



Asia Plateau centre at Panchgani to the farming community in various regions of India is well presented, as also in cities with its remarkable impact on the Harijans and other groups, especially young people. It is a challenging story – a group of diverse backgrounds and nations working together towards bringing the kind of change to India for which Gandhi and his followers were calling."

Revised edition available from David Young, 15 Vale Avenue, Brighton BN1 8UB Cost £3.95 plus postage

A STRING OF PEARLS

"Ethel Roberts was my friend for some 40 years. When she died she left her personal papers to me and another friend. In a series of notebooks I found some of the quotations and thoughts that had meant most to her – as well as some favourite humorous anecdotes. Reading these I have been very moved and felt others would enjoy and benefit from them too. Hence this little book, compiled in loving and appreciative memory of a friend I greatly admired."

From the Introduction to "A String of Pearls", by Jeanne Faber, available from Pythouse, Tisbury, Salisbury, SP3 6PB. Cost: £2

IN MARCH, the *Church of Ireland Gazette* carried a review of Michael Henderson's book *Forgiveness – Breaking the Chain of Hate*. Reviewer David

Chillingworth said the book "takes the reader on a kaleidoscopic tour of the world's most intractable conflicts. It is genuinely revelatory and encouraging. It reinforces what I once heard Archbishop Desmond Tutu say to an audience of community workers – that everything begins with spirituality".

GREENCOAT FORUMS

Dr Zaki Badawi will speak on Towards a partnership of civilisations.

Sheikh Dr MA Zaki Badawi is the Principal of the Muslim College in London and Chairman of the Imams and Mosques Council (UK).

Tuesday June 17 at 7.15pm
Refreshments from 6.30 pm

Flowers at Caux

If you have a moment at Caux please visit the Flower Room, where help will be needed with arranging dining room flowers and watering flowering plants around the building. *Rita Sargent*

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"THE PROCESS OF BUILDING TRUST..."

...IN NORTH-EAST ENGLAND

Integration is not just about racial understanding and awareness, but also about jobs, Nitin Shukla, Diversity Officer for Gateshead Council, told a conference on May 17 attended by refugees, asylum seekers, councillors, and people working with NGOs and statutory organisations from across North East England. "There is much concern about the skills shortage," he said. "But the issue is how to utilise the skills which are already present in the community, through asylum seekers and refugees."

The day, organised by Gateshead Council and the Gateshead African Community Association (GAFRICOM), was an outcome of the workshop on 'The West's Response to Asylum Seekers' at Caux last summer, which Shukla and three others from the North East attended.

A wide range of grassroots initia-

tives – often led by refugees or asylum seekers – were represented at the conference. They included GAFRICOM's work to take African music, dance, crafts and storytelling into local schools and the



Positive Images Project which does similar work with secondary schools and youth groups.

"We tell young refugees not to ask, 'What should Britain do for us?' but 'What should we do for Britain?', " said Herbert Dirahu of the Youth Integration Project North East, which encourages young refugees and asylum seekers to

play a part in youth fora in their towns. In Middlesbrough, young refugees had taken up this challenge by planning a Keep Middlesbrough Tidy campaign.

Topping up experience and skills.

Whereas it costs up to £200,000 to train a doctor from scratch, it costs less than £5,000 to help a refugee

doctor to qualify to work in the UK – yet many refugee health professionals end up working in take-aways, or as cleaners or night watchmen. The North East Programme for the Professional Integration of Refugee Health Workers helps health professionals to gain the language skills and professional qualifications to work in the National Health Service. Eighty doctors, nurses, dentists and other health workers are currently in the process in the North East..

The Refugee Employment Training Advisory Group (RETAG) also helps refugees to find jobs which match their qualifications. "The uniqueness of our project is that we are not changing what people want to be," said Mordicks Asimba. "We are topping up the experience and skills that people already have." The Leader of Gateshead Council, Mick Henry, and Newcastle's Cabinet Member for Housing and Regeneration, Ruth Robson, both stressed their desire that asylum seekers dispersed to the North East by the Home Office, should choose to settle there after they receive permission to remain in Britain.

People working in similar areas had a chance to meet each other and form networks. There were some unexpected encounters – in one discussion group, representatives of a community group found themselves face to face with an official who could help them to resolve the housing problems faced by

some of their members, and ended up exchanging phone numbers.

Asylum seekers – and those who work alongside them – often feel isolated. The conference went a long way to break down this isolation – and could be a pattern for events in other parts of the country.

Mary Lean

... THROUGH HOPE IN THE CITIES

I am fortunate enough to work as part of the Hope in the Cities (HiC) team in the UK, and was invited to be part of the panel for the May Greencoat Forum entitled "Building Sustainable Communities".

During the evening, we had time to discuss our own communities and ask, "Does my community look like the one I want to see? How am I going to make it different?" Ideas flowed. One that particularly interested me was, how do we build trust? The question was asked of me in South Africa, when someone said, "It is not a question of race now, it is a question of trust."

HiC aims to help to build trust between individuals and within communities through facilitating dialogues where people can speak to each other honestly and "safely" from the heart and not just from the head.

Rupert Hill spoke of these conversations as "a very useful tool we can use to build bridges within our communities". Lawrence Fearon

spread is boundless. It has made possible the exploration of space. It has revolutionised health, education – and war.

The Electronics of the Spirit is an old science. Spirit has been known a long time. Abraham experienced it. Moses on the mountain received ideas from the mind of God that began a new civilisation and became the foundation of the three monotheistic faiths. The two great laws, repeated by Jesus, envisaged an electronic circuit for man – God, myself and the other person. If there is a break in the circuit i.e. in my relationship with God, or with the other person, the whole circuit may go dead. This was set out clearly by Jesus when he said, if you are bringing a gift to God and things are not right with your brother, first put things right with your brother and then bring your gift to God.

In America, Abraham Lincoln said, "We have been recipients of the choicest bounties of Heaven. We have grown in numbers, wealth and power as no other nation has ever grown, but we have forgotten God." This could be said by all the "have" nations today. We are so dissatisfied. We demand more, more, more. This is the materialism which Frank Buchman said is the mother of all "isms". This was certainly true of communism and fascism. Is it also true of terrorism? Many military leaders are at last understanding that in spite of the most sophisticated weaponry wars can be lost through

failure to win hearts and minds.

In Philadelphia there is a statue of William Penn. He said, "Men must choose to be governed by God or they condemn themselves to be ruled by tyrants." We have reached a point where man must either solve his problems or be destroyed by them. In this modern world, in spite of all the time-saving provided for us by IT we are so busy. How to find time to listen, to reflect, to meditate, to pray? It seems very difficult. Yet there is one simple solution and that is to get up earlier and devote that time when the mind is fresh to tune into the Electronics of the Spirit. This is the unique gift given to every person born into this amazing world.

AFRICA'S SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

was the theme of Archie Mackenzie's talk in April to a group of African ambassadors at the UN, hosted by the Nigerian Ambassador, Arthur Mbanefo.

Pamphlet available from 24 Greencoat Place, cost 50p.

INITIATIVES OF CHANGE IN INDIA – An Assessment by David Young

"David Young is well placed for presenting this theme from the days when Frank Buchman first met Gandhi," writes Robin Mowat. "The subject embraces more aspects of India's life than might be expected. It's outreach through its

UNE MAISON SE FERME, UNE AUTRE S'OUVRE

Many will remember Diane and Robert de Watteville's lovely home in Paris which they gave to MRA/IC for its work of reconciliation in Europe after World War II. This home has now been sold and a new centre has been found nearby in Issy-les-Moulineaux.

We attended a great occasion at the end of April for many from across France and from overseas who came to express gratitude for the past and inspiration, trust and hope for the future.

We gathered to "thank Divine Providence, to thank God. To thank the men and women who over decades have followed a commitment, found a calling and served in this home to make it a haven of inspiration and an instrument for change and reconciliation," said Philippe Lasserre. He also thanked the innumerable volunteers who had come over the years, showing a dedication without which the home could not have been maintained.

Samia Driss, a young Tunisian mother now living in France, said, "Heart-power made me part of this home. The heart is what we should take to the new centre. Here I found another France and here I learned to build relationships that, later, I could take to those who live in my area. I learned to listen in silence. These deep experiences I want to pass on to other Muslims, many of whom have a bad picture of France."

Tom and Mary Jones represented the innumerable Britons who came to the Centre. Tom said, "We see things differently, for our countries have different histories. But we learned to respect each other, to accept the other's history even when sometimes there were disagreements."

Christiane de Watteville-Mallet, daughter of Robert and Diane, concluded, "There is certainly great emotion [as we say farewell to this home] but no sadness for we have a great future before us".

Elsa Vogel

THE ELECTRONICS OF THE SPIRIT – a Reflection by Alec Porter

"What wonders God hath wrought" was the first message sent by transatlantic cable to America by Queen Victoria in May 1858. She must have realised that the Creator had many more wonders to be discovered, rather than "Isn't man very clever to invent these things?" I used to wonder whether these discoveries were released when mankind was ready for them, but it is now clear we have grown up scientifically and technologically, but spiritually and morally we are still in Primary One.

Electronics is a new science. One of its pioneers, Lee de Forest, even in its infancy in 1955, could see it would lead the world into a new age beyond the atomic age. Now its

talked of giving a different kind of opportunity to all people whatever their ethnic, religious or cultural background to talk and "work towards change locally and globally through change in our own lives. Change must start with ourselves".

Unknown Territory

Richard Hawthorne MBE, businessman, described a recent HiC partnership, with Cross Cultural Networks in Nottingham, to hold a dialogue in a Muslim Centre. The hinge issue was the relationship between youth and public authority. Both groups took part. "On the second day," he said, "a woman whose son had been killed in a drive-by shooting arrived, angry and bitter that the police had failed to arrest the perpetrators. She stayed over three hours and had deep conversations with all those taking part.

"One of the biggest challenges we face now is how to be change agents. For me it means stepping out of where I feel secure into unknown territory."

What will it take to trust the other?

Recent dialogue participants were asked to give their reactions. Chris Evans attended a conversation between the business and the community sectors. He described what happened when his group was divided into two sections, one mostly black and the other totally

white. Each was asked, "What will it take for you to trust the other?" One of the black men said he found it extremely difficult to trust white, professional, middle-class men – "which is what I am," said Chris. "I began to feel his shoes on my feet, and this has given me a whole new understanding." The process of trust building had started from that moment.

At the end of the evening, described by many as "challenging", a French woman said, "I find a spirit of values here. I thought I was the only person thinking like that. Here I have found others who are thinking the same way. Thank you".

Phoebe Gill

... IN WALES

Stunningly located between mountain and sea, the Welsh National Language Centre at Nant Gwrtheyrn was the venue for the seventh in the series of Dialogues entitled "Cymru'n Un – cymodi cymunedau" aimed at building trust between communities, finding a uniting vision for Wales and its role in the world. Thirty people gathered to examine the causes of tensions in communities and how to bridge them. We were asked "What makes a community? Why do some feel threatened? Is 'one Wales' possible?"

The Bishop of Bangor, the Rt Rev Saunders Davies was in the chair. He pointed out that civilisation had

developed out of communities which had acted as cells for the growth of society. Clive Wolfendalle, Assistant Chief Constable, North Wales Police, speaking in Welsh said that North Wales Police was now operating a new type of community policing which "moves the focus of police work from just responding to random calls about crime to addressing the real fears of people". He said that the new Community Beat officers "released from isolated car patrols and the ceaseless demands of the police radio" would be able to operate in more constructive ways, hopefully developing a stake in the communities in which they worked.

Enough is Enough

The Chief Constable said his force was about to launch an initiative known as *dyna ddion* – enough is enough, aimed at cracking down on trivial misbehaviour and yobbish culture. He said it would only succeed if families and neighbours also said *dyna ddigon*. Mohammed Messamah, who represented the Imam Centre in Llandudno Junction, emphasised that "everyone has to join in. We need a moral strategy for the nation. How do we rescue the moral element that is there underneath? For Muslims the strength of a community or a nation lies in its moral life."

Judy Ling Wong, director of the Black Environment Network, said

society desperately needed a "reinforcement of human awareness and basic goodness". She said how important it was that the police had been part of the constructive communal conversation. "We have begun to see how we can each play our part in the 'we' of community," concluded Bishop Davies.

Paul Williams

... IN COLLAROY, AUSTRALIA – "TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE"

As a British person visiting Australia, it is hard to put into words all that I got from this conference. Collaroy is situated in an area of great natural beauty – looking out over one of Sydney's northern beaches. The sheer cross-section of people that were gathered there astonished me – speakers from the Lebanon, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands were mixing with South Africans, Americans and Australians – indigenous and non-indigenous.

Many speeches addressed the issue of building peace on an international level, which provided the framework for some of the deeply personal accounts that followed over the next few days.

I asked myself, "So where does one begin to resolve conflict which already exists in a situation, where the atrocities have been too great, and the pain inflicted too hard to bear. How could there ever be a



Letlapa Mphahlele and Ginn Fourie from South Africa

starting point? I learnt it involves taking risks – being prepared to go one step further than you think you can manage. "It's up to you," was Maggie Hodgson's challenge to the conference – a woman who has worked for healing and justice in Canada.

I want to hear the whole truth

Putting this in context, the most moving talk for me was the one where Letlapa Mphahlele and Ginn Fourie spoke. Letlapa was a former Azanian People's Liberation Army commander in South Africa who had orchestrated the bombing in which Ginn's daughter, Lyndi, had been killed, ten years ago. The tears still fell on the day that Ginn spoke at Collaroy. Letlapa stood by and listened calmly to her story as they stood on the podium together, and Ginn often turned to look at him as she recounted her story. She told how she had met the people who

killed her daughter and, in an extraordinary moment, she had felt overwhelming compassion for them – she knew that there had to be a reason for what they had done. She sent a note to them, extending her forgiveness, "I want to hear your story – I want to hear the whole truth," she said. What followed was the beginning of a profound friendship with Letlapa. "We have both shed each other's blood," she said.

"Now, let us use tears as the mortar to build a new foundation."

What was so evident throughout their joint address was the sense that each one was taking individual responsibility in the situation. By not trivialising what they themselves felt, they were able to reach a more complete understanding of what had caused the other person to act in the way that they did. I was deeply moved by that talk in particular. What I took away from it was the importance of your heart attitude in a situation. It is about honesty and openness – and the willingness to take the risks that necessarily come with that. It is also about finding the courage to admit/share responsibility for the pain of others. I have much respect for way that IC sows seeds in communities – and this conference testified to the harvest that can be gathered.

Serena Tarling