

EDITORIAL

Justice . . . and Humanity

There are many things a christian can be thankful about with respect to the administration of justice in our law courts. By and large we can rely on the community sense of justice to prosecute the guilty and to protect the innocent. Every day, in bible terms, 'the fatherless and the widow' are vindicated by our judges.

But not always.

There is a definite and alarming trend — albeit slow — to undermine justice in our courts and ancillary institutions. It is not that the law is not enforced, it is that justice is not always done. That is, people may be punished for their crimes, but they are not always given their due. And this is greatly offensive and reprehensible, because God — who is the Creator, Judge and Redeemer of all humankind in Jesus Christ — is not only perfect justice in himself, but demands the administration of the same by his creatures, us. God punishes fairly, according to desert. But such is not the case with ourselves.

We most often now punish to reform; to change a person's outlook and behaviour by coercion and none too subtle persuasion. When the "treatment" is deemed complete then the offender is paroled. In theory, any treatment — however savage or mild — is permissible. In practice — due to the liberal values that the christian gospel has created in our society and which still exist even if precariously — the form of treatment is limited. In a sense, some justice must still be seen to be done; we do not yet over-punish to the point of chopping-off hands for theft. Not yet.

Now surely this is a christian overstatement? No, in the view of this paper justice in N.S.W. is at times a scarce commodity. Two cases in point illustrate this tendency.

First, one gains the impression from the sentencing practice in recent taxi-driver murders that a man's life is only worth about 5 years of restricted freedom, that is, imprisonment. This is the commonsense conclusion. A double, and let it be said, a most gross and brutal verdict for ordinary and law abiding citizens about their daily business, gained under community', and the sentence of two life sentences (14 years' imprisonment for the first, 10 years' imprisonment for the second) — terms this represents a life, or ten years for the first life, and every murder in the daily newspapers have rightly reflected the issue of outrage. But let it be said, the Judge was following the law and its current interpretation, that is, what is acceptable to the community'.

The second case is the sentencing of justice in our prison system. We have reported in the "dailies" have already reported on prisoners, who are living in even worse cages elsewhere in N.S.W. than those who are in the rain and the sun, no chairs, nothing to ease the mind; just open, bricked in, small, cages. Words fail to express the reprehensibility of such a situation.

Now we must not be dewy-eyed about criminals, and especially the violent, uncontrolled prisoners for whom Parklea is being built. Homosexual rape, savage attack, constant terror, and even murder is what the future denizens of Parklea inflict on their fellows, and wardens, in our prisons. To control such men for the good of all, including themselves, is not easy. But, we need to be clear that the punishment for crime in our society is not bread and water, or cages, or whatever, but is restriction of freedom, the loss of normal contact with the outside world. To inflict more than this on any prisoner is to over-punish. And that is what we are doing — inhumanly — as even the Ombudsman has pointed out. In spite of what the Minister for Corrective Services, Mr. Jackson, has said, there are other options known beside cages or sedatives for intractables. Scotland, with a population akin to N.S.W. has other, and in the celebrated recent case of one Jimmy Boyle, successful ways to control violent men. Even if that is an impossible option to be pursued here, then why does the Minister not pursue the mild recommendations of the Ombudsman instead of issuing a torrent of derisory words to defend his office?

Why has the Minister had this attitude? Because he really speaks for all of us. Due to our rebellion against God we do not wish to pursue justice, only convenience. Again, 'community standards' are in the background. There are no votes in prisons. Further, there is really no justice when individuals and the community deny a standard of morals exists outside of themselves — resident in God, or less clearly in "natural law", "natural justice", etc. Our governments have in many ways encouraged this refusal to recognise God through the virulent promotion of a thoroughly self-centred philosophy. The Family Law system, the Anti-Discrimination Board, all bear witness to self-centredness, and, a consequent banishment of justice.

Pray God that Parklea will not stand for a hundred years as some predict, a monument to our personal and national rebellion and selfishness.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wish to make a few comments about the Opening Service of the 31st General Meeting of the Australian Council of Churches. As the person responsible for the preparation of this service, I may be able to shed a little light on the confusion which was apparent on the front page of A.C.R. on August 9, 1982.

Firstly, it is not true to say, as you do, "Many delegates to the 31st General Meeting of the A.C.C. found the Opening Worship unacceptable." It is true that the Anglican delegates expressed considerable misgivings about the opening litany and, in fact, were not prepared for any of their number to help lead it. But neither were they prepared to cause embarrassment by protesting against the litany's use. Naturally, as soon as the disquiet of the Anglicans was discovered, those of us organising the service decided to drop the offending litany — out of consideration for the feelings of fellow Christians.

For practical reasons, the words of the litany could not be removed from the service sheet, but the litany was not used. As a result, there was some confusion among the worshippers — but it is not true to say, "Many delegates . . . found the Opening Worship unacceptable."

A litany of the saints is not an unusual feature of the worship of some Australian churches, including the Anglican Church. The difficulty with the litany proposed for the A.C.C. opening worship was that, in attempting to affirm solidarity with those who have focused the world's attention on God's purposes in more recent times, some of the petitions in the litany were directed to persons who have not been canonised (or even traditionally regarded as saints).

The people's response — "Stand here beside us" — was not meant to "call people back", as A.C.R. (curiously) suggests. It was a metaphorical expression of a desire to be part of that tradition of people who have enabled light to fall on the reality of God's purposes for the world. Some of the people mentioned in the litany were not overtly religious, but then God's purposes have at times been less accurately reflected by "religious" people than by those not usually so regarded. The Bible points us to this fact time and time again.

A.C.R. also makes the assumption that the opening service is "a statement of what the A.C.C. stands for." When we talk about the A.C.C. in this sense, we cannot simply talk about the A.C.C. staff or the people at the General Meeting; we must talk about thirteen member churches, and the emerging consensus the Council is helping to bring about across that wide range of doctrine and practice. This consensus is what the Council stands for and, insofar as the opening litany was not used, its deletion from the opening service was more representative of the mind of the A.C.C. than its inclusion would have been.

Finally, we come to the allegation that the service was "Marxist oriented". More than anything else, this kicking the Communist can and has convinced me that A.C.R. is prepared to do and say anything to discredit the A.C.C. — whether it is true or not. I wonder if this could be an attempt to bolster failing circulation.

Despite the controversy A.C.R. has attempted to generate, by the grace of God wiser Anglican voices have been more clearly heard. The authenticity of the ecumenical movement has been affirmed by the Primate, the Most Revd. J. B. R. Grindrod. Speaking at the Public Celebration at the General Meeting, he said, "We are in the Australian Council of Churches because it is Christ's will." Surely, then, it is incumbent on us not to tear each other down, but to build one another up in faith.

Yours sincerely,
The Rev. Paul Swadling
Promotions Secretary
Australian Council of Churches

Dear Sir,

Your reports on the Brisbane General Meeting of the Australian Council of Churches (ACR 9/8/82) contain several errors from which you have drawn misleading conclusions.

1. The Metropolitan Community Church was not admitted as an observer at the ACC 31st General Meeting. The Rev. D. Johnson was admitted as a visitor from that Church.
2. This action was not without prior knowledge of the ACC Committee responsible for such decisions and normal procedures were followed. The June 9 meeting of the ACC Executive Committee discussed this issue at considerable length and agreed, with one vote in opposition recorded, to decline the MCC's request to be granted observer status but to invite the Church as a visitor. Had ACR asked any of the Sydney Anglicans who had attended the ACC Executive Committee on June 9, this most misleading error could have been avoided.
3. The conclusions you draw regarding the MCC are misleading and are not based on fact. I trust you will acknowledge this failure to report the facts.
4. In the Editorial of the same issue, ACR states that Sydney Diocese has withheld

money from the Australian Council of Churches in protest over the Programme to Combat Racism. This is not correct.

Sydney Diocese has redirected that portion of its allocation to General Synod funds which goes to the World Council of Churches as the membership fee for the Anglican Church in Australia, to the Refugee Resettlement work of the Australian Council of Churches.

Thus the money has been (indirectly) withheld from the WCC and given to the ACC.

5. Your editorial suggests the World Council of Churches has lost interest in world mission and Christian unity. Two recent actions easily dispel this misleading impression.

Firstly, three statements — on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry — were adopted in a unanimous vote by nearly 100 theologians from the Anglican, Reformed, Roman Catholic and Orthodox traditions at the January 1982 meeting of the WCC Faith and Order Commission. These historic statements represent the fruit of a 50 year process and the WCC's 301 member churches have been invited to respond to the texts.

Secondly, the adoption by the WCC Central Committee in July this year of the major statement "Mission and Evangelism — An Ecumenical Affirmation". This statement has emerged out of several years of debate and discussion within the WCC Commission on World Mission and Evangelism. On conversion, it says "The proclamation of the gospel includes an invitation to recognize and accept in a personal decision the saving lordship of Christ".

I'm not sure what conclusion to draw from the fact that ACR regularly reports on decisions by the WCC regarding racism but has not reported this significant statement on Mission and Evangelism.

Yours sincerely,
Russell Rollason
Information Officer

The Editor replies:

The Australian Church Record does not print material without careful research. For that reason it is necessary to reply to Mr. Rollason's accusations.

1, 2, and 3. Our report on the admission of a representative of the Metropolitan Community Church (the Church for homosexuals) was based on comments made by those attending the General Meeting of the A.C.C. It was a small item because we chose not to publish accusations that questioned the integrity of certain individuals in the A.C.C. It seems that those accusations were correct. Prime amongst them was the suggestion that this whole matter of the M.C.C. was dealt with in an underhanded way to prevent any reaction from members. This seems to be borne out by the fact that those we spoke to have assured us that our reporting of the matter was as they had observed it — that is, the M.C.C. representative was admitted as an observer. We cannot challenge the official statement, which Mr. Rollason obviously has, but we stand by our report of what impartial participants (who we trust implicitly) assured us that they understood by the situation.

Further, we see no difference in the point we were making between observer and visitor. Any recognition of the M.C.C. under whatever term chosen, is offensive to the views of some members of the A.C.C.

We should also point out that, if any of the Sydney Anglicans on the A.C.C. Executive Committee had voted for this action, then they did not act in accord with the clearly stated position of the Synod which elected them and which they are supposed to represent. They should, in all conscience resign their positions unless they are prepared to truly represent those who elect them.

4. Despite, Mr. Rollason's gobbledegook statement the facts remain that the Sydney Synod has acted out of a concern over the policies of the WCC and especially out of disagreement with the Programme to combat Racism. No matter how Mr. Rollason seeks to explain it away, he cannot alter what a majority of members of the Sydney Synod believe they have done.

5. The statement on conversion that "The proclamation of the gospel includes an invitation to recognise and accept in a personal decision the saving lordship of Christ" is not, to us, newsworthy. It seems strange that a purportedly Christian organisation should take years of debate and discussion to finally decide that the Apostle Paul was right! Our real problem though is with the statement that the proclamation of the gospel "includes". As we read the statement of the WCC Commission on World Mission and Evangelism we see that this is a small and almost insignificant part of the overall statement (in fact we saw it as hastily added to be a sop to the conservatives). What the WCC has done is exactly what some Galatians were doing in Paul's day — preaching a gospel of justification plus. Paul condemned this as heresy — the mind of God on the matter can hardly have changed!

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At last an Australian made Evangelistic programme

In May of this year Bishop Jack Dain, Chairman of the Board of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association in Australia, announced a new programme to be offered by the B.G.E.A. He said:

"We were so excited and encouraged by the results of the recent Leighton Ford Northside Reachout at Sydney's St. Ives Showground (58,000 attended, 2048 made commitments to Christ) that we have decided to adopt and extend the "Reachout" ministry in Australia.

When I mentioned this idea at the final meeting of the Northside Reachout it met with warm and overwhelming support.

In the person of the Rev. Norman Pell, who was the co-ordinator of the Northside Reachout, we have an Australian with a wealth of world-wide experience in the unique style of "Reachout" evangelism.

In future, Mr. Pell will head up our Reachout ministry here in Australia and he will put himself at the disposal of churches and denominations to assist with advice and expertise regarding evangelism in areas throughout Australia.

We believe that wonderful things lie ahead of us in evangelism as we share in this partnership of faith in action."

The Church Record shares Bishop Dain's sense of expectation. This is an important move in a country used to importing evangelists and evangelistic programmes from overseas. This programme has been developed IN AUSTRALIA and exported overseas.

The man who will head this new programme is Norman Pell. Church Record recently interviewed him.

At first sight Norman Pell does not appear as impressive as the people we are used to from the Billy Graham Association. He seems almost ordinary. But to talk to him for just a few minutes is to see why he was asked, in 1964, to go to America to be Director of the Leighton Ford Crusades. His enthusiasm for evangelism is infectious and his enthusiasm for his brain child — the Reachout Programme — knows no bounds.

Norman Pell was ordained as a Baptist pastor in Victoria and served for seven years before becoming the Director of the Christian Endeavour Movement in Australia. When Billy Graham came to Melbourne in 1959 Pell was Youth Chairman for the Crusade. As a result of the work he did he was invited in 1961 to organise the Crusades held throughout Victoria by the Associate Evangelists of the Billy Graham team.

The call came in 1964 to go to America and there he was put in charge of the Leighton Ford Crusades. During that time he developed a strong friendship with Ford; a friendship that led eventually to the development of the Reachout programme.

After seven years Pell returned to Australia to become the General Superintendent of the Baptist Union of Victoria. He held that position for five years and during that period the Reachout programme was born.

Disenchanted

Pell says, "During that time the status quo mentality of the Church really got to me and I realised that if we were going to see in Australia a significant change in our impact on the community at large then we had to have a change take place in the Church." That change, he realised had to take place at a rate and in a style that was acceptable to the Church so that individual members could be encouraged to participate.

"I began to look at the principles embodied in the ministry of Jesus and to recognise where we were failing to apply those principles in the contemporary life of the Church. Out of this came the Reachout approach," Paul says.

Lausanne

Norman Pell went to the Lausanne conference and there renewed his friendship with Leighton Ford. During conversation it became clear that Ford had been going through a similar kind of experience of disquiet. He liked Pell's ideas and asked him if he would return and begin to implement the Reachout programme in the Ford Crusades.

The first time the programme was used was in Vancouver, Canada. It was an experiment and Pell admits that they made mistakes. But it was what was needed and so it was developed and refined through many other Crusades including Australian ones — Melbourne, Brisbane, Wollongong, Tasmania and Adelaide.

Pell is proud that the programme is Australian. "The whole concept is an Australian concept. We've taken it to America and they've accepted it. Now it has been used for the Northside Reachout in Sydney. The Board of the B.G.E.A. was so impressed that they decided to make it available to other churches."

Basic Principle

"The Church has to get a vision of what the local congregation should be. Most congregations have settled for the fact

that they can only have a marginal impact on the community," Pell says. "We begin with Jesus intention for His Church. He never intended it to grow by evangelistic campaigns — that's a plus factor — but the Church was to grow by the spontaneous outreach of the people of God. So we start with a programme of goals discovery based on the resources of people in that congregation. The other resources then help to develop that."

What is Reachout?

A recent Decision magazine article set out the Principles of Reachout.

The principles of the Reachout process are based on the understanding that the church, among other definitions, is "the extension of the Incarnation". It must therefore embody the principles in its life and ministry that were characteristic of the ministry of Jesus (Matthew 9:35-10:7; Luke 10:17-22).

These principles have been defined as:

- **Establishing specific objectives.** Helping the local congregation (not just the leadership) to discover what specific goals the Lord is calling them to achieve in the terms of the Kingdom of God!
- **Identifying People's needs.** Assisting the local congregation to break through the barriers which isolate the church from people in the community and enable Christians to "build bridges of friendship" to responsive families.
- **Equipping the people of God.** Motivating the entire congregation to want to be the people of God and enabling them with confidence to share their faith.
- **Reaching out and discipling.** Encouraging Christians to relate to people in their life situation with special emphasis on the use of the Christian home in this connection, sharing their fellowship and faith in a way that will stimulate spiritual growth.
- **Celebrating and evaluating.** Joining together in worship and thanksgiving to celebrate God's working in His world and to reach out to others in the context of praise and fellowship.

Resources

There are numerous resources available to help implement this programme. These have been widely advertised. So the Record reviewed them to help our readers get a better appreciation of them.

(1) Congregational goals discovery Plan. This is designed to help the local congregation to discover information about their local area and, using that information, to establish goals and to implement them. The material is very helpful but usually needs to be altered slightly to meet local needs. Such alteration is simple, especially after you have read the leader's guide or had it explained. We found this to be a simple but absolutely essential start — and we would urge congregations to use it — even if they don't do the full Reachout programme.

(2) In the Spirit of Love. This book of studies is designed to be used to prepare the congregation for the full implementation of the Reachout programme. The studies are geared to be used at different levels. Each person is asked to use them in personal devotions, in family devotions, in small groups and then the Sunday worship is based on them. The effect of a congregation using

these is exciting. It not only enthralls them but often there are reports of people being converted through being asked by friends to do the seven studies.

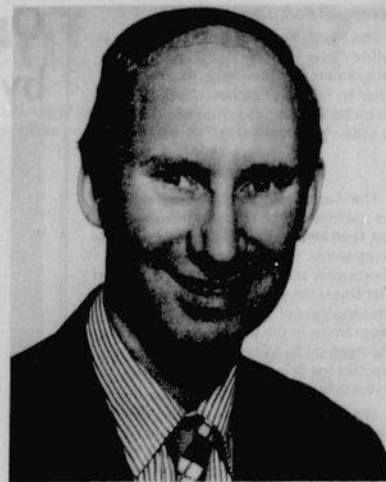
(3) Good News is for Sharing. This is a book on evangelism by Leighton Ford. Of all the books available on evangelism this is one of the best. Very practical, it presents information in a way that can be understood and applied by everyone. With it there is a study guide using overhead projector transparencies. We can think of no more helpful way for a local congregation to do a training course in evangelism.

(4) Prayer Workshop. Prayer is, of course, absolutely essential in evangelism. Yet many Christians do not know how to pray properly — and there is very little information available to help them. This material fills that gap — simple, clear and invaluable.

(5) Community contact by telephone. This is a development that Norman Pell is very excited about. It is proving very successful in introducing new people to the local congregation. It may not be everybody's cup of tea — but it works!

(6) Nurturing new disciples. A vital part of the programme, this is a useful set of six studies for beginning the development of the Christian life of new converts.

(7) Open Heart, Open Home. This is a new addition to the programme — and a good one. Based on the book by Karen Burton Mains which is excellent, it seeks to help people to make their home a basis for Reachout. Most of us have agreed with the approach for years but have never really known how to carry it out — this course will definitely help. The group leaders notes will help lay members of the congregation to use the book effectively.



Norman Pell

Celebration

The final stage of the Reachout programme is the celebration phase. This is the "Crusade" but it is really just the icing on the cake. If a congregation has worked through the programme it's life will have been revitalised, it will already be reaching out into the community and it will have an ongoing programme of reachout.

Whilst Leighton Ford is available for Crusades, Norman Pell believes that it is important that we develop Australian evangelists. For that reason he hopes that the Reachout programme can be implemented by small areas — or even single congregations — utilising the many gifted evangelists in Australia.

Help

Norman Pell sees the need for a catalyst in the programme. That is the role he hopes to play in the coming years. He is prepared to travel anywhere in Australia to explain the Reachout process, to help with the implementation of any part of the programme and to advise at each stage of the programme. Whilst the programme stands on its own and the material is very clear, congregations will find his assistance invaluable and should make use of it.

Costs

"Never hesitate to call on our service because of lack of finance," Pell told us. He is anxious that every congregation has an opportunity to fully participate. A set of cost suggestions is available from the Billy Graham office and the costs suggested are most reasonable.

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ORDER YOUR REACHOUT RESOURCE MATERIAL NOW

CONGREGATIONAL GOALS DISCOVERY PLAN
— \$10.00, plus \$2.00 pack and post N.S.W., \$4.00 other States

IN THE SPIRIT OF LOVE

1. Study Guide — \$1.00, plus 65¢ pack and post
2. Information Manual (describes how to implement the series) — 75¢, plus 40¢ pack and post

GOOD NEWS IS FOR SHARING

1. Leader's Guide Book (includes transparencies for overhead projector) — \$12.00, plus \$1.00 pack and post N.S.W., \$1.10 other States
2. Response Sheets (each set provides for 8 people for the course) — \$3.00 per set, plus \$1.00 pack and post N.S.W., \$1.10 other States
3. 'Good News is for Sharing' book (by Leighton Ford) — \$3.95, plus \$1.00 pack and post N.S.W., \$1.10 other States
4. 6-Session Outline Guide — \$1.00, plus 40¢ pack and post

PRAYER WORKSHOP

— \$1.00, plus 55¢ pack and post

COMMUNITY CONTACT BY TELEPHONE

— \$2.00, plus 55¢ pack and post

NURTURING NEW DISCIPLES

— \$2.00, plus 55¢ pack and post

OPEN HEART, OPEN HOME

1. Open Heart, Open Home book (by Karen B. Mains) — \$5.95, plus \$1.00 pack and post N.S.W., \$1.10 other States
2. Leader's Guide for discussion groups over 6 weeks — \$1.00, plus 40¢ pack and post
3. Introductory outlines — 50¢ each, plus 40¢ pack and post

Available from:—

DECISION BOOKS

G.P.O. BOX 4807, SYDNEY, NSW 2001

or direct from the Billy Graham office, St. Andrew's House, Sydney Square

Dear Sir,

Your editorial plea for Christian economists to speak up on "the precarious position of our nation's economy" could be as futile as the solutions put forward by the various schools of thought on that subject. You rightly say "God has set out guidelines for every area of the life of His people — let's find out what they are and obey them" (ACR 23/8/82).

How can we perfectly obey the Divine Economic System as given to ancient Israel when we are entangled with the world's Babylonian system? Take usury for instance which actually means interest. If we dispense with interest on our savings, we are merely enriching the banks. The Apostolic Fathers condemned interest. Indeed, in the time of Edward the Confessor the law was such that an interest taker was declared an outlaw, forfeited all his property and was banished from England. Even during the reign of James 1st, the taking of interest ranked with murder. Perhaps some Christian economist could supply the date when interest became respectable and who started this system in our so-called Christian lands.

In my view, the International Monetary system is coming under Divine judgement and will collapse to make way for the coming of the Kingdom of God. All we can do on that score is to "Look Up" for our redemption

draweth nigh and preach the Word.

God did not leave Israel the nation without light on down-to-earth living. His laws covered, amongst other things, Home Ownership without Mortgages; Health Insurance without cost; Financing without Interest; Agriculture without pestilences; Taxation without oppression; National Defence; Workers Compensation, Sale or Lease of Property, Debt Cancellation every seven years, thus causing a partial redistribution of wealth in seven year periods; Naturalisation of foreigners; and Racial and Sex Purity.

A few of these laws are incorporated in our modern society, and the Church, if true to oneself, could have an immense influence on our nation, but that the Church is not true to itself is evident in the legalising of homosexuality — a sin which caused the Divine destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Prophetically, we are undoubtedly in the End Time when sin of all kinds is reaching its peak, prior to the chaining of the devil and the destruction of all his works. It will not be easy. We can only put on all the Armour of God and stand fast in His truth till "the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and He shall reign for ever."

Yours sincerely,
Phyllis Creasey

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The Northside Reachout Committee in Sydney have been so thrilled with the programme that they have, in a recent letter to Sydney churches, offered some financial assistance to churches that want to utilise the programme.

Recommendation

The Australian Church Record makes no apology for the fact that this article has read like a publicity release for the programme. We have researched it thoroughly and are absolutely convinced that this is the way forward for the development of an evangelistic programme in the local congregation. We recommend to our readers that they contact the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association for more details.

We also believe that Norman Pell will prove to be of invaluable assistance to those Churches which seek to use his services.

It is good to be able to recommend an evangelistic programme developed in Australia, by an Australian, which has already proved successful overseas. We are pleased that the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association has decided to offer the programme in its present form.

Letters to the Editor continued

As I read Mr. Rollason's letter and the rather ad letter by Mr. Swordling, I am even more convinced that the call of our editorial writer in the ACR of 9/8/82 is an urgent one. If the ACC has moved so far away from Biblical truth then the time has come to quit.

Dear Sir,

Congratulations to Lesley Hicks on her fine article entitled "Women — and the cult of independence" (9/8/82).

In his book "Sex roles and the Christian family", W. Peter Blitchington (Published by Tyndale) makes this interesting comment, "Why didn't God make us all a combination of male and female, so we wouldn't be so dependent on one another? Why not make us each complete in ourselves? For one thing, we wouldn't have been as happy if we were complete in ourselves. God made us so that we would have a need for Him, and this would impel us to grow to be like Him.

"He also made us so that we would need one another, and thus would grow together toward unity. By design, all of God's creation is constructed to avoid self-sufficiency. Everything about our earth and its inhabitants is designed to promote harmony, interdependence, and unselfishness". (Page 51).

One can only say "Amen!"

Allan Barron

Dear Sir,

The decision by the leader of the PLO, Mr. Arafat to establish his headquarters in the North African Arab Country of Tunisia is a step of great importance bearing in mind that it was Tunisia's leader President Bourguiba who made the following public statement in July, 1973:

"With all respect to King Hussein I suggest that the Emirate of Transjordan (now called Jordan) was created from oil cloth by Great Britain, which for this purpose cut up ancient Palestine. To this desert territory to the east of the Jordan (River), it gave the name Transjordan. But there is nothing in history which carries this name. Whilst since our earliest time there was Palestine and Palestinians. I maintain that the matter of Transjordan is an artificial one, and that Palestine is the basic problem. King Hussein should submit to the wishes of the people, in accordance with the principles of democracy and self-determination, so as to avoid the fate of his grandfather, Abdullah, or of his cousin, Feisal, both of whom were assassinated."

The covenant of the PLO clearly sets out in article 2 that the PLO seek to recover Jordan as part of the Palestinian Arab homeland.

The move by the PLO to Tunisia can therefore be seen as part of a ploy by Arafat to seek to return to Jordan from where he was expelled in 1970 when at that time he tried to assert his authority against Hussein for control of more than one million Palestinian Arabs then living in Jordan which itself is almost 80% of former Palestine.

Today the overwhelming majority of Jordan's population is comprised of Palestinian Arabs and they form the largest concentration of Palestinian Arabs anywhere in the world.

Our committee hopes that in bringing these facts before you it will enable a more rational and responsible public debate on the resolution of the Palestinian Arab problems.

Yours sincerely,
D. Singer,
Convenor

Open Door into China — by radio



What is happening in China in 1982?

The Rev. Ken Lo, director in Hong Kong for the Far East Broadcasting Company writes —

"During May we received only 535 letters out of Mainland China. The continued decreasing responses is most significant. It is a further indication that China is exerting more pressure through her policies and seems to be closing the country to too much outside influence. With this present situation, delivery ministry is depressed. Thus we believe the only free channel through which the gospel can penetrate without obstruction into every Chinese city and village, is by radio. For this vital task of reaching one billion Chinese we seek your constant prayerful support."

Enlightening Response: F.E.B.C. can often gauge the political pressure in many countries, or lack of it, from the mail they receive. China is no exception. In 1978 — 53 letters were received out of Mainland China from listeners.

In 1979 — 10,781
In 1980 — 9,320
In 1981 — 13,050

Then for comparison on a monthly basis May 1981 — 1,279 letters, May 1982 — 535 letters.

However, as the quantity of mail has decreased, the quality has definitely increased. Ken Lo and his staff are very encouraged by this. It is proof that their specialised programming is having a significant spiritual impact. Here is part of one such letter mailed from inside China —

"I have been listening to your broadcast for a long time. My favourite programmes are 'Science and Technology' and 'Let's Learn English'. You have given me a lot of help and enriched my knowledge of the outside world, so that I am aware of the progress in the world's technology. However, most of all, you have introduced to me the best friend, Jesus Christ, who has given me lots of help and consolation. I thank you from the bottom of my heart."

Archbishop on divorce canon

The remarriage of divorced people and the state of canon law in Australia is the topic of the Archbishop's letter in the September issue of Southern Cross, the official magazine of Sydney Diocese.

The Archbishop says he has misgivings about the proposed canon to regulate the practice and procedure of the church with respect to the marriage of divorced persons. "It does little," he says, "to clarify the present doctrines and principles of this church regarding marriage, nor does it ease the burden on the diocesan bishop who has the responsibility of seeing that clergyman keep the law of the church." The Archbishop also says "I would prefer that arrangements for marriages be not made before approval has been given."

This proposed canon, and others concerning the ordination of women and the admission of children to holy communion will come before Synod for discussion in October. Sydney Synod begins on Tuesday, October 5th.

New Chairman

Prof. Bruce Harris of Macquarie University has been named as the new Chairman of the Education Commission of the Diocese of Sydney.

The Education Commission was set up by the Diocese to advise it on a wide variety of educational matters. Prof. Harris replaces the previous chairman, the Most Rev. D. W. B. Robinson. The Archbishop will continue, however as Chairman of the Council of the Board of Education.

CRUCIBLE OF PROPHETS: AUSTRALIANS AND THE QUESTION OF GOD by Veronica Brady

AGENDA FOR A BIBLICAL CHURCH
Two Volumes
Edited by Alan Nichols & John W. Williams

KNOW AND TELL THE GOSPEL
by John C. Chapman

The judges were disappointed at the limited amount of genuinely creative writing. There is a strong emphasis on the handbooks and aids to Christian ministry and although there are some worthy publications in this regard, it is hoped that publishers will work hard towards a much broader range of Christian books. The number of entries of children's books is also disappointing. Obviously much more needs to be done to provide quality Christian reading for our young people.

The Award for the Best Designed Book

One book, *Growing Together: Letters Between Frederick John Cato and Frances Bethune, 1881-1884*, Queensland Hill Press, (with its obvious budget advantages) is outstanding and has been chosen for the design award.

The design standard of books entered this year was not considered to be of a high order. Too often the designer's concern or responsibility seems to have ended with the production of a good cover. Little or no consideration has been given to the choice of stock, to typography, and to the supervision of printing. Often the overall quality has been spoiled by some very ordinary photography. *Agenda for a Biblical Church*, 2 vols., AIO Press, an otherwise excellent production, suffers from this factor. *Pancakes & Painted Eggs*, Hodder & Stoughton, has a well designed cover but the same standard of illustration has not been maintained throughout.

There are several other covers which command attention:

Sharing Christ, Acorn Press Ltd.
Facets of Truth, AIO Press
Look What We Found, Christian Foundation for the Blind
The Sunburnt Soul, Anzea Publishers
Be Our Freedom, Lord, Lutheran Publishing House

Judges

The judges were Mr. Jos Goudswaard, Mrs. Barbara Buchanan and Mr. Ron Buckland. Mrs. Merrill Corney assisted in the judging of the children's books and Mr. Lance Stirling was responsible for the design award. Dr. John Wilson co-ordinated the judging.

The awards were presented at the annual convention banquet of the Christian Bookselling Association of Australia at La Trobe University Union Building on Thursday evening, 19th August.

The Australian Christian Book of the Year Awards 1982

The Australian Christian Literature Society offers annual awards for original books written by Australians and published by Australian publishing houses. From the twenty-eight entries submitted in 1982 the judges have chosen as the *Australian Christian Book of the Year*:

BE OUR FREEDOM, LORD

prepared and edited by Terry Falla
Lutheran Publishing House, Adelaide
The award for the *Best Children's Book* has been given to:

CHILDREN OF THE KINGDOM BOOKS
Project Director: Dr. Anne Burgess
Dove Communications, Blackburn, Vic.

This is the second year that ACLS has offered such awards. The criteria taken into account include:

- the original nature of the work
- the literary style
- the design, layout, cover, text and illustrations
- the contribution that the book makes in meeting a need in Christian writing for the Australian situation.

Five other entries were awarded certificates of special commendation.

PANCAKES & PAINTED EGGS
by Jean Chapman

TALKING ABOUT SOMETHING IMPORTANT
by Stan Stewart and Pauline Hubner

Humanism — The Big Lie

The hotly debated topic of christian approaches to secular humanism in education was the subject of a recent conference promoted by the Sydney Anglican Board of Education.

The keynote speaker was Dr. Peter Jensen of Moore College. Dr. Jensen argued that, although secular humanism was fundamentally antagonistic to the christian message, there were some points of similarity and agreement. He said it ought to be possible on some occasions for humanists and Christians to work together in education, provided that the christian contribution was clearly distinguished.

Dr. Jensen also pointed out that secular humanism was only one of several threats to the Gospel present in to-day's society. Other threats may not be as clearly recognised because they incorporated religious ideas. He cited nationalism and mysticism.

The tendency to describe all non-christian contributions to education as "secular humanism" had two disadvantages. First, it prevented discrimination between the sources of various ideas. Second, it assumed that "secular humanism" is thoroughly evil.

Dr. Jensen argued however that this reaction was at variance with the christian doctrine of creation. He said it was wrong to assume that everything which we gained from non-christian culture was evil and to be repudiated. There was, of course, the equal danger of submitting the Gospel to the prevailing culture without discrimination. The proper response was to bring each aspect of culture under the judgement of Christ. Dr. Jensen said "We can learn from the discoveries and achievements of all mankind since all men and women are created in the image of God."

Discussion and comment followed Dr. Jensen's address and there was dissent as well as agreement. Members of the conference tried to isolate areas of concern about the influence of humanism in education so that further discussions could be arranged.

DISMISSAL DEMANDED

The Right to Life Association (N.S.W.) demands the instant dismissal of Wendy McCarthy from the influential posts she holds with the State Government if the statements attributed to her are true as stated in the *Australian*.

She is alleged to have threatened politicians who assist in legislating for the closure of abortion centres with exposure of their names where they have used Family Planning Association services for abortion referrals for their family, if she were "pushed".

Blackmail is highly illegal. When people such as Ms. McCarthy who is on the N.S.W. Women's Advisory Council, an official State Government body, misuses her position and becomes involved in these alleged unethical tactics, the people of this State should demand instant action from the Government.

The same article stated that Mr. Greg Woods, a barrister, also spoke at the formation of the Right to Choose Coalition. Is this the same Greg Woods who is a senior advisor to the State Attorney General, Mr. Frank Walker? If so we query the propriety of a senior government official attributing his name to a pro abortion lobby group.

All political parties have a conscience vote on abortion. Do these public servants wish to convey to electors in this State that the State Government has a policy and that it is in favour of the pro abortion activities of the Family Planning Association and is in favour of a member of that Association misusing confidential records for political gain?

This Association requests also an immediate review of funds allocated by both Federal and State Government to the Family Planning Association which runs into millions of dollars.

Although the article under discussion alleged a connection with Right to Life and the Festival of Light, it is not true that they are officially connected, but the Right to Life readily applauds any organisation which upholds respect for human life.

Pro-Life News

Do prisons prevent crime?

Through his work in bringing the gospel to prisoners across America, Chuck Colson saw the urgent need to work for justice for these men. "I believe that as Christians there is something we can and must do, not only to reform prisoners, but also to reform prisons", he says.

It would seem on the face of it that increased imprisonment and longer prison sentences do not deter crime. Indeed, many informed observers have suggested that, instead of deterring crime, our prisons contribute to it; and our experience in prisons supports this assertion.

How prisons manufacture crime

More than half of the prisoners in America are incarcerated for nonviolent crimes. Frequently they are subjected to brutal treatment, homosexual rape, the continual threat of violence, and a boring routine that deadens the human spirit. A great many nonviolent offenders come out of prison not rehabilitated but instead in far worse mental, physical and moral condition than when they went in.

Many prisoner families break up during the period of incarceration. Thus, a prison term often deprives an offender of the basic family relationship which experts agree is absolutely critical to rehabilitation upon release. Very few after-care services are available to offenders upon their release.

According to the FBI, 74 percent of the offenders released from prison are rearrested within four years. A recent television documentary, closed with a sober warning: "Maybe prisoners do deserve what they get here (in prison). But maybe we deserve what we get when they eventually get out."

Expensive failures

If they are added in, the final cost figure is realistically nearer \$20,000 annually per inmate, and on the rise constantly.

Chief Justice Warren Burger recently said, "We have developed systems of correction which do not correct... If anyone is tempted to regard humane prison reform as 'coddling' criminals, let him visit a prison and talk with inmates and staff. I have visited some of the best and some of the worst prisons and have never seen any signs of 'coddling', but I have seen the terrible results of the boredom and frustration of empty hours and a pointless existence."



The failure of rehabilitation

Michigan legislator Paul Henry: "To place a criminal offender in an artificial world composed only of other criminal offenders and then to expect that person to emerge from that abnormal environment as a healthy and whole person is certainly a questionable strategy."

The real value of prisons

We believe prisons are necessary for that roughly 20 per cent of the prison population convicted of dangerously violent crimes. These individuals must be kept in prison for the protection of the general public. Yet every opportunity should still be offered those who must be confined to rehabilitate themselves, if and when they choose to do so.



Chuck Colson

Why reform is difficult

Change in criminal justice policy and practice is notoriously slow. Most Americans simply don't care what happens in prisons and are prepared instead to spend the money necessary to incarcerate hundreds of thousands of criminals. The public doesn't understand the enormous cost of prisons, not just in money but also in lives and in public safety; nor is the public aware of our penal system's incredibly consistent record of failure.

As election time approaches, the temptation is to "talk tough" about crime, which translates into vengeful policies of longer sentences and more prisons. On the one hand there is the threat of being labeled "a bleeding heart," which is politically damaging in a society clinging to cliché-ridden perceptions of law and order. On the other hand, those in prison have no constituency, hence no leverage. Meaningful prison reform will come about only when the public sees both the failure of the present system, and the advantages of the alternatives.

Prison reform is a matter of life and death

Alternative punishments

A. Restitution
"Restitution" requires the offender to repay the crime-victim for property loss or property or personal damages. The offender's pay is diverted into channels beyond his/her control: repayment of the victim, compensation of the state, supporting the offender's family, and establishing a capital reserve which will help keep an offender from being impelled back toward crime by poverty after release.

B. Community Service Orders
A criminal act is an offense against particular victims, of course, but it is also an offense against society.

Too often offenders now pay their "debt to society" in prison, with resulting waste of valuable human resources. For instance, one prisoner who had been a prominent doctor and convicted of stock fraud was in a particular prison where there was no resident doctor, but the many inmates with medical needs had to rely on a paramedic. Later he volunteered to help meet a shortage of doctors in the surrounding community by working nights, but his offer was refused.

Instead of being sent to prison, offenders could be required to work for a period of years, either at a very modest pay or none at all, in ghettos, hospitals, or other areas of public need.

C. House Arrest

This alternative is primarily for convicted felons whose probation reports indicate they are unlikely to be involved in further criminal behaviour.

D. Probation and Contract Probation
Probation is one of the most widely used alternatives. Offenders on probation are sentenced to obey specific behaviour guidelines under the supervision of a Probation Officer. Violation of the guidelines can result in incarceration.

E. Deferred Sentencing

F. Suspended Sentencing

G. Fines

However, the amount of a fine should be based on both the seriousness of the offense and the offender's ability to pay.

H. Alcohol and Drug Treatment

Drug abusers should be assigned to institutions specially designed to deal with their unique problems.

I. Employment Assistance

Whenever possible, alternatives to imprisonment should be found for those whose criminal behaviour might be eliminated by the development of job skills. Responsibility for developing employment programmes must be shared by government, the community, and the church. Crime may reflect both personal and societal failure; yet too often only the convict is punished, and underlying conditions and attitudes remain unchanged.

J. Pre-Trial Intervention

K. Community Dispute (or Citizen Dispute) Settlement

This programme develops a board of citizen volunteers to handle a broad range of cases which would ordinarily go to the criminal system. Referrals come through the prosecutor, and the board acts as mediator for the disputing parties.



Alternatives Involving Some Incarceration

A. Shorter Sentences

B. Weekend Sentences

C. Classification

In no case should nonviolent offenders (or those with demonstrated good behaviour records) be housed in cells or dormitories with those guilty of violent crimes or behaviour. The need for classification in this regard goes far beyond existing designations of "Minimum" "Medium" and "Maximum" security sections within penal institutions, which are far too crude.

D. Protection Against Violence

Offenders who must be incarcerated should also be protected against the physical, psychological or homosexual intimidation which has always been too much a part of prison life.

E. Increased "Good-time" Credit

F. The Use of Smaller Modern Prison Units

Most studies show that big penitentiaries breed violence and gang control, and suffer as well from poor staff supervision. The trend today is to build prisons to hold 300-500 inmates. They should be located near the major population centers rather than out in the country, so that both the family of the inmate and volunteers have better access. Generally, these are far more humane and manageable facilities.

How Needed Reforms Can Happen

It is our conviction that the best hope for lasting humane prison reform lies with American Christians. This reform will come when Christians examine the scripture and realize that prison is nowhere used for punishment of crimes. Rather, whenever practical, restitution is the scripturally-mandated form of punishment, and reform of the offender is central to its purpose. Jesus applied this principle with Zaccheus (Luke 19). Moreover, the orientation of punishment toward reform and rehabilitation of evildoers is found throughout the Bible, as in Ezekiel 33:11: "As I live, says the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live."



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Departing December 18th for 27 days we visit Bangkok for 2 nights then fly to Jordan where our 3 night stay will include a visit to Petra. Crossing into Israel for 10 nights our extensive sightseeing includes CHRISTMAS EVE IN BETHLEHEM. We go on to Egypt for 7 nights (Cairo, Aswan, Luxor, etc.) before returning via Singapore (2 nights). Our Group Leader is the Rev. Dr. Stuart Barton Babbage former Dean of Sydney, Melbourne and New College University of Sydney and Principal of Ridley College Melbourne. Fares are \$3255 from Melbourne or Sydney.

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This 30 day tour leaving on December 18th, 1982, is really something special for young adults. Centred on London, Kent, Edinburgh and the Yorkshire Dales, we spend Christmas in England (including a house party) and New Year in Scotland. Land travel is by rail, bus and on foot and your Group Leader is Graham Townsend (Chaplain at Ballarat High School). The price from Melbourne or Sydney is \$2635 (less \$40 for under 26's).

MIDDLE EAST ADVENTURE TOUR

Leaving on Saturday, January 1st, 1983, we spend 2 nights in Bangkok, 3 nights in Jordan (including a visit to the "lost" city of Petra), 10 nights in Israel visiting the holy places with ample free time, 7 nights in Egypt including Cairo, Aswan, Luxor, etc., with 2 nights in Singapore on the way home. Our Group Leader will be Rev. Ravenal Weinman of St. Andrew's Uniting Church, Box Hill. Two meals each day are included and accommodation is in good hotels. Price from Melbourne, Brisbane or Sydney is \$3500.

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T UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER

Dr. Alan Craddock

Dealing with bitterness

There are many stumbling blocks in the way of good relationships between Christians, but there are also many standing between Christians and non-Christians. In my experience as a counsellor I have encountered a number of Christian people who appeared to have serious difficulty with envy and resentment directed against non-Christian acquaintances.

At the heart of their attitude is a false sense of injustice. One young man said to me that he had sought to honour God in his life and yet when he looked around him he saw non-Christian people who were much more satisfied than he was. He was disturbed and made bitter by the fact that he was seeking to please God and yet experienced frustration and dissatisfaction. Furthermore, his resentment and envy interfered with his friendship and witness with his non-Christian friends.

In this particular case there were two identifiable causes of his resentment. First, sexual frustration. The young man believed in a Christian view of marriage and the centrality of sexual faithfulness. He had refrained from sexual activity, believing that marriage was the proper place for its expression. He believed this to be right but was frustrated and resentful in the light of the permissive values and activities of his friends. They

appeared to prosper and suffer little for their activity.

The second cause involved his anger that such people would experience satisfaction and do well while he was dissatisfied and really struggling with his studies. He was near to failure while his "randy" friends went on from strength to strength academically.

Such an attitude presents a stumbling block not only to this man and his non-Christian friends, but also to the man and God. I am reminded here of one of the psalms of Asaph who experiences the temptation to feel in a way that is parallel in many respects to the situation I have described. In Psalm 73:2-5 Asaph writes that his feet had almost slipped. He says: "I had nearly lost my foothold. For I envied the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. They have no struggles, their bodies are healthy and strong. They are free from the burden common to man."

The parallel is clear and I would argue that the problem is common among Christians today. The solution to the problem requires us to regain a proper perspective on the situation. We will need to recognize the shift in our values which has taken place. By which set of values do we judge success and satisfaction? What are the long-term

consequences of a denial of Godly values?

Asaph makes it clear that his attitude was wrong. But he does not evade the fact that he was thinking that way. On the contrary, he expresses his feeling to God. He does so as part and parcel of the process of regaining and affirming the proper perspective I described earlier. He begins his song by acknowledging the timeless truth: "God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart."

He acknowledges his attitude in vv 2-12 and reaches a plaintive climax in verse 12: "This is what the wicked are like — always carefree, they increase in wealth". His honesty as he bares his soul before God is clear in vv. 13-16. He states that it felt futile that he had kept his heart pure and that the whole question of his situation was **oppressive** to him.

Understanding, a regaining of a proper value perspective, came to Asaph when he entered the sanctuary of God: "Then I understood their final destiny." (v. 17) He is then able to see the absolute faithfulness of his sovereign God: "Yet I am always with you; you held me by my right hand, you guide me with your counsel . . . and being with you, I desire nothing on earth. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever." (vv. 23-26).

I believe we have here a model for the contemporary Christian faced with the kind of difficulty described earlier. Envy, resentment, dissatisfaction and guilt are all too often seen as feeling which stand between us and God. Handled inappropriately they will. But the appropriate thing to do is to honestly express our feelings and our confusion to God. We need to ask God to help us to regain the right perspective upon our situation. We need our faith strengthened so as to see that whatever our situation is, and however tough it may be, that it is "good to be near God" and to make the sovereign Lord our refuge. (Psalm 73:28).

This constructive perspective will have the effect of removing the stumbling blocks. The young man I described earlier found this to be the case. Under the new perspective his focus shifted from self-pity to concern for his non-Christian friends. His quiet and caring witness became an impressive form of ministry — a far cry from his earlier state of bitterness, anger, resentment and envy in which he "nearly lost his foothold."

He regained his faith in the appropriateness of the Christian view of sex and also recognized his need to concentrate more of his attention on his studies. He had regained a long-term view of the gains which such attitudes can achieve in the total setting of God's will for his life.

Farmyard Capers

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Paul White and Clifford Warne have teamed up to produce this beautiful set of children's books. The stories are similar to the Jungle Doctor allegories but are set in a farmyard.

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Book Three clearly teaches the consequences of either obeying God or disobeying Him.

Book Four cleverly demonstrates the wisdom of recognising the dangers that face God's children in this life.

The humour in the stories has a child's level and a distinct adult's level. They would therefore be useful evangelistic tools, say as prizes in Scripture classes.

Tom Smith

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Chief Executive Officer, T. J. BLAND

New appointment for communist work



Ben Kil and wife, Eleanor. Children from left: Penne 11, Daniel 3, Gordon 14, Benjamin 5.

The international missionary movement, Open Doors with Brother Andrew, has announced the appointment of Ben Kil as representative for Queensland and Northern New South Wales.

Australian Director for Open Doors, Mr. Greg O'Connor said: "As Brother Andrew founded the work in Holland some 27 years ago, it is appropriate that Ben Kil, a fellow-countryman of Brother Andrew, should join our ministry."

Ben Kil was assistant pastor at Trundle Baptist Church, N.S.W. whilst running his mixed farm at Tullamore. He said: "The whole family is behind me in this move to Queensland. However, it was a big step, as the farm was bought for the children to make a living in the future. The Church members at Trundle have been faithful friends throughout the decision-making process."

"I lived the first twenty years of my life in Holland. As a youth I was always very conscious of the fear of Russian invasion. As children we were aware of the restrictions of Communism. But I understand that these Communist countries that are isolated to the Gospel are our mission field and my prayer and heart's desire is that all may come to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. The message I take to Christian groups will always be positive."

"However, when I see the affluent life-style of Australians, compared to families in Europe, I must point this out. My job is to represent the cause of the Suffering Body of Christ in restricted countries. God's children often pay a high price for their faith. Many are willing to be martyred."

Keith Green missed, but ministry continues

The sudden death of leading contemporary Christian singer, Keith Green, has left a space in the ranks of *The Last Day Ministries*, but the work continues. Formerly under a three prong leadership, the work continues today, under the direction of the two other elders, Martin Bennett and Wayne Dillard



Meetings previously arranged for Keith Green are to be taken by his wife, Melody.

On Wednesday, July 28, at 7.20 p.m., Keith Green (aged 28) together with his two eldest children, Josiah (3½) and Bethany (2) were killed when the Cessna 414 in which they were travelling, failed to clear the trees at the end of the runway near the Last Days Ministries ranch, in Lindale, Texas.

The flight was to be a joy flight, to tour the surrounding countryside and property. A fellow worker, Don Burmeister was the pilot. He is survived by his wife Jannette and two young children.

Sydney scholar overseas

The Vice Principal of Moore Theological College has left Australia to spend the northern academic year in Canada. The Rev. Dr. William Dumbrell will join the staff of Regent College, Vancouver.



Regent College is one of the leading evangelical training institutions on the North American continent. Its staff includes Dr. J. I. Packer, W. Ward Gasque and Australian John Nolland. Old Testament lecturer Bruce Waltke, well-known as a contributor to American evangelical publications, is on Sabbatical leave and the College has invited Dr. Dumbrell to replace him.

Whilst at the College, Dr. Dumbrell will lead a special seminar on "Aspects of Old Testament Theology relating to Covenant Theme". He has been asked to lead such a seminar because of his book, due for publication in 1983, "The Old and New Covenants".

Dr. Dumbrell's friends can write to him c/- Regent College, 2130 Westbrook Mall, Vancouver.

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Can we legislate morality? American scholar asks

Can we legislate morality? was the question posed by Dallas Professor, Dr. Norman Geisler at the end of the sixth annual Moore College Lectures delivered at the College over five nights in the middle of September.

Sydney, in the grip of a serious petrol dispute, is not the place to get large crowds to a series of theological lectures yet the Moore College auditorium was packed for each of the five lectures Dr. Geisler delivered.

The Moore College Annual Lectures are held each September and bring to Australia leading overseas scholars. Previous lecturers have included F. F. Bruce and J. I. Packer. Australian lecturers have included Dr. D. B. Knox and the present Archbishop of Sydney. The 1982 lecturer was Dr. Norman L. Geisler, a leading evangelical theologian in America.

Dr. Geisler's series was entitled "Ethical Worlds in Collision: Humanism Vs. Christianity". He dealt with the basis of Christian and Humanist ethics, the conflict between them and the problems of co-existence. The lectures were notable for Dr. Geisler's ability to illustrate his material in such a way that it was easily understood. This was evidenced by the large number of lay people who came to each lecture.

Dr. Geisler's material was related to the situation in America where there is a more open conflict between the two systems. For example he spent a lecture outlining their collision over the issue of teaching evolution in the schools. He shared from first hand experience an account of the recent Arkansas Creation-Evolution trial in which the humanists were victorious and which showed the conflict clearly.

"The consequences of the conflict are serious", Geisler stated. He characterised modern secular humanists as bigots who were happy to allow all points of view to be expressed except non humanist ones. Stating that there were only really two points of view possible — either a system of belief based on a Creator or a system of belief based on natural causes and 'chance' — he went on to claim that the consequences of a humanist victory were fourfold —

- Academic — a loss of real freedom
- Scientific — a loss of progress
- Religion — the establishment of humanism
- Ethical — the dominance of relativism.

He also stated that Secular Humanism was "philosophically inconsistent, ethically parasitic and spiritually depraved."

In his final lecture Geisler discussed the co-existence of the two systems in a pluralist society. He stated that we cannot legislate morality. Only change from the inside is really lasting. He concluded that Christians must do four things:

1. They must proclaim absolute standards from the pulpit — based on the ethical principles set out in the Scriptures.
2. They must model the absolute standard in the Church.
3. They should legislate the optimum ethic possible in a pluralist society. This he defined as an ethic that gave the maximum freedom for all with the minimum infringement of freedom for any.

(From Australian Baptist, by Rev. Don Anderson of the Anglican parish of Airds, Ruse.)

Understanding the socially disadvantaged

Most of us live reasonably ordered and predictable lives and therefore we have difficulty understanding the many socially and materially disadvantaged people in our community.

If you are not in touch with people so disadvantaged, bear with me as I describe some of the issues which are commonplace for them.

UNEMPLOYMENT resulting from personal sickness, injury, lack of relevant skill and few job opportunities.

PROBLEM-PRONE FAMILIES who try, but just don't get themselves together because of the lack of intellectual and emotional stability.

LACK OF ADEQUATE EMOTIONAL SUPPORT SYSTEMS. When accepting the provision of government housing, disadvantaged people are often forced to move away from family and long-standing friends. This can cause great loneliness and distress, especially in times of trouble, because the emotional and physical support is lacking.

RELATIONSHIP PROBLEMS arise because the disadvantaged have great difficulty making and sustaining relationships. Marriage break-ups and fights with neighbours, although common in any community, seem to be more common and more disastrous among disadvantaged people.

LACK OF PLANNING SKILLS. This often leads to financial problems. Money is not set aside for unforeseen sickness or other problems. Bills go unpaid and financial over-commitment is common.

OPEN TO EXPLOITATION. Disadvantaged people are often easy prey to the slick salesman. Some so-called Christian groups play upon the disadvantaged person's desire to escape the real problems of life by promising a "religious package" which will give immediate and miraculous solution to deep and long-standing problems.

Can we help?

So much for some of the problems. Can the Christian Church offer real and substantial help to disadvantaged Australians?

YES. The Church does have something to offer. What I now wish to identify comes from reading and reflection, but more importantly from working with disadvantaged people over the past ten years in different geographical areas.

We have the gospel which points to a great God who can save anyone, irrespective of social need. But, if the Church is to effectively communicate this gospel, three issues need to be highlighted.

FIRSTLY, the Church must be prepared to recognise that we must express our love and concern in tangible ways. Only in this way will the Church be seen as credible. This will involve us all in sacrifices of time and money.

SECONDLY, Disadvantaged people are real human beings and must be given respect and dignity — they are NOT "cases", but people for whom Christ died. I have seen disadvantaged people blossom and grow because a Christian was prepared to build a genuine relationship with them. Christians have deliberately decided to move house so that they might be in a position to offer such friendship to needy families. Maybe God could use you in such a ministry.

LASTLY, the Church at large needs to act with patience and perseverance towards parishes where there is a large number of disadvantaged people. Financial and numerical growth is very slow in such parishes and a high ratio of staff is needed for a greater length of time. Clergy need extra support, as it is devastating to work in an area for years and see little "normal church progress."

Prayer

Understanding is needed when new and relevant ways of reaching the disadvantaged are engaged. Instead of calling into question the spiritual credibility of such clergy, support them with prayer.

It is a long hard battle to realise ministry to the disadvantaged but God is pleased to bless the weak and foolish efforts made by many Christians.

Visit of the Very Reverend George Reid M.C.

Outstanding Scottish preacher and Church-leader, the Very Reverend George Reid will be occupying the Scots Church pulpit from Sunday, 1 August to 30 January 1983.

Dr. Reid is a Chaplain to Her Majesty

the Queen and a former Moderator of the Church of Scotland.

He has occupied major pulpits in the three principal cities of Scotland, namely, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen. He is an arresting and powerful preacher with the gift of colourful illustration and a penchant for relating the Gospel to modern man, his problems and needs in a convincing and scholarly way.

In World War II he served as a Chaplain in the Scots Guards in the Western European campaign during which he was awarded the Military Cross. He was eventually made Senior Chaplain to the 15th Scottish Division.

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CHRISTIANITY IN THE CLASSROOM



In the context of the down-to-earth Christian Option program, Tasmanian secondary school students are getting a chance to put things straight.

Topics ranging from 'Who is Jesus' and 'The Bible' to 'Ageing and Death', 'World Inequality' and 'Human Nature and Aggression' are dealt with in normal classes, where staffers can work closely with students and answer their questions.

Lorraine Heazlewood, one of the three full-time members of the Christian Option team, describes one of their aims:

"Allowing doubts, confusion, prejudice and experiences to be expressed and responded to from a Christian perspective, is a major part of the program. Hazy thinking, erroneous ideas and new insights can be brought into the open."

Christian Option in Tasmania is closely co-ordinated by Scripture Union and staffed co-operatively with Fusion Tasmania. The program began in 1977 and since then around 200 schools have

taken part each year. Following evaluation of the venture in Tasmania, the idea has been launched this year by Scripture Union in Victoria and Queensland. In South Australia, a wider group incorporating the United Christian Forum and John Smith's Truth and Liberation team have been successfully developing a similar concept for a number of years.

Interested schools invite the Christian Option team to work with their students on a fulltime basis for periods of two days to two weeks. The actual subject content of a C.O. program is negotiated with school staff; it may be slotted into an existing subject area, such as social science, or it may be a separate 'religious education' unit.

Although all students are expected to take part in the program the Christian Option perspective is not forced on them. S.U. State Director, David Reeve explains: "Our team doesn't intend to 'shove Christianity down students' "

throats'. But we do challenge them to make sure that they know what the Christian Option is before they decide whether to accept or reject it."

From the start the team aimed to design an educationally sound program incorporating simulation games; audiovisuals; panel discussions; worksheets; music; group work and arrange of other activities. Their success was acknowledged by the Australian Schools Commission in 1979. An Innovations grant was provided so that a Project Officer (Heather Ferguson) could be employed for one year.

But the proof of the program lies in the students' response, described here by David Reeve: "We've had students from a non-Christian background reading Bible passages for the first time ... and being startled at the life and teaching of Jesus. Students from Christian homes are realising that Christian belief can be challenged — and defended — in the cut and thrust of the classroom."

4. They must evangelise the world to change people from the inside so that the optimum will begin to approach the maximum — i.e. the Biblical standard.

At the conclusion of each lecture there was lively questioning and debate.

The lectures were recorded and cassettes are available from Moore College. The Committee who organised the lectures expect that the lectures will eventually appear as a book (one of the conditions of the lectures is that the lecturer arranges to have the material published).

The Principal of Moore College announced at the end of the series that the lecturer for 1983 will be Rev. Dr. W. Dumbrell, the Vice-Principal of the College who is currently lecturing at Regent College, Vancouver.

The lecture series Dr. Geisler delivered was important. He provided for his audience an insight into the more open confrontation of humanism and Christianity in America. This should serve as a warning to Australian where the conflict is subtle rather than open and therefore, possibly even more dangerous.

1981 Census — Religion

The Zadock Centre has issued the following statement on the 1981 Census figures.

"The final 1981 Census figures on religion now released, show a further decline in affiliation with christian churches in Australia. Only 74.6% of the Australian population now claim affiliation with Christianity in some form. While this represents a 2.2% drop between 1976 and 1981 it is considerably less than the 7.6% drop recorded between 1971 and 1976.

Non christian religions were up 4% to 1.4%. The largest non-Christian group was the Muslim community at 0.5% of the population.

Those claiming no religion increased 2.5% to 10.8% of the total population while 11.4% did not state their affiliation. Assuming an even split of the Not Stated between Christianity and No Religion the

national breakdown would be — Christianity 82.1%, No Religion 16.5%.

Nationally, the Anglican Church was hardest hit, suffering a loss of 1.6%. The other significant loss was from churches involved in the moves to union which lead to the formation of the United Church. Here the overall national loss from all those churches was 1.4%. Ironically, however, in the Northern Territory with the lowest Christian affiliation anywhere in the Commonwealth (58.8%) combined church membership of all the churches involved in the union increased by 1.2%.

Apart from the Northern Territory, WA and VIC now have the lowest christian church allegiance at 73.5% and 73.8%; NSW has the highest at 79.6% of population. NSW also shares with Tasmania the lowest No Religion figure at 8.6%."

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