



Meetings (3rd Sunday)
81 Greville Street

Next - 20 August

(02) 9419 7394
amann@bigpond.net.au

Issue 65 - August 2000 - Email version

| CONTENTS | | | Page |
|----------|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-----------|
| | Francis J Chan | Peter Marjot | 2 |
| | Nature bats last! | Gary Hipworth | 2 |
| | Awake | Virginia Parsell | 4 |
| | Communication Tongued with Fire | John Wren-Lewis | 5 |
| | Readers Letters | Alex Reichel David Allan | 11 |
| | Journey to India | with johndavid | 13 |
| | Dialogue & Group Meetings | | 14 |

Editor's Note

I am sad to report that one of our regular Greville Street meeting friends and contributor to this newsletter, Francis Chan, died in hospital at Hervey Bay on 12 July. Peter Marjot has prepared a note about Francis for this issue (see page 2). Francis did a lot of work on the Javanese Sufi tradition of Sumarah (Issue 51) which arose from some tapes of Dr Phillip Groves which he lent to me dealing with the feeling of meaning (Issue 48). More recently, he was instrumental in providing the material and comment for the deMello article in the last Nowletter.

I'm afraid the plan for a gathering on the border is not much further forward. The idea of holding it in the South was to provide an opportunity for Victorian and NSW readers to come together. At present we have only four Victorian possibles and nine from NSW. I will select a target date for the gathering and contact all those who have expressed interest directly during August to see if we can firm it up. It looks as though Autumn would now be the time to have it?

I finally got around to preparing an index of all Nowletter articles back to the first issue in 1993. It is now very easy to locate contributions. John Wren-Lewis provided the encouragement to get the Nowletter started and one of the things I discovered during the indexing was that we haven't published as much of John's work as I thought. I have been reading it elsewhere and thinking it was here. So I am hoping to correct this by including some of his articles in coming months. Do many of you keep a journal? If so, would you consider converting lumps of it into Nowletter articles? This enterprise is based on the notion that we are interesting people sharing a common interest in these matters, all in the same boat and that we can gain more by sharing our understandings and misunderstandings than by relying solely on the recognized 'authorities' in the business.

Thanks for contributions to this issue and apologies for delay in printing two poems sent in and held over until Nowletter 66.

Francis Chan

I last saw Francis on Saturday, 10th June at our regular weekly rendezvous. He was leaving for Queensland to stay with his family for three weeks, as he regularly did about once a year. Although he had battled a brain tumour for some time and had been in and out of hospital for chemotherapy, on that Saturday he was in good shape and looking forward to his visit. He left Sydney the following Thursday.

Within a fortnight he was visited by his friends Barry and Jack who drove up from the Gold Coast. Barry reported subsequently that he looked crook then. From there he went steadily downhill, with remissions, until an accelerated decline from Monday, July 10th until his peaceful death on the Wednesday at around 3:00pm. He was already well overdue to return to Sydney when Alan called me late Thursday night with the devastating news of his passing.

Barry and I (both ex-members of Alan's group) went up to his funeral the following Wednesday, 19th July at a funeral parlour in Hervey Bay. A large group of about 40 family and friends attended. The coffin was open and both Barry and I were fortunate enough to be able to say goodbye face-to-face. After the service, conducted by his uncle, a moving elegy (composed by a New Zealand friend) was read out by his sister. When asked if anyone wished to say a few words, Barry spoke up, I followed him and promptly broke down and wept and had to be escorted back to my seat.

I was then asked to be a pall bearer and helped carry Francis out to the hearse, thence we all went to the cemetery where both Barry and I helped carry him to the grave site. Two wreathes lay on the coffin as it was lowered into the ground. Then we all left for the reception.

Separate flowers were sent from Francis' Sydney friends and myself with the following inscriptions:
From your friends Alan, Barry, Jack, Julian and Margot. It was good knowing you.

From your old friend Peter, with sorrow, respect and affection. I profoundly miss the sharing of our thoughts. Sydney won't be the same without you.

A gap has been left in my life which I cannot presently come to terms with. All we ever did was to meet weekly and talk for about two hours. I don't know why I miss him so much (Saturdays now are a yawning emptiness), unless it was that we were always in rapport whatever the subject matter, and that I shall probably never be lucky enough to cultivate another regular meeting of minds like it in my lifetime (at nearly 69). But isn't that enough reason?

Peter Marjot 25/07/00

Nature bats last!

I am moved to point out the "blindingly obvious" because I can't stomach the way many people want to deny reality, put somebody else on a pedestal as an authority to be revered, play never-ending games about dialogue, seeking enlightenment and trying to have "a religious mind" but continuing to allow the ego/ thought to dominate the world and cause incredible suffering.

There is only one fact that will sort everyone of us out, sooner or later – we all die – end – finito! You might think that this one unavoidable fact would unite humanity and we might be able to have some genuine compassion for each other (rather than some imagined compassion) because not one of us will get out of this experience alive. But instead the prospect of death only seems to further isolate each one of us and we withdraw into an ego prison which has impenetrable walls made from thought.

My understanding of this madness in our heads is that thought has invented a thinker in a glorious but vain attempt to achieve *permanent* security. The poor old human mind has got only one instrument to protect the organism – the intellect. The trouble is, it cannot protect the organism from death. But because that is its major purpose, it does the only thing that it knows – it invents “me” and “you”. Now it must protect this fiction with all its knowledge and beliefs and images, otherwise it cannot survive!

I have discovered that thought can do some things very well (communicate, invent) but that it is totally inadequate when it comes to matters of life and death. When it meddles in this area, it can only produce more problems, fear, and suffering for the organism (religious beliefs, personal growth, becoming somebody by comparing with other people, all the psychological nonsense that we go on with) The brain that really does see this fact for itself, has suddenly become intelligent, rather than just conceptually clever. It immediately stops putting energy into continuing with false ideas, and reactions about life and death.

What’s the point? This is a new brain. It is not being “conned” any more by itself, or society, or other people. It simply wants to live in peace, and it now understands the *absolute* limitation of thought. It is no longer fragmented. It is at peace.

The old mind is me and it is you. Until I saw and felt this fact for myself, I continued thinking that I could change myself. It was only when I really understood that there was no way out for “me” i.e., I was a human-made idea, not something real and solid, that I let go – no more immature choices, no more future plans based on memories of past pleasures, no more ambition, no more competition, no more will-power, no more judging others, no more illusions.

If we give the mind any kind of crutch, any authority, any place where it can deceive itself, then it continues playing its imaginary game. That’s what it is good at!

Nothing is permanent. The mind that sees this truth for itself is never the same mind again. It now lives with death every moment of its existence. “If you see the Buddha on the road, kill him!” And every other upstart guru that wants you to believe that “he or she knows”. These exploiters need the exploited to survive.

The truth is “uncomfortable”. After reading my book, some people have told me that the first part of the book (the autobiographical part) made them feel uncomfortable, whereas they really enjoyed the more “spiritual” second part of the book. Well, the violence, the wife -beating, my dishonesty, the reports of the daily suffering in the world, the greed and the destruction of the environment, and the incredible stupidity of human beings (including myself) were all in the first part of the book. For me, this is reality, the truth about the human condition, and I and every other human being is only one moment of madness away from hurting another live being.

Why don’t we want to see the truth about ourselves? Is it too painful? Too shocking? Makes us feel uncomfortable? Are we all being too polite about these things? Getting involved in endless theories about life or enlightenment, but not prepared to stay with the facts.

Some brilliant scientific minds have theorised that this stage of evolution represents man’s crowning glory because it is man – through his mind - that now controls the direction that evolution will take from this moment on. We are seeing this in the human genome project. But there is a fatal flaw in this idea. Man’s mind is limited and conceptual – meaning it is made up of fragments (like

each single gene) – it is not and can never be whole. It is only when the human mind sees and understands its own limitations that it becomes really intelligent and free – and this insight has nothing to do with control or choice. It happens in the moment or it never happens.

Therefore, I have not got a clue what this existence is all about, or what ‘I’ am supposed to be doing here. I *cannot* know! As soon as ‘I’ try to open my mouth to help anyone else, I become a pathetic little ego fragment again. Who is it that can’t stomach the way some people want to deny reality, and worship some authority figure? Who is it that is judging others? Gary Hipworth please shut-up! Silence is the only remedy for the limitations of human thought – but not the silence that human beings can imagine.

Gary Hipworth

Awake

I came, I went, yet I am always here.
I lived, will die, yet I am always here.
I hurt, I sicken, yet I am always here.

What does this tell me, being always here?
My meaning, my ageing, my private pain
Have no real value when I am always here.

My special history is just a dream,
A kaleidoscope of changing pictures;
I only have this moment to awake.

My fancy images of what has been
Evaporate like shining mirages
When I come upon the actual scene.

The instant taking in of what is here
Wipes out my past and bars the future days.
I’ m snapped in place without a trace of me.

A total nought, filled with the busy world,
The portion that comes slipping in right now.
No more, no less, a lightsome show of shows

Put on, of course, for no one here at all,
An absent viewer of the moving view,
Eternally grateful, heartened with joy.
Virginia Parsell

Communication Tongued with Fire

Personal Reflections on the Eternity-Vision of T.S. Eliot's *Four Quartets*

We know a poet because he makes *us* poets. *S.T. Coleridge*

The human soul, in intense emotion, strives to express itself in verse *T.S. Eliot*

All poets are artists in using language; a great poet creates new language, new combinations of words (even sometimes actual new words, as in the case of Shakespeare) which enable experiences to be expressed as never before, and hence to be brought to new levels of awareness for the individual reader and for the whole community. From that standpoint, T.S. Eliot has a good claim to be the major poet of our century. Even before the musical *Cats* made his name literally a household word all around the globe, many phrases that he invented were incorporated into common parlance, often without their origin being known to many who use them - "measuring out life in coffee spoons," for instance; experiencing "fear in a handful of dust," the world ending, "not with a bang, but a whimper," or "human kind cannot bear very much reality."

Such expressions have been particularly important in articulating the *spiritual* concerns of our time, especially concerns about death and dying, right across the spectrum from organised religion to the so-called, "Human Potential Movement", trans-personal psychology and the farthest-out New Age Groups. In fact, if today's spiritual seekers had a motto, it would surely have to be:

We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.

I have often heard those lines, or paraphrases of them, quoted anonymously as if they came from some ancient scripture; in fact, they come from the final passage of Eliot's poetic *magnum opus*, the cycle called *Four Quartets*, first published in complete form over half a century ago. He encapsulated in those four lines an ancient legend of a long-lost sailor finally drifting to land on what he thinks to be some remote shore, only to discover that it is his home, a theme quoted again and again by Eliot's slightly older contemporary, the prolific novelist, essayist, critic, biographer and popular philosopher, G.K. Chesterton, who in 1912 published a whole novel, *Manalive*, based on the idea that such a traveller would, for the first time, fully appreciate the place he came from.

I knew Eliot in the 1950s, when he was the most senior and I the most junior council-member of a teaching centre called St. Anne's House in London's Soho, which also celebrated its ~~half~~ centenary not long ago. I was amused to read recently that an American critic has likened Eliot's work in the *Quartets* to taking over a bombed-out area in the materialistic jungle of twentieth-century Western culture in order to establish an arena for spiritual re-appraisal - for that was what he and a group of others did quite literally in 1943, when the *Quartets* could not yet be published in book form in England (but only in Eliot's native America) because of wartime paper shortage. Hitler's bombs took out the ancient Anglican church of St. Anne, Soho, but left the offices and clergy-house standing, and the formidable detective-novelist-turned-religious-playwright, Dorothy L. Sayers, sought Eliot's help in persuading the Bishop of London to open the building as a "centre for Christian discourse" where lectures could be given. At that time I was a science student at London University, and all unbeknown to each other, Eliot and I were fire-wardens in the same "disfigured streets" that he described so vividly in the final *Quartet*; I came to St. Anne's only after the War,

when I was asked to lecture there on science and religion, and by then Eliot was already a Nobel Laureate, having been awarded the Literature Prize in 1948.

I thought there was something vaguely familiar about the tall, thin, distinguished-looking elderly man who slipped into the back row just as I began lecturing and slipped out again equally unobtrusively as soon as I stopped, every week for about two months. I realised his identity only when a letter arrived from Eliot, in his capacity as a Director of the publishing company Faber and Faber, asking if I would like to do a book on the subject. I was, of course, over the moon; but I was also quite astonished, not out of modesty, but because I had been arguing fiercely against the conservative Christian orthodoxy of Chesterton (who died before the War), of Sayers, of Eliot and of the other famous council-member at St. Anne's, C. S. Lewis. I had come from a home where God was the great Fuhrer in the sky who demanded that we all knuckle under to our workers' duties in poverty without protest and who would strike us down if we did not; and although I strongly believed that science did not disprove the idea of God, I saw traditional Christianity as an even worse enemy of the spirit than the atheism or agnosticism of my scientific colleagues. That letter from Eliot was the first hint of what I came to realise only much later, that at heart all of them were far less narrow-minded in their orthodoxy than they are usually given credit for, even by some of their greatest admirers.

I would now rank Chesterton, Eliot and Lewis all as early 'Sages of Aquarius', forerunners of the great upsurge of free spiritual enquiry that began in the 1960s under the banner of the Age of Aquarius.

All three, for instance, were open to the fact of spiritual truth in non-Christian religions, and Lewis wrote a book about it. All three saw it as part of their work to re-awaken awareness and love of the great worldwide pre-Christian mythic traditions, as Joseph Campbell and Jean Houston have been doing in the heyday of the Aquarian movement; Lewis ranged from science fiction to children's stories (the famous *Narnia* books) for this purpose, and Eliot's poetry is full of classical mythic overtones even when dealing with the most modern themes - for example, *Four Quartets* is a cycle of four long poems (called quartets because four voices can be heard in each) constructed around themes of the four ancient mythic elements, air, earth, water and fire.

All three writers were also very aware, in marked contrast to most orthodox Christianity in their day and ours, that spirituality involves awakening awareness of the natural environment - not sentimental or superstitious *beliefs* about the goodness of nature prior to humanity, but actual *consciousness of place*. Chesterton wrote several novels trying to convey that even suburbs have such spirit for those with eyes to see, and one of his essays tells how an artist's impression of the earth as a globe in space, which he found in a scientific encyclopedia for children, moved him to exactly the kind of spiritual-environmental vision of Planet Earth that in our own day has come to astronauts. And Eliot, whose most famous early poem used the metaphor of *The Waste Land* to express materialism's dehumanisation of life, went on to express his spiritual vision in the *Quartets* by naming each of the poems after a specific place that had been spiritually important to him. He used his poetic art to explore what it was like to know those places with spiritual consciousness.

The real subject of the poems, however, is consciousness itself rather than the places, and that is what makes Eliot our great poet of the spirit. For spirit is consciousness - not your consciousness or mine or anyone's, but consciousness-as-such, the dimension of *Isness* or of Conscious Being, whose play of individualised *doing* is the entire dance of events in place and time. Eliot advances

this theme in the first *Quartet*, the poem of air, which was actually written nearly a decade before the others and named *Burnt Norton*, after a country house burned down by its owner in the eighteenth century in the beautiful English Cotswolds, noted for splendid gardens. It is about time, and about the memories that always haunt such gardens for the discerning eye, like the illusion of children' s laughter in the rustling of dry leaves in a sunlit drained pool children who are now long dead:

Then a cloud passed, and the pool was empty...
Go, go, go, said the bird: human kind
Cannot bear very much reality.

And yet there is that other dimension altogether in the very fact of consciousness itself:

To be conscious is not to be in time.

This is the meaning of eternity - not everlasting time ('the waste sad time, stretching before and after'), but the all-embracing present-ness of Conscious Being or Spirit, which continually creates time and space as the matter of its manifestation-in-doing:

Except for the point, the still point,
There would be no dance, and there is only the dance.

That is not a metaphysical belief; it is a plain fact of direct experience *whenever there is full consciousness of the actual process of experiencing*, that is, consciousness of consciousness itself, of its being, as well as of the things that the conscious person *does*:

I can only say, *there* we have been: but I cannot say where,
And I cannot say, how long, for that is to place it in time.

The tragedy of the ordinary human condition, which in one way or another is the main subject of nearly all Eliot' s poetry, and the central theme of the *Quartets*, is that this dimension of consciousness is absent from most of life, because the whole structure of human living concentrates our individualised attention totally on the temporal business of *doing* (which includes thinking, savouring, emoting, judging and willing, as well as physical action), to the exclusion of actual experiencing, the non-temporal essence of consciousness:

Time past and time future
Allow but a little consciousness.

In that sense, all human cultures of which we have record have been materialistic in practice, long before materialism emerged in explicit philosophies in recent centuries, when sceptics began to challenge the lip-service that was given to the *idea* of spirit in religious cultures. And this practical materialism - the concentration of attention on the matter rather than on the spirit of living, on doing rather than on being, on time rather than on eternity - is tragic because it robs life of its only real satisfaction. Except for a few fairly rare folk commonly known as mystics, real satisfaction comes only in occasional flashes:

The moment in the arbour where the rain beat,
The moment in the draughty church at smokefall.

That it is not *heard* at all, but you *are* the music
While the music lasts. These are only hints and guesses,
Hints followed by guesses, and the rest
Is prayer, observance, discipline, thought and action.

I was then, as now, immensely moved by the poetry - in fact, I became that verbal music while it lasted - yet I hated what it was saying, for its conclusion seemed suspiciously like a highbrow version of the pie-in-the sky-when-you-die religion of my childhood, against which I had rebelled into science. Faced with the choice of giving up physical existence as hopeless or of dismissing those special moments as mere passing fancies, I took the latter course, and rejected all mysticism as neurotic delusion, choosing instead a very practical Christian humanism aimed at making the world better at providing the "fruition, fulfilment, security or affection" which Eliot came close to despising.

I felt myself thoroughly vindicated in this choice when in 1949 Eliot returned to his earlier role as playwright with *The Cocktail Party*, in which the heroine, whose mystical longing for those special moments forces her to break away from human relationships in order to become a nun, finds her fulfilment only in death, martyred by savages. ("They crucified her near an anthill"). Yet when I met Eliot later in the 1950's, I found none of the harshness to ordinary life that his verse seemed to show so clearly; and what was more, his next two plays were altogether gentler, softer, more accepting of the possibility that life might after all be good. The last play in particular, *The Elder Statesman*, depicts a Grand Old Man being unmasked publicly for dishonesties and meannesses in his youth, but eventually coming to forgive himself. He blesses his daughter for her forthcoming marriage with no hint that it is doomed to be a mediocre exercise in vanity, as marriage was portrayed in *The Cocktail Party*, or end in just "dung and death," as do the rustic marriages of *East Coker* - and then he himself dies peacefully under a beech tree, with no hint of the "primitive terror" of *The Dry Salvages*. I could not help seeing Eliot himself in that character, for by then he had married his secretary and apparently found the domestic felicity that he had formerly dismissed as impossible, an act which must have taken no mean act of self-forgiveness for those conscience-tormenting earlier years. At the time, I could only attribute this to the mellowing of age, but I now think that there may have been a more profound explanation.

Back then, I paid little attention to the fact that he had had a heart attack from which he nearly died in 1951, just before I had that letter from him; I am not sure that I even knew about it, since the information came as a complete surprise when I recently read Stephen Spender's delightful book *Eliot* in the Fontana Modern Masters series. Today, however, I know from the researches of Dr. Kenneth Ring in America, of Dr. Cherie Sutherland here, and of many others around the world, as well as from my own personal experience, that coming close to death can, for many people, bring a major mystical opening of consciousness that goes altogether beyond those "hints followed by guesses" which the Eliot of the *Quartets* believed were the best that most of us could expect in this life. It also often brings a profound self-forgiveness. When I was trying to write an account in 1985 of my own "Near-Death Experience" of two years before, I actually found a phrase from *East Coker*, running through my head as the perfect description of it: "I will say to my soul, Be still, and let the dark come upon you,/ Which shall be the darkness of God."

These words were, I knew, a reference to the mystical writings of St. John of the Cross, but until my near-death experience, I had taken them to mean simply the prayerful acceptance of

life' s worst derelictions, perhaps including death itself. In the near-death experience, however, I encountered a Living Dark which was, quite simply, 'eternity in love with the productions of time,' an all-embracing love for everything at the very ground of consciousness as such, the "everything" including John Wren -Lewis with all his weaknesses and nastinesses, past and present. And it has stayed with me day and night ever since, thereby proving beyond any doubt that "en chainment" of consciousness to past and future is *not*, definitely not, "woven in the weakness of the changing body." Whatever *is* responsible for the common eternity-blindness of the ordinary human condition, it can be cured this side of the grave for anyone, as I am sure both the Buddha and Jesus knew -

and my suspicion now is that Eliot discovered at least something of this in his heart attack. I think that he came back knowing that all those "guesses" at mystical truth, for which he had struggled to find the right words drawing on the "hints" of special moments and the works of the great mystics, were actually the basic properties of his own everyday consciousness in ordinary life:

The inner freedom from the practical desire,
The release from action and suffering, release from the inner
And outer compulsion, yet surrounded
By a grace of sense, a white light still and moving.

This experience is a consciousness which abolishes fear of death, not so much because death becomes a passing to the eternal home, but because the eternal home is, to pick a phrase from *East Coker* out of context, "where one starts from" at every instant in the adventure of living, in this world or in any other. The rest of my life-adventure in this world is now dedicated to investigating possible other ways of breaking the enchainment of consciousness to past and future without dicing with death; or, to coin a phrase, "How to Succeed into Eternity without Nearly Dying." I think this is humanity' s great task for the coming millennium now that near death experiences have shown us the possibility, and in that task I am sure that there is an enormous amount to be learned from the guesses of Thomas Stearns Eliot and from his marvellous "raids on the inarticulate" in an effort to express them.

And if I am right about his heart attack in 1951, then his actual death in 1965 will have given a new twist of meaning to the lines which appear on his memorial in Westminster Abbey, taken from the last *Quartet*, the poem of fire called *Little Gidding* after the Huntingdonshire village that he had chosen for special prayers:

And what the dead had no speech for, when living,
They can tell you, being dead: the communication
Of the dead is tongued with fire beyond the language of the living.

John Wren-Lewis

First published in the Chesterton Review <<http://www.chesterton.org/>> and reprinted here with permission of the author.

Letters

Letter from Dr Alex Reichel, Academy of the Word, Sydney 29/5/00

Dear Alan,

When I read your piece in NOW about Anthony de Mello, I couldn't help thinking of the popular song:

When you go through life
Make this your goal
Watch the donut
Not the hole.'

For me, Anthony de Mello's "outlook" is about as nourishing and enlightening as the hole in the donut. I was also reminded of a line in Milton which I can't remember exactly, but calls to mind those people who make men blind and then complain that they cannot see.

I couldn't agree more with the Vatican's "Notification". I can see that de Mello has "nothing" to offer. If you take away every signpost and every symbol capable of throwing some light on the road, surely the pilgrim and his mentor will both fall into a ditch. Truth may never be expressed in words but the symbols expressed by the words shed more light each time they are used. Their batteries never run down; (II Cor. 3:18)

More Chesterton, less de Mello
Kind regards

Alex Reichel

Editor's note.

For those of you who can't find a bible here is the verse referred to.

But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord.

I am hoping to persuade Alex to enlarge on his theme as I think it is an opportunity to explore how two people can find such apparently conflicting messages in the same material. Not just the different reaction to deMello but, for example, to the verse quoted above which I read as an expression of what some of us call headlessness.

Letter from David Allan

In a personal note David, who I met at the Katoomba Krishnamurti weekend and with whom I had an interesting chat about cathedrals on which I reported in Nowletter 62, said:

'One of the things I have been trying to do is use the 'Krishnamurti material', or more likely my response to it, to respond to the common currency of media communication. I enclose such an attempt - dialogue? - which results from an article in the magazine 'Family Matters'. The following was written in response to an article in 'Family Matters' but it was not accepted for publication in that journal.'

THE WELFARE CONUNDRUM; PROBLEM SOLVED OR PROBLEM RE-CYCLED.

Noel Pearson (Positive and Negative Welfare and Australian Indigenous Communities, Spring Summer, 1997, Issue 54) effectively outlines the undermining of the integrity of the aboriginal people due to what he calls, negative welfare." He defines this as '...the provision without responsibility of income support to able bodied people of working age.' The principle of social reciprocity is really the focus of Pearson' s extensive and even passionate argument and according to his discussion reciprocity was very important in the economy of traditional aboriginal communities and likewise it is central in the modern white economy.

As well as containing a very serious flaw, Pearson' s argument illustrates a very useful point. The flaw hinges on the concept, theory, or principle of reciprocity. As welfare is, by definition, the condition of doing well, there can be no such concepts as positive or negative welfare- even though they may sound useful and allow the writer to build up a statement which seems, on the surface, to be useful and insightful. One does not wish to be pedantic about language but its misuse at times, can direct attention to deeper problems. (Negative welfare is like ' waste management' or ' herbal tea.')

Pearson' s error has risen from his insistence on the efficacy of the principle of reciprocity, which illustrates the matter of common sense, and social justice, it seems, at the same time. If the writer wishes to claim that reciprocity was a mainstay of aboriginal society before white invasion then I must take his word on this - but principles have just not worked in western society. In the same category as principles of social exchange, we may also put, commandments, dogma, theory, and manifestos, from which is derived, socialism, and in turn, welfare! (Welfare theory has not worked but positive welfare, whatever it is, and reciprocity will work!)

If it is true, and surely it is, that these concepts often have different and indeed opposite effects to those who champion them with great enthusiasm, it can be seen that the implementation of ' positive welfare' will come out at the coal face, sooner or later as 'negative - positive welfare". Someone will then try to change this to "positive - negative - positive welfare!". Clearly we can keep going with this sort of re-cycling or move right out of the endless destructive cycle.

Thus, picking up on the language problem can direct attention to the deeper problem. From this we can also see the more important, indeed vital point about principles and identify one invariable principle - ALL PRINCIPLES ARE MADE OF RUBBER.

It is neither possible nor appropriate to describe in detail where we go from here with respect to the devastating problem of aboriginal society described by Pearson. If one could digest the points I have made, then enormous progress would be made, on the spot, so to speak. The further problem of reciprocity and indeed reconciliation is that it emphasises two parties, and thus conflict. This is certainly not an argument for assimilation, which also identifies two parties. In short, if the problem is to be resolved rather than recycled perhaps in the spirit and imitation of once being warriors, it will demand creativity.

Creativity cannot rise to the surface while such a surface has so much useless junk and debris floating there.

David Allan

Sacred Satsang Journey to India

This is an opportunity to combine Satsang with a well organised journey through some of the most sacred parts of India. John David has lived in India for some nine years and travelled there extensively. He will conduct Satsang at Rishikesh, Lucknow, Bodhgaya and Tiruvannamalai. Faith Pandian, from Window to the World, lives in India and regularly organises these kind of travel journeys.

This journey is going ahead with a core group of eight people. There are still places for four more people. It looks likely that we will have someone making a documentary of our travels and we have two musicians as part of the group.

Cost \$2750 plus Airfare of \$1300

If you are interested in this journey, please call John David as soon as possible as flight bookings etc are now pressing.

Call 02 93888344 or Email

| DIALOGUE MEETINGS SYDNEY AREA | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| LOCATION | DAY OF MONTH | MEETING PLACE | TIME & CONTACT | Phone Nos. |
| City | Third Saturday | Theosophical Society Level 2, 484 Kent St., City | 2.30pm Terry O'Brien | 02 9949 8379 018 410 127 |
| Chatswood | Third Sunday | 81 Greville St. (off Fullers Rd) Chatswood | 10.30 am Alan & Margot Mann | 02 9419 7394 |
| Clontarf | Fourth Sunday | 49 Peronne Avenue Clontarf | 11am Terry O'Brien | 02 9949 8379 018 410 127 |

Group Meetings

Sydney

Academy of the Word Seminar Programme - Under St Peter's, Devonshire St., Surry Hills

Second Tuesdays 6.15pm - Healing & Well-being

Fourth Tuesdays 6.15pm - State of the World

Dr Alex Reichel (02) 9310 4504

- Satsang with John David. Thursdays - ongoing - From 7-9pm. Friends Meeting House - 119 Devonshire St., Surry Hills (3min from Central Station)
Call Open Sky (02) 9300 0234 for details.

Nowra

Dialogue Group meets every first Saturday of the month from 4-6pm
The Tea Club, Berry Street, Nowra - Opposite Roxy Cinema - Call Riche 4421 5947

