

SKY PILOT NEWS

July
1971

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NO APPETITE: From the Sky Pilot's Log, 2CH Broadcast

I was flying over the barren country west of Palmer's peanut farm when I first sighted him. He was sitting in the shade of a tree and he made no attempt to stand up and wave as the aeroplane flew overhead. This in itself was unusual. I circled round and came down to within a few feet of the tree tops and then I could see by his ragged clothing and bare feet that he was in trouble. There was no possible place to land the aeroplane on the rough country within reach of him so I turned back to Palmer's farm. The peanut farmer himself came to the landing strip to meet me. As I had passed overhead only a few minutes before he knew that something was wrong.

"What is it, Smithy? The old bus playing up, or something? I mean to say I saw you pass over just now and I reckoned you were heading for Alice Springs. Why did you come back?"

"There's a man in trouble about 15 miles from here. He looks about all in. Can you run out the T model Ford in a hurry?"

"Sure thing. Lucky I put new gear bands in only a day or two ago. But who is it? Could you see from the air?"

"Not very well. He wouldn't look up. Besides, when I was flying high he was too far off to recognise, and when I came down low there wasn't time for more than a fleeting glance. But I could see he's in a bad way."

"Is he near the track, Smithy? What I mean is that we'll need horses if he's off the track. I can't take the car off the track, it's too rough out that way."

"He's right on the track, Silas. Provided he doesn't shift before we get back it'll only take us about three quarters of an hour to find him. Can you rake up some soft food stuff? A tin of whitebait or something? There was plenty of water on the track so it must be food he's needing."

"I'll throw something in the car right away and put in an extra drum of petrol. I filled the tank the other day. I won't be a minute; you tie down the aeroplane and I'll be ready by then."

Silas Palmer hurried away and I pegged down the aeroplane and put the tarpaulins and propeller covers on. Before I had finished, the old T model Ford rattled along and Silas kept the engine running while I finished my job. Then I jumped into the seat beside him and we bumped our way over the rough track and headed for the west.

We had a puncture on the way and it was over an hour later when we sighted the stranger still seated under a tree. We could tell at once that he was starving to death. His limbs had shrunk away to such an extent that his knees and elbows looked strangely swollen and out of proportion. He had a half-full water bag beside him and he was conscious for we could see his faded eyes gazing intently at nothing in particular. Palmer ran over to him.

"I say, old man," he asked, "what's the trouble? Run out of tucker by the look of you. How long is it since you had anything to eat?"

The man turned haggard eyes on Palmer and his lips moved, but we could hear no sound. He seemed very listless and showed no sign of relief or pleasure at the sight of his rescuers. Palmer tried him again. But once more the man said nothing.

"He's in a bad way, Smithy, he can't even talk. I don't like the way he looks at me either. Perhaps he doesn't realise it isn't another dream — maybe he thinks we aren't really here at all. Try him with something to eat. Open that tin of whitebait. He ought to manage a mouthful of that, don't you think?"

"It's the best we've got, but I think we're going to have trouble getting him to eat. I've struck men in this condition before. He's got past feeling hungry."

"Nonsense. What I mean is he's starving; anyone can see that at a glance. Hold a spoonful under his nose. As soon as he smells it you won't be able to hold him back."

I did as Palmer suggested, but the man made no sign that he was even aware that the food

existed. Palmer took the spoon from me and tried again. He even attempted to force a little of the soft fish into the man's mouth. The only result was that the man turned his head weakly away. Food had no interest for him. Again and again we attempted to force a little of the food down the man's throat, hoping that once he tasted it his hunger would come back to him. It was wasted effort. At last Palmer sat back in disgust.

"What do you know about that? He isn't even interested in it! Here he is starving to death and he doesn't want food. Perhaps we could try him with something else."

"You try him then while I get a fire started and make a cup of tea. Perhaps when he tastes tea his appetite will come back to him."

"That's an idea. I could do with a drink of tea myself. Phew! it's hot! This poor devil must have been a long time without food to have got as thin as he is."

"By what's left of his clothes he looks like a city man. No bushman would be wearing a waistcoat in heat like this. I wish inexperienced men wouldn't attempt to travel along these roads without plenty of food and water. He's not the first man to get into difficulties on this road."

"But how was he travelling? Surely he wouldn't be walking? Maybe there's a car or horses back along the road a bit. He looks as if he's walked for miles after his shoes wore out. Look at the state of his feet."

"They are certainly swollen and cut about terribly. They look more like two pieces of raw meat."

"I guess he had a car. He doesn't look the kind of man to be travelling with horses. Now, have you got that tea made? Better cool some off a bit and we'll try him with it."

"This ought to do; I've cooled it off enough for him to drink it straight down. Now you hold up his head and I'll give him a mouthful in a spoon."

"He doesn't seem to want it; see, he's turning away again. Good heavens! to think he'd turn down a cup of tea after all he's been through. What can we do now? I can't make him eat, blown if I can."

"I think we'd better get him back to your farm. If we can't get him to eat then we'll have to find some way of force feeding him. He can't live much longer without food."

"Well the sooner the better. Give me a hand and we'll put him in the back seat. I'll have to drive pretty slowly, though, or he'll roll off."

It was a long and tiring trip back. Palmer

drove as slowly and carefully as possible but even so the passenger had a rough ride. He was either asleep or unconscious when eventually we drove up to the farm, and I was afraid that we had been too late. For a week the stranger hung between life and death. We fed him through a tube at first and even when he began to regain strength his appetite did not return. When he was able to we made him eat a little even though he said he didn't want it. We had to coax and finally browbeat him into exerting himself to take the nourishment so necessary to his life. After a particularly difficult morning Palmer turned to me in exasperation.

"He beats me," he said. "Anyone would think he didn't want to live; he won't do a thing to help himself. Do you remember Ned Black when he was marooned on Beatrice Island? It was a different story then. We had to hold him back from the food as soon as he'd tasted it."

"Lack of food is bad enough, but lack of appetite is worse. Here's a man dying for want of food and there's plenty of it available. It's strange how a man can get to the stage when he doesn't want the most important thing and he'll die rather than eat."

"I wouldn't have believed it possible unless I'd seen it myself; I'm hanged if I would."

But as time went on we were successful in making the stranger eat; and in a month he was himself again. We learned his story bit by bit. He had been travelling on horseback in spite of Palmer's guess to the contrary. But he was not used to horses and one day the horse broke its hobbles and made off. The stranger was not expert enough to track the animal down and so he decided, after wasting several days in a vain search for the elusive animal, to walk the several hundred miles. He found little in the way of food and soon he acquired the habit of drinking large quantities of water whenever he felt hungry and the time came when he lost all desire for food and in his weakened condition had only the desire to lie down and die.

There's a lesson for us in this. Many a man is starving himself of spiritual food and day by day he gets weaker — not because God has failed to provide for him, but because he has no appetite. At times every man feels drawn to God. Often the desire for something different, something better, is very real. It is God's way of drawing a man to Himself. And if this desire or yearning is encouraged the hunger for more and more of the things of God will grow. On the other hand it is possible to kill all appetite for spiritual things by filling oneself with the things of the

world — the pursuit of pleasure or worldly profit or fame and position. And the day comes when all appetite for spiritual things has gone and then without other help a man drifts into the hopeless position of having starved himself to death — or close to death — and still feels no desire for spiritual food.

The final entry in today's Log is taken from the 6th chapter of St. John's Gospel. Jesus said: "I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever. And the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

AN ABORIGINAL SPEAKS OUT: The following appeared in the Autumn issue of DURAN DURAN, the Newsletter of the Aboriginal Education Council (N.S.W.), and is reprinted by permission. (The word "Koori" simply means Aboriginal.)

EVEN THOUGH I AM A KOORI . . . I am almost sick to death of hearing: ' . . . it's not fair, we blacks are given a bad time, no-one takes any notice of us, no-one will give us our land, no-one will give us good jobs, the whole world is against us . . . WHY?"

Well I'll tell you WHY!

NO MAN, whether he is black, white, red or yellow is going to get anywhere if he can't even get to work on time. Just because we're black doesn't mean we can always be late and lazy. Just because we're black doesn't mean we can be sloppily dressed all the time. Just because we're black doesn't mean we can ignore people when we feel like it. Just because we're black doesn't mean we can do without manners altogether. Just because we're black doesn't mean we can get paid on a Friday and come to work on Monday — broke. Just because we're black doesn't mean we can come to work drunk, or not come to work at all the day after pay day. Just because we're black doesn't mean we can become so low that we have to ASK people for money. Just because we're black doesn't mean that everyone is going to pat us on the head and say "poor little black child."

WHAT man is ever going to sit up and listen to a crowd of lazy, penniless drunks (brought on entirely by themselves), who think they're doing such a marvellous job for their people? We are a unique race of the world — a race we

should be proud of. How can we be proud of the way we act? Always swearing, always conning, always drinking, you think that's being smart? That's just showing the whites how much we are lacking in intelligence.

I think it's about time we stopped acting like kids. I don't know about you others but I want to get a good job. I want to live a clean, happy life, free of debt and worry. Not travelling from cop shop to cop shop. You all say that — I've heard you — but there's just one difference between the way I say it and the way you say it — **I MEAN IT.**

Sorry brothers, I've seen the light.

BALANCE SHEET: The Balance Sheet, published in this issue, shows a healthy growth but mostly from legacies. We always try to reserve any money received from legacies for our Building Fund. As mentioned in a previous issue the Mission Council was given a modern cottage by Mr. R. P. Davis, of Castle Hill. This was required as a Farm Manager's residence and will be occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Langford-Smith. The cost of moving such a cottage, setting it on brick foundations, building a septic tank and connecting water and electricity will cost several thousand dollars and this will come from the surplus shown in our Balance Sheet. We feel sure this is a providence of God for just such a need.

The cottage has been moved and the work of setting it on piers at Marella Mission Farm is progressing.

We also require an additional storeroom for sorting and packing the clothing and salvage that is sent in by friends. We are hoping that one of the Service Clubs will assist us by providing the labour for this project.

CLOTHING: We are very grateful to friends who so kindly send us clothing. We are unfortunately unable to pick up parcels, except at Parramatta Railway Station, but our supporters have been very good bringing the clothing to the Mission Farm or railing it to Parramatta. Anything that can be used for the children is put aside and the other clothing is sold on our Stalls and provides money for other things required by the children. This has been a major source of our income over the years and it means a great deal to us at Marella.

EXPENDITURE		INCOME	
Advertising	29.65	Bank Interest	34.60
Children's Expenses	496.84	Donations to Home	10403.68
Car Allowances	707.52	Home Offering Boxes	444.03
Children's Board	5222.00	Deputations	273.17
Depreciation	684.91	Sales of Work, Stalls, etc.	8842.58
Donations Earmarked	8.00	Subs. to News	94.40
Electricity and Water	740.07	Government Allowances	10814.72
Expenses, Rates, etc. Cullen Estate	201.83	Parents' Contributions	108.00
Freight	15.04	Sale of Salvage	664.55
Insurance	320.00	Specific Donations:	
Maintenance and Repairs	1172.66	Rates	611.80
Printing and Stationery	932.78	Canteen Spending Money	8.00
Postages	319.80	School and Children's Expenses	41.00
Rent	1040.00	Refrigerator	200.00
Salaries and Wages	15778.58	Office and Shop	300.00
Rates	611.80	Drier	220.00
Stalls and Sale of Work Expenses	1057.26	Special Purposes	585.00
Store Purchases	1436.08	Memorial Picture	2.00
Sundry Expenses	35.89	Stove	393.00
Telephone	107.10	Saucepans	16.60
Travelling Expenses	45.29	Commissions	10.29
Vehicle Expenses	227.17	Adoption Societies	186.20
Souvenirs Purchase etc.	209.69	Legacies	11088.16
Building Fund for the year		Store Income	1584.00
31st March, 1971 transferred	60.02	Souvenirs etc.	304.55
Excess of Income over Expenditure for the		Cullen Estate	954.74
year ended 31st March, 1971, transferred			
to Accumulated Funds	16725.09		
	\$48185.07		\$48185.07

CURRENT LIABILITIES						CURRENT ASSETS					
Hire Purchase Creditors	518.00					Cash on Hand	20.00				
	<u> </u>		518.00			Stock on Hand (at cost)					
RESERVES						General	400.00				
Asset Revaluation		4988.78				Christmas Cards	182.70				
						Shop	448.37				
ACCUMULATED FUNDS						Sundries	242.56				
Balance 1st April 1970	25286.88					Commonwealth Bank	10722.44		12016.07		
Add Excess of Income over Expenditure for year ended 31st March 1971		16725.09	42011.97				<u> </u>				
		<u> </u>				FIXED ASSETS					
BUILDING FUND						Buildings (at cost)	42334.19				
Balance 1st April, 1970	26833.75					Land and Buildings					
Add Donations for the year ended 31st March, 1971		60.02	26893.77			63 Park Road (at V.G.)	8200.00				
						Children's Equipment					
						(at cost less depreciation)	540.24				
						Furniture and Equipment					
						(at cost less depreciation)	7081.26				
						Office Equipment					
						(at cost less depreciation)	2062.08				
						Van (at cost less depreciation)	1954.30				
						Machinery					
						(at cost less depreciation)	38.00		62210.07		
							<u> </u>				
						INTANGIBLE ASSETS					
						Formation Expenses			186.38		
									<u> </u>		
			\$74412.52							\$74412.52	

I report that I have examined the above Balance Sheet and attached Income and Expenditure Account of the Sky Pilot Fellowship Limited. In my opinion the Balance Sheet and Income and Expenditure Account are properly drawn up in accordance with the provisions of the Companies Act, 1961, and so as to give a true and fair view of the state of the Company's affairs. The accounting records (including Registers) examined by me have, in my opinion, been properly kept in accordance with the said Act.

K. H. PEARCE
Chartered Accountant
Registered under the Public Accountants Registration
Act, 1945, as amended.