



THE LEGACY OF FRANK BUCHMAN

IN ALLENTOWN

As the IofC National Gathering in the US on 'The legacy of Frank Buchman' (held in Allentown, Pennsylvania, June 3-5) came to its final session, people were on their feet with decisions, ideas, hopes and plans.

Some said it had echoes of Lake Tahoe, a milestone in IofC's history during the Second World War. Others said it had stimulated their expectations of how God may use IofC again in America's development. Some spoke of a renewed decision to seek for God's way.

At the opening banquet, keynote speaker **A R K Mackenzie**, a former British Ambassador and one of those at the inception of the UN at Dumbarton Oaks and San Francisco, spoke of Frank Buchman's legacy and

his impact on international affairs.*

Two of the qualities that made Buchman so effective, said Mackenzie, were the depth of his diagnosis and the depth of his faith. Often the real problems are not dealt with, he said, 'because people are too cynical to believe that a change in human nature is possible, too shallow in their analysis to see that change in people is necessary and too selfish to want to change.

'These were three of Buchman's lifelong targets. His speeches were studded with examples of people who faced change in themselves and who influenced international affairs as a result.' He added that Buchman's ideas called for 'the freedom of glasshouse living' and the experience that 'the truth shall make you free'.

The setting for the gathering was the brand-new Heritage Center in Allentown, headquarters of the Lehigh Valley Historical Society. Its Director, **John Zolomij**, said, 'I am overwhelmed by the thinking of this group. It will affect the way I live.' One of his staff said, 'Frank Buchman should be much more spotlighted in his hometown. I will dedicate time and effort to make him known.'

Addressing the theme of the conference, **Dick Ruffin**, now Executive Vice-President of the International Association of Initiatives of Change,

*See full text of this speech on the Extranet.



Frank Buchman

said there were grounds for pride in the recent pioneering work done by IofC in conflict transformation, racial reconciliation and business ethics, and challenged us to do similar work in two fields.

First, we should clarify public discourse on moral issues, which is 'currently at kindergarten level'. The necessity for those on every side of the issues to narrow the gap between ideals and actions should be demonstrated by all of us and underlined strongly in the press.

Secondly, we could significantly enhance America's security by building right relationships with those from every culture and country in our midst. 'We have the need and the opportunity,' he said, 'to create diverse learning communities right where we are. There is not a person from whom you cannot learn and not a person with whom you don't have something to share.'

Jarvis Harriman from Arizona recalled how the programme of *You Can Defend America* met the need in the 1940s when civil defence was at a loss on how to act. He said the present Homeland Security needed IofC's input just as much.

Chicago business woman **Ruma Bose** had worked with Mother Theresa when she was 19. 'Six years ago I started on this road with IofC and then turned away,' she said. 'I now have the resources and the possibilities to do something effective but I know I have to go back to basics, to love of God, love for people and times of quiet in the morning. I am starting again.'

A young group called *Action (for a Change)* received a welcome to visit

Florida and California from people attending such a gathering for the first time. Ten cities expect to receive *Action* for a week each: a learning and giving experience for the group, a way for hosts to connect effectively with their community.

The gathering included those who had worked with MRA for many years, those for whom this was a first experience and those who feel called to carry Buchman's legacy forward. It bore out the words of **Will Jenkins**, inspirer of *Action*, who said, 'The strongest moral argument has always been a life lived out with integrity.'

Geoffrey Pugh

...AND IN LONDON

Is it possible for one individual to make a change in today's world? According to nine keynote speakers at a conference in London on June 4, there was no doubt. The conference at 24 Greencoat Place was on the theme, *People making a difference: from the personal to the global.*

John Leggat



Photo of audience taken through door porthole



John Leggat

Abdi Gure

Personal accounts and anecdotes from Africa, Asia, Latin America and Britain attested to the theme that change, at national or international level, must start within the mind and heart of the individual - astonishing stories of putting change into practice.

Lawrence Fearon, co-ordinator of a national *Hope in the Cities* programme, spoke of his personal commitment to change. When he asked himself, 'Who am I really?' his realisation that what he had become was not the person he was meant to be had led to a drastic change in his life.

This resulted in a vision for his local North London community, the founding of the largest local community-led project in Europe at Bridge Park and the launch of a *Hope in the Cities* programme in the UK. 'By creating inclusive communities and trust-based relationships where all are valued, everyone is empowered to fulfil their potential,' he said.

Abdi Gure from Somalia told how, over eight years, he has helped build the Harrow Association of Somali Voluntary Organisations in West London, serving some 10,000 Somalis. It is the first Somali umbrella organi-

sation in the UK. 'There are an estimated 150,000 Somalis living in London,' said Gure. 'They never had a voice. Through our group, Somalis now have access to all service providers, and partnerships have been created with educational groups, drug treatment and youth centres.'

Amina Dikedi from Nigeria, organiser of the *Clean Africa Campaign*, said, 'I felt disillusionment for my country and I blamed our leaders... but a personal journey started some 18 years back when someone said: "If you want to see your nation change, the best place to start is with yourself."'

Amina has made a difference through the *Clean Africa Campaign* (a concerted effort by Africans to find home-grown solutions to problems by conducting leadership training programmes throughout the continent and by speaking out). 'My role is to encourage people onto the right track, to speak out and to forgive both African and world leaders for wrong past policies.' The proposed modern 'Marshall Plan' for Africa was an opportunity to reverse the fortunes of a continent, she said.

During a three-month sabbatical to India, *Cambridge Evening News* reporter **Pam Jenner**, a trained counsellor, said she 'was frequently astounded and humbled by the dedication of many Indians to improving the lives of others, despite their own hardships.'

She worked on a project in rural Tamil Nadu, where disabled children and young people are given free education, medical treatment, career training and equipment to help them



John Leggat

Pam Jenner

lead fulfilling lives. Pam had felt even more humbled when she found the project had been set up by a man paralysed from the neck down and another with muscular dystrophy. Together they had realised their dream of a Valley for the Disabled.

Counselling became Pam's gift to the Valley. 'Many of the girls said that just by being able to talk I had helped them find ways of overcoming problems,' said Pam. 'When I was young, I arrogantly believed I could change the world. Now I know only too well that change has to start with me.'

Mary Lean, editor of *For A Change* magazine and Vice-chair of the Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group, spoke about the 'gift' of listening. 'Often all we can do is to listen, but it's amazing how much that means to people. Those we encounter are often in deep distress and there is little we can do to help them. And of course listening – both to other people, and to the inner voice – is something anyone can do. It's the key to making a difference.'

'What kind of difference do we want to make?' asked **Dr Philip Boobbyer**, Senior Lecturer in

Modern European History at the University of Kent. He suggested we follow the lead of Frank Buchman and set aside time each morning for meditation and to listen to the voice of God. 'I find the quiet time is vital for getting perspectives on issues,' he said. 'It is helpful for prioritising. If we are to make a difference in the world, we may have to say no to things as well as yes. Once freed of some of the wrong things that tie us down, we can play a role in healing some of our society's wounds.'

Afternoon workshops included 'Nurturing a heart and soul for Europe', 'Making family relationships work' and 'Bridging religious and ethnic divides'.

Neil Mence

MAKING POVERTY HISTORY

'If there is the will, we really could reduce the number of people living in absolute poverty to under 10%. We could save the lives of several hundred million children with relatively small dents in our own pockets,' an international development expert told a capacity crowd at a Greencoat Forum on May 10.

'That's the challenge worth rising to,' said **Dr Peter Rundell**, responsible for poverty reduction strategies in the European Commission's Development Director-General's office. 'That's what gets me up in the morning and I hope there is a way for us collectively to work out a way of making it happen.'

In an address, entitled *Making Poverty History: a personal pers-*

**Peter Rundell**

pective, he outlined challenges facing the international aid community, its successes and failures to date, and some of the positive and negative influences affecting outcomes.

Referring to the UN's eight millennium development goals, he said there had been a surprising amount of success. Halving the number of people living on less than \$1 a day was on the way to being reached. The proportion of people living below this poverty line had been reduced from 40% in 1981 to 21% today.

Rundell said the issues were not simple, but very complex. But ending on a personal note, he observed, 'Many people are involved in aid development because of their ideals. It's 90% perspiration and 10% inspiration. That can come from friends or by spending time quietly seeking guidance from God.'

A man at peace with himself, Rundell is dedicated to his work and feels confident that he is led in the process.

Neil Mence

A REFLECTION

Probably like most, I have met quite a few spiritual people along the way, or people who have inspired me to forsake selfishness and really try to make my life count. For me, there was a quality about these people that shone out and made me say to myself, 'Yes, I want to be like that, to leave the muddle and the compromise and the petty living.'

During the past 35 years or so, I have seen many charities and got involved with some of them, and that has made me evaluate afresh the uniqueness of MRA/IofC with its foundation of absolute moral standards and God's guidance. These two basic principles for living are pure gold in an increasingly amoral world, and we drop them at our peril. Of course, we fall at times and we make mistakes, but that's very different from settling for a lesser quality of life.

In the Christian community of which my husband I are part, there is a lot of talk about 'love'... For people like me it is more often a challenge to be a sort of gad-fly: to say uncomfortable things, to share from one's own experience of change when appropriate and stories of change that I know of. Sometimes God seems to propel you into situations that, if you thought twice, you perhaps would have said, 'No, thank you!'

Lately I have taken to reading some of Frank Buchman's speeches. I am so struck by their relevance. In 1936, the year after I was born, he said to 25,000 people in Birmingham, 'We are not out to tell God. We are out to let God tell us. And He will tell us.'

Cathy Montrose

HOW TO PASS THE BATON?

Over the last ten years the schools programme which I initiated has been very rewarding. Our various teams have facilitated about 700 sessions in Sixth Forms all over Britain.

The conviction I increasingly have is how to support initiatives and leadership of younger people. How is the baton going to be passed on to the next generation? It has been encouraging to see younger people taking responsibility, as with the Under 40s gathering in Kenya earlier this year. The initiative for that arose from those who had taken part in the nine-month training programme *Action for Life 2*, starting in Panchgani, India, and finishing with the Asia Pacific Youth Conference in Cambodia last July.

Growing fellowship

My wife Maria and I were part of the support team as they began their journey. Men and women from Asia, Africa and Eastern Europe were working side by side with those from Britain, Australia and the USA – 20 countries in all.

The fellowship which grew from Frank Buchman's work in Oxford some 70 years ago became the motor of MRA/Initiatives of Change for the following decades. We are now in an excellent position to relate to the needs of the present-day world mix – multi-cultural and international.

I see *Action for Life* as an early stage in the process of building a fellowship which will carry forward Frank Buchman's work in the 21st century.

Action for Life 3 is taking shape with young leadership including Australians Chris Lancaster and Nigel

Heywood who worked on the schools programme here. Preparations are developing apace for November, and they very much need our encouragement and support for this great step in faith.

A similar initiative is developing in the USA starting in September, for two and a half months. *Action (for a Change)* is a group of young people who, after initial orientation and training, will go to 10 US cities. It is an imaginative and bold step in faith led by American Will Jenkins. I have accepted an invitation to be part of the team and am grateful for Maria's support in this.

Some of my generation will be able to join these initiatives in person. I am delighted that Geoffrey and Veronica Craig from London will be part of *Action for Life 3*. Others may want to help with much needed financial support, as there are applicants from places where it is difficult to raise funds.

Howard Grace

TIRLEY GARTH TRUST RENAMED

Following the disposal of Tirley Garth in December 2002, the proceeds of the sale were invested with the resulting income being used to support programmes and new initiatives of IofC around the world. The trustees' aim is to encourage 'green shoots of growth' in IofC, particularly among younger people. This we do with a sense of gratitude and privilege on behalf of IofC's world fellowship. Applications for funds are required to follow simple but rigorous guidelines, which

are available from Tom Jones.

Wishing to keep the name of the original benefactor, Miss Irene Prestwich, rather than that of a property no longer ours, the Tirley Garth Trust is now being wound up and all its assets transferred to the **Irene Prestwich Trust**, with the same six trustees.

(The entry for the Irene Prestwich Trust with the UK Charity Commissioners is being altered, adding the words: '**incorporating the Tirley Garth Trust**'. However, any legacies in wills not already drawn up, destined for the benefit of the new combined Trust, should specify 'the Irene Prestwich Trust'.)

**Philip Boobbyer, Veronica Craig,
Roddy Edwards, Tom Jones, Ann
Rignall, Paul Williams**
Email: Tom.Jones@uk.iofc.org

BOOKS

Dear Friends, I wanted to say THANK YOU to everyone who was involved in my book project, and that's a lot of people! I have successfully sent out boxes of books to friends in Ghana, Taiwan, South Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia, India (Kashmir & Nagaland) and Ukraine. All have sent back messages of gratitude, saying that these books will help people understand MRA better and can also be used for outreach purposes. There are still some books left, and these have been passed on to *Foundations for Freedom*, who will use them with the many groups in Central and Eastern Europe. Thanks again to all those who made this possible.

Bhav Patel

GIVING TO IOFC ON-LINE

It is now possible to make a donation to Initiatives of Change via the internet. Go to www.uk.iofc.org, and find 'Donate' in the left hand column on your screen. Click on Donate, and follow directions.

Chris Evans

NEWSLETTER CHANGE

You may not know that this is the final edition of *Newsletter UK* being prepared by the current editors. They are retiring after many years of generous service.

Much appreciation goes to all those who have had a part in commissioning articles and editing them over the last 19 years. A satisfying newsletter needs editorial balance, a good designer, writers and a team to send it out. We have been fortunate in the people who have taken on all these tasks.

The list of those who have had a part is too long to single out individuals but, as one of several hundred grateful readers, I would like to wish God speed to the most recent editors, Ann Carpenter, Mary Jones and Janet Paine, in whatever they feel called to undertake in the future.

Fortunately, the designer Blair Cummock is ready to continue. We are searching for the right way forward, although the frequency of the *Newsletter* may be reduced from the autumn - and possibly even take a different form. Be assured that we will find a way to send out news of Initiatives of Change to those who don't have access to the Internet.

Please 'watch this space'. In the meantime, do send me any ideas or offers of help.

Kenneth Noble



ALL MUSIC TREASURE CDS NOW AVAILABLE

The full list of MRA music treasure CDs being offered by **Herb Allen** and **Day Ely Ravenscroft** is now available, as follows:

From the Ely Home to the World (2 CDs)

The Words & Music of Cecil Broadhurst

The Words & Music of George Fraser

The Caux Quartet

The Colwell Brothers, the Early Years

The Vanishing Island (2 CDs and book, with script and stage directions)

Songs from Give a Dog a Bone (recorded by the original London cast)

The Crowning Experience, featuring Muriel Smith

The Glory of Christmas, with Muriel Smith

Christmas on Mackinac Island, a radio broadcast with Muriel Smith and the MRA International Chorus

Merry Christmas to You All (Up with People, 1967)

Viva La Gente (Up with People's recording in Rome before live audience)

We Could Go In (a Christmas musical by

George Fraser with script and stage directions)

All of the above for private, non-commercial use.

They can be ordered direct from Day Ravenscroft (\$10 each) by email: ravens1-2@juno.com (put only 'CDs' in subject line).

However, for those in UK wishing to pay in sterling, please write to Anne Mackay, Camallt, Dumgoyne by Killearn, G63 9LA, and make cheques for £6 per CD payable to Mrs JAD Allen.

FORTHCOMING EVENT

Edinburgh, July 5 at 7.30pm in the Methodist Central Hall, Toll Cross

The Rev Professor **Piet Meiring** will speak on the theme: 'Can swords really be beaten into ploughshares? Lessons from the South African experience'.

Professor Meiring holds the chair in Science of Religion and Missiology at Pretoria's Faculty of Theology, from where he was released at the request of Archbishop Desmond Tutu to serve on South Africa's Truth & Reconciliation Commission 1996-98.

The meeting has been arranged by the Edinburgh committee of the Christian Socialist Movement. It is an open meeting and all are welcome.

Finlay Moir

This issue was edited by Mary Jones and Janet Paine with layout by Blair Cummock. As you have read above, this is the last issue produced by our particular team. We have greatly enjoyed working together month by month to pass on the constantly varied and frequently inspiring news which many of you have helped to create. Thank you for contributions and support over the years.