

African Enterprise changes management

Dr. Paul White, Chairman of African Enterprise, has announced that Pilgrim International Limited was appointed to manage African Enterprise in Australia, from July 1, 1980.

"The increase of interest by Australians in the Christian outreach work of African Enterprise and the consequent need for sound and economic management has resulted in the Board of Directors inviting

Pilgrim International Limited to provide full administration and promotional services for African Enterprise. This arrangement will enable African Enterprise to draw on the wide range of expertise which Pilgrim International has accumulated over many years as well as eliminating the need for African Enterprise to directly employ staff or have separate offices and administration structures," said Dr. White.

"Under this new arrangement Pilgrim International will provide the services of Mr. Warwick Olson who will continue as Director of African Enterprise Limited, and Miss Margaret Rook as Executive Secretary."

African Enterprise.



A capacity house at the Sydney Opera House made for an excellent start to Robert Colman's first ever solo Australian tour. Robert has previously only performed on request, generally at week-ends but this tour which continues for just under a month, allows him to perform at many centres which his schedule has previously prevented him from visiting.

The Opera House Concert was titled an Inspirational Music Spectacular and was jointly promoted by 2CH, the N.S.W. Council of Churches and Rhema Artists. The evening also featured The Congress Hall Salvation Army Band, Rose-Marie Longe and The Green Valley Young People's Choir.

Following on from the success of the evening, Rhema Artists have announced that the Inspirational Music Spectacular will become an annual event. A recording of the night was also made and an album entitled 'Robert Colman Live at the Opera House' is being rush released to coincide with his Australian Concert Tour.

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100 YEARS FOR SALLIES IN AUST.



The Author, Barbara Bolton (right) and Helen Harrison, Christian Books Manager of Hodder & Stoughton, with first copies of BOOTH'S DRUM. The book has been highly commended by former Commissioner Catherine Bramwell-Booth, now 97 years old, and a granddaughter of the Army's Founder, General William Booth.

A Unique Australian Albatross

A new publishing company has recently been formed in Australia. Based in Sutherland, Sydney, the company is called *Albatross Books* has been set up to produce books that explore new frontiers of Christian thought.

While majoring on authors from Australia and New Zealand (the albatross is common to both countries, being a bird of the southern oceans), the company will be working closely with Lion Publishing of Tring, England. Under a unique reciprocal agreement, all Albatross books will be published in the UK as a new imprint within the Lion list.

In summarising the company's objectives, the founding Director, John Waterhouse, said: "Albatross seeks to produce books that have some sort of prophetic function — that articulate something about our future, not just our past.

We need books that demonstrate the practical outworkings of a position or philosophy — that don't merely state what 'ought' but what 'can'.

Books whose presuppositions are Christian, but whose appearance is not — that reflect a Christian world view but in a healthy, positive, constructive way are also important.

"While this is easier said than done, I believe we are seeing in this region an emerging group of authors who are exploring the Christian faith in quite original and exciting ways and who deserve an international forum for their ideas. We have to see a publishing company in Australia that has the local equivalent to the Fontana Paperback range, published by Collins and which exercised such a decisive role in the 1960s and 1970s. The time is ripe for a venture like this in the 1990's," said Mr. Waterhouse.



BCA Fed. Sec.

The Rev. Wakely Wade (51) has been appointed federal secretary of the Bush Church Aid Society. He will take up his appointment on November, 5, 1980.

Mr. Wade was ordained in 1953. He served as rector of Brighton-le-Sands in Sydney Diocese prior to becoming BCA general secretary for New South Wales in 1977.

In announcing the appointment Archbishop Sir Marcus Loane, president of the society said that "Mr. Wade as secretary for NSW has already acquired considerable knowledge of BCA and has had the opportunity to visit BCA workers on the field. He can be relied upon to carry on the principles and policies which have been so ably pursued by the retiring federal secretary".

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The Australian



CHURCH RECORD

1715

SEPTEMBER 22

Registered for posting as a publication Category A

PRICE 30 CENTS

"ABORIGINALS STILL THE MOST SERIOUSLY DEPRIVED GROUP" SAYS FED. MINISTER, BUT ...

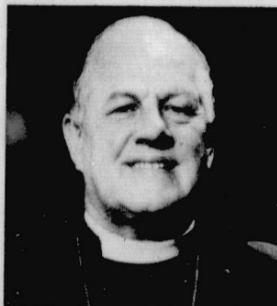


... these children have a chance. In September, 1979, two aboriginal family group homes were set up in Marrickville, Sydney. Together they care for a total of sixteen aboriginal children at a time. The children are looked after by eight aboriginal staff and an aboriginal social worker, who is the co-ordinator of the project operated by the Church of England Homes. Most of the children were born in the inner city, and their parents and relatives live in close proximity. This ensures that the family linkage is maintained. The two family group homes: Marella and Havilah were set up after lengthy discussions with aboriginal people in the area.

Archbishop to Resign

Archbishop Geoffrey Sambell announced today that he would resign at the end of this year on account of ill health.

Archbishop Sambell, during the eleven years he has been Anglican Archbishop of Perth, has initiated a wide range of social services and established twenty new parishes in the growing suburbs of Perth.



Commenting on the Archbishop's retirement, the Primate of the Anglican Church in Australia, Archbishop Sir Marcus Loane said he regretted the circumstances which had led Archbishop Sambell to early retirement. The Church in Australia, he said, was grateful for the vigorous and strong leadership which the Archbishop had given.

Archbishop Sambell is at present on holiday overseas.

Noonkanbah — Bishop Witt "3 Points Not Made Before"

Bishop Howell Witt, the Bishop of North West Australia, recently made a statement on the Noonkanbah affair. Bishop Witt, who has been in the North West for the past fifteen years said he wanted to make three points which as far as he knew had not been made before.

He said that until the rig arrived on site, Union involvement in its passage throughout the northwest had been minimal. He said that like most other West Australians he had been led to believe by statements emanating from Government ministers and from the Trades and Labour Council that there was going to be a great show down and display of strength from both sides. But this had not eventuated.

UNION INVOLVEMENT

"That rig, had certain unions wanted it, could not have moved from Eneabba. It could have been stopped at three or four places in the Pilbara. A few strategically shunted trucks across the railway lines would have seen to that.

"Instead, the number of union sympathisers that turned out at Karratha were outnumbered by the police, two of whom were seen on television kindly assisting in the propping up of the only banner of any size.

"Instead of congregating at a spot in Roebourne where Blind Freddie

and his dog could have halted the convoy, they gathered on one of the longest and straightest stretches of the North West Highway where even a Panzer division would have had its hands full trying to slow it down.

ONLY ABORIGINES

"At Hedland, further up the track there were no unionists at all, only the aborigines from Strelley.

"While many of us were expecting out and out confrontation and calling for negotiations in a less emotional atmosphere, the rig was rolling merrily along through the Pilbara without let or hindrance."

Bishop Witt's second comment was that the Noonkanbah people were having to grapple with the Mining Act, which as holders of a pastoral lease, was slanted against all pastoralists.

"As a member of the Farmers' Union put it, it tends to make the farmer (and he might have added the pastoralists too) a stranger in his own land. The man who wants to use the land to produce takes second place to the company that wants to use it to mine.

"The primary producer is treated as a second class citizen; his rights are limited. In some cases his wishes are ignored and his family life disturbed and much of his hard work goes for naught.

To page 3

ON OTHER PAGES

Dr Klaas Runia speaks out on boring preaching, changes in Dutch R.C. and Reformed Churches, and misunderstanding about homosexual resolution ...

page 3

Families at Risk: Weaknesses or Strengths? Dr Craddock ...

page 7

Letters: "Lucky Country" editorial, Better Catholic Wife, AngGays, Jet Setting, Odd ...

page 2

RES Takes Decisive Action on Homosexuality

(Nimes, France) The ironic tone that had prevailed at the Reformed Ecumenical Synod Nimes 1980 throughout nearly three weeks of meeting changed when on the last full day of discussions the issue of homosexuality came up for debate. A number of member churches had become upset that the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (GKN) had taken a decision on homosexuality that ran counter to the traditional position.

Three churches had even suggested that unless this issue was settled their continued membership in the RES would be at stake. The Advisory Committee, on which were delegates from both the GKN and the "plaintiff" churches, met late into the night. The debate in plenary was tense throughout. Yet a decision was reached that found the approval of the vast majority.

In its decision the Synod recognised the intention of the GKN in their pastoral concern in drawing attention to the suffering, despair and experience of rejection to which homosexual persons in many cases are being subjected. The Synod also stated "in accordance with the traditional Reformed understanding of Scripture" that all homosexual practice is sin. It further stated that "any advice or counsel that weakens the resistance to sin does not help but actually harms both the struggling person himself and others who might be affected through him."

Turning to the GKN the Synod requested the Dutch church to clarify their pastoral letter on "homophilical" (homosexual) persons in order to make clear that their view on homosexual practice is in accordance with Scripture. The Synod further expressed its "grave concern about the ambiguous nature of the 1979 decision of the GKN" on homosexuality.

The Synod finally instructed the Interim Committee to appoint a study committee to study the biblical data and hermeneutical questions related to the problems of "homophilical" (homosexuality) include in their study the decisions of member churches on this matter, ask the member churches for their advice, views and experience in dealing with "homophilical"

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EDITORIAL

A Theology of Play

The current fad for finding new theologies has reached its latest and most ludicrous expression in *A Theology of Play*, as proposed by a Canadian nun, sister Olga Warnke.

This is a conscious attack on the 'puritan work ethic' which has supposedly bedevilled Anglo-Saxon culture for the last three centuries. Nowadays it is regarded as almost compulsory for any Christian magazine to contain several scathing references to this Protestant failing.

Articles on the need to work less abound. It would even be worth offering a prize to the author of any such article who could resist pulling out the cliché 'workaholic', and brandishing it as though he had invented it.

It is useless to defend the Puritans on this point. Those who use the phrase are convinced of their guilt and would not be moved even by a knowledge of the re-assessment of the Puritans that has occurred in recent years. But this is beside the point. We have a more significant guide than the Puritans.

The Bible, itself displays none of the hesitations about hard work that have become the recent fashion: 'Six days you shall labour . . .', 'Whatever your task, work heartily, as serving the Lord and not men', 'keep away from any brother who is living in idleness'. Paul records how he toiled, 'striving with all the energy which he mightily inspires within me'.

Certainly there is a danger in overwork and in the neglect of family and recreation. But there is also a danger that Christians will simply take their cue from an already leisured society and become lethargic and complacent. God's own sabbath rest came at the end of six days of creative and joyful labour.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,

I greatly regret that your editorial, "No wonder they call it the lucky country", should have been based on a seriously misleading representation of the announcement made by the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, the Hon. Ian Macphie, on 19 June 1980.

In fact, the Minister announced a series of measures which were directed both at increasing legal migration and reducing illegal migration.

You have ignored the former and misrepresented the latter.

So far as illegal immigration is concerned, the central point of the Minister's announcement was that legislation would be introduced to preclude at law the grant of change of status to other than a very narrow range of cases, for example, a person who comes to Australia as a visitor and subsequently marries an Australian resident. This will remove the principal incentive to illegal immigrants, i.e. the prospect of being granted permanent residence. Contrary to what you state, it will also prevent any future amnesty unless both Houses of Parliament agree that there should be another amnesty and also agree to amend the law to permit an amnesty.

It is to be regretted that, although you express yourself so strongly against illegal immigration, your editorial should explicitly encourage people to continue to come to Australia illegally. You tell anyone who is prepared to accept your assurance that "the Government . . . will be forced again to admit defeat . . ." and call yet another amnesty. It is that easy!

In doing so, you are, in fact, inviting people to plate themselves in a similar situation to those to whom you refer when you said:

"The Record knows of cases where illegal immigrants are forced to work long hours for wages well below the award, and are subject to exploitation by landlords simply because of their status."

Finally, I would seek an assurance from you that you will give the information which you state you have about these cases of exploitation to the appropriate Federal and State authorities concerned with working conditions etc., and that so far as this Department's area of responsibility is concerned, you will help us to make known to these people the conditions under which they can obtain the right of legal permanent residence in this country and thus escape from the exploitation which you so properly condemn.

David Page,
Acting Director Public Relations,
Dept. of Immigration.

Dear Sir,

I am concerned by your publication of the article relevant to a royal consort "Better a Catholic wife with a real faith than a nominal with the right label" (A.C.R. August 25) and must disagree with your editorial comment that it warrants careful reading. I find the article confused and confusing, and somewhat typical of the contemporary trend of blurring distinctions.

I must also disagree with your editorial statement "The real issue is that of the problems that the Roman Catholic church still creates for those of its adherents who marry a Protestant both for the husband and wife and their children." I do not believe that is the central issue at all.

The real issue, as I see it, is that such a marriage would give an official and public acceptance of Roman Catholicism in a country almost certainly in time enable Roman Catholicism to become more firmly established. There are lessons to be learned from scripture concerning mixed royal marriages.

The issue is surely not one of individuals, personalities or even the faith of individual Roman Catholics many of whom, no doubt, have a real saving faith in Christ. The issue is Roman Catholicism — with all its distinctive teachings and practices. Do we believe that Roman Catholicism is a legitimate expression of Christianity or is it a false version? It would seem that the battles of the Reformation have to be re-fought today.

Yours faithfully,
Maxwell Bonner.

Dear Sirs,

AngGays is a group of lesbians and homosexual men who are actively involved in parish life within the Diocese of Sydney and thus are naturally interested in the discussion of homosexuality in "Church Record" of August 25th and wish to make some contribution to this discussion.

Firstly, with reference to the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands' Synod decision to give homosexuals full standing in that Church, we note that this reflects the attitude of the Anglican Diocese of Christchurch, N.Z. report of 1979, and also our own view, namely that full participation in the Church's life is the right of every Anglican, homosexual or otherwise. It was the general view of the Christchurch Synod Committee that ". . . both homosexual and heterosexual relationships are 'natural' features of human life in the world, hence positively good, and the gift of God." (Para. 4c p.57).

Secondly, we believe that the view expressed in the feature "What a World!" by Lesley Hicks, namely that the bible unequivocally condemns homosexuality, is a distortion of the Gospel in which Scripture is being used to justify a preconceived position which is based on ignorance, fear and prejudice. We, rather, have approached the bible openly, with much study and reflection and always in fellowship with the Church.

While we respect the desire of some homosexuals to remain celibate, we believe that this should be a free choice, made by an informed conscience, without social and moral pressure such as that undoubtedly exerted by True Freedom Trust and similar groups and some sections of the Church.

Finally, we would like to suggest other books besides those mentioned by Ms Hicks and the title reviewed in your columns. Two suggested books which we have found especially helpful are *The Church and the Homosexual* by J. J. McNeil and *Is the Homosexual my Neighbour* by E. Scanzoni and V. Mollenkott (these latter being two evangelical women).

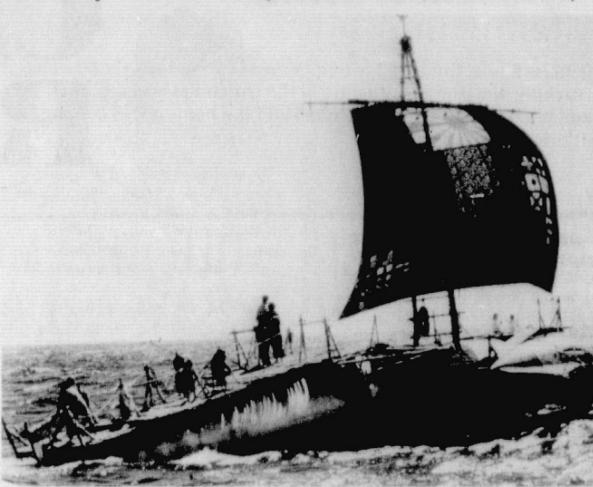
Fabian LoSchiavo,
for AngGays.

Dear Sir,

I wish to reply to N. May's scathing criticism of "Let Setting Christians" in 28th July issue of Church Record.

I agree that care and concern should be exercised in sending people overseas, but we are living in the 20th century, the world is very small and accessible. Business firms send people overseas to conduct business, we are in the King's business and why should not the very best be done and money spent to

Can you take yourself to see it?



The Last Flight of Noahs Ark

Oh! for more holiday distractions like this one.

After the Black Hole fiasco maybe Walt Disney Productions decided that life was much more interesting on earth. They're right and they've proven so with this movie.

Out of work pilot pursued by nasty bill collectors is pressurised into flying idealistic (and pretty) missionary (and assorted animals) to an Hawaiian island. The aircraft is a World War II bomber, which lumbers into the air complete with two orphanage stowaways.

The aircraft's old instruments ensure that they get lost, run out of fuel and crash-land on an idyllic tropic paradise which is complete with unrescued World War II Japanese naval officers. How they get off the island and back to civilisation is pleasant absorbing entertainment. Here's hoping Noah's Ark will do the rounds again next holiday season.

The usher said to me "it won't last a week after the holidays — they'll put the "R" movies back on to make some money". Let's get out there and support good films — this is one of them.

THE LAST FLIGHT OF NOAHS ARK — The Barclay, 681 George Street, Sydney.

MAINLY ABOUT PEOPLE

Clergy Moves

SYDNEY

Rev. Theo J. Hayman, former Federal Secretary of Bush Church Aid Society, Rector of St. Stephen's, Willoughby.

Rev. D. E. Langshaw resigns as Rector of Naremburn/Cammeray on 31st January 1981 to become Asst. Chaplain at the Church of England Retirement Villages.

Rev. C. C. G. Reed will be inducted as Rector of Corrimall on 3rd September, 1980.

MELBOURNE

Rev. Ken Peters, from Priest-in-Charge S. Mary Magdalene, Dallas, to incumbency S. Peter's Bundoora.

The Rev. Geoffrey M. Tisdall, from incumbency S. Peter's Bundoora to incumbency S. Peter's Box Hill.

ADELAIDE

The Rev. D. J. L. Richardson, Tutor St. Barnabas' College 1st September, 1980.

Rev. K. B. Giles, Anglican Chaplain at New England University, Armidale — Rector Parish of Kensington, January, 1980.

PERTH

Rev. B. R. Jones as Rector of St. Margaret's Woodville.

The Rev. P. R. Brain, Curate of Holy Trinity Church, St. Luke's, Maddington, Diocese of Perth.

CHANGES IN MISSIONARY AND ECUMENICAL COUNCIL

Bishop G. B. Muston of Melbourne becomes Chairman of the Ecumenical Committee, the appointment held for some nine years by the late Bishop Delbridge.

The Reverend Canon R. L. Butters, Chairman of the Australian Board of Missions, replaces Bishop Muston as Chairman of the Missionary Committee of the Council.

promote this "business".

N. May mentions the Church Missionary Society. He/she has obviously never served God in a very remote, hard part of Australia, Tanzania, India, etc. Missionaries in these places greatly appreciate and need the help and encouragement given by officials of C.M.S. to keep going in their work. These officials also need to see the situation on the field so that correct staff, prayer and guidance can be given when decisions need to be made for the field. If the situation was really known, it is often the case that these men would rather be home with their families. There is quite a difference to attending a conference or constantly talking to missionaries about their problems and sightseeing.

We in this lush land of Australia have a responsibility to God to help rehabilitate Uganda through African Enterprise and this must necessitate the sending of personnel.

So what if \$38,000 was spent on accommodation for the Sydney Billy Graham Crusade. N. May mentions that no one raised a voice about this. Obviously because the majority thought it thoroughly worthwhile. Every cent was worth it then I look at the few people (out of so many) that I know who came to know Jesus as a result.

The cattle on a thousand hills are His. Our responsibility is to give our tithe or whatever, their's is the responsibility to spend wisely as they see the need. Let's have nothing but the best for the King's business!

Yours faithfully,
(Mrs) B. Barker.

Tim Tunbridge,
Bilgola Plateau.

Dear Sir,

Regarding the articles that have appeared in recent Church Records reviewing films with explicit sex and violence and encouraging people of all ages to see these films — I cannot see this as bringing Glory to God (1 Cor. 10:31) or teaching us to think upon things pure (Phil. 4:8ff). Could you arrange a teaching article on this subject as I am in quite a quandary over the matter.

Yours sincerely,
Mary Rowland.

Sir,

In the article "The Church and Homosexuality" (Church Record 25th August) Michael Green is quoted as having written in his book, "The balance of Scripture is neither with those who justify the gay scene or with those who shudder at it."

I find this a rather odd statement. Anyone with a truly Scriptural view of morality would be appalled at a sin as perverse and unnatural as homosexuality.

We are taught in Leviticus 20:13 G.N.B. "If a man has sexual relations with another man, they have done a disgusting thing . . ." and in Genesis Chapter 19, the "gay scene" in Sodom was such that God caused the destruction of that corrupt city.

It is submitted that the real balance of Scripture is to love the sinner, but hate the sin which he commits.

"Changing Keys Without Altering the Tune"

Dr Klaas Runia, the 1980 Visiting Moore College Lecturer discusses preaching, the present situation in the Dutch Reformed Church and Dutch Roman Catholic Church and the homosexual debate, with the Church Record.

What made you choose the topic of preaching for the Moore College Annual lectures?

Well, I had considered the topic Inspiration of Scripture which is extremely important, but it seemed to me that the sermon which is the most critical aspect of the worship service is being attacked on all sides. The social scientists are critical, communication theorists are also critical. Theologians have negative things to say, and also the people in the pews often find sermons boring.

If the sermon no longer appeals then we have reached a very bad state indeed.

I felt that it would be most helpful for preachers and people alike to look at this whole issue. The big question is "What has gone wrong? The biblical message is still living and of tremendous importance today, but ministers are finding it difficult to get the message across. The main problem might well be relating the message to the situation in which people are now living. Preachers cannot just repeat what the Scriptures say. They must be speaking to the situation in which they now find themselves. The modern preacher finds himself faced with two problems.



Firstly he has to find out what the text of scripture is actually saying. What is the particular message of this specific passage? The old method of saying general things from a text which could also come from several other texts no longer do.

Secondly there is a need for the preacher to analyse the situation in which we are now living. We are not living in the first, the sixteenth or nineteenth century. What the congregation needs and what the preacher must do is to relate the message of scripture to today, for when these two are wedded together you get the message of God for his people for today. Preaching is more difficult today than it was fifty or twenty years ago. People are living in such complex spheres. In past generations ministers knew what their people did by way of their jobs and knew what that work entailed. Today the minister cannot fathom the complexity of some of the jobs and issues that are raised by them. Within a congregation of 200-300 people it is almost impossible to give one message that will address their needs with the biblical message for their situation. The complexity of the electronic age with the chip industry is indicative of our problem.

Western civilization has undergone great changes. We have moved away

from the easy parallels that could be made with our situation and that of the Bible's, namely a ready identification with an agricultural context. For example the issues of nuclear energy and nuclear war. We will not find simple Bible texts. To find answers we will need to think through the whole message of the Bible to have light thrown on that. The sixth commandment not to kill was a point for reflecting on the issue of war and a just war. But now we hardly dare to speak of a just war. With the weapons we have, every war seems unjust. How does the Christian think his way through that issue?

Poverty and Wealth

On the question of poverty and wealth using a particular text will not do. Even to gather together all the texts on the subject and to apply directly to our situation will not bring the answers. These issues are so complex that what we have to do is to apply the whole of the Bible's message and its approach to life to find the connection between that world and ours. Man's place in creation, his own person and dignity are also at stake. It is in effect like music, sometimes you have to transpose into another key to get what you need. However, you do not change the tune. To give an example, there was a committee formed by the Reformed Ecumenical Synod with members from Europe, South Africa and U.S.A. that looked at the social calling of the Church. One member simply took a series of passages and strung them together in an attempt to find a pattern for today's Christians. What was needed was a starting point with the preaching of Jesus and the kingdom and an understanding of the Church's relationship to that kingdom. It was from that starting point that we found the way forward.

Pew and Pulpit need each other

On the complex issues of our time the man in the pew needs the help of the preacher. He will not find he can simply apply a text. The man in the pew needs to really know what the Bible says, while the preacher needs to know about the world of today. They need each other in working together to find the message for our age on complicated issues. Let me stress that the Bible is very clear on basic issues of life, and the message of salvation is crystal clear. On the moral and ethical issues we need each other. What this says to theological training is that we cannot just stop at the point of expounding the text and relating that to the Church's doctrine. There is a definite place for the analysis of our age. We need the help of areas such as sociology to understand the present structures. Of course the Church itself has its own structures. We are so used to them that we cannot see them clearly. The outsider can help us at this point to see what is happening to us because of the structures which mould our living and our thinking.

Things are changing. I found this when I returned to Holland in 1971 after 15 years in Australia. The isolation of the churches had broken down. The early post war period tended to revive the pre-war structures for the first post war decade. We had our homogeneous church, our christian schools and our



Dr Klaas Runia, Professor of Practical Theology, Kampen Seminary, and his wife in Sydney with Dr Peter Jensen and Dr Bill Dumbrell of Moore College.

older Christian leadership. We had our own political party. We were not much involved in our society, but rather interested in our own situation as a church. It was during the German occupation that we met together with others and we found that they also were Christians, true Christians. Young people especially saw that all was not well for us. We were too isolated, and young people were looking for the renewal of the Church. However for the first post war decade the older generation took over again. By 1960 younger men were appointed to the leadership especially in the theological colleges. They took a new look at old problems, and the new issues that our times raised. There was the impact of change upon the Church. Pre war you knew what a Reformed person was, post war it was different. We have not found a new Christian tradition for our time. We have become secularised like our society and we took over a lot of things other people did without questioning them. There has been a similar process in the Roman Catholic in Holland. Originally it was a closed community, and very much attached to Rome. It was said that Dutch Roman Catholics were more Roman than the Italians. They have been caught up in the same process. Secularisation has become more rampant than for the Reformed adherents. Church attendance which was once very high for the Roman Catholic areas, is now very low indeed. Many have just simply given up.

R.C. wrong starting point

Their problem is best illustrated in the Dutch Adult Catechism. It aimed to interpret the biblical message for today. Its weakness lay in its starting point — the problems of modern man. This was the approach of the modern theologian Paul Tillich. It did not start with the answers of the Bible, but the other way around. The result was that many parts of Scripture were omitted. However what was left out was what they could find no relevance for. In the Reformed Church synod there has been the discussion of a number of contentious issues. One minister challenged the old idea of the satisfaction in the doctrine of the atonement.

Homosexual Debate in 1981

On the issue of homosexuality the synod has debated this issue and there have been different interpretations of the resolution. It was recognised by the synod that many have this problem within the ranks of the Reformed

congregations. They have these tendencies, but never dared talk about their difficulties. The Synod felt that there ought to be a situation in the Church where Christians can talk of their difficulties. Last year Synod issued a call to all congregations which said that people with these inclinations and experience ought not to be automatically debarred from the Lord's Supper or from holding office in the Church. The debate has arisen because of the ambiguity of the word 'experience'. Some have argued that it means experiencing the feeling while others have argued that it means actual physical liaison. This matter will be ironed out at the next session of the synod.

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From page 1

"I know," said the Bishop, "little of the value or otherwise of the foreign owned company to the well being of this country's economy, but I agree with the statement that some foreign owned companies have a greater say in the development of this State than the men who have worked that land for generations."

CONFLICTING RIGHTS

Bishop Witt went on to say that he believed that the struggle was not between right and left nor between Government and Union. He said he believed it was between the rights of the man who wanted to use his land for primary production and those of the company that wanted to mine it.

He said that the Noonkanbah people, as he understood it, did not say that mining should not proceed but that they must decide both where and when.

"I think that they should be allowed to do just that. It is a matter that concerns them and the Amax Corporation and no one else.

"If they were allowed to do this in their own way and in their own time — for they are not a Board of Directors but a community — they would be doing a service for the whole pastoral industry." Bishop Howell Witt ended by saying that the rights they would gain would be the rights of every pastoralist.



Keston College

Baptist Congress "Touched Up" By Editor

The latest issue of the Soviet Baptist journal, (Fraternal Herald), which has just reached Keston College, is devoted exclusively to a report on the All-Union Congress held in Moscow last December (see KNS Nos. 88, 90).

The account of the Congress is somewhat one-sided. It fails to mention the arguments put forward in favour of changing the method of electing the Presidium (the executive body of the Union), though it does admit that the procedure was passed by a majority, as opposed to the overwhelming majority that voted for the agenda and the revised Constitution. Most critical contributions from delegates are either suppressed or glossed over.

For example, three delegates raised problems encountered with the authorities over construction or reconstruction of church buildings in Dushanbe (Turkmen SSR), Chernovtsy (Ukraine) and Leningrad. The delegate from the Turkmen SSR "expressed thanks to the Lord for His blessings and also shared the worries which believers encounter in the churches of the Turkmen, Tadzhik and Uzbek republics".

As well as the obstructiveness of the authorities in Dushanbe over rebuilding the church, he had also mentioned that of the thirty churches in the three republics only fifteen were registered. The chairman of the Chernovtsy church council is reported as speaking of the "problems in the Chernovtsy church": the problems were not within the church but with the local authorities. The appeal by the Leningrad choir-master for help with overcoming delaying tactics by the city authorities and in getting their extension project implemented is completely ignored — instead, the report concentrates on his remarks on the musical life of the churches.

Another distortion is in the presentation of the membership of the All-Union Council and the Presidium. The journal implies that the complete membership of both bodies was announced to the Congress: in fact the All-Union Council was one member short following the refusal of the delegates to elect P. K. Shatrov. Naturally, this unfortunate incident is not even hinted at. The gap has been filled by B. I. Bilas, Pentecostal senior presbyter for Lvov region. His name has clearly been added after the journal was set in type as it is in slightly heavier type and badly aligned with the other names. The

Presidium has acquired not only the two Pentecostal members who were to be nominated by the Pentecostals (a matter not resolved before the delegates dispersed) but also two other members, K. S. Sedletsky, senior presbyter for Moldavia, and I. V. Bukaty, senior presbyter for Belorussia. One of the two Pentecostal members, D. L. Voznyuk, has become a vice-president.

The remaining alteration is even more blatantly against the will of the Congress. It concerns the qualifications for membership, a matter which was discussed at some length. Clause 24a was drafted, and approved, as follows:

"A person who has believed in Christ as his personal Saviour, has experienced rebirth through the word of God and the Holy Spirit, has received believer's baptism and has attained the age of majority may be a member of the local church."

A number of delegates were unhappy about age being mentioned at all, but it was pointed out that Soviet law required members to be 18 years old, and that the order adopted meant that baptism was separated from membership, with age the final qualification. The order has now been reversed, placing attainment of the age of majority before baptism. Bratsky Vestnick's version of Dukhonenko's speech introducing the draft ignores clause 24a altogether (without any indication that the speech has been abridged) and also omits Dukhonenko's reference to an article in the atheist monthly (Science and Religion) in which a Council of Religious Affairs official notes that parents may take children to church and give them a religious upbringing. Dukhonenko encouraged parents to take advantage of this right.

The success of Baptists in bringing up their children in the faith and in attracting young people from non-religious families cannot be to the liking of the authorities either. The renewed linking of baptism with membership (admittedly normal Baptist practice) renders illegal the baptism of teenagers under the age of 18. It is bound to alienate the young people in the churches still further, despite the desire of the Congress to help young Christians.

ST. LUKE'S LIVERPOOL SUNDAY SCHOOL RE-UNION

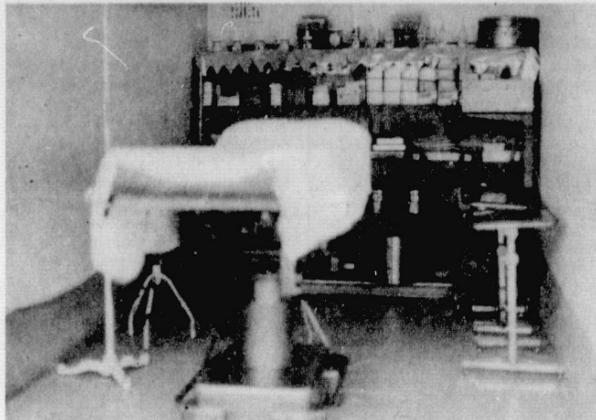
All old students, helpers and teachers

Sunday 19th October

Reunion 3.00 p.m.
Speaker Laurie Banks
Basket tea 5.00 p.m.
(B.Y.O.)

Evening Service — 7.15 p.m.
Speaker — Laurie Banks

Ship - Container → Eritrean Operating Theatre



"People Prepare for Nerve Gas War" - Australian Nurse in Africa

"Everywhere I went, Eritreans had homemade protective gas masks, mainly of cotton cloth packed with charcoal," so reports Sydney nurse, Valerie Browning. Sister Browning has recently visited Eritrea in the Horn of Africa on behalf of the Australian Council of Churches.

"Such a mask and goggles made from old x-ray films were hanging from an intra-venous drip stand for a patient in one hospital."

"In the northern Eritrea base area, the Eritreans wait on full alert for the outbreak of the Sixth offensive — Ethiopia's sixth attempt since June 1978 to crush the Eritrean Independence Movement. The last offensive in this eighteen year old war was in January this year.

"The Eritreans are preparing for the possible use of chemical warfare following their discovery of new military hardware including Soviet M124 helicopter gunships and quantities of nerve gas at Asmara airport.

"Ogbe Haile, a member of the Political Bureau of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF), told me during my visit to the north-east Sahel front-line in early August, 'The chemicals are being stored in a separate place in Asmara. There are

large quantities of specially imported gas masks for the Ethiopian military but we do not know if it has been transported to the front-lines. The Soviet backed Ethiopian army can be expected to use it anywhere in Eritrea as our people are one in supporting our struggle for independence'.

"I spoke to a housewife who left Asmara in the middle of June. She belonged to an underground group who informed the EPLF of the arrival of nerve gas. She said the new material arrived in the last week of May.

"From their trench positions high in the hills overlooking the Ethiopians in the plains below, the Eritreans have obvious strategic advantage. As the EPLF military commander said 'The Ethiopians have no choice but to fight us with the more advanced technology of chemical warfare after failing to defeat the EPLF with bombs and bullets.'"

Miss Browning is a founding member of the Eritrean Relief Committee in Australia, which, over the past 2 years, has raised over \$70,000 for medical and other humanitarian assistance for the Eritrean people.

A.C.C.

100 years ago

Extracts from Church Record 1880

A MADRAS NATIVE CLERGYMAN'S REPORT OF HIS CHURCH COMMITTEES

"My church committee consists of seven members. One of them is a graduate, and three are undergraduates, of the Madras University. [It must be borne in mind that in the Indian Universities no one can be an undergraduate without passing a severe examination, and that many rest content with that honour, seeking no further academic advancement.] They meet in the Lecture Hall every second Saturday of the month. All matters connected with the pastorate are freely discussed. The members are thus kept not only fully informed of the condition of the church, but are also led to take a more active and personal interest in its progress and government. Mr. Nittanadham, the secretary of the committee, is employed under Government, and is of great service to me in my work. Another member, Mr. Devasagayam Ishu, is a medical student, and often helps me, with my son John, and son-in-law Mr. Hensman, in Sunday duties. Another member, Mr. Andrews, assists me much in the open-air preaching, prayer meetings, &c. You will thus see that it is my aim to develop the lay element as much as possible, and enlist it in the service of the church."

and has been most severe. —At Hong-A there is an attendance on Sunday of about fifty, and a class every evening of from eight to ten young men, steadily working together through the New Testament. The strong feeling now being evinced by the converts all over the mission to purchase or build chapels for themselves is, we think a most hopeful sign. Where the converts themselves build or buy a chapel, there is reason for hoping that they will look upon it as their own, and take more interest in it than when it is merely rented year by year by the foreign society."

The above are but a few, and, indeed, very few of the instances which might be given of the power of the Gospel on the heart and actions of the converted heathen. But they are enough to encourage godly people to pray and work in faith, to stir up the lukewarm, and to close the mouth of unbelievers.

SATURDAY NIGHT. How is it spent? We are glad to say that the practice of a Saturday evening prayer meeting is extending in the church, and that many of God's children come together for an hour on the eve of the Holy Sabbath to obtain refreshment by fellowship with each other and with God. We are sure that no time is more suitable for such a meeting. Many can testify to the blessing which this hour of prayer has been to them. There are very many who make this evening a time of dissipation and pleasure. This means toil and weariness, and, in consequence, the Sabbath is not a delight. It is a day too often spent in indolence, in order to recover from the fatigue produced by the toilsome pleasures of the previous night. But a large number of persons are busily engaged until a late hour every Saturday evening in our shops and places of business. Worn and prostrate, both physically and mentally, their Sabbath is no use to them excepting for physical restoration.

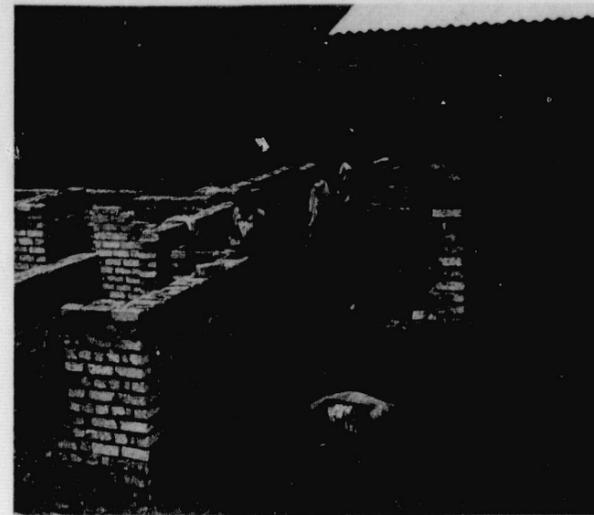
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No Light . . . No Night Study



The African Enterprise organisation has adopted a project to help the Muyebe Girls' High School in Uganda to instal its own electricity supply. The installation is expected to cost \$25,000 and will be undertaken by an English electrical engineer, Mr. Andrew Hazelwood, who was formerly a teacher at the school. According to the headmistress, Miss Elizabeth Traill, who is a CMS Rwanda missionary, the provision of electricity will allow much more study time for the girls who board at the school. It will also provide many other improved facilities including work done by students in the science laboratory.

A parish church in Nottingham, England with links with one of the missionary teachers, Miss Fay Rumley, has already promised to supply a diesel generator.

African Enterprise hopes other parishes in various countries and many individuals will help make this project a reality — as part of the Ugandan rebuilding and rehabilitation programme.

Bible Promotion in Cuba

The Cuban Ecumenical Council of Churches has established a Bible Promotion Commission to deal with Bible imports and distribution.

The last import of Scriptures into Cuba took place in 1979 when the Castro government allowed the Ecumenical Council an import of 10,000 Bibles. These were supplied from Mexico City by the United Bible Societies.

The new Bible Promotion Commission consists of representatives from different churches with its main function to look after new import permits and the fair distribution of the Scriptures that are received.

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Urgent need for medical workers

Two more nurses have joined the World Vision medical team working in a refugee camp in northern Somalia. They are Barbara Walker of New Zealand, who replaces a nurse who is returning to North America, and Joan Kilele from Nairobi, who has been appointed as an additional team member.

Australians in the World Vision medical team are Dr. Trevor Taylor of Adelaide and Wayne Sturgess, a pharmacist from Perth. The team has been working in the Las Dure camp since May this year, ministering to the needs of more than 40,000 refugees, mostly women and children, who have fled the drought and warfare in the Ogaden area of south-east Ethiopia. It is estimated that about a million refugees are now living in Somalia.

The associate director of research and development for World Vision, Steve Powell, said the agency is still very much involved in work among refugees in Thailand and Kampuchea. Powell said World Vision has an urgent need for skilled and experienced medical staff for its hospital in Phnom Penh.

A director of nursing with considerable administrative experience is needed immediately. Also required are a surgeon and a laboratory technician to begin immediately.

All candidates must be fluent in the French language and willing to serve a minimum of six months in Kampuchea. In addition to these short term vacancies, Powell said there are vacancies for full-time workers in administrative positions in the World Vision office in Manila.

Vacancies exist for a financial associate, and associate director of administration and an assistant programme director.

Enquiries about these positions can be made at the World Vision office in Melbourne.

WHAT A WORLD

Life on Earth

Lesley Hicks

LIFE ON EARTH has come to an end, not in atomic annihilation, but — I refer of course to the programme on A.B.C. television — with man, equipped with the miracle of language, as top animal in evolution's pyramid.

It was a beautiful series of programmes, one which made us hanker after a colour T.V. set. We even made a point of watching it in colour once or twice at my mother's home nearby, and our son, having learnt to take photos from a T.V. screen, switched his photographic attention momentarily from Dr. Who to capture a few of David Attenborough's specimens of wildlife.

The infinite range of life on earth was there for our wonder — from the fragile beauty of microscopic life, the colour and grace of butterflies, frogs and gliders, to the ugliness of swarming iguanas in the Galapagos. or of a pack of chuckling hyenas attacking a carcass.

While Attenborough's evolutionary assumptions coloured his every comment, we could only admire the Creator's handiwork all the more as revealed by the photography and planning of the programmes. I watched the whole series therefore with mingled delight and annoyance.

CREATION versus EVOLUTION

The creation/evolution debate is a confusing one. I read all I can find on the subject, and find that both creationists and evolutionists differ amongst themselves in the details of their theories, especially with regard to fossil men or pre-men. When I was a university student, the approved approach amongst Christians who were scientifically literate seemed to favour an unsatisfactory sort of blend of the two, with God of course, as Creator but with evolution as His method, over the necessary aeons of time.

Now amongst Christians it seems to be just as intellectually respectable to reject the theory of evolution as altogether untenable, as its problems and inconsistencies have loomed larger over the years. Even the most convinced evolutionists are forced to acknowledge that the fossil record almost totally lacks transitional forms (or "missing links"). One, George Gaylord Simpson, wrote "It is possible to claim that such transitions are not recorded because they did not exist, that the changes were not by transition but by sudden leaps of evolution." Or, a Christian might just as logically argue, by special creation. All the fossil evidence seems to favour it, as well as the common



sense of attributing all life's marvellous design to a Designer.

I accept the basic historicity of the first eleven chapters of Genesis, but nothing I have read has ever satisfied all my questions about prehistory and early man. We simply do not have all the data, whether by revelation or by scientific discovery. God has given us all the information we need for our salvation and call to worship, but not all that our curiosity demands.

ANSWERS, PLEASE!

As I once heard a speaker say, "The first thing I'll do when I get to heaven will be to head for the Information Desk to get the answers to all my questions." I certainly don't expect to find them in this life!

But we are all, especially children, brainwashed by programmes like "Life on Earth" and most school texts which assume that man and all of life are a product of mere time plus chance, demanding of us a most irrational leap of faith. Few in the scientific or media establishments will acknowledge the many fallacies and weaknesses in evolutionary assumptions. These have been convincingly exposed by Christian scientists such as Dr. A. Rendle Short and Dr. James Jauncey twenty or so years ago, and more recently by Dr. Duane T. Gish.

I find it a problem though that writers like these presuppose a tertiary level of knowledge and reasoning capacity, while the questions about the conflict between evolution and creation are asked even by primary school children. How can one counter and expose godless evolutionary propaganda without over-simplifying on the one hand or else boring the socks off students or congregations by talking above the level of their understanding? Perhaps some of my readers have solutions.

It is important that we seek answers. People are genuinely troubled by these issues, and some continue to reject Christ and the Bible altogether because of their inability to accept the Genesis account of origins.

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T UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER
Families at Risk: Weaknesses or Strengths?

DR. ALAN CRADDOCK

Marriage and family relationships are currently at great risk in our society and many Christians are disturbed by the apparent vulnerability of such relationships to stress and ultimately to breakdown. Recent figures from the Federal Attorney General's office indicate that the number of divorces per year is again increasing (38,000 in 1979 and about 40,000 in 1980 are the current estimates) and will continue to rise. By 1990 it is estimated that the number of divorces could actually exceed the number of marriages. Estimations are naturally to be treated with caution and I have doubts about the 1990 situation. But no matter how one views the future, the present situation is disturbing.

Divorce figures reveal only part of the problem. Many intact families continue to exist in a barely tolerable state. Sometimes the latent tensions erupt into physical violence. This is reflected in the following figures released in the U.S.A.: (1) Nearly 1 out of every 4 murder victims is killed by a member of their own family, (2) Each year at least six million men, women and children are victims of

severe physical attacks at the hands of their spouses or parents, (3) Each year 2,000 children are killed by their caretakers.

The Australian scene is not very encouraging. The report of the Royal Commission on Human Relations (1977) indicates that "... the size of the problem of domestic violence in Australia is difficult to determine because of the desire of most people involved to keep it secret and suffer in silence". But one estimate is that from March 1974 to June 1976 over 5,000 women and nearly 7,000 children were given shelter in Women's Refuges in the face of domestic violence. These figures would be greatly increased if those seeking shelter at other refuges run by churches and welfare agencies were added.

Incidences of divorce and domestic violence are only reasonably visible manifestations of relationship tensions. Marriage counsellors and clergy are only too aware of the less visible but nonetheless agonising difficulties faced by many other families. The sheer volume of marital and family

problems prompts many people to question the viability of the traditional family unit. The basic issue appears to involve whether or not the family is basically a weak and vulnerable organisation which inevitably places its members at risk.

The point that is often overlooked by critics of the family is that many of the so-called weaknesses of the family serve dual roles. The very factors which may contribute to outbreaks of violence or which create frustrations and tension for family members, are also factors which have the potential for making the family a warm supportive and satisfying environment.

One example of a dual role factor is the level of intimacy and emotional involvement of family members. Husbands and wives and their children spend a great deal of time together and know one another intimately. They come to feel comfortable with one another and relax in each other's presence, becoming honest and open. Each person's strengths and weaknesses, likes and dislikes, loves and fears become known intimately.

This kind of knowledge can help to support the relationship but the information can also be used in any attack upon family members when this is desired. Knowing a person thoroughly enables you to meet their needs appropriately and at the same time provides you with information about their weaknesses which may be used against them. The factor which can lead to satisfaction can also become a major source of relationship tension.

I believe it is helpful to examine the factors which appear to place families at risk and to see them as possible inversions of factors which normally strengthen family relationships. We need to concentrate upon the conditions which cause a strength to turn to weakness rather than upon the so-called weaknesses which are claimed by some to be inevitably associated with marriage and family relationships. In the next issue I will examine a set of alleged weaknesses of the family and discuss the way in which they may be seen as corruptions of positive aspects of family life.

BOOK REVIEWS



Booth's Drum
By Barbara Bolton
Published by Hodder and Stoughton, paperback, 287 pp.
Price \$3.95.

A lecturer at college once told us that he used to march behind the army drum. He was devastated when someone called out, "How far behind?"

At least those who made this book possible were where the action was. Why, there's even a photograph of Brother Gale, now aged 103 who was present at the first meeting as an infant (obviously).

Published to celebrate the centenary of the army "opening fire" in Adelaide's Botanic Park just a century ago, the book is a valuable contribution to Australia's social and religious history.

Barbara Bolton has enlivened the account with numerous anecdotes, such as "Smelly Bill" Denby who was renamed "Sweet William" when his life and appearance changed with his conversion.

They were thrilling days, with persecution from the mob and imprisonment from the authorities. "Newspapers against us, public against us, but God for us," read an early report sent back to England. Flour, soot and mud were regular missiles at the street meetings, but they fired away and won the battle.

Whether strategy has been modified for the 1980's remains to be seen, but the army has certainly been abreast of the times in the past. "We, as white people, occupying the land of these aboriginals, have a large debt to pay these blacks," wrote John Horsley. It might have been written today; it was penned in 1885.

The movement is shown in its strengths and its weaknesses. The original practice of admitting candidates with little training must have jeopardised the spiritual calibre of many under their command. Today one must pose the query as to whether the outstanding social work has tended to overshadow the emphasis of the gospel message.

This possibility was recognised by many in the early days, and is not allayed when one reads that "the twentieth century Salvationist is an activist".

The book's main appeal will naturally be to salvationists, but those who admire the army will find detailed accounts of its ministry, particularly in war and in the disasters which still occur in our community.

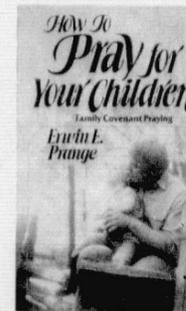
An unfortunate omission is the work done during the early days of the Snowy Mountains Scheme. Officers in the mountains operated under difficult conditions in true Salvationist style. Perhaps their performance can yet be chronicled.

When one officer failed to sell his quota of the War Cry, the paper printed a picture of a tombstone bearing his name. You can never accuse Salvationists of beating round the bush!

Donald Howard

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How to pray for your children
Erwin E. Prange
Published by Bethany Fellowship, Minneapolis. 170 pages paperback.

Bethany Fellowship has been publishing interesting and attractive books on the family; this one deals with family covenant praying.

It's a devotional hodge-podge, but has some good points for the discerning reader. Ministers should profit from reading it. After all, if we can stir people to pray with and for their families, anything might happen.

Donald Howard

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Yours Faithfully
Gerald Priestland
Collins 155 pages paperback, \$3.25.

Gerald Priestland was for some time the discerning BBC man in Washington. Now he is Religious Affairs Correspondent of the BBC, a field in which he is not so discerning. Perhaps it is his Quaker background.

If you want some light and stimulating reading by one who is a craftsman with words, this is the book for you.

After all, if a man can't please someone in 63 talks ranging from sex to synods, there's something wrong somewhere, and I don't mean with the author.

Donald Howard

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OFF TO THE CRYSTAL CATHEDRAL OPENING



The first party of 40 people left Sydney, Tuesday September 2nd, headed for the grand opening and dedication services of the Robert Schuller Ministries' CRYSTAL CATHEDRAL at the Garden Grove Community Church.

Three separate dedication services are planned, so as to accommodate the thousands who are planning to attend.

Amongst the first group was well known Australian athlete, Marjorie Jackson ("The Lithgow Flash"). Following the death of her husband, Mr. Nelson, Mrs. Jackson-Nelson has initiated a fund to help fight leukemia. Many have come to her for assistance, and she suggests that if they want a message of hope, they should view the TV program, HOUR OF POWER, by Dr. Robert Schuller.

Leaves for Extended Tour

The Rev. Greg Blaxland has just completed, at the end of August, a total of 15 years and 5 months service with the South American Missionary Society and has taken his long service leave from 18th September to 18th December. Prior to commencing this leave, he will lead a series of lectures at the S.A.M.S. International Candidates' Training Course at Union Mills, North Carolina, U.S.A., where some 30 candidates from the United States, the United Kingdom and Australasia commenced their special orientation course on 8th July.

Mr. Blaxland with his wife, Judith, and three sons Peter (19), John (17) and Andrew (15), will spend three months at a Discipleship Training School in Hawaii. The School is conducted by the International Interdenominational Fellowship known as Youth With A Mission. Following this training, the Blaxland family hopes to revisit several areas of Anglican work in South America, returning to Australia in early February 1981.

None of the expenses involved in the foregoing will be drawn from the general funds of S.A.M.S. Australasia.

SAMS

OBEY... and go to jail!



Chuck Colson of the Prison Fellowship in the U.S.A., addressed a special breakfast meeting in Sydney, Tuesday September 2nd. The challenge to the 400 guests present was that of being obedient to the Lord and following His will, even if it meant going to prison... to visit the inmates!

Jim Chouais (Executive Director, Prison Fellowship of Australia) with the Founder, Charles (Chuck) Colson, at the meeting in Sydney.

Photo Ramon Williams.

Seminars at Katoomba Conference

Six seminars are planned for the Saturday and Sunday afternoons of the "World Missions in the Eighties" Conference at Katoomba, N.S.W.

Each Seminar is planned by its Chairman who is also responsible for running the session. Those attending the Conference may choose which they wish to attend.

Subjects being dealt with are **Literature** — its writing, production, publishing, distribution and impact. **Youth** — their needs and aspirations in developing countries and how to reach them with the Gospel. **Leadership Training** — at all levels including Theological Education by Extension, residential Colleges, local

church Bible studies. These are to be on the Saturday afternoon.

On Sunday there will be in-depth sessions on **Communications** — by all means including radio; the place and potential of **Medical work** in the eighties and a full session on **Training** — what to do and what to study to be an effective missionary.

The key-note of these Seminars is the extent of inter-mission society co-operation that has been engendered in their planning and presentation. The whole Conference is marked by the high level of fellowship among the various participating societies.

The Winners!



Ann Galloway, Assistant Manager of the S.U. Bookshop, Perth with her award for the best bookshop in Australia, together with Brian Burleigh, General Manager of Bookhouse Australia Ltd. with the award for the best exhibitor.

The standard set at the C.B.A.A. Convention was very high and is believed to exceed anything in the commercial book selling area, in Australia.

photo Ramon Williams

The Australian



CHURCH RECORD

13 OCT 1980

FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1880

1716

OCTOBER 6

Registered for posting as a publication Category A

PRICE 30 CENTS

A TRIP TO HELP THOSE ON DRUG TRIP



(Left to right) Alan Monson, Peter Engler, Dave Ellis and George Capsis, Christians from Sydney, show some of the Cantonese hand signs learnt during their four week holiday — helping in a Christian drug rehabilitation program, on Dawn Island near Hong Kong. There, drug users seeking to be rehabilitated, are matched with a former drug-user, who has an understanding of what they are going through. Called "Siamese twins", the worker is alongside to encourage and help, 24 hours a day! The success rate is higher than any drug programme conducted by the Government. In Hong Kong, there are over 250,000 known drug users, most starting at the age of 12-13 years. Many on Dawn Island have criminal records, one being a murderer.

photo Ramon Williams

Kenyan Church must 'wake up' or pay price

Unless Kenyan Christians 'wake up' and support the work of the Bible Society in their country, one day it will be very difficult to find Bibles in Kenya.

That is the verdict of the newly appointed general secretary of the Bible Society of Kenya, Pastor Joseph Musembi.

There are 40 main languages spoken in Kenya but so far the complete Bible is only available in nine of them. "The Maasai, for example, have been crying out for a Bible for 15 years," he says.

Although the Bible Society of Kenya is heavily subsidised by friendly churches and religious organisations in the United States and Europe, the support it has received from local Kenyan churches has been negligible.

'Uncomfortable'

Pastor Musembi wonders why the six million Christians who attend church every Sunday in Kenya cannot raise the money required so that the Bible Society can fill the demand.

The reason, it is believed, is that for many years missionaries have provided money for church work in Kenya. Already many donors are uncomfortable about having to give money to Bible Society of Kenya every year. They feel that Kenya churches and Christians can easily raise the necessary funds, and Pastor Musembi agrees.

Fountain Trust to close — not economic but 'in obedience to God'

The Fountain Trust, the charismatic organisation which in its relatively short life of sixteen years has become a noted institution in the Church, is to close down at the end of this year.

A sad thing, you might think, and yet one more mark of the religious recession which has long pre-dated the present economic one. But not so. The trustees and executive committee announced on Monday that all activities would cease on December 31 "in joyful obedience to God."

Their statement said that the decision was a unanimous one, taken after much prayer. "There has been no pressure whatsoever, financial or otherwise, in this decision. We have taken it in peace and harmony that this is the call of God."

The six full-time and three part-time employees of the Trust who will join the ranks of the two million unemployed are apparently quite

cheerful at the prospect, and are said to be also in full agreement with the decision to close down.

Trust members had some difficulty in explaining to the Press conference which they called in London how and why they had arrived at the conviction that the organisation should close because, as is well known, while God sometimes makes it clear that he wants something done, he does not always bother to spell out why.

However, it seems that it is at least partly because of its success in becoming a sort of institution that the Trust must now close. Institutions tend to try to encapsulate God, said the director, the Rev. Michael Barling, in cautioning people to think very carefully before starting up new organisations to take the Fountain Trust's place.

But, from the more positive angle, it was felt that the Trust had helped prompt a host of groups and activities, especially at the local level, which could now carry on the Trust's task of encouraging the renewing work of the Holy Spirit.

The Trustees' statement said they were convinced that God was saying that the Fountain Trust had played its part and that this particular ministry must come to an end. "We do not pretend to know how God intends to see this work continue to move forward," they declared, but "we do believe that this act of obedience will prove to be a positive contribution to the whole work of renewal."

W.C.C and RES Membership

Membership in the World Council of Churches has been a bone of contention for the Reformed Ecumenical Synod churches for nearly three decades and it will continue to be debated at least until 1984. The RES Nimes, France which adjourned on 25 July decided to make one last try to reach agreement on the nettlesome issue and authorised the appointment of an 8-member committee to study the issue further, with a view to reaching a final decision in 1984.

The Advisory Committee reported that all the members of the committee, regardless of viewpoint, are of the conviction that the matter of membership in the WCC ought not to be allowed to continue unresolved, occupying so much of the time and energy of every meeting of the Synod and undermining the unity of the Synod. They agreed that this Synod ought to initiate action to enable the Synod of 1984 to make a definitive decision concerning WCC membership, whatever that decision may be.

The delegates of the Free Church of Scotland and the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland had been given a directive from their respective churches to seek resolution of this matter at this particular Synod.

They were deeply disappointed, therefore, that after seven synods and 29 years of debate, the matter still rests on the Synod table. They recognised nevertheless, that the matter will finally be disposed of in full accordance with the constitution of the RES, at the next meeting of the Synod.

In acting on the proposals of the Advisory Committee, the Synod reaffirmed the advice given by every meeting of the RES since 1953 onwards to member churches not to join the WCC. It then instructed the Interim Committee to appoint a study committee "to make a comprehensive study, from Scripture and our confessions, of the Reformed concept of the church and its implications for current and future ecumenical relationships".

The committee is instructed to include in its study the question of the membership of churches in the WCC and to give serious attention to the ecumenical relationship of the younger RES churches.

To implement the study, a committee of eight persons, two each from Africa, the Americas, Europe, Asia and the South Pacific has been formed. They are asked in turn to form regional committees in which the churches in the area will be involved. The final report is due in July 1983, one year before the final decision is made.

(RES NE 8/12/80)

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