

Members' Forum

Correspondence

THE CAMPHILL IMPULSE

Further to the description of the mission of the CVT written by Frances Wright in the March Newsletter, we would like to add to readers' understanding of the Camphill impulse.

While everything Karl König brought about was indeed fundamentally based on anthroposophy he was also able to convey and sustain a social and cultural vision of community building lived together with people with disabilities, which has implications far beyond service provision to them and which has been a major contribution to the social insights of our time. This vision does not see people only as either providers or recipients of services but as co-creators of a social enterprise in which everyone's needs and wellbeing are supported through mutual commitment and relationship.

This has inspired thousands of people over 75 years, and while of course contemporary social care values and regulations are important in ensuring protection, accountability, value for money, and high standards, we believe the groundbreaking vision and practice of Karl König can continue to make a contribution to society today and in the future.

Cherry How, member of the AS in Ireland, Camphill Community Clanabogan, N. Ireland and Johannes Moora, member of the AS in GB, Delrow, Camphill Community, CVT

INSPIRATION

Dear Members,

As the present year now draws towards its close, it seems a suitable moment to look back with the benefit of hindsight at the report in the March issue of this *Newsletter* about the Camphill Village Trust (CVT, founded in 1954).

The report was penned by Frances Wright, the CVT's Directress of Human Resources, who referred inter alia to a recent "strategic review" made by

the charity, and herself went on to lift from this very review the following sentence: "We want to be highly regarded, financially sustainable and well-resourced, with people who are motivated in their work and where anthroposophy remains a living inspiration."

Any reasonable person could at the time have connected that mention of anthroposophy with statements made a few months previously in a section on "Co-workers" found on page 22 of the charity's printed document *Telling Our Story: Annual Report and Financial Statements 2012/2013*: "...These career volunteers contribute to CVT's unique life-sharing approach and support the rich environment of family, working and social life. Co-workers are an important way of ensuring the Trust's objectives of keeping the anthroposophical principles of Dr. Steiner alive and relevant in these modern times are met, as well as being an integral part of delivering the care our funders contract the Trust to provide." The document containing these statements has remained accessible right up to the time of writing via a link on the CVT website.

Frances Wright ended her own report by stating that the CVT trustees "...hope the charity will continue to have the goodwill and support of the Society." There was an accompanying advertisement for the post of trustee.

The jiggery-pokery concealed behind this advertisement – as also behind Frances Wright's unsolicited offers of that trusteeship to well-known members of our Society – came properly into view two months later in May, when the trustees issued an edict abolishing the vocation of co-worker throughout all of their (mercifully now only English) centres. That sufficiently indicated the extent to which "anthroposophy remains a living inspiration" within the boardroom of the CVT.

One can indeed hardly help wondering whether the inspiration for this

move was not rather coming from a completely different source altogether. At any rate the documentary evidence beginning to appear later in the summer on the website of the resultant contrary campaign "Action for Botton" – also mentioned by Nick Blitz in the September issue, and thereafter considerably amplified throughout October – seems to show that in recent years there has arisen a hardened sequence of reprehensible practice – to put it mildly – on the part of the CVT trustees and their well-paid stooges on both directorial and managerial levels, of a type which can hardly be regarded as being inspired by anthroposophy, or even as being characteristic of what Rudolf Steiner once termed a "decent human being", let alone a so-called charity. After assessing the currently observable tendencies in this whole matter I would myself hope that our Society will now rather transfer its goodwill and support to "Action for Botton" instead.

Regarding the subject of inspiration, I am submitting to Camphill Correspondence, the editor of which, Maria Mountain, has kindly agreed to publish it from the March 2015 issue onwards, an important but still little-known lecture by Carlo Pietzner (1915-1986), one of the founders of Camphill and also from 1957 until his departure to America in 1961 Treasurer of the CVT. The content of this lecture throws a startlingly relevant light upon the internal machinations taking place within the top echelons of the CVT in our own time. Copies may be ordered by anyone, also in advance, from the editor at campcorresp@gmail.com *Crispian Villeneuve*