



**THE NETHERLANDS**

A international audience recently heard Archie Mackenzie, who served as a British diplomat for over 32 years, speak at the IC Centre in The Hague. His simple, clear sharing of the lessons he had learned created an atmosphere to which people responded. Besides relating some of the events recorded in his book, he spoke in depth about the United Nations. There had been miscalculations by all parties concerned, he said, leading to the current atmosphere in New York. He suggested that rather than trying to reach agreement on rewriting some of the articles of the Charter - which would take too much time under present conditions - the time should be used now to address what had been neglected - the moral and spiritual side. There is a need to fill the faith-deficit.

He then gave some sign posts for a 'road map' for faith based diplomacy:

- Stop making exceptions in your own favour;
- Stop judging yourself by your ideals - and others by their actions;
- Stop 'fudging'.

Among those taking part in the discussion afterwards were a diplomat from Serbia Montenegro, a former Japanese ambassador and a US lawyer. Also present were diplomats from the Netherlands as well as many others, young and old. All available copies of *Faith in Diplomacy* were sold.

**Digna Hintzen**

**BOOKS FOR CHRISTMAS.**

**Forgiveness; Breaking the Chain of Hate** by Michael Henderson. £11.50 plus £1 postage

**Faith in Diplomacy** by Archie Mackenzie. £9.95 plus £1 postage

**Hope for Today** - A selection of daily readings. £6 plus £1 postage

**No Longer Down Under** - by Mike Brown. £10 plus £1 postage

**Met Along the Way** - Jim Coulter's experiences of a life of faith and those he met on his journey. £7.50 plus £1 postage

**God Guides** - Mary Ghee's experiences in India. £2 plus 50p postage

**A String of Pearls** - Poems and thought pieces collected by Ethel Roberts. £2 plus 50p postage

All available from Grosvenor Books, 24 Greencoat Place, London SW1P 1RD <grosvenor@london.iofc.org>

**GREENCOAT FORUM**

**Tuesday, December 9 - 6.30pm**  
*Excellence and enjoyment for all? Goals for 21st Century education.*

Hilary Belden is Project Director, Ealing Excellence in Cities Education Action Zone and a former secondary headteacher.

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: *The Editors wish all our readers* :  
: *a very Happy Christmas* :  
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This issue was edited by Ann Carpenter and Phoebe Gill with layout by Blair Cummock. Please send material for the January issue by December 31 to Mary Jones, Oakley Cottage, Kirkcudbright DG6 4AH. email tandmjones@compuserve.com

**THE POWER OF APOLOGY AND FORGIVENESS**

*The following extracts are taken from the second 'Action for Life' newsletter - Panchgani, India:*

*Action for Life is a training programme for an international group of 30 to 40 people who are in India for five months before embarking on a series of visits to other south-east Asian countries (see October issue UK Newsletter)*

**Letters of Apology**

After two weeks with *Action for Life*, one thing is certain, there is never a dull moment . . . . We are all having experiences we will never forget.

A significant part of these initial weeks, has been the discovery of each other. In our life story and quiet-time sharing, we realise the treasures and the pain of our various experiences. Some of us have written letters of apology, while others have faced new truths about themselves. We sense that God is using it all to shape us into the individuals and team He wants us to be.

**Start with Ourselves**

In our discussions on "The Heart of Transformation", we have learnt that we should start with ourselves before we can become agents of change in the world. If we apply the four absolute standards of honesty, purity, unselfishness and love,

we can transform our lives. We can then share this journey with others in order to build a better world.

In our morning sessions, we listened to an overview of globalisation. We were presented with a vision of what we could be doing in 2025 if we use globalisation positively to bring justice, development, peace and to end disease. We were then given the opposite scenario, with the possibility of a globalised world shaped by fear, hate and unbridled greed . . . .

The week ended with a session entitled "Giving Hope to Humanity". and we discussed ways in which we could effectively do this.

We watched a film entitled *Crossroad* which told of the life of Frank Buchman, the initiator of Moral Re-Armament, now Initiatives of Change. He demonstrated the power of apology and forgiveness and this allowed him to heal his past. The most important shift in his life was the impact he had on people, affecting them deeply and redefining the power of relationships. It threw a light on the Cold War and we discovered the relevance of Buchman's ideas in today's world.

## God Has a Plan

In a world where religious extremism and fanaticism is on the increase . . . MRA can be conscious living experience for everyone. We learned that "ordinary people can do extraordinary things" because we all have unique qualities. In our thinking we must seek guidance, in our feelings we must have love, and in our actions we should have a faith that balances our spiritual and physical selves. "God has a plan and everyone has a part in it".

## COVENTRY

### No to Revenge and Yes to Forgiveness

The city of Coventry has a long and honourable tradition in peace building.

On the night of 14/15 November 1940 much of the city centre, including the 14th-century cathedral, along with twelve armaments factories, were destroyed. It introduced a new word into the German language "koentriieren" to "covenant" that is to annihilate. Yet, only six weeks after the bombing, the cathedral's provost, Dick Howard, broadcast from the ruins asking the British people to say "No" to revenge and "Yes" to forgiveness.

Now the name Coventry has quite a different meaning - peace. Its International Centre for Reconciliation is involved in peace building initiatives all over the world, for instance helping broker the Kaduna Peace Declaration of

Religious Leaders and the First Alexandria Declaration of the Religious Leaders of the Holy Land. Its present director, Canon Andrew White, is carrying forward Dick Howard's reconciling vision and has acted as the Archbishop of Canterbury's Special Representative to the Middle East.

The Community of the Cross of Nails, which draws its name from nails found in the ruins of the cathedral, is a part of the cathedral's ministry of reconciliation, and has as its goal to "witness to the power which forgiveness has, to build new life out of the brokenness of the world." One of its new members is St Ethelburga's Centre for Peace and Reconciliation in London.

### River Kwai Survivor

In October this year the city of Coventry inaugurated a Peace Month and a Hiroshima Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Exhibition, which was officially opened by the Japanese Ambassador Masaki Orita. On the invitation of the Lord Mayor, Councillor Sucha Singh Bains, a local survivor of Japanese prison camps, Les Dennison, was invited to participate in the inauguration. Dennison was captured at the fall of Singapore in 1942 and was among only 400 of 1,600 prisoners who survived working on the Burma Railway and one of the bridges over the River Kwai. He weighed just 5st 4lbs when he returned home.



Lawrence Fearon talks with Andrea Cooper (2nd from right) and the Learn to Lead group.

### It will happen

Nicholas Manterfield from Deutsche Bank in London said that he used to be uncertain of what he wanted to achieve in life. "From thinking that I couldn't do something, I have come to believe that once I have decided to achieve something, it will happen. Leadership starts with leading oneself, knowing what one wants to achieve and helping others to achieve what is for them. It is a way of creating something together that we want to be a part of. Now, we are trying to develop a network of like-minded people who share the same spirit of leadership, to reach people in organisations to make ethical, moral and effective decisions for the future. I believe that leadership starts from within. If you can change yourself, together we can change the world."

The evening involved the audience in imagining what form leadership would take if it was described

as a tree, an animal or a building. If leadership was a tree it would be an oak, strong and reliable, one person suggested.

Fabiola Benavente

## WREXHAM - November 5

Michael Henderson, journalist and author, was the guest speaker

at a meeting arranged by local people involved in Initiatives of Change. This was held at Capel y Groes, a Welsh Presbyterian church in Wrexham, and was chaired by the Minister the Rev Elfed ap Nefydd Roberts, MA, DD, a former Principal of the Theological College, Aberystwyth, and highly respected throughout Wales. He had read Michael's book *Forgiveness, Breaking the Chain of Hate*. In his introduction, he said the book gave hope through its many examples of reconciliation and that he found reading it a very thrilling experience.

Michael was able to make the stories come alive and many people there sensed the importance of the forgiveness factor.

Nia Rhosier from Pont Robert gave the vote of thanks. She was for 15 years Secretary of the Fellowship of Reconciliation in Wales.

Beryl Jones

cont from p3

Recently we were invited by an Azerbaijani family for a wonderful Russian meal in gratitude for some help we had been able to give them at a very difficult time. We also share the heartbreak of a delightful Kosovan family picked up and deported, not even allowed to collect their clothes or belongings and sent back to a country where they had lost everything, including every member of their family and still fear for their lives. So many stories. So many countries represented. Such richness too. We have just had an Eid feast at Asylum Link for around 100 people. We are now planning a large Christmas party. Everybody can take part in everyone else's ceremonies.

For me, caring for these people is not just a matter of making friends, but of building for the future.

**Judith Henderson**

## **GREENCOAT FORUM**

**London, November 18**

Seven graduates of *Learn to Lead*, a student leadership development programme based in Sheffield, presented a fascinating and inspiring evening, describing what effect it had had on their lives.

Andrew Cox, business student at Sheffield University; Joe Swann, business student at Sheffield Hallam University; Sasirekha Palaniswamy, a University of Manchester graduate; Nicky Clarke from Sky Media

London, and Nicolas Manterfield from Deutsche Bank were the voices of what the programme aims to promote in young people to develop their full potential. They were speaking on the theme "In search of leadership" at a Greencoat Forum in the Initiatives of Change centre in London.

The evening was facilitated by Andrea Cooper, Customer Marketing Manager Homecare at Procter & Gamble, who was one of the first graduates, nine years ago. "We are all leaders. Whilst we may not label ourselves as leaders, we all have the skills necessary to lead," she said.

"*Learn to Lead* gave me the tools and techniques to lead my life. It gave me confidence and reminded me how to dream. Now I just want to be the best person I can be," said Nicky Clarke from Sky Media London.

"I never knew how to listen to or understand others and I used to wonder why others were not harmonious and why they didn't change," said Sashi Palaniswamy, who comes from Tamil Nadu in India. "I had never experienced such happiness and satisfaction as I had during the programme. It provided a safe space to be so I learned how to listen and appreciate diversity amongst people. The most important lesson is that change starts with me and I can look for the resources within me rather than looking for them outside. Now I believe that if something is for me, it's up to me," she said.

After the Japanese ambassador had unveiled a plaque, the official party moved to the ruins of the cathedral for an opening ceremony attended by the public. Dennison, together with Yamawaki, an atomic bomb survivor, lit candles at the ceremony which was filmed by British and Japanese television.

The *Coventry Citizen* carried a headline "Time for us all to forgive - POW backs Peace Month". The paper described how Dennison attended a conference in Switzerland in 1962 where he unexpectedly encountered a Japanese delegation. A Japanese general apologized for what had been done to Dennison: "I know what happened and I don't ever expect you to forget what happened," the general said and bowed low: "I beg you to forgive me and my nation."

Dennison told the paper, "He was genuine and that was the beginning of a remarkable change in my attitude. Saying sorry must bear the transparency of humility and gives repentance and assurance that removes all possible doubt." The paper writes, "Despite the horrific treatment of Les and his comrades, he is keen to leave the animosity of war where it belongs - in the past. 'For a long time I felt bitterness and hatred but I don't want that to be passed on to the second generation,' he explained."

Dennison has been invited to speak to the students at the Coventry University Centre for the Study of Forgiveness and

Reconciliation. Ambassador Orita wrote to him, "It is through the efforts of brave people like you that British and Japanese people are able to grow closer together in the spirit of peace and friendship, without forgetting the past." Chief Executive Stella Manzie thanked Dennison for his participation and paid tribute to his courage and Lord Mayor Bains wrote, "Hopefully, Coventry Peace Month will become an annual event to build on the City's international reputation as a City of Peace and Reconciliation.

**Michael Henderson**

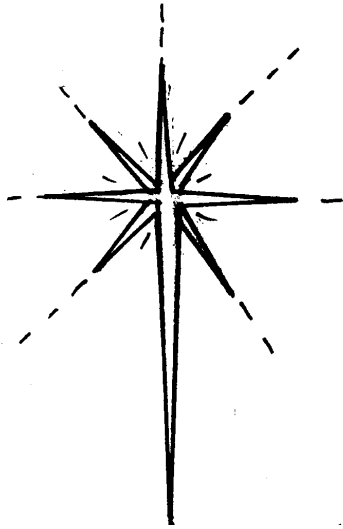
## **OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL GATE**

Some years ago I had the feeling that I should do something for the growing number of asylum-seekers in our city. An article in our local paper by a Liverpool mother, who befriended some Albanian mothers as they waited for their children outside their school, was my cue. I phoned her, met her and joined her befriending group. I very soon had three or four families that I was getting to know as real friends.

Then I became a volunteer of Asylum Link Merseyside where hundreds of asylum-seekers come for help, friendship, socialising, IT and English lessons. My responsibility is supplying clothes, loads of which have been given by our churches.

What tragic stories one hears. But care and friendship means everything to them. → cont on p 6

# CHRISTMAS



*Statesman with your promise,  
Rich man with your power,  
Who will light the nations  
Through this midnight hour?*

*Dark the heart of millions,  
Hungry to be fed,  
Bitter at their toiling –  
Who will give them bread?*

*Wisdom can be humble.  
Wise men from afar  
Knew themselves for nothing  
Following a star.*

*Kings who left their kingdoms,  
Humbly they trod,  
Bearing thrones as offerings.  
They were taught of God.*

*Proud men, bring your knowledge;  
Frightened men your fears;  
Stubborn men, the hatreds  
Of your wasted years.*

*Ye who would – but dare not;  
Ye who dare – but fail;  
Every living creature,  
Valiant and frail,*

*See the thin-brained cattle,  
Wiser than you all,  
Ox and ass together  
Kneeling at the stall.*

*God Himself in heaven  
Raised His head and smiled  
As the wise and foolish  
Journeyed to a Child.*

*God Himself is leaning  
Out of heaven's bar,  
Waiting till men humbly  
Follow on a star.*

*Peter Howard*