

Martyr Church on the Run — Wrong Image of Sudan

ROCKHAMPTON
Canon B. Farran was appointed Rector of Gladstone on June 15. Dates of other commissionings are: Rev. G. Fryar at North Rockhampton on August 16; Rev. P. Gribble at Blackwater on August 17; and Rev. S. Rigby at Blackall on August 23.

The Rector of North Rockhampton, Rev. B. Farran, and the Diocesan Aboriginal and Islander Chaplain, Rev. J. Warby, have been appointed as Canons.

The Dean of Rockhampton, Very Rev. J. Bayton is to be the Bishop's Commissary.

Mr. T. B. Macauley has been appointed Bishop's Warden.

MELBOURNE

Rev. W. R. Dowell transfers from incumbency of St. Philip's, West Heidelberg to incumbency of St. Barnabas, Balwyn on September 18.

Rev. N. R. Glover becomes part-time minister-in-charge under the direction of the Regional Bishop at St. Cecilia's, West Preston from July 1.

Rev. A. J. Schreuder transfers from Chaplain of Gippsland and St. Anne's, Grammar School, Sale, to full-time Chaplain Tintern C. of E. Girls' Grammar School, from February, 1980.

Rev. D. J. Wilson transfers from incumbency All Souls', Edenhope to incumbency of St. John's, Lilydale.

Rev. D. G. Cobbett resigns from incumbency Holy Trinity, Oakleigh to missionary service with Church Missionary Society from September 9.

Rev. K. J. Perry resigns from incumbency Holy Trinity, Oakleigh to missionary service with Church Missionary Society from September 9.

Rev. E. J. Lees died July 3.

STAINED GLASS WINDOWS

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Sudan Interior Mission workers, Brian and Doris Fargher, passed through Sydney on their way for a three month furlough in New Zealand, and made it clear that many reports are untrue, concerning the work in the Sudan.

Reports of persecution are exaggerated, especially stories of mass killing and torture. It is true that in some areas, churches have been closed, and some evangelical churches are viewed with suspicion, especially if actively involved in meetings for young people. However, according to them, the Day for evangelism is not over.

At present there are only 38 missionaries, for a force of up to 300, still present. If allowed to continue, there is still a "terrific future" according to Mr. Fargher.

Some areas have been effectively evangelised, and are now able to send out their own missionaries. In other parts, millions have still not heard the Gospel. "Christian education in the Church is very needy", said Mr. Fargher. "Sunday school classes are just beginning, but the material, in Amharic, is very limited".

UNLAWFUL ASSEMBLY

The regulation regarding the unlawful assembly of no



Brian and Doris Fargher, S.I.M. missionaries from the Sudan.
Photo: Ramon Williams.

ACC LOOKS FOR CHINA VISITORS

In an attempt to deepen its understanding of China, the Australian Council of Churches' Commission on Overseas Mission would like to talk with church people who have visited China in the last few years.

Through such discussions, COOM feels, its member mission boards might get a more balanced understanding of China. They might also see more clearly the kind of relationships that ought to exist between our two countries.

"In particular, we'd like to share the information we have about life in China and the life and witness of Christians in China", said the Rev. Dr. John Brown, a COOM member and general secretary of the United Church's Commission for World Mission.

Dr. Brown invited all church people who have been to China recently, and who would be interested in sharing in such discussions, to contact him at the Commission for World Mission, Box C103, Clarence Street P.O., N.S.W. 2000. The phone number is (02) 29 3112.

"URN OF CONCERN" EARNED \$16,500



The Thanksgiving Dinner for the H. I. Urn of Concern project, held in Sydney recently attracted 50 participants, in spite of the mail difficulties caused by industrial disputes. Held at the Boulevard Hotel, the occasion was one of encouragement to those involved in this scheme.

Commenced as a "once only" project, the H. I. Urn of Concern involves women in the sacrificial giving of money, which is placed in a small "urn". All those participating are then informed through regular mailing of newsletters and prayer information, of the work involving Third World women. Many of these attend the Hagai Institute Leadership Training Course, held in Singapore.

On a given date, the holders of "urns" are to break them and forward the contents to the Hagai Institute office, in Brisbane, towards scholarships for some of the women in Singapore.

Last year, two ladies received scholarship grants from the finance received. This year, it was revealed at the Thanksgiving Dinner, four ladies received scholarships!

A total of \$16,500 was raised, with \$500 coming from a lady in the United States of America who had heard of the work, and \$75 from a lady in Singapore.

Graham Dorn, aged 18, has been a spastic all his life. Recently he gained employment at Centre Industries, associated with the Spastic Centre in his area of Seaford. Mrs. Dorn had been interested in Dr. John Hagai's book about his son Johnny who was a quadriplegic. The more she read of Johnny and his prayer involvement for Dr. Hagai's work, the more she told her own son, Graham. Now the Dorn family, especially Graham, has become closely associated with the H. I. work and the giving possible through the H. I. Urn of Concern.

The picture shows Robyn Power speaking with Mrs. Margaret Dorn at the H. I. Urn of Concern Thanksgiving Dinner. Mrs. Dorn had a special reason for wanting an "Urn" ... for her 18 year old spastic son, Graham, who wants to share his earnings for the Hagai Institute work. (Photo Ramon Williams).

OLD FRIENDS MEET

A vice-president of World Vision International met recently with the Anglican Primate of Australia, Archbishop Sir Marcus Loane.

Dr. Sam Kamaleon, who was in Australia to lead a number of Christian Leadership conferences, met with Archbishop Loane at St. Andrew's House, Sydney. The two spent time recalling their preaching days together in India.

Dr. Kamaleon is an ordained Methodist Minister, who directs Christian Leadership and pastors' conferences throughout the world, particularly in Third World nations.

While in Australia, an approach was made to Dr. Kamaleon to conduct a leadership conference for Aborigines in Australia. The request came from sections of the Aboriginal Christian community.

Dr. Kamaleon is now considering a conference next year in Alice Springs.



Dr. Sam Kamaleon with Archbishop Sir Marcus Loane.



Mrs. Eileen Middleton of the C.L.C. shop at Springwood, presents the Mayor, Alderman Leslie with a copy of the N.I.V. Bible for the local library, during the opening ceremony of the Christian Literature Crusade's eleventh book shop. Photo: Ramon Williams.

CLC MOUNTAIN ADVANCE

The Christian Literature Crusade's opened its eleventh book shop in Australia, at Springwood on June 28. The brightly coloured, attractively arranged and decorated store quickly filled with people, following the official ceremony conducted in the plaza outside.

Shop F, in the Town Hall Plaza, Springwood, first came to the notice of Eileen Middleton two months ago. Mrs. Middleton was formerly the manager of the CLC Family Book Shop at Parramatta.

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OUT OF THE ASHES — THE DESPERATE PLIGHT



The remains of the Balayi coffee processing plant at Masaka in Uganda, which is owned and operated by the Church of Uganda. Coffee to the value of 3,000,000 shillings (\$375,000) was destroyed during the war of liberation and 300 employees put out of work. First hand account, page 2.

ON OTHER PAGES

• **Former Chinese Anglican
Bishop-Dean's Interview (Part 2)**
"Loyal to Mao and God"

page 2

• **Morphett on Media**
Christian's role (Part 2)

page 3

• **World Vision Viet Report**
"Gospel is being freely preached"

page 4

• **Receiving and Extending Forgiveness**
The problem of resurrecting old issues —
Dr Craddock

page 4

• **Dial for a Drunk**
Helping in Inner City

page 8

• **N.T. Greek in Nine Weeks**

page 7

• **Letters**
W.C.C. Defence
Racial Assumptions

page 6

EDITORIAL

The latest strike to be reported in the papers, and not all are, was a strike by twelve snowplough drivers at Mount Kosciuszko. The drivers timed it well as it was the first real snow fall of the season, right on the weekend when some skiers were leaving and others arriving and all inconvenienced. It was such a small pimple on the industrial face compared to the ugly scars of the waterfront strike, or the petrol refinery strike, or the train strike, that it might seem hardly worth mentioning, though this will not be the opinion of the hard pressed resort operators who have had a bad enough season as it is.

But what about strikes in general, which are of such frequent occurrence in the Australian Community? Are strikes legitimate? The retort will be made that in a free world a person always has the right to withdraw his labour, but this reflects the error of modern secularism which ignores the fact that we are in relationship to one another and therefore have obligations towards one another. For example, members of Nasa monitoring a moon shot at Houston, Texas, are they at liberty to withdraw their labour at their own discretion when three astronauts are in orbit and are relying on the faithfulness of the Houston team for their safe return to mother earth? Plainly there are some situations when it

is indefensible to withdraw your labour and the government should legislate accordingly, providing penalties for those who offend. Those who staff essential services have the strongest obligation to remain at their work rather than jeopardise the whole community, and although clearing the roads in the snow fields could hardly be regarded as an essential service, those who have chosen to take up this work have an obligation to those whose plans depend on their faithfulness in it.

The basis of most strikes is greed. Indeed our modern economic system may be described as organised greed. Jesus described Christians as the salt of the earth, but most of us have lost our savour, being motivated by greed along with the rest of the community. The organised church is not exempt. It manages its properties for what it can get from them. But the Christian principle is service which considers other persons' welfare primarily. Greed looks after number one first.

The sad thing is that greed is a perversion of the noblest motive, the seeking of life. In the Garden of Eden, God planted the tree of life as the hope and promise that those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honour, will be rewarded with eternal life.

ORGANISED GREED

Sinful man seeks power and possessions in the belief that this is where real life resides. He is greedy. He is mistaken as to where life lies. Jesus said, "A man's life does not consist in the abundance of the things that he possesses". Life consists of relationships, especially relationship with God. Jesus said, "This is life eternal to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He sent".

Greed is the commonest human sin and it is the one most fiercely denounced in holy scripture. The tenth commandment forbade it. Jesus condemned it in the strongest of terms, and in several places St Paul warned that the greedy person will not enter the kingdom of heaven. He said that it was the equivalent of idolatry, which is the grossest of sins and he warned that the wrath of God overtakes those who are greedy. In a society where organised greed is reflected in company reports, in trade union militancy and in the aspirations of ordinary people, Christians and the Christian church must witness to service and not self-centredness as the principle for organising human life. Not rights, but obligations, are to be uppermost. The Son of God was among us as He who serves. Relationships are the all important thing in life. Society consists of relationship. Service furthers relationships, greed destroys them.

Former Anglican Chinese Bishop Interviewed in Nanking

PART II



Professor Ting and his wife with the Anglican Dean of Sydney and Mrs Shilton.

DEAN: If there was any discrimination in the past against Christians as far as jobs or positions are concerned, is there any now?

PROFESSOR TING: Before the Cultural Revolution I can't say there was absolutely no discrimination because in such a big population there were bound to be people who held a certain point of view about religions. But as far as the official policy of the State is concerned all religions were equal and people were not to be treated differently on account of their religion.

Children from religious families would be admitted into University just as much as other children. So on the whole during those seventeen years I think the Government did see to it that no discrimination should happen. In those days people were not treated in accordance to their religious belief.

Take Dr. Sun Yat Sen and Chiang Kai Chek. As far as religion is concerned they were both Protestants but Dr. Sun Yat Sen has always been very highly respected. I think most Chinese know that he was a Christian and people respected him because he was a forerunner of Chinese democratic revolution.

Whereas Chiang Kai Chek was reputed to be a devout Methodist, I don't think many people in China would look up to him as any sort of leader in China. During the Cultural Revolution the situation was quite different, because in those years the influence of the Gang of Four seemed to have gained the upper hand. It would be to the great disadvantage of the religious believers in many ways.

I know of Moslems, for instance, who in the rural areas were compelled to raise pigs, hogs and they were even compelled to eat pork, because they were considered to be revolutionary.

And when they refused, the bones of hogs would be poured into the wells so that the Moslems would find it impossible to drink the water of the well. All that sort of thing. It sounds very unreasonable and primitive but that happened in certain areas where Moslems were in a large majority.

But today all of this has to be changed. Christians, too, in certain rural areas where I was recently, have a production team composed of some ten or fifteen families. They were all Christians and their productive work was excellent.

Then, during the Cultural Revolution, some people went to them and asked them to whom they were loyal.

Chairman Mao or God? They were compelled to say whether their primary loyalty was to Chairman Mao or to God. They said, We are loyal to both. In political matters we are loyal to Chairman Mao. We support Chairman Mao, but in religious faith we are loyal to God. They were not satisfied. They felt that they were debunking Chairman Mao. So the conflict became very severe.

The Christians didn't even cultivate the land for two years because they couldn't unless they said their first loyalty or their only loyalty was to Chairman Mao. With the downfall of the Gang of Four all this situation has been remedied for the Christians in that team, they became quite happy and they are working on the land again. So that shows you something of the discrimination or even persecution that Christians had to suffer during those days.

Since the downfall of the Gang of Four I think our Government is working very hard to go back to the correct practices of the first seventeen years. Christians are again regarded to be a part, definitely a part of the united front, that is Christians and Communists may differ in ideological and philosophical, theological matters but politically as long as the Christian is patriotic, as long as the Christian wishes China to grow better, to become stronger, then there is enough common ground between the Christian and the Communist to work together and that is the policy of the Communist party about the united front. It's on that ground that Christians and non-Christians can work together for socialism.

DEAN: So you wouldn't see any place in the future for, as it used to be called, Foreign Missionaries because of an attitude to foreign powers generally, would that be so?

PROFESSOR TING: Well, a very important point emphasised by the Chinese Christians since the early days of the Liberation was that the churches in China ought to be Chinese and national. Financially the churches are to be self-supporting. It is not anything nationalistic. It has no objection to international connections between Chinese Christians and Christians abroad. But it is just that the churches must be self-governing, self-supporting and the work of the churches need to be carried on by the Chinese Christians themselves.

Many people had returned to find their homes empty and so had to start "from scratch" as they had only taken a few clothes with them when they fled. There was food in some areas, but in most areas bordering on Tanzania there was need for food.

ENDLESS HORROR, ENDLESS RECONSTRUCTION

A graphic insight into the sufferings endured by Ugandans during the eight years of the Idi Amin regime and the recent fighting that led to the liberation has been gained by a Sydney observer, Mr. Warwick Olson, who has just returned to Australia after travelling extensively through Uganda as a member of a team to assess relief and rehabilitation needs. He spent ten days in the most hard hit areas of Uganda.

"The stories of horror were endless. One pastor told me of a mother with her baby who was trying to flee from Amin's soldiers. They were caught and the baby was tossed into the swirling rapids of the Nile River — all because the mother had hidden a small sum of money in the child's napkin", Mr. Olson said.

"Almost every person I spoke to told of relatives and close friends who had been eliminated during the eight years of Amin's rule or who had been killed during the war of liberation. Ugandan officials believe that more than half a million men, women and children have died".

2 MASS GRAVES OF 900 CHILDREN

A moving experience during that visit was to be taken to two mass graves just outside the town of Mbarara in Western Uganda. In those graves were buried 900 children who had died during the 10 weeks war of liberation.

These children, who were either orphaned or separated from their parents, had moved from place to place, first to avoid the wrath of Amin's soldiers and then the bombs of the Tanzanian liberating forces. Many of the children had died from malnutrition. Others had contracted disease, mainly through a measles epidemic.

The towns of Masaka and Mbarara near the Tanzanian border the commercial centres had been destroyed.

There was no electricity and water was short. Food was short in the town because of the extensive damage to the commercial centre, and outside the town in areas near the Tanzanian border there was a desperate shortage of food and clothing.

The bishop in this area, the Right Reverend Christopher Senyonjo, said the Church must be in the forefront of the rehabilitation and reconstruction programme.

He hopes Christians and other people of goodwill in other countries will help to finance some of the reconstruction. The Church is also appealing for help to complete a dispensary, which is urgently needed to serve a community of 10,000 people.

The devastation and destruction in Mbarara seemed to be even greater than that in Masaka. The whole commercial area had been badly bombed. The residential areas were less affected, but most of the houses had been looted. In many cases that had left the people without beds, cooking utensils, crockery and cutlery.

Bedding taken from under them

The Churches in the area had been badly hit by looting and destruction. Welfare institutions and hospitals had also been crippled with beds and medicines in short supply. In one instance looters removed patients from their beds to take the bedding.

Canon Keith Katakanya, secretary of East Ankole Diocese of the Church of Uganda, said that the most urgent need was for blankets, clothes, cooking utensils like saucepans, beds and mattresses.

Many people had returned to find their homes empty and so had to start "from scratch" as they had only taken a few clothes with them when they fled. There was food in some areas, but in most areas bordering on Tanzania there was need for food.

THESE SURVIVED THE WAR



Children at the Church of Uganda's Baby Home at Fort Portal have been affected by the recent war of liberation. The Baby Home was looted and cots, bedding, food and other essential items were stolen. The Matron and staff are carrying on under very difficult circumstances.

"There is a big work to be done for the spiritual welfare of the people", the canon said. "We need to reach our people with a different way of teaching, but this could be costly as we may have to get expert people from outside to give religious teaching to rehabilitate our people spiritually".

Mr. Olson said the Archbishop of Uganda, the Most Reverend Silvanus Wani, had asked the African Enterprise organisation, under the leadership of Bishop Kivengere, to co-ordinate the relief and rehabilitation effort for the Church of Uganda.

African Enterprise had already established an office in the Ugandan capital, Kampala, and the co-ordinator of the work is the Reverend John Wilson, who until recently headed African Enterprise's Ugandan relief programme in Kenya.

Archbishop Wani told Mr. Olson that Bishop Kivengere and the African Enterprise team had done a magnificent job from Kenya in caring for Ugandans displaced by the brutal Amin regime. Now that they were back in Uganda, he wanted them to become deeply involved, not only in the relief programme but also in the Church's ministry of "reconciliation of hearts and minds".

Mr. Olson, a director of the Sydney-based communications organisation, Pilgrim International Limited, is associated with the Australian support office of African Enterprise.

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WHO REALLY OWNS THE MEDIA?

Tony Morphett takes the Christian view

PART TWO



MEDIA RESPONSIBILITY MEDIA OWNERSHIP MEDIA CONTROL

So let us look at those phrases again: "ownership of the media"; "control of the media"; and "media responsibility".

If you are a Christian, you know who owns the media. In terms of the parable of the vineyard, He is an absentee owner... he has gone away and left us to manage it, but he is still the owner. The owner is God, in the form of Jesus Christ, who has all things under His feet. Now I agree that this is very inconvenient. It would make life seem much easier if he owned it, and only had to answer to each other for what we did with it. But that is not the truth of the matter. Such a view does not fit the facts.

But "control of the media" is a different matter. Genesis 1 tells us that God handed the planet and its resources over to us to work with. As I said earlier, this may seem to us to be a dumb decision but it's none of our business to question it. "Control of the media" is in human hands. Now how does a Christian who works in media set about deciding how he carries out his responsibilities firstly as a Christian, and secondly as a media worker. Well for a start that is the order of his responsibilities. One, Christian. Two, worker.

And employers should not feel too bad about this, because a Christian who is silly enough to think he can cheat God will not think twice about cheating his boss. Furthermore, a practising Christian who works from the blueprint... works from the Bible... should make a good employee, because he is under orders to use his talents productively... to multiply his talents. So that not only should he not be robbing you blind, he ought to be making you look good as an employer.

PROBLEMS FOR CHRISTIANS

The media however creates problems for the Christian employee.

Media... television, radio, newspapers, magazines... are channels for information and entertainment. But they don't just inform and entertain society. They reflect it as it is, and also as it thinks it wants to become. Media reflects the short-term aspirations of various parts of society. An example of this a few years back was a drama series set in a secondary school. I understand a large bloc of the audience were primary school children.

Another series purported to represent life in a block of flats. A lot of the audience were secondary school children who thought that that was what their future was going to be like. People really are influenced by what they see and read and hear. The advertising industry has spent millions in research establishing this. If people are not influenced by what they read and see and hear, then advertising is a hoax, and political campaigners are wasting their time.

Now the Christian media worker has to work in that situation, and also he has to work in teams with people who don't share his views.

This is as it ought to be. In the world, as a leavening agent, is exactly where the Christian ought to be. This creates all sorts of problems for him on a day-to-day basis and I'll be looking at some of those problems later.

Most of them spring from the sort of society we are. We're a society with ills. Some of our ills were the cause, and more of them are the results of two world wars, a depression, and an extraordinary technology. This technology and capacity to

make things has made us a rich society... most of us have a far higher standard of living than even aristocrats of the Middle Ages... but it's a rich society where some people still don't get enough to eat.

In the past ten years materialism has proved itself to be a thoroughly unworkable philosophy. The richest countries in the world have pockets of malnutrition in them. This is so not because we lack the food. It's because we lack the desire to feed our own people. Let alone anyone else's. In a sentence: materialism can't cope with sin.

We have a society in which it's possible to pretend that we possess the freedom, to act in isolation from other people. It's a society which in defence of selfishness and justification for not caring for the weak produced the nonsense phrase "victimless crime".

It's a society which, while becoming increasingly aware of the interdependence of plants and animals in nature — increasingly aware of ecology — increasingly pretends to believe that people aren't interdependent — that it's actually possible to lead a purely independent and self-centred existence.

Now that's a society which isn't thinking clearly or well. A society which is, to be frank, mentally ill, and needs healing. And that illness stems from a retreat from the facts, and that healing can only come from a recognition of the facts including the original Fact of God, and His demands on us.

REFLECT AN ILL SOCIETY

Workers in the media are involved in reflecting that society and its desires. Because they're reflecting an ill society, workers in the media quite often take damage. And quite often that damage is in the form of loss of belief in values... in a word, cynicism. Cynicism, unfortunately, has become part of the romantic image of the reporter. As a cadet reporter one put on cynicism with one's first trenchcoat.

I realise it's quite often the sensitive person's defence against pain, but there's something very tedious about cynicism. It's directionless, non-creative, it reacts rather than acts, it's a negation rather than an affirmation, it confuses rather than clarifies. In a pantomime, the devil may be a swashbuckling chap in red tights. In real life, his trademarks are tedium and confusion and his colour is more often grey.

The one thing the real devil has in common with his portrayal in pantomime is that he's involved in illusion. He's the father of lies. And the romantic illusion persists... the lie persists... that lack of belief is more positive than belief itself. It's hard to estimate how much damage has been done to our society by the romanticism of the 19th century who elevated rebellion into a virtue. Now we know from Genesis that rebellion is the key vice. It's what got us into the mess we're in.

And that's because rebellion against God is a rebellion against the original Fact, and if you rebel against the facts, you get mashed. If I go to the top of this building and rebel against the law of gravity by stepping off into the air above Pitt Street... then I get mashed. If you cross streets ignoring the facts of motor cars you get damaged. If you live your life ignoring the fact of God, you get damaged. Believe me. I tried it, I did it, I got damaged.

So in the 19th century someone comes up and says "the rebel's a hero" and idiots ever since have believed it and have been taking damage from it. I know, because I was one of those idiots. I was capable of saying "if God exists then He must be defied". Big deal. Trouble is, it's like defying the Law of Gravity. It's dumb. You get mashed. And you lead a grey, tedious life in the meantime.

The media worker... the man or woman working in newspapers, radio, television, reporting or fictionalising our society can't wish the ills of that society out of existence... can't avoid them. It's like being a cell in a sick body. The cell can't opt out, all it can do is get sick itself or try and make the body well again. What can the Christian working in media do to make the body of society well again? We're all in this together, and media has tremendous, leverage in society. So what can we do?

The owner has given us the vineyard and gone away, and the vineyard's in a bad mess and the owner might come back any time to get us to account for what we've been doing with his property. Our Father's left us to



look after the house and it is in one (literally) hell of a mess.

And if we knew the date he was coming back, then we'd have the washing up and vacuuming done by that day. Even have the beds made, wouldn't we? But the old man's smarter than that. He hasn't told us in order. Well, you've read this morning's newspaper, so you know the house isn't in order. And what can I do? Fast as I wash up, the others dirty the dishes, right?

INSTRUCTIONS BEHIND THE DOOR

We'll come back to the list of instructions that our Father left hanging behind the door.

We're supposed to love God and our neighbour as ourselves. Our neighbour doesn't seem very lovely, but we have to love him. Sometimes our neighbour doesn't seem very lovely, but we manage there, don't we? So loving our neighbour ought to be possible, because we know fewer horrible things about him than we know about ourselves. Anyway, John in his first letter says "If anyone says 'I love God', and hates his brother, he's a liar". John gives as his reason the fact that you've seen your brother and you haven't seen God.

Now I would've thought that it's sometimes easier to love someone you haven't seen than someone you have... but surely there's another reason here too. Genesis says we're made in the image of God. Now because of our rebellion we've damaged that image, it's a flawed image, but it's still there. So it's logically inconsistent to say you love God and hate your brother. You're saying... I love God but I hate the image of God. It doesn't make sense.

So a Christian in media, like any other Christian, has to deal with God and other people from a position of love. But a media worker's business is people. People he interviews, people he writes about, people he photographs, people whose businesses he writes about, people whose books or films he reviews, people who've just lost relatives, people whose lives resemble the fictional stories he constructs or films. He has to deal with these people from a position of love. And unless he works from love, his work is going to be rotten anyway.

I don't use the word "rotten" figuratively. I mean it literally. The whole universe, and life itself came from God's creative act of love. So if we, who are flawed images of God, are not ourselves working from a position of love, then we are not working from a position of life. And the lack of life is death, and our work will be literally rotting, or rotten. It may have the luminescence of decay, but that is the only light it will give.

One of the most astonishing things God did when He made us, was to give us the potential to reproduce ourselves.

A Christian worker in the media has to draw lines past which he can't work. And those lines are there for very positive reasons. What I'm saying isn't negation. Isn't a big "no". It's a big "yes". It's a yes to God's love, and the love we owe to God and our fellow man.

Pornography for instance is desperately wicked, is such a sign of a desperately ill society. For what pornography does is to separate sexual intercourse from love and from the reproduction of new, if flawed, images of God. It separates sexual intercourse from life, and the lack of life is death. And death is the symptom of what Christians call "sin", which is rebellion against the facts, and therefore against God the original Fact.

Pornography isn't the subject, and I'm not going to pursue it, but it's a good example of an area where a gift of God has been detached from its life-enhancing purpose, and directed into death. Where food has been tipped into the sewer. Pornography's simply anti-woman, anti-man, anti-life, anti-human, anti-love. Anti-God.

I suppose we link in our minds "media, sex and violence"... and with violence we have another example of the detaching of an emotion from its right function. After all, anger isn't bad in itself. There are sometimes good reasons to be angry. But if we link it with unforgiving behaviour, and then celebrate the mismatch as a good and reasonable form of human conduct... then we're out of line.

I'm guilty of having done it. Of having celebrated revenge as a good thing. And of course it's simply not on. We're usurping God's function. "Judge not." "Vengeance is mine saith the Lord." Not on.

So there are fashionable areas in media where Christians are handicapped. Where we can't participate. It's always been so. We couldn't work in the Colosseum in Ancient Rome and we can't write sadism and porn now. That's tough luck, but there's other work around. Myself... I argue. I negotiate with producers. I say "I can't write it this way, but I could write it that way... and I try and make sure that that way's a better story."

ONE LIGHT SHINES ANOTHER CONCEALED

And there are producers I'll probably never work with, and who probably wouldn't want to work with me. Recently someone in the business was suggesting me for a job, and the person he was talking to leant forward and said "you realise Tony Morphett's a, ah... a Christian?" The man who was suggesting me is also a Christian, but not quite the exhibitionist that I am. So he stayed deadpan and said "well I suppose there are worse things to be".

This is a nice little scene, because it illustrates two things very clearly: one, in some sections of media there is no more threatening thing that you can be than a Christian; and two, there are Christians in media who aren't known as such.

Now I don't know whether they go round drawing a fish in the dust and rapidly rubbing it out, but because of the aggressively secular nature of the industry, there are Christians who've been hit in the head once too often and don't stand up and be counted any more. And clearly this isn't according to the book.

We not only have to stand up and be counted, we also have to evangelise, which is one of those words like fundamentalist that gets us into trouble. We have to let people know that the epidemic of death, which we caused by our rebellion against the source of life, against the facts... that that epidemic ended on the Cross. Now if there was an epidemic of bubonic plague going around and you knew the cure was a very simple one... and you kept the knowledge of that cure to yourself... then I don't think you'd be behaving very nicely.

And saying "the cure's in books in the library... let 'em look it up, like I did"... or "there are hospitals in every suburb where they can learn the cure"... doesn't really let us off the hook, when we can say to our neighbour "look, Jesus did it on the Cross for you. All you have to do is accept it and be cured!" Now if we don't believe the Bible, then we don't have to do that. We can watch them die and say "bye bye. Death's an incurable disease, no one survives it."

And, frankly, when I was an atheist, I thought that was a terrific deal. That death was permanent. That it didn't matter what you'd done, you never had to answer for it. One of the hardest things I had to accept as a new Christian was this idea of survival after death, of the resurrection of my body. I could accept Christ's resurrection because the evidence was there. But I couldn't accept mine. Because I was scared that people would say "oh, you're after pie in the sky. You're afraid of dying."

• To page 4



An Evangelical Church in Hanoi

TONY MORPHETT — "Not afraid of death as such"

• From page 3

I'm not afraid of death as such... being eaten by crocodiles and so on, yes, but not of death as such. What I'm afraid of is losing touch with Christ now I've found Him. So it's not death I'm afraid of, it's Judgment. I'm so afraid of it, I'll obey orders very willingly, something I've never done before.

And the orders include Matthew 28, verses 18-20. The resurrected Christ is talking to His disciples. "And Jesus came and said to them: 'All authority in heaven and earth has been given to Me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age.'"

If you are a Christian in media, then those are your orders. You have to evangelise. Not badly, not shouting "have you been saved?" into unwilling people's ears. Not grabbing lapels. Lots of people have tearaway lapels these days. But with love, because you want to save them from death.

The ownership is vested in Christ. All authority in heaven and earth has been given to Him. He made it. It's His.

The control has been given to human beings. In Genesis 1, 26 God has given man dominion over all the earth. We are stewards under His authority.

And stewards are responsible to the owner for what they do with his property. The owner has told us that he is coming back, ready or not. Whether you believe it or not. You may not believe in the law of gravity but that won't save you if you step off the roof.

There's been a lot of talk recently about children's television. I'd like to leave you with two quotes from Jesus. "Let the children come to Me, do not hinder them; for to such belongs the Kingdom of God" (Mk 10, 14), and "Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a great millstone were hung round his neck and he were thrown into the sea" (Mk 9, 42). The thing about this book is that it does clarify one's program-making decisions.

Ownership, control, responsibility. We know the owner. We know who has control under him. We know who's responsible. We are responsible and we'll answer for that responsibility when the owner returns.

When I was asked to give this talk, I thought I knew what I was going to say. Something mildly entertaining, a talk about what the Bible's done for me. But I got forced back to the Bible itself, and away from myself. And the Bible has its own disturbing logic.

CHRISTIANS MUST BE PART OF THE CRISIS

WORLD VISION VIETNAM REPORT

The Christian Church is still alive and well in Vietnam under a government policy that does not encourage or discourage religion, says World Vision's relief and development director, who's just back from that country.

Roger Walker's visit to Vietnam was the second stage of a study into the Indo-Chinese refugee problem. Late last year, Walker spent time in Thailand, where he visited refugee camps and met with officials of the United Nations' High Commission on Refugees.

Commenting on the refugee situation, Roger Walker says that the crisis must be attacked on two levels.

"There are hundreds of thousands to be helped who have made their escape and are now crowded into camps or who are struggling for survival on the high seas.

"I believe that Australia and other Western nations have a responsibility to take more refugees. However, I believe the community must give the Government its full support. Christians must do more to help settle these brothers and sisters in Christ. There is no use calling for an increase in the refugee intake unless we are willing to do our bit."

The World Vision relief and development director says the second level of attack must be to give support to both Vietnam and Kampuchea. We must not look on these two countries in only negative terms.

"Exciting development is taking place in Vietnam. Kampuchea is in the middle of a full scale famine and is desperate for assistance. I believe we must respond to that call even if the Australian Government has

to reverse its policy and recognize the Phnom Penh leadership.

"This leg of my trip gave me a picture of the life in unified Vietnam and an opportunity to see if World Vision could give assistance to Vietnam and Kampuchea," says Roger Walker.

He says that there is a contrast between Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon). In the North the communist system is embedded into the lives of the people. There is reasonable equality and co-operation. There is a more spartan approach to life.

In the South there is still confusion and uncertainty about the future. The new life-style is still filtering down to the grass roots. Because of this uncertainty, many Vietnamese are making their escape.

Under the communist system, says Roger Walker, there is free education, health care and no taxation. The salary scale begins at 50 dong (\$150) and increases to 200 dong (the salary of the Vietnamese president is 200 dong). Essential diet, rice and meat, is rationed. Each person is allowed 15 kilos of rice a month.

that there would be no more church in the North. "But we did keep God's Word according to the faith. We kept the Word of Jesus and the name of the Lord is known here."

The Catholic Church is still strong in the North. In the South, the church operates with comparative freedom. Like all citizens, ministers have to live with travel limitations. People travelling beyond the city must return home on the same day. This makes evangelism and conferences of pastors and bishops difficult.

GOSPEL IS FREELY PREACHED

"In the South, unlike the North, there is still apprehension among Christians about the future. But everywhere in Vietnam the Gospel is being freely preached."

Roger Walker, who visited Vietnam during the war years, says the new government has made remarkable progress in clearing the city of its prostitution and drug problems. The New Economic Zone, a settlement just out of old Saigon, while having its teething problems, appears to be taking its toll on the city slums.

The World Vision relief and development director says he was very impressed with the level of operation and cleanliness of hospitals he visited. Many have been upgraded since 1975.

WE KEEP GOD'S WORD

However, people told me that when the nation was partitioned in 1954, many Christians went South, believing

St. Wasp's Church

Now Romans, chapters nine to eleven, tell of the ingrafting of the Gentiles.



Woman as episcopal candidate

A WOMAN priest—Canon Mary Michael Simpson, who visited this country last year—was one of six people nominated recently for the post of Suffragan Bishop of New York.

She was the first woman to be formally nominated for the episcopate since such a move became possible through the 1976 decision by the General Convention of the US Episcopal Church.

Canon Simpson was not elected, though her supporters are said to be pleased with the move which she made in the ballots. The "Church Times" understands that, although she knew she had no chance of being elected, she was persuaded to stand by the female clergy of the diocese and their supporters in order to make the point that women are now eligible for the episcopate.

Here was one of three names proposed from the floor in a revolt at the diocesan selection convention by lay and clerical members who felt that the three men suggested by the official nominating committee represented too small and too narrow a spectrum of choice.

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NEW PRINCIPAL FOR CMS TRAINING COLLEGE



Rev John McIntosh, BA, BD, ThM, has been appointed principal of St Andrew's House in Melbourne — the training college for Church Missionary Society candidates.

He succeeds Rev David Penman who is now Rector of the Parish of Palmerston North in New Zealand.

John and his American-born wife Barbara are at present CMS missionaries in Indonesia where John has been a lecturer in Theology at Nommensen University, North Sumatra, since 1971.

An "old boy" of St Andrew's Cathedral Choir School and Trinity Grammar, Sydney, John holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Sydney University and studied at Westminster Theological Seminary in Pennsylvania, USA, where he gained a BD (1962) and ThM. After ordination in Sydney, he lectured at Moore Theological College. He was curate at St Barnabas' Anglican Church, East Roseville, and then St James', Turramurra, before training for missionary service at St Andrew's Hall in 1970.

John and Barbara have four children. The two eldest, Jane and Alison, are at school in Australia. James and Katherine are attending Chefoo School in West Malaysia.

The McIntosh family will move to Melbourne and John will take up his new post at the beginning of first term in 1980.

Police Impotence and the Summary Offences Act

"Police News" is the official journal of the Police Association. An editorial in the latest issue criticises the laws passed by the NSW Parliament last April, but not yet promulgated, to replace the Summary Offences Act.

The police journal says that these new laws mean that police have lost "any semblance of control over many common street offences". The editorial lists the types of behaviour which often occur after hotels close and which gives offence to other citizens. Under the new law the police cannot take action.

The Secretary of the Police Association said problems have arisen from the decision to "polish the offence of soliciting for prostitution. He said that there had been an influx of prostitutes from other States and New Zealand. This could lead to an underworld war to control prostitution.

The police are angry that the Government did not bother to consult them before passing the new laws. Presumably those who "thought up" these new laws live in select suburbs where these ugly aspects of society do not disturb them.

B. G. Judd

THE GROWING INFLUENCE OF ISLAMIC FAITH

The growing Islamic influence which is continuing in the Middle East and Africa is causing widespread concern among church leaders at the Anglican Consultative Council. This concern was indicated by the Archbishop of Canterbury in his opening address when he questioned whether the Anglican Communion was equipped to meet the challenge of Islam's "notable advance".

Two members of the ACC from Muslim countries agreed that for years the West had disregarded the advance of Islam. The Rev Clement Guya Janda of Kenya and Bishop Inayat Masih of Pakistan said that Westerners viewed with surprise the Iranian blood-bath.

But for persons living in or near countries under the "veil of Islamic power", the developments in Iran and the steady advance of the Muslim faith were no surprise.

Two of the ACC meeting's four sections — those dealing with Christian unity and mission, and the theological basis of human rights — are expected to refer to this rise of Islam in their reports, despite the fact that the Council's Secretary-General, Bishop John Howe, says that the subject of Islam is not formally on the agenda.



Archbishop Bill Bennett, of South Africa, talking with the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Coggan, between sessions of the recent ACC meeting.

To Understand Each Other

by Dr Alan Craddock

RECEIVING AND EXTENDING FORGIVENESS

How well do you handle "forgiveness"? If you find it hard to forgive someone who has wronged you, or if you can't really accept that you have been forgiven when you are at fault, then you have a real problem on your hands. Even in the best of families, relationships can become very hostile and after a fiery session it is good to see that faults have been forgiven and the partners reconciled to one another. If the forgiveness is real, the clash lies in the past and the future has not been jeopardised.

But often forgiveness seems to be easily given or received. I was recently watching a TV programme in which a father and his daughter became bitterly divided and refused to talk to one another. The script-writer did the usual trick and had them reconciled before they over-ran the programme's timeslot.

It was all suitably touching and simple, and made good family entertainment — there was even a lesson to learn! Real life is not quite so simple. The lives of real people are not scripted by experts or packaged to suit a one-hour media presentation (with time out for commercials too of course).

In reality, many people say that they forgive, but when tension builds up again the old issue is resurrected. In marital counselling it is not unusual to encounter couples who keep on forgiving one another for their faults, but who can't seem to forget these faults.

It is useful to remember that the forgiveness you give is to be as absolute and complete as the forgiveness God is willing to give. His forgiveness is not whimsical

or forgetful but is "faithful and just" (1 John 1:9). He forgives even when it is undeserved. His forgiveness is an act of unmerited grace and good favour. The forgiveness needed in our relationships should be modelled on this.

There is a further problem with forgiveness. This concerns the receiving of forgiveness. I recall talking with a teenager who had made a mistake which had cost her and her family considerable pain. Her parents had genuinely forgiven her and had set the matter aside.

The fault was seen to be in the past, the present and the future were seen to be far more important than ancient history. The only person who couldn't see it this way was the girl herself. She just could not believe she was genuinely forgiven and her guilt feelings continued to grow and she became seriously depressed.

This failure to accept the

reality of a genuine spirit of forgiveness is all too common, for many people are much more comfortable giving forgiveness than they are in receiving it. Parents, especially, find it hard to realize that their children want to forgive as much as to be forgiven.

Where there is a breakdown in a relationship because one person has wronged another, genuine forgiveness is needed as part of the reconciliation. One person needs forgiveness, the other to express it. Failure to adequately give or receive forgiveness can ultimately destroy the relationship.

A constructive and loving relationship can soon degenerate into hate and destruction when forgiveness is either withheld or turned aside. On the positive side, forgiveness can liberate both parties. The person forgiven is freed from guilt and the forgiver from the burden of unresolved resentment.

PROFESSOR TING ON CHINA

• From page 2

their missionaries as individuals because many of them came to China with the sole intention of evangelising China. They didn't want to be a political tool of Western penetration even though when they were caught in the whole machinery of western political and military and political penetration of China, objectively because they didn't know any better, they could have supported groups in China, political groups in China, that were against the interests of the people of China. But today we understand that many missionaries have turned into friends of new China. Many of them have visited new China. Even some of our friends have come to Nanking and have come to see us. So we are taking a very friendly attitude towards the former missionaries. It is unthinkable for the Chinese churches to receive missionaries back to be permanent co-workers.

DEAN: So if there were some ex-missionaries who needed to leave China in those very turbulent days and wanted to come back for a visit, would they be welcome to do that?

PROFESSOR TING: Certainly. Archbishop Mowll was a former missionary in China and he came back in 1956. Then our very good Canadian friend, Pat Johnson, for instance, was a missionary in Manchuria. He has come to Nanking three times. Bishop Hall came back. Bishop Baker has not come yet. I understand he hopes to come to China.

PART THREE NEXT ISSUE

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W.C.C.

Sir,
May I respond to Douglas Brown's article (and question) "Who Now Wags the WCC's Tail?" in ACR 16/7/79.

Either it is unfortunate for Mr Brown that the information and wisdom of the recently concluded Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting was not available to him at the time he wrote his article, or presumably now he is writing an article that suggests all the heads of the Commonwealth are "left wing, radical, revolutionary, neo Marxists", and whatever other words he can find in his political dictionary.

The policy of the WCC on Zimbabwe/Rhodesia has been to seek an end to the violence and "to support efforts to achieve a just and peaceful settlement through negotiations involving all parties concerned". The Communiqué of the Commonwealth meeting outlines an almost identical policy. The Commonwealth leaders also called for increased aid to the Rhodesian refugees in neighbouring countries of Botswana, Zambia and Mozambique.

Such aid will be administered in conjunction with the Patriotic Front, as it is the Front which organizes and runs the refugee camps. This increased Commonwealth aid will go to the same people, for the same purposes and by similar channels to the grant last year from the WCC Programme to Combat Racism. Incidentally, so does the aid from the Red Cross and the various United Nations agencies.

The World Council's policies and actions in Southern Africa are biblically motivated. If any reader wishes to receive a copy of the WCC policy explaining its biblical and theological basis, please write to me.

Can Mr Brown explain his motivations and understandings in biblical and theological terms? Why, for instance, has he overlooked the fact that Bishop Muzorewa, as acting Prime Minister of Rhodesia whilst Ian Smith was in the USA, either signed the Executive order or refused to use his Executive powers to stop the order that led to a Rhodesian raid in October last year on the Felimo Refugee Camp in Zambia, resulting in the killing of 226 Africans (mainly women and children) and the wounding of a further 699 refugee people?

If Mr Brown is only prepared to condemn violence by the Patriotic Front and not by the Muzorewa-Smith forces,

then I can only conclude that his motivation is political rather than biblical. Mr Brown lightly dismisses the accusations made against the May Rhodesian elections. Again, not all such accusations were from "predictable" organizations. The British Parliamentary Human Rights Group, headed by Lord Chitnis, in its report or observation of the Rhodesian election "Free and Fair?" concluded:

"The recent election in Rhodesia was nothing more than a gigantic confidence trick designed to foist on a cowed and indoctrinated black electorate a settlement and a constitution which were formulated without its consent and which are being implemented without its approval."

When a spokesman for a minority group seeks to dismiss world wide opinion — both reflected by Governments and churches — as "left wing, marxist" etc, I begin to ask "Is there a hidden motive?"

The rest of his article which purports to be an analysis of the decision making process of the WCC might just as accurately be applied to any church synod or assembly. As a member of the Sydney Diocesan Synod, I am only too well aware that the 830 synodsmen "in no

LETTERS

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The Place of Real Prayer

"Revival Praying" by Leonard Ravenhill
Bethany Fellowship
Large Format Paperback
176 pp. \$2.95

There is an air of old-fashioned earnestness about this book, so it's not one for the reader who demands trendy contemporary spirituality. It is in fact a reprint of a book written in 1962, and quotes many preachers and authors of a much earlier vintage, besides the Bible in A.V.

From start to finish it is an impassioned plea for reliance on prayer if God's work is to be accomplished. Written by a pastor and preacher, its special burden is that the leaders of God's people should be men whose messages spring from long hours of intercession as well as study of the Scriptures.

Its challenge will shame all of us who are too content with a shallow, non-expectant faith, and perhaps, if we are responsive, will drive us to our knees.

Lesley Hicks

Contriving a Loving Response

"Total Joy" by Marabel Morgan
Hodder and Stoughton
155 pp. \$2.75

Marabel Morgan has written this book as a follow-up to her best selling "The Total Woman". She is a dedicated and sincere Christian woman who obviously wants to help as many women as she can to have a fulfilled and joyous marriage. The book is based on the premise that "a woman wants her marriage — if she has one — to succeed". She then outlines a course of action designed to "keep it alive and make it zing!"

The book is divided into four sections: The Joy of Being; The Joy of Caring (Accept, Admire, Adapt, Appreciate); The Joy of Loving;

way resembled government and opposition". May I challenge anyone who reads Mr Brown's article, to read it, substituting "synod" for "assembly", "St Andrew's House" for "Geneva", "standing committee" for "central committee", and so on.

My point is not to criticize Sydney Synod (generally I think it operates as well as the WCC Assemblies do) but to point out that the criticisms Mr Brown makes of the WCC are applicable to any large church assembly or synod.

If we are to take his criticisms seriously, then we must surely examine the whole question of participation by lay people in the decision making processes of the church, at all levels. If Mr Brown cared to make a few suggestions on this point, his writings may be of some value.

Russell G. Rolleston
Information Officer
Aust Council of Churches

Racial Assumptions

Sir,
Thank you for your editorial of July 2, in answer to my letter published in that issue.

I was misled by assertions such as those repeated in that editorial, namely, that it is not un-Christian to refuse entry to Australia to third-world (ie, coloured) people seeking an easy life and higher living standards, and

that we ought to comply with the requests of third-world governments and exclude talented people whose skills are needed in their own countries, into concluding that you were only pretending to support the admission of Indo-Chinese refugees, while your real intention was to promote racist views.

Apparently, to judge from Mrs Creasey's letter, I was not alone in thinking so, but after reading your editorial I realise I was wrong and offer my apologies.

At the same time, I suggest that you might well ask yourself whether assumptions such as those I have instanced are not racist. Is national selfishness any less un-Christian than individual selfishness? Did not most white immigrants come to Australia seeking an easier life and higher living standards?

Is it not a basic right of Australians to leave this country and live elsewhere if they want to? While we regret the brain drain from Australia to America and Europe, do we ask foreign governments to exclude people in this category? In short, do you not have double standards — one for people of European extraction and another for everybody else?

And, if so, do not such assumptions reinforce the fears and prejudices lurking in the minds of many Australians, and so make it unlikely that your pleas for refugees will be as successful as they otherwise might be?

(Rev) G. S. Clarke
Lane Cove, NSW

we have to deal with involve the breakdown of marriage. This book is sub-titled "Putting your life back together again" and is offered as help to those people who suddenly, and often against their desire, find themselves divorced.

Bustanoby is obviously an experienced and compassionate counsellor, and much of his book provides helpful and useful guidance. There are however several weaknesses in the book as far as I am concerned. It is written for Americans. The chapter on "Divorce Laws" would not totally apply in Australia and could be misleading. It is based on the contemporary "self-love" philosophy, which it regards as the gateway to new relationships.

Both authors were guests at a special welcoming meeting, held for media and clergy, at the Jenkins Hall, Lane Cove, Sydney, Thursday, August 2.

Mrs LaHaye observed that, "The problems you have here, namely the sin problem and the breakdown of the family, are the same as in the USA and Canada".

Concern for the divorce rate is becoming evident, as is the concern for the family breakdown situation, in all three countries.

If they can sow seeds that help others, the time will be worth the cost, according to both visitors.

Dr LaHaye opened his address with the claim that, "When our family is

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AUTHORS RETURN



Tim and Bev LaHaye with David Hillis, after their arrival in Australia, for a two week tour of speaking engagements, organized by Word of Life, Australia. Photo, Ramon Williams.

SPIRIT-CONTROLLED LIFE FOR THE FAMILY

Word of Life in Australia has sponsored the return visit of Dr and Mrs T. LaHaye to this land, where they will be addressing meetings over the next two weeks. The two weeks are actually part of their annual holidays, but they were so attracted to Australia on their last visit that they claim "This will be no hardship for us".

Tim and Bev LaHaye are known for their books on the subjects associated with the spiritual family life.

Dr LaHaye is pastor of one of California's largest churches, Scott Memorial Baptist Church; is Chancellor of Christian Heritage College; founded the San Diego Christian Unified School System as well as being the author of many well-known books.

Such books as "How to be Happy Though Married" and "Spirit Controlled Temperament" were written by Dr LaHaye, who also co-authored, with his wife, "The Act of Marriage" and "Spirit Controlled Family Living".

Beverly LaHaye has written "The Spirit-Controlled Woman" and "How to Develop Your Child's Temperament".

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This service to readers is a form of free advertising. A person wishing to buy or sell anything can place a free advertisement of up to five lines. If the advertisement is successful, the advertiser is asked to pay The Church Record 10 per cent of the value of the sale price, up to a maximum of \$10 per advertisement.

The service is known as FREE AD and runs on an honour system. The advertiser will be responsible for forwarding to The Church Record office what is owing.

FOR SALE: Hammond Organ (L-100) in perfect condition. Ideal for small church. Phone Wollongong (042) 25 5561. Valued at \$1200, would accept less.

FOR SALE: Desk — C.R.O. 8 drawer, excellent condition \$60. Ph: 427 1163.

WANTED TO BUY: 50 small Sunday School stackable chairs, preferably Sebel Steel, 452 3096.

FOR SALE: Chairs steel framed stacking padded 24 excellent condition \$5. 46 good condition \$5. 59 strong wooden kinder chairs \$3 each. Sydney 53 724 Rev. John Lance, 9 Littleton Street, Riverwood, 2210.

WANTED by needy parish — old duplicator. Phone: (045) 75 1417.

WHAT A WORLD

Lesley Hicks

There is a handsome building in our suburb which always reminds me of a tomb — a mausoleum for a dead church. Its curved white facade, adorned with pillars, is always deserted. Not once have I seen its doors open and people going in and out, though some must do so at times when I am not around to see them.

"One Way" says the sign outside the Second Church of Christ Scientist, Chatswood. The arrow points elsewhere. In fact, it seems to be aimed in the direction of the Baptist Church opposite! And for any who have studied the whole sad story of Mary Baker Eddy and the "church" she founded, the fact that its adherents are rapidly dying out is not surprising.

It's not my intention to write about that movement just now. Actually, my train of thought started with those pillars, and the expression "pillars of the church". A pillar is a solid but dead support. It's not the way I'd like to be described in relation to my church.

Rather, "Blessed is the man . . ." sings the first Psalm, "whose delight is in the law of the Lord. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither".

DEALING WITH DEADNESS

I'm concerned with the problem of any active and prominent church members, or ministers for that matter (after all, they are church members too) who may feel dry and dead spiritually, more like pillars bearing the weight of the roof than living, growing trees. What if our prayers seem to hit the ceiling instead of the leafy canopy of heaven and the ear of God beyond?

Is it wise for us honestly to reveal our spiritual state, or to admit that we feel pressured by troubles to which God does not seem to be providing answers? To whom, and at what risk? Do we risk judgement, rejection and gossip? Yet it seems to me that a Christian who admits to sin or spiritual need is in a far more hopeful state than one smugly content with a mediocre level of Christian living.

How much acceptance, encouragement and ongoing counselling was given to long-established Christians who were moved for one reason or another to go forward at the Graham Crusade?

In all my experience, and in all that I read, it seems most significant and healthy that God's people should be repentant, dissatisfied with the level of their living and eager to press on to a new beginning. Perhaps then we will begin to pray for personal and corporate revival, renewal, an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Or do we really want that?

Sometimes when people well known and active in the church admit to having needs unmet and longings unfulfilled, they meet only a brush-off, or a repetition of platitudes they know all too well, and criticism for their weakness or emotionalism. Christians, apparently, are not meant to confess to sins and inadequacies.

Yet in a counselling or small group situation there could be fruitful opportunities for honest sharing, mutual encouragement and growth. James exhorts us to confess our sins to each other and to pray for each other that we may be healed.

THE LONELY
As for those on the fringe,

The Bishop Speaks Out

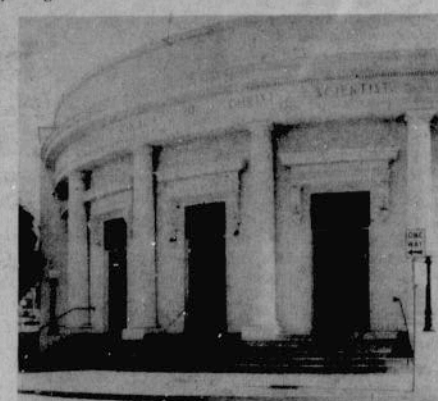
The Christian and Work

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If the advertising campaign, costing millions, initiated by the Australian Government and launched nationally recently, is successful, this is going to change.

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History teaches us that in times of national emergency there is the motivation for people to work and strive together for the common good. But in times of peace and apparent security there is a tendency for individual and group selfishness to spread like a rash and the experiences of recent months across



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I would not lightly advise her to leave that church and look elsewhere for love and acceptance, though there are times when that seems justified. If an alternative church showed a welcoming love — not just a superficial short-lived friendliness — I would probably recommend it to this troubled young woman, even if it was doctrinally less "sound".

There's something else I wonder. Who ministers to the ministers? Their wives, perhaps. But what if the marriage is under strain? Bishops? Fellow-clergy? Lay members of their church? If clergy are pillars on a pedestal, rigid and unapproachable, how great their need, and how hard they are to help!

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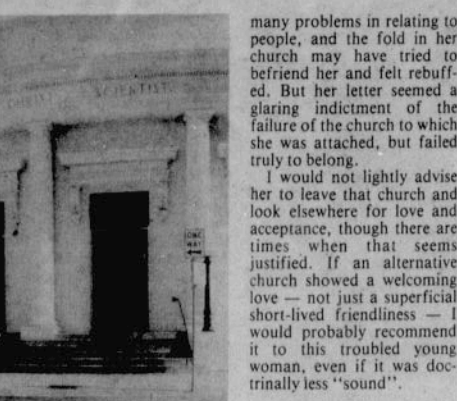
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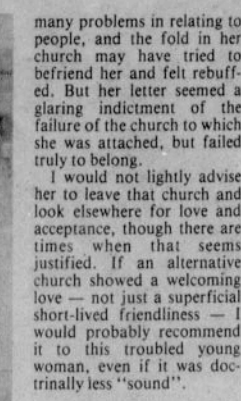
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