONCERN insists on working in partnership with other organizations and local churches.

The Refugee Program is usually in co-operation with the United Nations or a local Government. Refugees are sent pouring out of Vietnam and upon their arrival in Malaysia, are met by medical personnel and welfare workers, from WORLD CONCERN.

"There is no work known as 'WORLD CONCERN', as we provide the workers for existing programs. We are not involved in Church Planting but we assist those who are," commented Mr. Beals.

He went on to quote situations where economic advice had been given to a village and local church, in the Philippines. Because of that help, an industry was begun which has helped finance the church and its work. Similar assistance was given in Pakistan where all that was needed was help to commence.

"Although we have helped a base to commence in Australia, there is now the need for Australians to see the opportunities and assist in every way possible. Any funds received here would be used direct for the project intended," said Mr. Beals.

HMS Speaker

Guest speaker at the Sydney Anglican Home Mission Society's Festivals at Wollongong, Parramatta and Sydney this year will be the Rev. Thomas Wang, general secretary of the Chinese Co-ordination Centre of World Evangelism in Hong Kong. In his work, Mr Wang acts as a link between the Christian communities within the People's Republic of China and Chinese Christian communities throughout the rest of the world. His first New South Wales address will be at the Festival at St. Michael's Cathedral, Wollongong on Tuesday, May 1, commencing at 6 pm. The next night, Wednesday, May 2, the Mr Wang will be guest speaker at the HMS Parramatta Festival at St. John's Cathedral.

Great step forward in Ministry

Over 500 people, predominantly Asian, attended the commencement of the International Service at the Lyceum Church-in-a-Theatre on Sunday, on 15th April.

In announcing the development of the International ministry at Wesley Central Mission, the Superintendent, Rev. Gordon Moyes, said: "Exactly five years ago we commenced a service in Cantonese and Mandarin for a handful of Chinese

people. Over the past five years we have seen this Congregation grow from strength to strength.

For the past two years Rev. Dr. Tony Chi, whom the Mission brought from Singapore to head up this work, has spearheaded incredible growth. There are currently 300 active members of the International Congregation and they have outgrown Wesley Chapel in Castlereagh Street.

Book on Time launched where time began



Ron Buckland, National Director of Scripture Union (left) — the man who launched the book — and Jeff Blair, General Manager of Anzea Bookhouse — the Publisher of "Tyranny of Time".
(Photo: Ramon Williams)

LANCER BOOKS, a division of ANZEA BOOKHOUSE, launched Dr. Robert Banks' latest book, "THE TYRANNY OF TIME", at the Sydney Observatory. The Sydney Observatory was chosen as the location for it was here that the measurement and standardization of time for Australia took place. Originally a ball was dropped signalling the firing of a cannon at 1 p.m. precisely. Today the Observatory houses the Atomic Clock which controls the radio time signals heard throughout Sydney.

Raylee Llewellyn of the Sydney Observatory staff explained the history of the measurement of time and the various methods used to signal a set time. "Shipping needed local time and standard time, relative to Greenwich mean time," commented Miss Llewellyn. "An entire English fleet was wrecked in the Mediterranean Sea, simply because of a wrong measurement of time. Four minutes measured one degree of

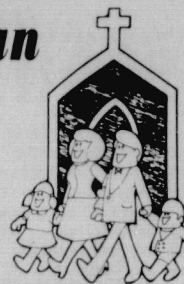
longitude and a simple miscalculation meant being off course by many miles".

The book "THE TYRANNY OF TIME" sets about to discuss the use of time wisely and to advantage. The author explains something of the reason for his study of the subject of "time" on page 35.

"We have seen that it is certain groups amongst the middle-class urban members of highly industrialised countries who are hardest hit by the time problem. It is pre-eminently those people whom I am addressing in this book. I am aware that there are others within Western societies who do not have this problem at all, or at least do not appear to do so. I am thinking of the unemployed, the disadvantaged and the prematurely retired. They feel they do not have enough to do. I am concerned about such people. In my own way I am attempting to do something to alleviate and alter their situation."

RAMON WILLIAMS

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How opposition grew to Homosexual Act

With the exception of the Uniting Church the major church bodies in New South Wales are opposed to the decriminalisation of homosexual acts proposed by the Premier Mr. Neville Wran. Mr. Wran had said that he would, in the very near future, introduce a new bill to make homosexual acts between consenting male adults in private no longer criminal acts. The Premier had given strong intimations that if the proposed bill was not passed it would be re-introduced in a way which would not allow a free, conscience vote.

Anglican Response

The standing committee of the Sydney Anglican Diocese had discussed this matter earlier. As a result, the Archbishop of Sydney, the Most Rev Donald Robinson, wrote to every member of the NSW Parliament. The letter said:

"We have not changed our attitude to this issue (decriminalisation) since the last time legislation of the kind now envisaged was considered by the Parliament. Though we do support the removal of anomalies we are firmly opposed to the decriminalisation of homosexual acts.

"Some issues, by their very nature, are of a kind that demands the exercise of a conscience vote. The decriminalisation of homosexual acts is such an issue and we strongly object to any suggestion that it should be determined along party lines.

"We believe we speak for the majority of Anglicans — 1.3 million people — in the diocese of Sydney."

Festival of Light

Mr Fred Nile, MLC, as National Coordinator of FOL-CSO, in a press release entitled "Wran to Legalise Sodomy" condemned the Premier's proposal as immoral and an act of political blackmail.

"We condemn his plans to ram through his Sodomy Bill within the next two weeks, for the following reasons", said Mr. Nile.

"1 During the elections Mr. Wran did NOT state sodomy would be his

top priority in the new Parliament and so has no mandate from the people of NSW. He is rushing the Bill through in two weeks to prevent community discussion and to distract public attention from the Jackson case before Judge Slattery.

2 Mr. Wran's threat to remove the conscience vote for ALP Catholic members is a shameful act of political blackmail.

3 The deceptive language 'that homosexual acts between consenting adults in private will be reformed' conceals the real proposal which is simply the legalisation of sodomy.

4 The NSW Anti-Discrimination Act Homosexual Sections already adequately covers the rights of homosexuals in NSW and no further legislation is needed or desirable in this State.

5 The massive health problems associated with perverse acts such as sodomy etc, particularly Aids, Syphilis and Hepatitis B, etc, means such legislation is irresponsible.

6 The rapid growth of the homosexual paedophile movement is also putting children and teenagers at risk and should not be encouraged.

7 The act of sodomy should remain illegal so that it cannot be taught in sex education classes in our schools as a normal sex act.

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Wang Embraces Anglicans



The Rev. Thomas Wang addressing a crowd of 2000 at the Sydney Town Hall on Friday, May 4 at the Anglican Home Mission Society's Sydney Diocesan Festival. Mr. Wang, who is General Secretary of the Chinese Co-ordination Centre for World Evangelism, also addressed HMS festivals at Wollongong and Parramatta and saw some of the Society's work with needy and disadvantaged people in the Sydney diocese. During his eight-day stay in Sydney he made contact with the 11 Chinese Christian churches in the city and arranged a series of bible studies and other engagements for the period May 11-16. In between his HMS engagements, Mr. Wang preached twice at St. Andrew's cathedral and at the Soldiers' Memorial Church at Cabramatta and St. John the Baptist at Milson's Point. He spent from May 8-11 in Melbourne talking to Chinese Christian churches in that city.

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The last title to be released in the I BELIEVE SERIES is "I Believe in Satan's Downfall". Written by the series editor, Michael Green, it attempts to deal with the modern trend in theology to disregard the idea of a personal Satan. At the same time, however, there is an increase in the interest of our age in the occult.

Michael Green addresses himself to the Biblical material about Satan and evil and, in particular, to the guaranteed downfall of Satan. Since Christians are continually engaged in a spiritual warfare this book is of great importance and we thoroughly recommend it.

You can obtain a copy FREE by introducing three new subscribers to the Australian Church Record.

ATTACK ON PORN VIDEOS

The Festival of Light has launched a major attack in recent months on the move to legalise X rated videos in NSW and elsewhere. This is such an important issue that the A.C.R. has printed a detailed background article on the matter (p.7.)

In a letter sent to the Federal Attorney-General, Senator Gareth Evans, Rev. Fred Nile M.L.C., National Co-ordinator of the Festival of Light, appealed to him to outlaw the flood of pornographic videos now sweeping the country. In that letter he made the following comments:

NSW Premier urges national ban:

The NSW Premier Hon Neville Wran Q.C., realises that the situation has got out of control. Mr Wran said that despite the government's commitment to non-censorship, "there are certain things beyond the pale". He named the main areas of concern with video-films showing pack rape, sado-masochism and extreme violence in association with sex acts. (Sydney Morning Herald 20/2/84 and other papers 20/4/84.)

A few weeks later Mr Wran said he would propose a national ban at the next meeting of Federal and State censorship ministers. "These films" he said "should not be legitimised in any form in NSW".

Prohibit 'X' and 'R' rated videos:

We contend that it is not enough to ban 'X' rated material. The violent content of 'R' rated videos is known to make viewers "violence prone".

'R' rated material should therefore also be banned because of the harm it will inflict on society and because 'R' rated material was only ever to be available for viewing by adults in closed theatres. 'R' rated films should only be shown to adult audiences and totally prohibited from video-cassettes where they can be viewed by children in a home.

The legislation required for videos — in our opinion — should be much stronger than for films shown in cinemas where to a certain extent, some control can be exercised in theatres. In private homes there is often no control and the material is easily available when parents are absent. It is estimated that in Britain — where legislation is inadequate — a large proportion of very young children have already been exposed to material that is harmful and damaging. British politicians from all parties are now convinced that they must act. British M.P. Graham Bright said recently that the producers of the "debased and debasing material have only one aim:

"to exploit the worst elements of human nature for profit. Shown to children, the damage could be forever" (The Age 16/1/84) under the heading "UK War on Video Nasties".

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San Francisco Close Down

Coincidental with the moves in New South Wales has been a controversy in San Francisco where a large part of the city's elected administration are gay activists. Activists from within their homosexual community, shocked by the continuing rapid rise in AIDS cases have decided to prevent bathhouses and bookshops and bars from allowing sexual activity in their premises.

The closure proposals resulted out of the actions of a Deputy Sheriff and long-time gay activist Larry Littlejohn. Littlejohn, claiming that he was frustrated by the lack of effectiveness of education measures in stopping the alarming spread of AIDS and the failure of Bathhouse and Sex Shop proprietors to co-operate in educating their clients, approached City Hall to file an intention to circulate an

initiative petition to make it city policy "to prohibit sexual activity amongst patrons of public bathhouses".

Such a petition needs to collect 7,332 signatures and then would go out as a referendum for city voters in the November ballot.

In order to avoid a city-wide referendum which would almost certainly have expressed a large anti-gay backlash a series of manoeuvres within the homosexual community resulted in an unhappy compromise whereby a temporary closure order has been ordered by the City Health Department under already existing laws.

Some homosexual city officials had issued strong statements supporting the closure on health grounds. "If there was typhoid we would close the public baths".

It was argued that a preponderance of AIDS cases are directly traceable to those who frequent such places and continue to indulge in multiple sexual activity.

They argued that despite attempts to educate these people, they continue to behave in a fashion that puts their own lives and the well-being of the gay community at stake.

Other homosexual groups, including the Bay Area Physicians for Human Rights, opposed the closures. They reiterated an earlier opinion that certain sexual practices were unsafe wherever they took place, but that the closures are not the answer.

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Moore College
Library



Staying Christian is possibly hardest when you have a young family and a just-established career.

These things demand so much time and energy that even the most enthusiastic members of fellowship and young marrieds' groups begin to slide out of the Christian life.

This problem was the impetus behind the Family Convention held at Katoomba this Easter. The theme of "Persevering/Growing in the Christian Life" was aimed at encouraging young families to draw aside from constant daily (and nightly) pressures to benefit from the teaching and fellowship the convention provides in a relaxed atmosphere.



Phillip Jensen

Subtle Pressures

"There are many subtle pressures in our age," said Rev. David Cook, one of the speakers. "Our society gives us everything we want so we tend to take the Bible for granted."

"As we get older," he continued, "we tend to get into seemingly 'deeper' things and grow away from the basics."

Katoomba Christian Convention committee Secretary, Mr. John Dykes, stressed that the topics chosen for the convention were those that would help people to get to know God more and to be more effective Christians in the world.

"The main emphasis of the Convention has always been careful exegesis of scripture with practical Christian living," said Bishop John Reid, who has been associated with the Convention since 1955, including service as chairman for several years. As a speaker this year, Bishop Reid gave a series of Bible expositions from Ephesians 5 and 6, designed to help young families in their Christian living.

Self-Giving

In talking to wives and husbands, Bishop Reid saw the love required of husbands and the submission required of wives to be part of the same thing. "Both have the central concept of giving oneself up for somebody else," he said. He pointed out that, "This may imply inequality only if 'headship' does not arise out of Paul's teaching."

In his address on parents and children, Bishop Reid reminded parents of how influential their example was in training, and of how ineffective and exasperating were such techniques as manipulation.

Middle-aged Christians

David Cook is minister of the Ashfield Presbyterian Church. His talks focused

Canon John Chapman, who gave one address on "The Spirit Now and Then", and by Convention Chairman, Rev. Phillip Jensen, Anglican Chaplain of the University of New South Wales. Mr. Jensen led a session designed to help convention-goers be more aware of the needs and opportunities for evangelism in Australia and abroad.

He interviewed Bishop Reid concerning the work of the Lausanne Conference Continuing Committee; David Cook on some opportunities for evangelism and training in Sydney; and John Dykes on the work of the Katoomba Christian Convention.

Comprehensive Children's Programme

A children's programme was held during the weekend, providing creche facilities, a pre-schoolers group, a Kids Club, and a programme for young teens.

GROWING IN MIDDLE AGE

Katoomba Family Convention

on the problems of being a Christian approaching middle age. "Abiding in Jesus" was his central theme. He explained that to do this there must be no apathy towards sin, our brethren, truth, and obedience.

"There's no easy answer," he said. "You have to keep plodding".

What followed were very practical discussions on the Bible, prayer, and looking forward to Christ's return.

They included an illustration of how to read and interpret the Bible for yourself, using Judges 3:12-30, about Ehud.

"If you can get something helpful out of that passage, you really have shown that all the Bible is profitable," remarked a passer-by to Mr. Cook, "and you certainly did that".

Middle-aged Apostle

Looking at Ephesians 3:14-21, Mr. Cook used the prayer of Paul, the "middle-aged apostle" as an example.

Referring to his final address, Mr. Cook explained, "We shouldn't live as if we're in heaven and perfect now, but we have been changed and we do have the Spirit living in us."

"Looking forward to the final victory of Jesus should really affect the quality of our living and our involvement in mission," he concluded.

Response of Shock

Those in their early 30's were at first shocked to be included in the "middle-aged" category. However, upon recovery many of them took Mr. Cook's points with renewed determination to get back to living and growing in their Christian lives.

Bishop Reid and David Cook were joined on the speaking platform by



David Cook and 3p John Reid

Organiser of the children's programme, Stephen Gibson, said that the 80-90 children at the Kids Club represented a significant growth in numbers. The children were particularly captivated by an exciting melodrama about pirates and maidens, performed by members of the team from North Rocks Uniting Church.

Study sessions were held for 50-60 teens each morning, along with typical Katoomba activities such as bush walks.

Organisers of the convention see the children's programme as a crucial part of the development of the Convention's ministry to families. Young parents are better able to appreciate the input offered when they can be confident that their children are being cared for in a reliable and helpful way.

"One of our aims for the future is to provide even better facilities for families," said Phillip Jensen.

Contrasts

The Easter Convention provides some contrasts with the Youth Convention, when nearly 3,500 young people came to Katoomba for the January long weekend.

Numbers and excitement weren't as high, but the encouragement of joining with many other Christians was just as great.

"People recognise they're part of a larger church," said John Dykes, "here we're all united in a spiritual way, and this takes people into the world in a Christian frame of mind, rather than thinking denominationally."

This convention seemed to cross over the barriers of age as well as denomination. While it was specifically directed at parents of young families, the number of bald heads apparent was evidence that the reliable and helpful

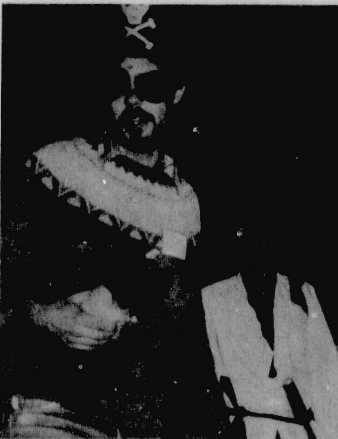


teaching always provided by the Convention drew some people back year after year.

Planning for Growth

From the tentative plans for next years Youth Convention, it seems that the Committee is planning for growth.

With speakers Rev. Dick Lucas from U.K. and Dr. Helen Rosevere coming the committee is looking at a tent to seat 7,000.



And what of the Easter Convention? "It's off and running," said Phillip Jensen. "This year the basis and foundation of a successful family convention has been set."

John Dykes was asked whether he thought the convention would continue to be successful:

"God will bless any ministry where His Word and His Name is honoured," he answered.

Certainly those who attended the convention were encouraged to honour the Word and Name of God. There was a great sense of oneness, of encouragement and of determination to persevere. This was especially the case during the Easter Sunday family communion service, when children, young people, "middle-aged" and old shared in song, prayer, and Scripture readings.

In his address on 2 Corinthians 5, Phillip Jensen summed up the message of Easter and the message of the Easter Convention:

"Those who live should live for Him who died."

Comments from the crowd/heard around the Convention

—"It's such a relief to be able to sit with your husband together and take it in while the children enjoy themselves."

—"Part of growing up is learning to discipline yourself" (a teenager, after the talk on Parents and Children.)

—"Because we're in the camping ground we could just put our kids to bed last night and still hear the message over the P.A."

—"We're going to be married in two weeks and the talks on 'Husbands and Wives', and 'Parents and Children' were helpful."

—"The talks were challenging on the practical side of life."

—"It's good to have the afternoons free."

—"We just wish more of our friends would come."

Who are these Lebanese Christians?

The Author is now on the staff of Westcot House, Cambridge after 10 years in Beirut—

It has come as something of a shock to many people to find Christian communities at the heart of the conflict in Lebanon. We, in the West, sometimes remember that there is a historic church of the East — the Greek Orthodox Church, but we know little or nothing of the complicated pattern of Middle Eastern Christianity. We may have heard of various missions to Muslim countries, but are unlikely to know much about the small Christian communities with roots in New Testament times which have struggled through the agonies of history into our twentieth century.

Though we read in the Acts of the Apostles that the followers of the Way were first called Christians in Antioch, the focus of the expanding churches mission rapidly shifts to Rome, so important for the western world; it is easy to overlook the continuing Christian presence in the East. We have tended to think of Christianity as a success story; a triumph over waves of persecution in the early centuries, stagnation and decadence perhaps in medieval times, but then a bursting into life again even if the materialism of our own times makes us feel uneasy. Looked at by a Christian in Syria, Lebanon or Egypt today the picture appears to be very different.

If I were a Middle Eastern Christian, and I looked back on the history of Christianity in my homeland, it would make me feel both very proud and very sad. Proud, because I come of martyr stock: I would be proud, not with some idle boastful worldly pride, but with the pride which is rooted in the sacrifice of Christian heroes who have gone before, who have lived out there lives in faith in times and places where a change of religion would have brought security and recognition.

But I would also feel almost desperately sad, sad that my Christian community has lost its ancient strength, that its numbers have been swamped by the dominance of Islam in the Middle East. Now I feel myself unhappy and insecure; a member of a minority community in a world where power lies in the hands of the majority.

If I am not already something of a second class citizen in my own country, then I am gripped by the fear of becoming one. I know that the history of my community, is glorious, but sometimes it seems small compensation for a present of mounting uncertainty.

Such feelings are common among Christians in the Middle East today, and help to account for the mixture of fear and aggression which is often reported of Christians in Lebanon, particularly those of the Maronite faith.

Churches in the Middle East

The Maronites, like other historic Christian communities in the Middle East, trace the beginnings of their church back to the days of the Eastern Roman Empire. The Emperor Constantine converted around the year 312, established his capital at the Greek City of Byzantium, which was renamed after him "Constantinople".

Constantinople became "the new Rome" and the headquarters of the Greek church in the East, just as Rome was for the Latin church in the West. With their succession of Christian emperors well established, one might have thought that the stage was set for a prosperous and triumphant era of Christianity. But in the East this was not to be so, at least not long-term. There were two main reasons for the check which came upon the progress of Christianity in the East: resentment against Greek domination on the part of the inhabitants of Egypt and Syria, and disastrous quarrels over Christian doctrine.

These quarrels reached a climax with the decision of the Council of Chalcedon (451) to proclaim the doctrine of two natures in the Person of Christ: the human nature and the divine nature. Such a "division of Christ" — as it seemed to many Eastern Christians — and the complicated theology on which it rested, proved a cause of continuing disunity in the Church which has lasted to this day.

The opposition to the teaching of Chalcedon eventually expressed itself in the establishment of a number of national churches teaching the doctrine of the one nature of Christ: the Coptic Church in Egypt, the Ethiopian Church, the Armenian Church, and the Syrian (Jacobite) Church. These churches claimed the title "Orthodox" like the Greek Church of the Empire, from which they had sprung. (All these churches have been called "Monophysite" for teaching "one nature" of Christ. They say Christ is from two natures, that of God and of man, but that after the birth of Jesus it is wrong to try to distinguish them. The word "Monophysite" should be used with caution, as in the past it has sometimes been a term of abuse.)

To complete this picture of division, we should also have mentioned the Persian Christians who followed the teachings of Nestorius, a Patriarch of Constantinople. He emphasised the distinction between the human and divine natures in Christ. His followers had already begun to separate themselves from Christians owing allegiance to Rome and Constantinople before the Council of Chalcedon. Living in the Persian empire, they needed an excuse to distance themselves from Roman authority, for the two empires were at enmity with each other. And so a difference in doctrine was reinforced by political expediency.

All this seems very complicated, but there are no short cuts to understanding how the Eastern church fell into division and became too weak to resist the seventh century invasions of the Muslim forces.

The Maronites

Where in all this, then, can we find the origins of the Maronites of Lebanon? We find their beginnings with a monastery named after a Saint Maron, which was situated in north Syria and flourished from the fifth century. The monks carried their missionary work into Mount Lebanon, and took refuge there in the ninth century during a period of insecurity. So they were but one movement in the Eastern church of their day. They probably became a separate denomination because they adopted a particular compromise doctrine about the Person of Christ, supported by one of the emperors, Heraclius. A compromise designed to re-unite the church resulted in the formation of yet another Christian denomination!

The Maronites, became virtually the national church of Lebanon; they aided the Crusaders in their campaigns against Muslim control of the holy land and have been in communion with the Roman Church since the 12th century. They are united to Rome but keep many of their own traditions. The Maronites have their own Patriarch, and are allowed to have married parish priests (although many are celibate). Their liturgy is in the Syriac language, though today Arabic is widely used so that people may understand.

The Maronites are the largest Christian body in Lebanon, and may constitute as much as twenty per cent of the total population of the country. In theory, a number of smaller Christian bodies brings the Christian population of Lebanon up to fifty per cent of the total population (of about two and a half million). In reality, Christians are now outnumbered by Muslims. But this is not expressed in terms of political power. The Maronites have remained the most powerful community in Lebanon since the country achieved independence in 1943. But the imbalance between the distribution of political power and the population strengths of the Christian and Muslim communities has been a major cause of factional fighting and instability. Can the Maronites let go of some of their power? Not surprisingly, they fear the consequences of doing so.

Insecurity and Division

Many of the reports of Lebanon's troubles in the Western press have been unfavourable to the Maronites, and particularly to the Phalangist forces which are largely drawn from their community. Attention has been given to acts of savagery and violence, and it would be quite wrong to try to excuse or minimise these. It does not really help to say that all

Lebanon's communities have some of these deeds on their hands. However we are certainly not in a position in the West to judge the Maronite Christians for their excesses: we in this country can never understand the sense of extreme insecurity which feeds their defensive aggression. (various parallels might be drawn into Northern Ireland, but my Irish friends are quick to point out that the English fail to understand that situation!)

The insecurity of the Maronites stems from the fact that they see themselves as defending a Christian fortress, Lebanon, in the Muslim Middle East. They see themselves as a Christian fragment in a great sea of Islam, and as the only Christian people in the Arab world still to feel free and independent. Now they are very much afraid that they may lose this independence. They are prepared to fight to salvage some rights as Christians from their long history of rugged resistance to the inroads of Islam. But it is all too easy to portray the Maronites of Lebanon as united behind one particular strategy; at this time, following this September's military set-back, they are probably more disunited than they have ever been. The President, Amin Gemayel, and the Maronite Patriarch are noted moderates. But some of the Maronite monks and militiamen are extremists of a fanatical kind, and would not mind pulling down the Middle East around their ears if it served their obsessive purpose of gaining an exclusive use of power over even a part of Lebanon.

While the Maronites have been much

by The Reverend Alan Amos

in the centre of the news, there are also other significant Christian communities in Lebanon: Greek Orthodox (worshipping in Arabic), Greek Catholic (united to Rome), Armenian Orthodox and Syrian Orthodox. These Christian communities are identified with conflicting political stances. The Greek Orthodox have traditionally supported "the left" in Lebanese politics: the Greek Catholics are largely "rightist" and stand with the Maronites; the Armenian Orthodox believe in "positive neutrality", that is trying to preserve the peace and encourage a negotiated settlement, the Syrian Orthodox stand with the Maronites, and are anxious that Lebanon should remain a haven in the Middle East for Christian minorities. There are also several quite small Protestant denominations whose members have been largely drawn from the much more numerous Orthodox and Catholic Churches during the period of the western missionary movement. They have constituted part of a prosperous middle class, and have worked for political and social stability. The Anglican church in Beirut is represented by two congregations, one worshipping in Arabic and consisting largely of families who trace their origins to Palestine, one worshipping in English and drawn from a number of nationalities, including British, American and Commonwealth citizens.

Continued back page

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Lesley Hicks

In conversations with people ten or so years older than myself I find a constantly recurring sadness, even amongst Christians. It is the sadness of their children's failed marriages. The burdens often fall heavily on the older generation, particularly women.

If there are children in the marriage and the grandmother lives close enough, and is a housewife at home, she may well find herself raising a family all over again. Willingly or grudgingly, she may become the secure anchor of dependability and affection the children so much need, when the custodial parent is too harassed and unhappy to provide it. Grandmothers who resent these demands and the curtailment of their freedom have been known to go out and get a job just so they are no longer available to be imposed upon.

Quite apart from the service they might have to render, older parents can be dogged almost as much by a sense of failure as those in the broken marriages. Guilt is probably unjustified but can be there just the same. I recall one woman (not a Christian) steeped in depression because all three of her children's marriages had ended in divorce.

Why so many?

Why so many divorces? One can't simply blame the Family Law Act, though it has enabled more couples to give up more readily, and in too many cases allows UDI — a unilateral declaration of independence — against the will of one of the partners, after an all-too-short twelve months' separation. Obvious factors are the greater demands couples put on the relationship, opting out sooner and after less provocation than in previous generations; the greater disregard for sexual taboos; the snowballing effect of increasing breakdown in relationships and

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Divorce and Counter-Divorce

personality stability from generation to generation; and the growing rejection by women of a dependent role.

Family Court attacks

Here in Sydney, it is thought that the violent attacks on Family Court judges and premises — the murder of Justice Opas, the bombing of Justice Gee's home with equally murderous intent, and the bombing of the Parramatta court building — are the results of the savage bitterness of men deprived of the custody of their children. The fact that the person or persons responsible for these atrocities remains at large is frightening for all who are associated with that court. We could especially remember in prayer, with thankfulness that their lives were so remarkably spared, Judge Richard Gee and his family, who are keen members of a northside Anglican parish.

The spreading tragedy of marriage breakdown, with its devastating impact on all involved — children most of all — hits every group in society. Christian couples are by no means immune, as every clergyman knows. Clergy themselves are not immune. In this climate, Christian congregations and their pastors have a high responsibility, not only to steady and comfort the casualties of divorce, but ideally to strengthen marriages so they do not fail.

For what they are worth, here are some ideas as to how we could do this.

At the outset

A request for a church wedding gives a minister an important opportunity for far more than token counselling. I get the impression that many Roman Catholic couples receive a more thorough marriage preparation than Anglicans. I know courses are available and are recommended, but I am thinking more of individual or couple to couple counselling — if not by the clergyman and his wife, perhaps by another couple in the parish. Ideally an ongoing relationship could be built up between the established couple and the newlyweds, with real evangelistic and pastoral possibilities. There would need to be a pool of suitable couples.

Couples at Risk

Where a clergyman becomes aware of a couple at risk, often only one is attending church, or neither. Even so, someone may need to risk rebuff by suggesting rescue measures before it's too late, challenging them both to work at strengthening their relationship by biblically-based counselling. The thought of an impending marriage breakdown is so frightening that at some point motivation may be high for anything — even God! — that gives hope.

Preaching for Change

A third major thrust must be through preaching — preaching for conversion and for obedient Christian living, with strong appeal to the conscience for repentance. Then it has to be confidently asserted that in the Holy Spirit's power, change is possible. And when all around in the community of that church, the couple whose marriage is threatened sees others who, despite the same sorts of pressures, are making it in the power of Christ, they realise there is hope for them too.

Maybe there are marriage-strengthening ideas which are working in your parish and could be shared with others via the Record. Write to me C/- the paper.

Zadok focus on Bioethics

Advances in medical technology are now making headlines almost weekly. In *Bioethical Issues at the Beginning of Human Life*, published as a Zadok paper (523), Professor D. Gareth Jones focuses on the general ethical principles that bear on two particular groups of problems:

(1) The status of the embryo and the guidelines for research relating to in-vitro fertilization and embryo transfer, (2) The ethical issues involved from a Christian perspective in therapeutic abortions.

The discussion is brief and accessible to the lay person. The author makes very clear the complexity of the issues that are raised by recent developments in medical technology.

The author D. Gareth Jones is currently Professor of Anatomy at the University of

Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand. He was formerly associate professor of anatomy and human biology at the University of Western Australia. He has previously taught at the University College of the University of London and has published numerous books and articles in his field of specialization. He has also written extensively on ethical issues in biological research and on the issues in the relationship between Christian belief and the scientific enterprise, most recently *Our Fragile Brain: A Christian Perspective on Brain Research* (IVP, 1981).

A fuller discussion of the issues raised in this paper will be found in Professor Jones' forthcoming book: *Brave New People: Ethical Issues at the Commencement of Life* (IVP, 1984).

How Opposition in NSW grew, Cont.

8 Finally, God the creator in the Bible, has clearly condemned sodomy (buggery) as an abomination — 'something God hates' and so should be rejected by our NSW Parliament which seeks to advance the glory of God through the legislation that it passes. Parliament must not legislate for immorality."

"The citizens of NSW are urged", said Mr Nile, "to strongly express their total opposition to the legalisation of sodomy by writing to Mr Wran, Mr Greiner and their State MP."

Sunday Distribution

To warn Christians of the dangers inherent in the decriminalisation proposal and to show how people could best register a protest, the FOL and its political arm, the "Call to Australia" on Sunday 6th May distributed some 25,000 leaflets to a very large number of protestant and catholic churches in NSW. The demand exceeded supply. The leaflet called upon Christians to send urgent letters, telegrams, or petitions to their local members, the Premier and the leader of the Opposition, Mr. Nick Greiner. Further, church members were urged to attend the demonstration organised by FOL and CIA for Tuesday, 8th May, outside Parliament House.

Homosexual Lobby

The various gay rights groups in Sydney had also been quick to respond, seeing the proposal as the most significant move forward in NSW towards their long term objectives of complete decriminalisation, outlawing of all discriminatory practices against them (including in the Armed Forces and Church Schools) and mandatory education of the young as to the normalcy and desirability of their sexual practices.

The major public difficulty they had with the Premier's proposal was that it may well have fixed the age of consent at 18 years instead of 16 years in line with other bills on sexuality. A big demonstration was planned outside Parliament House to counter the FOL organised Christian Witness and support the Premier.

Baptist Response

Statements broadly similar to the Anglican response were issued by the NSW Council of Churches and the NSW Baptist Union. The statement by the Council of Churches says: "This council deplores the way the Premier has initiated the latest attempt to change the law so soon after the elections, when he didn't mention it then."

The council's president, the Rev. Bruce Ballantyne-Jones, said Mr. Wran's precipitate action was in reaction to "loss of face" following his "embarrassing encounter" at the NSW Civil Liberties Council's dinner a few weeks ago.

Such was the concern of the Baptist Union that they took a quarter page advertisement in the Daily Telegraph of Monday, May 7. Having drawn the reader's attention to the fact that the proposed bill was scheduled to be introduced to Parliament on the following day the Baptist Union asked for less haste and more time for community discussion.

"Why is this legislation so urgent? Should there not be more time for community discussion? Will this legislation permit homosexuality to be promoted as a valid lifestyle in our

community, for example, in our educational institutions? Have we been convinced that the normalisation of homosexual activities will not affect society in the social, psychological and medical structures of the family? Is not the conscience vote the best way for Parliament to decide this issue? This legislation has come before Parliament and has been soundly defeated on previous occasions."

ACR Comments

That homosexual acts are entirely contrary to the mind of God and are socially mischievous is plain from both Scripture and experience. Further, that governments have a duty to suppress immorality and promote right relationships is also clear from the Bible. But no-one, including governments, are called on by God to be omniscient in ordering the relationships of their neighbours. The discharge of that duty depends on ability. In short, government is the art of the possible. Although no government should ever promote immorality it does not in the end have to suppress all wrong-doing.

Within that context the ACR would question the claims and goals of some Christian groups involved in the Churches opposition to Mr Wran's decriminalisation proposal. Such rhetoric as "complete foil" have had to fall to our editorial scissors.

Let us get a number of things straight. The way Mr. Wran has proceeded and the political goals of some supporters of the legislation are inimical. Further, that the present legislation is unenforceable and unenforced, and covertly homosexuality is already promoted in our schools, and at least part of the old legislation is unethical is also true. Again, what has united a somewhat diverse Christian response to the bill has been the fear of the consequences which could follow from decriminalisation.

The Baptist Union has perhaps best expressed it: "Will this legislation permit homosexuality to be promoted as a valid life-style in our community, for example, in our educational institutions?" "Have we been convinced that the normalisation of homosexual activities will not affect society in the social, psychological and medical structures of the family?"

Those sort of questions remain unanswered, but not only by the Government, but also by the Christians who have grouped to oppose the decriminalisation process.

Decriminalisation has already occurred in Victoria and South Australia. England has had decriminalisation since 1961, and California over a decade ago. Is homosexuality being promoted and accepted as a valid life-style in the public schools of South Australia, Victoria, England and California at any greater rate than in states and countries which have anti-homosexual laws on their statute books? We Christians need to give valid answers to hard questions, and the Government needs to ensure "more time for community discussion".

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World Vision to Australian poor

Bakke to visit Sydney again

American Urban ministry expert, Dr. Ray Bakke, will visit Sydney in 1985. Dr. Bakke visited Sydney two years ago — a brief visit because most of his programme was centred on Melbourne. He left such an impression on those clergy who heard him speak that it was decided that he should be invited back for a longer period of time.

A planning committee for Dr. Bakke's visit was formed after a preliminary meeting between those involved in both inner city and new areas ministry in Sydney. The committee has given suggestions to a representative of World Vision, Dr. Donald Douglas. He will liaise with Bakke about details of the visit. Bakke's visit will be under the auspices of World Vision.

World Vision and Evangelism

The A.C.R. spoke with Dr. Douglas after he had met with the Sydney committee. He said that he was excited with the prospects for Bakke's visit and was looking forward to working in liaison between Bakke and the Sydney Committee.



Dr. Ray Bakke

We raised with him the seemingly strange relationship between World Vision and such a visit, since in the eyes of most people World Vision is an organisation primarily concerned with child sponsorship.

Dr. Douglas told us that the view most people have of World Vision is incomplete. A major part of the World Vision organisation is the Mission and Evangelism division. Dr. Douglas is the Asian representative of this division. His responsibilities are:

(1) research projects on the status and need for evangelism in the world especially in S.E. Asia. (2) widespread travelling to meet with and consult with organisations and denominations in the

field in terms of the application of strategy to unreached people and (3) to work with World Vision field staffs in ministries of evangelism and outreach.

Dr. Douglas was involved in mission in the Philippines for 10 years. He was on the pastoral staff of two U.S. churches and he did his Ph.D. on international relations in S.E. Asia. Much of his work in conjunction with the continuing work of Lausanne. One of the chief areas of this is urban ministry seminars which occur under the leadership of Dr. Raymond Bakke.

We asked Dr. Douglas about the relationship between this work and child sponsorship which is the more visible part of the World Vision's activities. He told us that World Vision's main thrust was to contribute to world evangelisation. This was seen as a responsibility to engage in a holistic ministry to body, soul and spirit. The work is financed from the World Vision general budget and no money from sponsorship programmes is used in this area.

World Vision is financed or under-written by the gifts and offerings largely from individual Christians in a variety of nations around the world" he said. We have a sponsorship programme in which individual Christians say sponsor a specific child on a monthly basis and we also have non-sponsorship funds which are used for development of programmes in various nations."

Dr. Douglas told us:

"My visit to Australia on this occasion was a direct result of a request by Bishop Reid that I come to work with a preliminary committee on arrangements for an urban ministry seminar with Dr. Ray Bakke in 1985.

"It will engage Christian leaders of clergy and laity in a three-day conference designed to explore ministry options in urban context and to consider strategies for extending the work of Christ in the city.

"The purpose of these seminars is not to impose a formula on a particular city but to draw upon the willingness of the urban population and to design specific ministries that will meet urban dwellers where they are so it is not unusual that we would consider the kinds of differences that exist in a city like Sydney.

"As a result of the meeting a commitment arose to definitely plan a seminar. There was a great deal of interest and enthusiasm for studying and developing effective urban ministry patterns for Sydney."

Newcastle Church receives letter from Lech Walesa

A letter has been received from Lech Walesa, leader of Poland's Solidarity movement saying how he appreciates the support shown to him by the Anglican Diocese of Newcastle. "I consider it to be a special kind of congratulations, on account of my receiving the Nobel Peace Prize", Mr Walesa said.

At the Synod of the Diocese in October last year in discussing the 'Church in the Quest for Peace' a resolution was passed recognizing "That peace comes from the acceptance and sharing of God's love" and "congratulating Lech Walesa for the award of the Nobel Peace Prize."

Commenting on the receipt of the letter from Lech Walesa the Bishop of Newcastle, the Right Reverend Alfred

Holland said: "The quest for peace and freedom must continue in all areas of life, and I am glad that the Anglican Diocese of Newcastle can encourage the Polish people in their struggle for rights that we in Australia enjoy each day. I was encouraged to read in the April edition of 'Reader's Digest' an interview with Mr Walesa in which he testifies to the strength and encouragement he has drawn from his faith in God during the Solidarity struggle."

Concluding his letter to the Anglican Diocese Lech Walesa said: "I consider my Nobel Prize as an obligation for me to continue my work, and to be faithful to the causes of Solidarity."

Winter Appeal launched

Sydney's poor will continue to be clothed and fed despite recent State Government Social Service cutbacks. Various church relief agencies will be forced to take up the extra burden, but this is neither a new nor an unusual position.

The Archbishop of Sydney's Winter Appeal, which is to be launched on Sunday, May 6, will again be channelling funds to those in desperate need. Through 1983's Appeal more than

\$260,000 was raised and redistributed to those in need.

This year's theme is "Give hope" and is aimed at meeting people at their point of need, not just in material goods, but through friendship and understanding as well. Funds support a variety of schemes, including emergency accommodation, soup kitchens, job training programmes, financial assistance and counselling services.

Are we afraid to love?



Alan Craddock

Loving someone can be costly. This applies not only to romantic love, but to any kind of love. Love involves putting the needs of another person before one's own. It requires a level of commitment which takes responsibilities seriously and therefore goes beyond words into actions. In the face of these claims many people back away from love. They appear to be afraid of love and respond to the risk and cost they perceive in loving by isolating themselves from other persons. They prefer to be self-sufficient and solitary persons. This avoidance of "burdens" associated with love may only succeed in establishing a different burden — one of loneliness and frustration.

Furthermore, this strategy operates at a significant cost to those who need such a person's love. The person who is afraid to love is a person who ultimately fails to see or to meet the needs of others. Relationships between Christians will be severely disrupted by such fears and withdrawal. Mutual service and ministry will at worst be rendered impossible, or at least seriously hindered.

Two common fears which seem to affect this process are fear of being consumed and fear of failure. In the first, the burden perceived concerns the nature of the demands likely to be imposed. I recently read of a marriage counselling case which involved exactly this fear. Bob had been married to Karen for five years. His love for Karen was at first based largely upon physical attraction and the joy of her companionship. After about three years of marriage Karen suffered some serious illnesses which left her fearful and insecure.

Bob was daunted by the change in Karen. He began to fear the nature of the demands he believed she was now going to make upon him. He saw her becoming more and more dependent upon him and that this would become an ever-increasing set of demands which would turn their relationship from husband and wife to caretaker and patient. He reacted by withdrawing. Bob spent less time at home, communicated little when he was home and reacted very angrily when Karen tried to draw them close together once again.

The result of this process was an increase in the level of Karen's insecurity. Bob's withdrawal had worsened the situation and his emotional burden actually increased. The very thing he had tried to avoid was influencing him nonetheless. Had Bob taken the "risk" and ministered to Karen appropriately in the early stages of her crisis it is likely that his perceptions of her would have been more realistic, and that he would have identified and met her needs to their mutual benefit.

The second fear is fear of failure. It is a simple truism that many people don't try to do something because they fear that they'll fail. Failure is seen to be extremely costly. One can look foolish and incompetent, or one can get hurt. In some cases it is possible that others will be disadvantaged, let down or hurt. To avoid such costs it is better not to try, so the logic flows.

Fear of love involves these same dynamics. Loving someone and serving someone involves risk. There is a chance that failure will occur. It is possible to misperceive a person's needs and therefore receive an angry rejection which is humiliating and confidence-shattering. It is possible that one's help is simply not good enough and all one's best efforts serve only to make things worse. These kinds of thought processes and emotions hinder relationships

between Christians in their churches. We fear failure so we don't serve and love one another at all! Or, if we do, it is in very formalized, controlled and limited forms.

It is a curious paradox that love and fear are so closely linked together. Love can lift burdens or become a burden. Love can banish fear or die because of fear. There are some important Biblical perspectives on this dilemma in the first Epistle of John. The theme developed asserts that the process of loving can be faced with strength and optimism when we see the capacity to love as coming from our relationship with God through Christ, and not merely as originating solely in our own resources and efforts.

Four points emerge clearly:

(1) **Love comes from God:** "Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God... if we love each other, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us". (1 John 4:7-12)

(2) **Love involves action:** "This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands. This is love for God: to obey his commands." (1 John 5:2-3) The point here is that we express our love in obedient action. We live in ways that honour God and we therefore love.

(3) **Love is not burdensome:** "His commands are not burdensome, for everyone born of God has overcome the world." (1 John 5:4) How can God's desires for us be burdens with which we cannot cope? He has promised his help, strength and guidance in these matters and why would love in action be any different? We are commanded to love and enabled to love. This is not burdensome when our victory over such things has been ensured through Christ.

(4) **Love drives out fear:** "Love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment, because in this world we are like him. There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment." (1 John 4:17-18) The allusion here is to God's love expressed through Christ. This expression of love defeats sin and its consequences. God's love liberates and hence drives out fear of sin and its consequences.

Here is our model for loving and our source of optimism. "This is how we know what love is. Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. If anyone... sees his brother in need, but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and truth." (1 John 3:16-18).

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Editorial

Oh no; Not Another Editorial on the Permissive Society

Some years ago, when people started talking about the "permissive society", they could not have conceived how much further the permissiveness would go. There are things which are acceptable now that we would not have believed possible ten years ago.

This issue contains two stories which give cause for alarm. The first concerns the promise of the N.S.W. Premier, Mr. Wran, to legalise homosexuality. Claiming that N.S.W. needs to come into line with other States, he announced that he would get the legislation passed — even if he has to change his party's rules and force members to vote for the change rather than allow them a conscience vote. Reading news reports on the matter, it seems that there is no doubt that the legislation will pass through Parliament (the Liberals will support it) and that the only issue is whether the age of consent will be 16 or 18.

There are anomalies in the present laws which need to be dealt with. No one will argue with that. But what is happening is that something which is contrary to God's law has become so acceptable that most people in society no longer see it as "queer" or unusual. Legalising homosexuality will simply strengthen the effect of the propaganda that homosexual activists have been feeding us for so long.

The other story concerns pornographic video tapes. The "video boom" is a fact. Video recorders have revolutionised the entertainment industry. People are not only able to use them for time switching (recording television shows which are on at an inconvenient time to be watched at a more suitable time) but they are able to hire movies from the huge number of libraries that have sprung up. The latter has caught our law by surprise. For a long time we have been assailed with the view that people should be able to see, read and hear whatever they like in the privacy of their own home. It sounds advanced, sophisticated and acceptable but of course it has major difficulties. How do you keep it out of the hands of children?

Researchers tell us that pornography does have an effect on those who view it. This is true for adults as well as children. It is especially true of children. And here is the major problem. To make X rated videos legally available is to open up the opportunity for children and unstable adults to view them. Rather than legalising them we would do better to properly police the present law.

Further, the subject matter of these X rated videos is of real concern. We are told that a lot of X rated movies are nothing more than a series of couples having intercourse — often without any story line at all. As a result they quickly become "boring". Therefore, it becomes necessary to move into perversion to keep sales going. Some of the perversions are simply beyond our imagination.

What can we do about all of this? There is no doubt that something needs to be done. The Festival of Light is carrying out a campaign against both these matters. But in the end its effectiveness will be limited. The Festival of Light has had some notable successes over the years but they have failed to stem the permissive tide. And that should not surprise us because the Festival of Light is made up of a small number of Christians who are concerned enough to get active. A majority of Christians do nothing to support them.

Sometimes this is deliberate. There is a questioning of whether there is any chance of changing things by demonstrating and by legislation. The Bible makes it clear that, while God's standards are the best ones for all society, living by them is really for those who are in a proper relationship with God. So, for example, the Ten Commandments are given to a special people whose relationship with God is evidenced by the introduction. The Sermon on the Mount is given to the disciples. If we are to stem the wave of permissiveness effectively we really need a revival; only then will it be possible.

But that is not to say that we should not get actively involved in the way in which the F.O.L. does. Obviously there needs to be such an organisation to keep a watching brief, inform us of what is happening and organise public activities. However, the real responsibility lies with individual Christians in their daily lives. We only need the Festival of Light because the Church has failed; and the Church has failed because individual Christians do not live consistent lives.

When you analyse it, Christians are one of the largest groups in our society. More people attend Church every Sunday than attend all the sporting and entertainment events. Our membership is greater than any of the registered clubs. We ought to be able to transform our society. But we don't. And the reason is simple. Christians have, for too long, been hesitant to talk about their faith and how it affects their lifestyle. They have not taken opportunities presented in natural conversation to share their faith and the reasons for their standards. Worse still they have not lived consistent with that faith and those standards. This has robbed them of many opportunities to say anything. In the end the most effective way to deal with the permissive society is by each Christian living the Christian life properly.

We fear for the future. We expect our society to become even more permissive and that will give rise to even greater problems of violence and sexual abuse. The only way to change this trend is in the hands of all Christians. We cannot leave it to the few activists in the F.O.L. We need to support them in our ordinary living day by day.

Video classification—What's it all about?

Our lead article is about the classification of videos. It is almost certain that most of our readers will be unfamiliar with the background to the problem. For that reason we have put together the following article.

For a long time we have had a censorship system applied to the films that could be shown in cinemas. The details of that system have changed from time to time. In recent years there have been movies which have been given a R rating. For these there have been restrictions on who could attend and these have been enforceable at law. Television has had a different system. Based on the view that the TV is available to all age groups there have been extra restrictions included. Some programmes can only be shown at hours when it is assumed that children will not be viewing while others are shown in a modified form. Channel 0/28 has not been subjected to these restrictions.

The video revolution has added a new dimension to the problem. Because they are only for private viewing they have not really fitted the previous laws. As a result there has been confusion as to what is and is not legally available. The major distributors have often put the cinema classification on their releases. At the same time, not only have R rated cassettes been available but also what have been called X rated. There has been confusion as to what the position is regarding the legality of such tapes. Distributors have increased in large numbers. Often they import one copy of such a tape, available legally overseas, and then run off copies. Consequently many X rated videos have been of poor quality. Despite this it is a multi-million dollar industry.

NEW LAWS

On February 1 this year the Federal Government moved to alter this situation. They amended three Acts.

They were the Customs (Prohibited Imports) Regulations, the Customs (Cinematograph Films) Regulations and the Australian Capital Territory Classification of Publications Ordinance.

The two Customs Amendments allow for the importation and classification of a new class of films: films that are not permitted to be publicly exhibited but would be permitted for private video viewing. These films are known as X-rated movies.

The ACT Ordinance controls the screening, sale, hire, display, labelling, advertising and penalties applicable for breaches of the regulations with regard to films in the Australian Capital Territory. It is meant to be a model for other States and Territories.

The ACT Ordinance accepts film classifications approved by the Federal Censorship Board including the new X classification. X-rated movies are not to be screened publicly, are not to be made available to persons under the age of 18 and can only be sold, rented or displayed in a Restricted Area. Advertising material must be submitted to the Censorship Board for approval but otherwise is permitted. Classification is non-compulsory. Once classified a film must carry the Censor's prescribed markings.

SENATOR HARRADINE

Before this matter came before the Senate, Senator Brian Harradine released an article which summed up much of the background to this move. He wrote:

"In 1973 the then Attorney-General and Minister for Customs, Senator Lionel Murphy issued a Ministerial direction tantamount to asking Customs Officers to turn a blind eye to blatant breaches of relevant Customs regulations concerning films and prohibited imports.

The Murphy view was that "adults shall be entitled to read, hear and view what they wish in private or in public, and persons and those in their care shall not be exposed to unsolicited material which is offensive to them." (Senate Hansard, 8/3/73, P266)

At best this view can only be described as naive. At worst it formed the basis for a calculated secretive but successful attempt to undermine Commonwealth censorship laws.

The trickle of obscenity has now become a flood aided by advances in technology and copying techniques.

Successive Federal Attorney-General and some State Ministers responsible for controls over the exhibition of films and the advertising, display and sale of all publications and video tapes/discs are also to blame for the mess we are in.

Warnings from many informed citizens, including Chief Censor, Mrs Janet Strickland were ignored.

On 13 July 1983 last year the Federal and State Attorneys-General met in Brisbane and decided on a package proposal for new controls. Tasmania and Queensland reserved their positions.

The proposed controls reflect the naive Murphy view repeated by Senator Evans

G. General (suitable for all ages)

(NB we are unable to reprint details of the language criteria in all but the G category because it is illegal for a newspaper to print many of the words mentioned. Readers may decide for themselves by comparing it with what is allowed in G.)

Parents should feel confident that all children may view material in this classification without supervision, knowing that no distress or harm is likely to be caused

Language: Some infrequent coarse language (e.g. "bloody", "bastard", "arse", "piss") may be found, if non-



who claimed that the Labor Party was elected to government with a commitment to the policy (Note: This was not contained in Mr. Hawke's Policy Speech)

To provide a model for the States to follow Senator Evans has tabled in Federal Parliament the Classification of Publications Ordinance for the A.C.T. and amendments to Customs regulation concerning films and prohibited imports, i.e. the Customs (Prohibited Imports) Regulations and the Customs (Cinematograph Films) Regulations.

Amongst other things the package

- institutionalizes the importation, production and traffic in hard core pornography
- makes the Attorney-General, through his appointees, the arbiter of public morals in the A.C.T.
- relies on the voluntary co-operation of merchants in the business and does not insist on compulsory classifications.
- imported video tapes/discs for home use no longer subject to compulsory registration by the Film Censorship Board.

Note: Chief Censor, Mrs. Janet Strickland, in a letter to the Mahony Inquiry pointed out that this law is now being breached. She said "Unfortunately, customs officers often clear films and video tapes which have not been registered, irrespective of the legal requirement for registration . . .".

STATES

Initially it was assumed that all States would fall into line with this legislation — they would simply pass their own legislation consistent with that of the A.C.T. However, that has not proved to be the case.

At this time Tasmania and Queensland have both stated that they will not recognise the Commonwealth X classification. That means that in those States such tapes will remain illegal. N.S.W. has not yet acted on the matter. It is likely that, as the government settles in after the recent election, there will be a move to fall into line with the Federal classification. Other States already allow the sale of X rated material or plan to do so soon.

GUIDELINES

The Film Censorship Board has released the guidelines for the classification of videotapes. Each classification is discussed in terms of language, sex, violence and other. The details of the classification are set out below.

Language: Some infrequent crude language and mild sex-oriented dialogue and jokes.

Sex: Discreet verbal and/or visual suggestions of, and references to, intercourse and discussions about, for example, menstruation, masturbation, labour and childbirth; visuals of occasional full frontal nudity and head-and-shoulders shots of implied intercourse. (No implications of, for example, oral-genital sex or homosexual sex activity).

Violence: Discreet and sporadic depictions, but if continuous (e.g. kung-fu films) should be inexplicit and/or stylized.

Other: (i) mild supernatural and/or "horror" themes. (ii) informational drug references

M Mature (suitable for persons 15 years and over)

Material which is considered likely to disturb, harm or offend those under the age of 15 years. While most adult themes may be dealt with, the degree of explicitness and exploitiveness of treatment will determine whether they can be accommodated in this classification.

Language: No word or phrase is proscribed — (A high degree of assaultiveness or of verbal sexual explicitness is not acceptable.)

Sex: Implied sexual activity, but no "full length" depictions of intercourse. Implications of fellatio, cunnilingus, masturbation, etc. may be depicted, if visually discreet.

Violence: May be strong, realistic and sometimes bloody, but not exploitive, relished, very cruel or very explicit, e.g., dismemberment or beheadings, limited to flashes only; sexual violence, e.g., rape, only if very discreet.

Other: Drug abuse depictions, if not advocacy.

R Restricted (18 years and over)

Adult material likely to be harmful to those under 18 years and possibly offensive to some sections of the adult community.

Continued Page 10

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Chronicle

William Wilberforce "The Saint"

151 years ago, William Wilberforce died. In those years, his reputation as champion of the abolition of slavery, evangelical and politician has undergone a series of reassessments.

William Wilberforce has always been known as the man who freed the slaves. But he was also the man who called his countrymen to repentance, the leading lay theologian of the Evangelical Revival and the politician who dedicated himself to reforming the nation's morals.

To many of his contemporaries he was simply regarded as "the Saint" whose life, both public and private, provided one of the most shining and inspiring examples of practical Christianity.

The triumphant culmination of Wilberforce's life work was the abolition of slavery in the British Empire, of which Wilberforce heard the news just three days before he died in 1833. But this prominent part of his work, as well as the remainder, has been under close historical scrutiny for the last sixty years.

In short, since the turn of the century William Wilberforce's reputation has undergone a series of fluctuations.

Wilberforce as Reactionary Racist

The simple heroic view of Wilberforce had first been challenged by Fabian historians writing in the Edwardian period. In their works on British labour and social history, Beatrice and Sydney Webb and J L and Barbara Hammond echoed the criticisms of the Saint which had been made by his radical contemporaries like William Hazlitt and William Cobbett. In their eyes Wilberforce was not the courageous apostle of liberation for the negroes but rather the friend of repression and reaction, ever ready to support the illiberal measures taken by his friend William Pitt in the aftermath of the French Revolution and the notorious Six Acts with which Lord Liverpool gagged the press and prevented free speech and assembly in the years after the Napoleonic Wars.

But it was difficult for these critics to detract from his reputation as the champion of the negro slaves. The charge against Wilberforce was one of inconsistency between his treatment of distant (black) and close (white) neighbours.

It was not to be long, however, before even Wilberforce's reputation as the man who had freed the slaves came to be challenged. In his book "Capitalism and Slavery", published by Andre Deutsch in 1944, Eric Williams, later to be Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, argued that the slave trade had not collapsed because of the pressure of Wilberforce and the abolitionist movement but simply because it was no longer economically profitable or viable. The efforts of the Saints had been, at best, peripheral.

Worse was to follow; two books published in the aggressively secular 1960's and early 1970's labelled the now battered Wilberforce "reactionary racist".

In "The Making of the English Working Class" (Gollancz, 1963) E P Thompson accused Wilberforce and his fellow-Evangelicals of leading the counter-revolution which warped the humanitarian tradition of the eighteenth century "beyond recognition" and laid the foundations of Victorian complacency and repressive morality.

An even more devastating attack on Wilberforce appeared in 1973 in a book by Jack Gratus entitled "The Great White Lie" (Hutchinson). Gratus deliberately set out to remove the halo that had surrounded the leading Saint for so long. "Hero-worship", he wrote, "makes bad history".

Far from being the liberator of the negroes, Gratus argues, Wilberforce actually caused them greater misery in the long run by propagating ideas of racial supremacy which justified colonialism and the permanent suppression of black people. The slave trade was not abolished through the efforts of the Saints but rather through the activities of a largely forgotten group of radicals who used much more direct action.

Wilberforce as Anglo-catholic Opium Addict

Wilberforce has also been examined against the religious and social context in which he worked. In the 1790's and 1800's a remarkable group of Evangelicals, all active in public life, lived around a Common which name they came to bear as "The Clapham Sect". This small group of Evangelical MP's formed themselves into a mini-party under Wilberforce's leadership. Even historians like Ernest Howse ("Saints in Politics", 1953) who accept Wilberforce's conservative views on politics and morality see the Clapham Sect as a force for liberalism and humanity.

In another detailed study of the world of Evangelical pressure groups and societies, "Fathers of the Victorians" (1961) Ford K Brown portrayed Wilberforce as directing a carefully planned and meticulously organised assault on the Church of England, the aristocracy and other commanding heights of the country to secure them for "vital religion". Brown also put forward the novel, if contestable, theory that the leading lay Evangelical of his generation had actually moved to High Churchmanship in the last years of his life.

In 1974, a study by Robin Furneaux, very interested in the complex psychology of Wilberforce as shown in his family papers, produced the revelation that for much of his life the social reformer had been an opium addict.

The Evangelical Liberal Liberator

Several major works in recent times have almost swung the pendulum full circle. In "The Call to Seriousness", 1976, William Bradley showed that in their attitude to key political questions of their time — such as parliamentary reform, the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, Catholic Emancipation, and the controversy over the corn laws — Wilberforce and the Clapham Evangelicals were firmly on the liberal side.

The central question of how far Wilberforce himself was responsible for bringing about the end of the slave trade and later of slavery in the British Empire, is, of course, impossible to answer. It is clear that economic factors played an important part, but so also did the abolition movement and the very least that can be said is that the activities of the Saints and their supporters certainly hastened the day when the slaves were emancipated.

The Mass Agitator

What is much more certain is the long-term influence which the crusade against the slave trade had on British life and politics. It was the first successful campaign of mass agitation in Britain, the prototype of the thousands of pressure groups which have been a dominant feature of western life ever since.

Vindicator of Parliamentary Politics

The presence and the dominance of Wilberforce and his fellow Saints in the House of Commons changed both the public's conception of politicians and their notion of what Parliament should be about. The member for Yorkshire played a crucial role in two of the most significant changes which took place in British politics in the first half of the nineteenth century: the transformation of Parliament from being a gentlemen's club primarily concerned with the private interests of its members to a national assembly seen to be legislating for the public good, and the emergence of political leaders whose support was based on principles and policies rather than on ties of family connection or vested interest.

Opium addict and friend of repression Wilberforce may have been, but a pivotal figure in the transformation of British politics and society, and a Christian family man diligently given to the practice of the other person central precepts of the gospel he most certainly also was.

WORLD

Britain's steeped in booze

British society is 'steeped in booze' and the Christian Church must take the lead in promoting an alcohol-free lifestyle. This was the general view of an ecumenical conference on alcoholism which took place in Westminster last week.

The conference was convened by Mr Joseph Honan of the 'Westminster Conference on Addiction', a Roman Catholic body with a broad ecumenical committee. It was attended by around 100 delegates from 14 Christian bodies. The speakers were mainly from the Protestant denominations, the most notable being the Rt Rev Timothy Dudley-Smith, Bishop of Thetford.

Messages of support were received from the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Robert Runcie and Cardinal Basil Hume, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Westminster.

The main address was given by Dr Stuart Horner, chairman of the BMA committee on community medicine. He produced statistics to show a direct link between the considerable increase in consumption of alcoholic drinks and acute social problems, especially to do with health and family life.

"The only remedy is less availability (through legislation) causing less consumption" he contended. "But the Christian Church must take a lead. An alcohol-free lifestyle needs to be encouraged as part of an effective programme for alcohol related problems." His most striking challenge was, "What level of harm can the nation tolerate before taking effective action?"

Bishop Dudley-Smith, who in 1982 presented a motion before the Norwich diocesan synod on 'Alcohol and the witness of the Church', supported Dr Horner's thesis by saying: "The Church must give a lead in creating a climate of opinion that will force the government to limit alcohol consumption by legislation."

He drew attention to the effects of government policy on smoking, and then made the point that the same could be done with alcohol. "Time was when the non-smoker apologised, but now the smoker apologises, but the non-drinker still has to!"

He deplored the prestige value of drink in society, so much so that non-drinking apparently interferes with social success. Even in the Police Force, he said, it seems that career prospects demand compliance. Yet they know better than any other profession how alcohol is linked with crime and road accidents.

He stressed that it was not alcoholism that created the dangers; social drinking was the main source of these disasters. "The social fabric of life is steeped in booze" he declared.

Dr Stephen Orchard from the British Council of Churches sought to correct mis-interpretations of Scripture by those who fanatically supported teetotalism; but apart from this note, there was general agreement by all that the problem could be largely solved by urging moderating as well as expounding the virtues of total abstinence.

The spiritual peak of the conference was reached by the Rev Paul Arnold, a Baptist, who is secretary of the Band of Hope Union.

He saw as the worst result of the abuse of alcohol, the smothering of spiritual sense — "the suppression of the pain of guilt that could lead a person to the love and forgiveness of God in Christ — that was the greatest peril!"

This brought the conference back to the main mission of the Church — to encourage society to grapple with the problem of alcohol abuse.

C.E.N.

Iran's Anglicans in Good Heart

The tiny Anglican community in Iran is in good health in spite of having many of its properties confiscated and bank accounts frozen, according to Mr Terry Waite, the Archbishop of Canterbury's Assistant for Anglican Communion Affairs who visited there in March.

Mr Waite, whose visit fulfilled a promise made to the Church three years ago when he was instrumental in having church leaders and missionaries released from prison, took with him messages of "concern and support" from the Archbishop of Canterbury and other church leaders.

In what he described as "a very moving experience" he joined other Iranian Church people in a visit to the small burial ground outside Isfahan and took part in a simple service beside the grave of Bahram Deghani Tafti, son of the bishop, who was murdered in 1980.

He says that in spite of the loss of material resources, the past few years have been "a time of growth in faith" for the Church. He reports that lay people now take more services. One of the highlights of the Church's year is the annual summer camp held on the shores of the Caspian Sea.

It is reported that the Church has still not had a reply to its application for registration. Observers say that this could be due to the number of christian groups which have to be processed by the authorities.

English Prayer Book Bill withdrawn

Another attempt to secure the future of the Book of Common Prayer by Parliamentary rather than synodical means came to nothing last week when Lord Sudeley, Vice-President of the Prayer Book Society, withdrew the Bill which he had proposed.

This was the Prayer Book Protection Bill, similar to that which was introduced into Parliament in 1981 and which received its Second Reading in both Houses before fading out.

On Wednesday of last week, however, after a four-hour debate, Lord Sudeley withdrew his Bill without putting it to the vote. But he warned that he would, if necessary, bring the matter back, though he hoped he would not need to.

The debate was notable for the high turn-out of bishops which it attracted; and four of them spoke in the debate, all against implementing the Bill. As in 1981, there were warnings of the constitutional crisis which would be precipitated if Parliament were to legislate in this matter against the will of the Church.

For the supporters of the Bill, the chief concerns seemed to be what they saw as the neglect of the Prayer Book in the theological colleges, coupled with criticism of the synodical system and liturgical reform.

Church Times

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REVIEW

Overseas' Women Priests: English decision reversed.

A decision made last November by the General Synod's "inner Cabinet" which threatened defeat for the Women Ordained Abroad Measure has been overturned by the Synod's Standing Committee.

That decision in November, and the manner in which it was secured by the Catholic Group, led to an angry outburst by one Synod member — who clearly had the support of many others in the chamber who wish to see the Measure passed so that women ordained overseas can officiate on visits to this country.

For some time now reports have been circulating that the November decision might be at least modified; and, indeed, at its meeting on Wednesday of last week, the Standing Committee decided that the Measure would not after all be designated Article 8 business, as ruled by the "inner Cabinet".

Under Article 8 the Measure would have had to be referred to the dioceses, to have won the support of a majority of them, and to have obtained a two-thirds majority in all three houses of the General Synod at final-approval stage. It was this latter provision which most threatened the Measure, for its performance at general-approval stage suggested that it might not have been able to muster the necessary majorities later on.

Now, however, the Measure will have to obtain only simple majorities and should have no difficulty in doing that; but a smooth passage is by no means certain even yet, since members of the Synod's Catholic Group are likely to continue their endeavours to defeat the Measure.

It will be possible, for example, to appeal back to the inner Cabinet if there are at least twenty-five members wishing to do so; there could be a call for separate consideration of the Measure by the Convocations and House of Laity, where it could be defeated; and there could be an independent motion for its referral to the dioceses, though that is more likely to be a delaying rather than a wrecking move.

Last November the Catholic Group in the Synod took advantage of a Synod standing order which allowed them to petition the Presidents (the two Archbishops), the Prolocutors of the Convocations and the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the House of Laity to consider the Women Ordained Abroad Measure for designation under Article 8.

This "inner Cabinet" duly agreed to the request on the grounds that the Measure proposed a permanent change in the service of Holy Communion — thereby provoking a fierce protest from the Rev. B. M. O'Connor of Rochester. To prolonged applause he described the decision as "astounding", and the "inner Cabinet" as "naughty men" who would be seen as having undermined the synodical system with within.

The Standing Committee has felt able to remove the Article 8 requirement, it seems, because the revision committee concerned has accepted a suggestion that the Measure should be a temporary one, effective over a given number of years, rather than a permanent one as previously planned; and, as Article 8 applied only to a permanent Measure, the need for that designation has gone.

Church Times

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CATW

Still no talking (to God) in American schools

The American Senate has rejected a constitutional amendment which would allow children to say prayers aloud in school.

The amendment was brought by President Reagan and was supported by Republicans and right-wing fundamentalist religious groups. But it was equally vigorously opposed by other church leaders.

Prayers were said in American schools from the time the nation was founded, but in 1962 they were declared illegal on the grounds that they violated the constitutional separation of church and state.

President Reagan said that in this move, "God was thrown out of the public schools". In a last minute appeal to the Senate he claimed that 80 per cent of Americans favoured the return of school prayers.

The opposition has been led by the Rev Charles Bergstrom, executive director of the Lutheran Council's office for governmental affairs. He, with 24 other religious leaders, including three Lutheran bishops, wrote to the Senate expressing 'vigorous opposition' to the proposed constitutional amendments which, they claim, "are an unnecessary intrusion into the delicate balance between church and state".

Political

Bergstrom, who sees himself as a spokesman for mainline religions, civil liberties and educational groups, believes that prayer should be seen as a desire to be in communion with God, not something that can be used to instill discipline and create good citizens. "Christians should reject its use as a political ploy or a device to proselytise other people's children."

In the end they fell well short of the required two thirds majority and Bergstrom claimed the result as "a great thing for the main line churches".

C.E.N.

China may raise peasant taxes

Mainland China is considering the first tax increase for peasants in 25 years, as rural households enjoy higher incomes and a better standard of living, the English-language *China Daily* reported recently.

Average annual income for mainland China's 800 million peasants rose from 57 yuan (about US\$28) in 1957 to 270 yuan (about US\$135) in 1982.

But taxes — paid in the form of grain or other farm products — have not increased since they were set in 1958 at 15.5 per cent of grain production for an average year, which works out at just 3.50 yuan (US\$1.70) per capita.

For the past few years, more than 100 million commune members have been exempt from all tax because of poor harvests.

The newspaper quoted Mr Liu Guoqing, head of the department of agricultural tax at the Finance Ministry of mainland China, as saying the traditional low tax rate was aimed at stimulating production and making rural areas self-sufficient, and it worked.

Total grain production has nearly doubled from 195 million tons in 1957 to 353 million in 1982, but total taxation from agriculture has remained at about 2.9 billion yuan (US\$1.45 billion)

MARANATHA

High Tide

Harry Woods lived in Aberavon, Wales, in the 1930's. He would spend time walking along the local beach enjoying the fresh air and scenery.

Near the village harbour was the wreck of a little coaling vessel which long ago had failed to make the docks one stormy night.

The wreck was an ugly blot on the scenery. As he looked at it he no longer saw the wreck, but a reminder of his own sinful heart and life.

However, as he was watching and thinking the high tide came swiftly in and covered the wreck. It was now hidden from sight.

Harry Wood's heart rose up in praise to God. Instead of the ugly wreck was the peace and calm of the sea. Instead of seeing his sin, Harry Wood remembered that his sin was completely covered and removed by the death of Jesus Christ.

Harry had become a Christian some years before by turning back to God and receiving the forgiveness which God

promises to all who receive Jesus Christ as their Saviour.

The high tide was the wonderful reminder that his sins had been dealt with and were covered by the precious blood of Jesus Christ.

That is the joy of every Christian today.

Left to ourselves all of us stand under God's judgment, because of our sinful nature. Yet God provides the way out through the death of Jesus.

Life's problems will not evaporate when a person becomes a Christian, but the one problem none of us can remedy, our sin and its guilt, are forever dealt with when we commit ourselves to Jesus Christ.

Satan will cause the Christian to look at the low tide and remember sin, but God would say 'your sin has been dealt with'. With that assurance and confidence we can live for him no matter what each day will bring.

Peter Brain

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY

Interested person(s) are invited to invest in a non-profit Christian Association with a 15% per annum rate of return.

BACKGROUND Tasmanian Christian Enterprises was incorporated in 1969 as a service organisation to other Christian outreach bodies. Areas of support include the translation, printing and distribution of bibles, the provision of funds to enable under-privileged children to attend Christian Youth Camps, and the training of Asian students for Overseas Missionary service.

SOURCE OF FUNDS These are derived from a trading trust that involved the importing and distribution of musical instruments. Exclusive franchises include the Alex Steinbach range of pianos that now account for 15% of all piano imports into Australia.

SECURITY OF LOANS Loans are guaranteed by Tasmanian Christian Enterprises Inc., and backed by net assets in excess of \$500,000.00. The Management of the Association is with people who are qualified and experienced in Business Management. Independent opinions can be obtained from the Association's bank (Westpac) and Auditors (Atkinson Gibson).

LOAN CONDITIONS Minimum investment would be \$1000 for a minimum term of 1 year at the rate of 15% per annum with interest paid six monthly. Favourable consideration would be given to an unforeseen circumstance on the part of the investor requiring the funds to be paid back inside the minimum 12 month period.

INFORMATION UPDATE As investors will be directly contributing to the ability of the Association to extend its support ministry, information on the Association's activities will be sent on a regular basis.

Enquiries should be directed to

**Tasmanian Christian Enterprises Inc.,
223-225 Charles Street,
Launceston, Tasmania, 7250**

**or by phoning the Accountant, Mr. Michael Overton, or Managing Director,
Mr. Peter Edwards,
TOLL FREE on 008 030 122**

Quick Cuts Promiscuity

The Australian Church Record recently reported an approach made to the Commonwealth Minister of Health by the Christian Medical Fellowship about his decision to give separate Medicare cards to children aged fourteen years. The doctors suggested that the primary purpose of giving them the cards was so that they could have contraceptive advice and prescriptions without parental consent. If this is in fact the case it seems to me to be an unwarrantable intrusion into the rights of families. What particularly interested me in what the doctors have to say, however, concerns the ill effects of adolescent promiscuity.

They point out the notorious unreliability of teenagers in practising contraception, for example. As well, they say that adolescent girls who are involved in sexual intercourse under the age of 18 (and, more particularly, under the age of 16) have been shown to have an increased risk of cancer of the cervix at an earlier age than is usually seen. These dangers to physical health are accompanied, also by threats to psychological development. The doctors quote an eminent psychiatrist as saying, 'mature love is not possible and the

adolescent is diverted from the major tasks of the age period. The over-all effect is self-destructive.' They conclude, 'it is our opinion, on considerable medical evidence, that every effort should be made to persuade adolescents to delay sexual intercourse'.

Pardon me for saying the obvious, but it does appear that God's laws are based on the truth about our creation, and those old standards make sense after all. Is it likely that our society will hear this, though? I doubt it, somehow. Our sexual permissiveness is so firmly based on the selfish and short-term, that even appeals based on medical evidence will not turn the tide. Think of the way smoking has remained a widespread custom. Our libertarians believe firmly in the need for adolescent sexual experience no matter what the dangers. Our only hope is, that our society will experience repentance before God, and a wholesale turning to him. By God's grace this is not impossible. Let us pray that it happens before too many lives are blighted by permissiveness.

Peter Jensen

(We suggest that you might like to use this article in your Parish Paper)

THE GOOD READ

Epilogue to FEAR NO EVIL — A Personal Struggle with Cancer by David Watson January 1984

David Watson died on Saturday 18 February 1984.

It was only after a routine visit to his doctor that he discovered that he had cancer, and it was with this knowledge that David Watson embarked on the second part of his autobiography to follow his previous, widely acclaimed volume 'You are My God'.

'Fear no Evil' was published in Australia in June 1984. The enclosed epilogue from the book stands testimony to the courage and spirit that was David Watson.

Any struggle with cancer and death is likely to have unexpected twists and turns. A sudden burst of joy when dark clouds that threaten a raging storm give way to sunshine and springtime hopefulness. Or just the reverse when our faith and hope are plunged into that ugly pit of depression.

When I sent the manuscript of this book to the publishers I was feeling remarkably fit, apart from the puzzling backache that had bothered me for three or four months. 'How well you look!' everyone said to me. And I felt it. My waist was trim, my appetite good — I felt thoroughly alive!

Abruptly everything changed.

With the enjoyment of being back at work again, especially with my team, I threw my new energies into all that I could. After the Pastors' Conference in Switzerland, we had exciting visits to Manchester, the Isle of Wight, Belfast and Dublin, plenty of preaching engagements in London, as well as some broadcasting and writing. I knew it was too much, but everywhere we went the crowds and enthusiasm exceeded all expectations. At a Diocesan Service of Renewal in Southwark Cathedral (which seats 800) an estimated crowd of 2,000 turned up. Autumn '83 was a time when God seemed to be working with unusual power.

Then my body protested against all this activity by the most severe attack of asthma I have had for many years. In the past, such attacks had been controlled quickly by a certain course of steroids. I took this again, but my asthma continued unchecked, giving me broken nights and much discomfort. One side-effect was a thoroughly unpleasant development of thrush in my mouth during our Irish tour.

Still my asthma got worse. So I was given the highest dose of steroids I have ever had, which again aggravated the thrush. So with the generosity of some

close friends and with the encouragement of many (including Anne) I flew over to California for special prayer at John Wimber's church, since I felt I was losing the battle.

I was there for only eight days, and they were marvellous in their love, concern and prayer support. Each day different teams of Christians, experienced in the healing ministry, prayed for me, for periods ranging from two to five hours a day. Yet, for whatever reason, everything seemed to get worse. The asthma persisted, so that I slept badly each night; my legs, ankles and feet blew up like balloons; my abdomen grew at an astonishing rate until I looked like a pregnant woman in about her seventh month! My arms and shoulders withered into mere skin and bones, and instead of returning from California bursting with new health (as I had expected), I looked more dead than alive.

Drastic changes had to be made. Virtually all speaking engagements for the future were cancelled immediately, including major events in California, Norway, Sweden and Vancouver — which had been carefully planned for anything up to two years previously. My team would have to be disbanded by the end of April at the latest. I was now literally fighting for my life.

'God hasn't done anything for David' people are now beginning to say. 'We've prayed and prayed, and nothing has happened at all'. Medically speaking, that seems to be true. I am a fairly typical cancer patient with secondaries in the liver. Temporary remissions may occur, but then everything may suddenly 'explode'. At the moment there is still some uncertainty as to which symptoms are due to the steroids, having been on these for almost two months (I took my last one, I hope, this morning and the asthma is better). But there is no doubt that my liver has considerably enlarged due to sudden activity of the cancer cells.

However God has been far from inactive in my life. At about 1 am on Advent Sunday morning, I had a bad asthmatic attack. In my helplessness, I cried out to God to speak to me. I'm not very good at listening to God, but between 1-3 am God spoke to me so powerfully and painfully that I have never felt so broken before him (and still do).

He showed me that all my preaching, writing and other ministry was absolutely **nothing** compared to my love-relationship with him. In fact, my sheer busyness had squeezed out the close intimacy I had known with him during the first few months of the year after my operation.

God also showed me that any 'love' for him meant **nothing** unless I was truly able to love from my heart my brother or sister in Christ. As the Lord put various names into my mind I began to write letters to about twelve people asking for forgiveness for hurting them, for still being inwardly angry against them — or whatever. It was the most painful pruning and purging I can remember in my entire Christian life. But fruitful! Already some replies to my letters have reduced me to tears.

Whatever else is happening to me physically, God is working deeply in my life. His challenge to me can be summed

up in 3 words: 'Seek my face'. I am not now clinging to physical life (though I still believe that God can heal and wants to heal); but I am clinging to the Lord. I am ready to go and to be with Christ for ever. That would be literally heaven. But I'm equally ready to stay, if that is what God wants.

'Father, not my will but yours be done.' In that position of security I have experienced once again his perfect love, a love that casts out all fear.

David Watson

Printed with permission from the publishers, Hodder & Stoughton.

The Shape of Belief

Anzea Publishers 293 pp
recommended retail price \$24.95

One of the criticisms of evangelicals often is that we are so concerned with what the Bible says that we lose touch with the world in which we live and so cannot relate what the Bible says to that world. This has given a rise in America to an overused word — contextualisation.

There is no doubt that it is important that Christians learn to relate the message of the Scriptures to the society in which they live. The Shape of Belief is designed to help them do that.

The Shape of Belief attempts to describe Christianity in Australia today. It does so from a variety of angles and from a variety of contributors. Like any such work it has its problems. For example, there is an unevenness in the quality of articles. As well there are times when the same thing is said in two or three different articles.

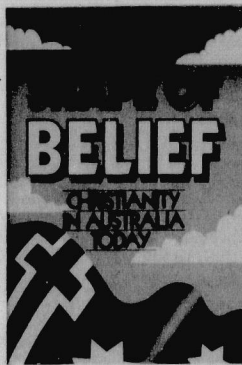
The overall impact of the book is to tell the reader that Christianity in Australia is not in good shape. Various contributors use statistics, sociological insights, historical perspectives, etc., to make this point. Each contributor then gives his or her interpretation of what needs to happen to help Christianity become more relevant to Australian society.

This book is an excellent resource book and is useful if it is used in that way and as a springboard for deeper thinking and discussion. Thus, whilst many of the suggested changes that need to be made are interesting they are also open to very serious questioning. The major difficulty is that the book deals almost entirely with the context of society and there is no attempt to relate what God has revealed in his work to the problems and possible

D. Kirkaldy

solutions that are raised. In other words the book has gone too far the other way.

There are many excellent chapters. Some are written with great insight into the issue being dealt with. Others, however, are reasonably superficial. It would be wrong in a review of this size to go through the chapters making comments on them all. Suffice it to say that their value lies primarily as discussion starters.



In the review copy there was a problem with the printing of the first page of John Waterhouse's article. It seems ironical that the article on Christian publishing in Australia should have such a printing error.

For this reviewer, the two most valuable sections of the book came at the end. The first, Christianity in Australia: A Bibliography, by Douglas Hynd was invaluable. Hynd has put together an impressive list of publications both of book and journal articles which those who want to take issues raised in the book further can use. The final chapter is a chapter of statistics. The danger with statistics is that you can prove anything you want from them. It is therefore helpful to those of us who are not trained in statistics to have the accompanying text written by Dorothy Harris. This seeks to interpret and make sense of the figures. There is no doubt that future writers about Christianity in Australia will make use of this collection of statistical information.

This book then, is recommended as a resource book for those who want to think or discuss further the problems of Christianity in Australia.

D. Kirkaldy

Video classification Cont.

Language: Sexually explicit and/or assaultive dialogue.

Sex: Implied, obscured or simulated sexual activity.

Violence: Explicit depictions with some gratuitous and exploitive non sexual violence; decapitations, dismemberment, disembowelling, etc. if briefly shown; discreet sexual violence.

Other: Depictions of use of drugs which might be construed as mildly advocacy.

X Extra Point-of-Sale Controls (18 years and over)

Language: No proscriptions.

Sex: All explicit depictions of sexual acts involving adults (except those referred to under 'Refused Classification') including explicit penetration, masturbation,

ejaculation, fellatio, cunnilingus; insertion of objects in orifices; miscellaneous other sexual activities and fetishes.

Violence: Explicit depictions (except those referred to under 'Refused Classification').

Other: Depictions of use of hard drugs which might be construed as advocacy.

Refused Classification

Language: No proscriptions.

Sex: Child pornography; bestiality.

Violence: Detailed and gratuitous depictions of acts of significant cruelty; explicit and gratuitous depictions of sexual violence against non-consenting persons.

Other: Instruction "manuals" for i) terrorist-type weapons and acts. ii) abuse of hard drugs.



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LETTERS

Kenyan women's ordination

Dear Sir,

As Clerical Secretary to the Synod of the Diocese of Mt. Kenya East since 1978 to December, 1983, I was surprised by the report you gave about our last Synod held 13th-16th December 1983 (of which I was the Secretary) about women ordination (Issue April 16).

Whoever supplied you with the report was correct as far as the voting and Bishops comment were. However the worst of it came from what you have quoted to have been made verbatim that since a man has paid dowry, his (or another's wife) cannot become his pastor. The quotation in fact shows that the African (Kenyan) Christian has no respect for woman and treats her as an object since he has "bought" (paid the dowry) her.

I have been involved with the recording of the debate in our Diocese from parish level to Synod level and I have never come across such a quotation which debases a woman to that level of an object "bought" by a man. The objective of your reporter seems not to report what was said but to discredit the African (Kenyan) Christian husband. Your reporter in fact terms the debate as "noisy" and your

readers would wonder whether something sensible could come out of such clamorous situation.

At the conclusion of the Synod, the Bishop expressed his hope that members would rethink their position once again and vote for the motion during the next Synod. Probably this could have been a better objective reporting than what you have just said. Please treat the African Christian fairly as he has the basic truths of the Bible and has a high respect for human life as well as that of a woman (wife).

Faithfully yours,
Jephthah K. Gathaka (Rev.)

P.S. One only needs to read the interview of Bishop Festo Kivengere in the same issue to get the balanced argument of the matter.

NOT LINEAL

Dear Sir,

Edward Rock's letter of April 11 was courageous, but does not go far enough. Quite rightly he defended the Dean of Perth's ABC broadcast from the racist accusation. The Dean spoke about that remarkable book by the famous Jewish author, Arthur Koestler, called

"The Thirteenth Tribe" which proves from unimpeachable sources that the majority of Israeli Jews are NOT lineal descendants of Biblical Israel.

That is historical truth, but where Edward Rock and many other Christians stop short, is to ask themselves the perfectly natural question, "Where then is biblical Israel?" I do not refer to the tens of thousands of spiritual children of Abraham through Christ, but historical, wayward Israel who must be in actual existence today, as are the Judah-descended Jews.

The Word of God is full of clues for those who really believe the Promises of God, but a veil has been over our eyes for so many centuries, that few can grasp the obvious when they see it. Some modern translations would seem to be deliberately obscuring where at all possible.

Rabbi R. Brasch, Chief Minister, Temple Emanuel, Sydney, in his interesting book "The Unknown Sanctuary", Chapter 34, (Angus & Robertson) asks the question which Edward Rock did not ask; nor did the Dean of Perth. WHY?

Yours faithfully,
Phyllis Creasey

Sunday trading

Dear Sir,

We refer to J.R. Browning's letter in your paper of April 16th, 1984, relative to Sunday Trading of hotels.

Prior to the last State Election the Temperance Alliance sent a questionnaire to the four main political parties asking for their stand on several issues relating to the use of and trade in alcohol.

One of the questions concerned Sunday trading.

The Liberal Party considered it a question which to have further enquiry, is needed.

The Labour and National parties made no comment on the issue — presumably the status quo should continue.

We thought these comments might be of interest to your readers.

Yours sincerely,
David Cocks,
Acting General Secretary,
N.S.W. Temperance Alliance.

Attack on porn movies Continued

Children exposed to moral danger:

We know that the whole burden cannot be placed on the government and that parents do have a responsibility but reports from U.K., U.S.A. and Australia proved that even the most responsible parents cannot fully control what their children see in a friends home. In the U.K. a report concerned a 14 year old girl who came home shattered after seeing such a video, (her father was so concerned for his daughter that he went to the neighbour's home and demanded to see it. After looking at what his daughter had seen he became so angry and frustrated that he smashed the video. He then rang the local Community Standards

Organisation to ask how he could campaign against "ideo nasties". He also reported to the police what he'd done.) Mothers in Sydney have already complained to me of children putting on an adult video screening for their school friends when their parents are away. Other mothers have complained that their irresponsible husbands have forced the whole family including children to watch perverted, violent videos in their lounge room.

This is a serious problem in Australia as can be seen from the money involved.

Multi-billion dollar industry:

According to The Australian (20/1/84) Australia spent \$120,000,000.00 on video tapes last year; an estimated \$30,000,000.00 going to the pornographic sector, i.e. 25 per cent. Reliable sources say the percentage will increase if nothing is done. A number of leading Australian companies including Media Groups have invested millions of dollars in the video-cassette industry and therefore have a vested interest in self regulation rather than strong Government controls.

One of the dangers of this exposure to pornography to such a wide sector of the public is the desensitisation that is taking place. What most Australians would have considered hard porn ten years ago is today generally considered "soft".

FREE AD

This service to readers is a form of free advertising. A person wishing to buy or sell anything can place a free advertisement of up to three lines. If the advertisement is successful, the advertiser is asked to pay The Church Record 10 per cent of the value of the sale price, up to a maximum of \$10 per advertisement. The service is known as FREE AD and runs on an honour system. The advertiser will be responsible for forwarding to The Church Record office what is owing.

WANTED: Music Editions of the Anglican Hymn Book. Please contact Rev. Ken Foster, P.O. Box 121, Guyra 2365 or Phone (067) 75 1111

WANTED: A second hand Home Communication Set. Phone Cox 624 3684.

THE AUSTRALIAN CHURCH RECORD, Editorial and Business, First Floor, St. Andrew's House, Sydney Square, Sydney 2000. This is a National paper issued fortnightly on alternate Mondays. Subscription is \$16.00 per year, posted. Printed by J. Bell & Co. Pty. Ltd., 13 McCauley Street, Alexandria, N.S.W. 2015.

Catalogues

This material is already readily available in N.S.W. even though it is still illegal. One of the worst instances is documented by the Festival of Light. Their Associated Director, Steve Stevens, in a letter sent to the N.S.W. Premier and also to the two Coalition leaders writes:

To let you know what is currently available I enclose a photocopy of one of the many N.S.W. lists of videos. (Fantasm Videos, 36 New Releases, January, 1984).

We have evidence that some companies stock material that they are at present afraid to advertise publicly. So the enclosed list does not show the most depraved material.

I draw your attention to six of the thirty-six titles and their comments:

1. Born to Raise Hell:

"This very heavy S. & M. video has been banned in nearly every country in the world.

Now available for perhaps a limited time in Australia.

It is only for the true devotee of Sado Masochism and definitely not for the squeamish".

2. Perverse Leather Orgy:

"... the perverted countess tortures her male slave before assisting her friends in a sex orgy. 'The Callboy Punishment' is to

be tied and tortured by two lovely ladies who make certain that he won't be earning money for a long time.

3. Animal F-----

"It's a mad sex orgy but there's one man left out. See how he copes with a nanny goat while the action rages around them".

4. Pony Girls

"When a mother and daughter go to buy a pony the latter is more interested in the stableman and certainly not shy. Mother needs something more filling and there's only the pony left".

5. Taboo

"It's incest at its best ..."

6. Baby Face:

"... a man is caught seducing an under age prick teaser. 'Nutcracker' devises a plan to castrate him and it's a terrifying heart stopping surprise climax ..."

This video list was sent to us by an angry N.S.W. citizen, who in his letter said:

"I am enclosing a copy of some literature which I was sent in the mail. I was sent two separate envelopes, one of which I am sending back to them with a letter telling them not to contaminate my home with filth of this nature anymore".

This other one I am sending to you to let you know the type of things being sent to the unsuspecting people through the mail, so that you might be able to do something about it.

Only for Adults

The A.C.R. decided to test the claim that these were only available to adults. We purchased a copy of what the newsagent told us was the best selling Australian video magazine. We then wrote to or filled in coupons for the various X rated catalogues advertised. We used an assumed name. Of the five we sent only three required a signature saying we were over 18 years of age. Those three we signed in childish handwriting. All companies sent catalogues — promptly.

All companies offered us a mail order service. Again only some had a requirement on the order form that we stipulate we were over 18. The other interesting feature of this is that the X rated videos were usually much cheaper than ordinary videos.

As a result, there is no doubt that children would have no difficulty getting hold of the X rated videos — supposedly only available to adults. Add to this the fact that they can get access to the video tapes their parents have ordered.

Continued back page

MAINLY ABOUT PEOPLE

SYDNEY DIOCESE

Rev. R. E. Mills, Diocese of Brisbane, became Asst. Minister, Christ Church St. Laurence on 2nd April, 1984.

Rev. R. Goodfellow, Rector St. Thomas' Auburn, resigned on 1st May, 1984.

Rev. D. Callow, Rector St. Mark's Resimba, has resigned to become Chaplain, Parramatta and Silverwater Prisons as from 1st June, 1984.

Rev. S. N. Abrahams, formerly Rector Nowra, became Director Vision for Growth on 1st May, 1984.

DIOCESE OF BATHURST

Rev. G. Wainwright, was inducted as Minister in Charge of the Church of the Good Shepherd at West Dubbo on 19th March.

Rev. R. Constant was inducted as Rector of Gilgandra on 20th March.

Rev. T. Browncombe was made Deacon at Mudgee on 11th March by Rt. Rev. C. Wood, Bishop of the Northern Territory. Mr. Browncombe will serve his curacy in Bathurst Diocese and then go to work in the Northern Territory.

Ven. T. Armsted has resigned as Rector of the Parish of Narramine and has also announced his retirement. He will continue as Archdeacon of Long for the time being.

Rev. D. Cooper has resigned as Rector of the Parish of Cowra as from 6th May. He has been appointed Chaplain of the Orange Hospitals.

Rev. F. Hetherington has resigned as Rector of the Parish of Coonamble as from 6th May. He will be inducted as Rector of Narramine on 15th May.

Rev. R. Zohrab was priested and Mr. G. Atkinson was made deacon at an Ordination in All Saints' Cathedral on 16th April.

Deaconess Edith Wanda Lowenstein

An Appreciation by Bernard G. Judd

Deaconess Edith Lowenstein had almost attained her 100th birthday and had been a resident of the Hammondville Homes for Senior Citizens for 25 years. In December, 1981 she recorded her recollections on tape and very clear recollections they were. She came from Melbourne when she was in her 20's. There were 4 boys and 2 girls in the family which had been members of St. Thomas' Church, Essendon. In Sydney she was a member of St. Nicholas' Church, Coogee whose Rector encouraged her to enter Deaconess House during the time that Miss Pallister was Principal. She was the oldest student in Deaconess House during her period of training and was selected to pioneer Anglican work at the Children's Court. This was under the auspices of the Deaconess Institution and was also financially supported by the Mothers' Union. "I suppose I was selected for the Children's Court work because I was the oldest of the graduating deaconesses, but, actually, I had lived such a sheltered life that the other students knew more about the ways of the world than I did", she said.

Her successful pioneering work at the Children's Court was a notable achievement and laid the foundations for those who came after her. Deaconess

(3rd October, 1884 — 27th April, 1984)

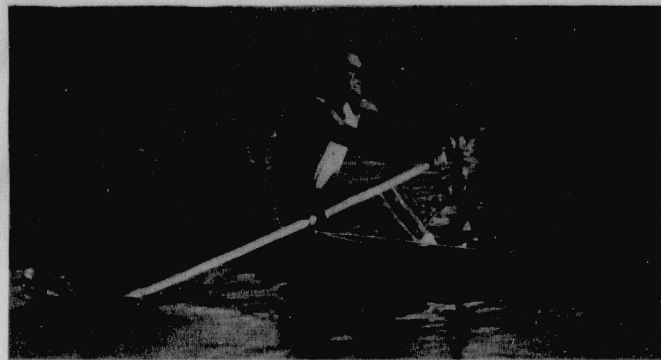
Lowenstein also engaged in similar work in Brisbane.

Deaconess Lowenstein's list of acquaintances reads like a Who's Who of the Diocese — Archbishop J. C. and Mrs. Wright, Archbishop H.W.K. and Mrs. Mowll, Bishop W. G. Hilliard, Bishop C.V. Pilcher, Archdeacon John Bidwell — are just a few names.

As a student, she remembered the Principal of Moore College, Archdeacon D. J. Davies who "used to pace up and down as he lectured". The Vice-Principal of the College was the Reverend Corrie Glanville who was a great teacher about the meaning of words. She came to know Monica Farrell well and was glad to meet her once again each week at the Hammondville Homes for Senior Citizens when Miss Farrell came to speak and to visit the residents.

She recalled the day, 25 years ago, when she came to see me at St. Peter's Rectory in East Sydney and expressed the wish to come to Hammondville to occupy a cottage. Deaconess Lowenstein was loved by everyone and appreciated all that was done by the Staff to care for her. She had a fervent trust in Christ our Lord and shed abroad a sweet Christian influence wherever she was.

Race for Bibles



Tom Treseder, Director of the Bible Society

A Tri-athlon with a difference was attempted on Tuesday, May 15th, at 8.30 a.m.

A cyclist, a rower and a runner set off from Pier One, Sydney, and headed for Lennox Park, Parramatta.

The rower sculled up the Parramatta River, the runner followed Parramatta Road to Wentworth Road, Concord, and was then relieved by a second runner. The cyclist rode over the Harbour Bridge, up the Pacific Highway to Hornsby, then took the Pennant Hills Road to Parramatta.

The four participants are members of

the Bible Society Staff in NSW and the object of the whole exercise was to gain sponsorship.

\$6.7 million dollars worth of translation and distribution projects have had to be shelved this year by the United Bible Societies and the team in NSW were putting some muscle into an attempt to activate at least a few of these shelved projects.

The rower was Tom Treseder, Director of the Bible Society, current holder of the 400 Metre Single Sculls Record and participant in the World Veteran Sculling Championships in Belgium later this year.

Porn attack Cont.

R Rated readily available

A.C.R. checked a number of video shops. All had a large number of R rated video tapes and some of these were, according to their covers most explicit. The managers we spoke to told us that they were amongst the most hired tapes in their shop. One manager told us that he does not want to stock such tapes but his customers demand them and he must either stock them or go out of business. One important thing about these tapes is that they are on display where children can see them — no shop owner wanted to admit that he/she would let someone under 18 hire one — but most said they knew others who would.

Growing

The porn video industry is going. There is even a magazine, sold through newsagents, devoted entirely to pornographic video tapes. It is on sale at one dollar per copy and contains articles, ads and reviews of new X rated releases. A newsagent told us that the first issue did not sell well in his shop but that as it has become better known he is now selling a number of copies of it. That magazine, with numerous pictures taken

from porn videos must, itself be close to the kind of pornographic material which is placed on restricted sale.

Support

The Festival of Light is committed to continuing its battle against pornographic videos. Mr. Nile writes (in the letter to the Attorney-General).

"We for our part will do all we can to warn the public of the damage inherent in this flood of video porn that is swamping Australia and pledge to do all we can to warn parents of the dangers involved. But we need strong support from Federal and State Governments — not only in pronouncements but by legislation. Strong legislation will be welcomed by all decent Australians. It will only be the irresponsible who have no concern for society and our children who will vociferously oppose such strong legislation and raise red herrings concerning adult rights and civil liberties. The responsible ban by the Federal and State Governments concerning child pornography is a graphic example that a responsible society has to draw the line somewhere and exercise adequate quality controls over a moral pollution and the greedy exploiters in our society."

Baptist pastor writes Hockey book with a message

The Federal Minister of Sports and Tourism, Mr. John Brown, recognised the contribution the Christian faith has in the writings of Mark Tronson when he launched "World Hockey" at Parliament House, Canberra, on Thursday, April 5 last.

Rev. Mark Tronson, National co-ordinator of Sports and Leisure Ministry, a ministry with the InterChurch Trade and Industry Mission and the Australian Christian Sports Fellowship, was received by the Minister for the launching of this his second book on Hockey.

"I have read much about Rev. Mark Tronson, and what is said of him and his own adopted statement, 'A person is a soul with a body' speaks of the character and style of writing readily evidenced," Mr. Brown said.

Dr Richard Charlesworth, Australian Hockey captain, said that Mark had been around the national titles circuit as long as he could remember, and his publicity contribution and personal contribution was widely recognised and appreciated.

Rev. F. P. McMaster, Superintendent of the Baptist Homes and Services in the A.C.T., said that Christ is at the centre of life, and the Christian Church is not peripheral.

Mr McMaster mentioned that when Mark Tronson was young, Canberra Baptist had ten hockey teams. He spoke on the subject of being "whole persons" rather than attempting to compartmentalise life.

Message

Mark Tronson addressed the gathering by illustrating the Christian life by hockey results, in that there are times when heights are reached, just as depths are plumbed after being beaten 6 nil. He continued, however, that most of life, like hockey matches, are played somewhere in between, and it was the "Living Christ" entering our sphere that makes the difference.

World Hockey has a message to it, and copies are now available in local bookstores.

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Lebanese Christians Continued

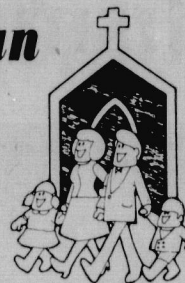
We have been looking at one side of the coin in the delicate equation of Lebanon, the Christian side. The Muslim side is almost equally as complex; here, we can only mention that the most recent fighting (August and September 1983) has revived bitter conflict between Maronites and Druzes, with memories of massacres going back to the last century. (The Druze are a community which is an offshoot of Islam; their religion is secret, and includes tenets which are heretical to the orthodox Muslim, like the doctrine of re-incarnation.) There is also a Druze community in Israel and some serve in the Israeli army. This adds a complicating factor to their rivalry with the Maronites. In the fighting the Israelis have been unsure of which group to back, Maronite or Druze, and unfortunately by their invasion in 1982 and partial withdrawal in September 1983 they have destabilised

the region of the Shouf mountains, where both sects have learnt to co-exist peacefully.

As I am writing, an uneasy truce is holding in Tripoli, north Lebanon, between pro-Arafat and pro-Syrian forces. As this bitter tragedy has been played out with the loss of many civilian lives, I have been remembering that there are Muslims and Christians who share alike in the Palestinian movement, and must be equally disheartened by this latest conflict. Palestinian Christians would be poles apart in their political stance from the Maronites whom we have been considering — yet they are alike in that a nationalism is their motivating force.

(Extracted from Bible Lands, magazine of the Jerusalem and Middle East Church Association.)

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The Agony of Black Christians in South Africa



In the context of a controversy conducted on the front pages of the daily newspapers over Sydney Anglican attitudes, Bishop Desmond Tutu of the Church of the Province of South Africa visited the N.S.W. capital under the auspices of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs. During a worship service sponsored by the Australian Council of Churches at Pitt Street Uniting Church, the Bishop spoke eloquently and painfully of the experience of blacks in South Africa. Photo: Ramon Williams.

Bishop Tutu's Address given on 9th May, 1984 was prefaced by some brief comments on how the South African Council of Churches is at present providing financial support for the political victims of apartheid legislation, and supporting several thousand students in their educational endeavours both at secondary and tertiary levels. He proffered a vote of thanks to Australian Christians on behalf of the South African Christians for their support through prayer & correspondence as a gesture of solidarity against the apartheid policies of the South African government.

The substance of the Bishop's address was in the form of a reply to the accusation that he constantly mixes politics and religion. In standing this statement on its head he noted that no political social system is amoral, much less one that is considered unjust by much of the world's community. Moreover the Bible speaks clearly on the issue of social injustice. Jezebel is required for having Naboth killed despite the latter's lack of political kudos, this is because God intervenes on Naboth's behalf as God always acts on injustice and oppression. In lambasting Israel's abuse of the Old Testament sacrificial system, God calls upon her to repent and to do justice to the widow, orphan and stranger in their midst. For Israel true worship must have repercussions for the weak of their own society, God is biased to the poor (Isaiah 61:1-2). God's words to Israel could not be divorced from a political context and neither can the gospel today be divorced from political action.

Jesus rare alignment

In the New Testament Jesus befriended

the social outcasts of his day and therefore Christians worship a God who is disreputable judging from the company he kept. In Matthew 25 true religion is pictured as feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the imprisoned and caring for the sick. Jesus rarely aligned himself with groups in his society, however we see him doing so in this passage for he is the God of the oppressed. He is also the God of the exodus seeking to liberate his people, not only from sin, but also political and economic bondage.

Mankind created for fellowship

A man's worth is exceedingly great for he is created in God's image and accorded the highest status of being God's viceroy on earth. This is true even for the oppressed, nevertheless the South African government says that worth is defined by a biological irrelevance, the colour of a man's skin. The Bible also teaches that mankind is created for koinonia, that is, for friendship, fellowship, mutual sharing and partnership. Adam's lack of a suitable partner was the only thing not good in God's Creation, and the creation of Eve fills out Adam's humanity. So a person is a person because of other people and humanity is defined by humanity. Apartheid with its principle of inferiority and segregation defies the basic spiritual truth. Jesus Christ's great task is as a reconciler, effecting reconciliation between man and God, and between man and man (Ephesians 2:14ff). But Apartheid teaches that mankind is irreconcilable and denies this foundational truth, this central truth of the gospel.

Continued on page 4

John Chapman brings Hong Kong to standstill

An Australian who brought a Hong Kong market to a standstill with his preaching will be the main speaker at a combined churches mission in Hurstville later this year.

Canon John Chapman, an international convention speaker, will preach at "Goodspeak '84" from September 13 to 23.

John Chapman said that the people in Hong Kong had been fascinated to hear his Australian accent translated into Chinese.

"I had preached in places as diverse as Philadelphia, Karachi and the Kenyan outback," he said, "but this was an unforgettable experience."

He had been invited to Hong Kong by the congregation of St. Andrew's Anglican Church in Kowloon.

Few people had expected such an overwhelming response at the market.

Open air meetings had been held before, but always in Chinese.

"An Aussie speaker, plus the fact that it was Christmas, made all the difference," said John Chapman.

"I was surrounded by masses of Chinese pressing forward out of curiosity and then staying to hear the Christmas message."

He said that there was a great spiritual hunger in Hong Kong where people arriving from the mainland found that material prosperity failed to answer their real need.

Nearly 6,000 people attended the recent South West Outreach at Liverpool where he preached in the E.G. Whitlam Sports Centre using three interpreters.

"Each man simultaneously translated from sound-proofed rooms to people with receivers," John Chapman said.

"They spoke in Italian, Chinese and Spanish."

"This called for a lot of preliminary work as the interpreters had to familiarise themselves with my material."

"I believe in enlivening my talks with spontaneous anecdotes, which posed a problem especially for the Chinese."

"However they all burst out laughing when the interpreter said that a joke had been told but he could not understand it!"

Mr. Chapman said that one of the most impressive congregations in his experience had been at St. Helen's Bishopsgate, London.

"This church is strategically centred in 'the city', the hub of banking and commercial life."

"A few years ago it was almost empty, now services have to be 'doubled-up'."

"Apart from large Sunday services, mid-week meetings are held for people who work nearby."

"These are so popular that there are two sessions each Tuesday to accommodate the crowd."

"It is a thrilling sight to see tycoons of British industry sitting on the steps with junior clerks to hear the Word of God."

"A few years ago this historic building was almost empty."

"Now there is standing room only."

"This shows that the Gospel is as relevant as ever to those living in the '80s."

Blind people now share 'Daily Bread'



Blind people throughout Australia can now join with the 30,000 regular users of Scripture Union's publication 'Daily Bread'. This aid to daily Bible reading is now available on cassette through Christian Blind Mission International, based in Hawthorn, Victoria.

Scripture Union staff are encouraged by this extension of the Movement's Bible-reading ministry.

Margaret Munro, Librarian for Christian Blind Mission International, said: "Since advertising the availability of 'Daily Bread' resources in our audio magazine late last year we have had a great response. Sixty-five people from all parts of Australia now receive cassettes each month, and the number continues to increase."

Voluntary readers transfer the 'Daily Bread' resources on to tape, making sure to include the date, Bible portion for the day, then the discussion material and questions.

One satisfied listener commented: "It has been like having a friend to share the Word with." Another wrote: "These studies are a great help and a wonderful blessing to me." A further enthusiastic comment from someone who lost their sight five years ago and has since been unable to read the Bible: "I think these 'Daily Bread' tapes are a great idea; I really was blessed and enjoyed them very much. I enjoyed hearing Jacob and his life again."

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We have chosen the I Believe Series because it is an important contribution to evangelical literature. The Series was edited by Michael Green and sought to make modern scholarship on important issues available at a level that the ordinary Christian could understand. Sadly, the books have been too expensive for most people — some of the titles selling for almost \$15. Some titles were issued in cheaper editions. We are offering the better quality edition to our readers.

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Michael Green addresses himself to the Biblical material about Satan and evil and, in particular, to the guaranteed downfall of Satan. Since Christians are continually engaged in a spiritual warfare this book is of great importance and we thoroughly recommend it.

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