



AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL STUDY OF
REVIVALIST RELIGION IN ADELAIDE

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SUMMARY

Evidence suggests that the concept of the 'secularization' of modern societies must be re-examined. Not only has there occurred the spread of 'invisible religion' in Thomas Luckmann's phrase, but revitalizing movements emphasising personal commitment, healing and charisma, have sprung up in the main Christian churches. The Pentecostalist movement has been highly influential in this.

The Pentecostal organization studied in this thesis, has been highly successful over three decades in achieving conversions, stable and growing membership, and avoiding disruption.

In this study explanation and understanding of the recent history and current beliefs and practices of the organization, which I call God's Army, are attempted by the combined use of historical sociology and ethnographic field work.

Two problems are considered and used for wider analysis:-

- (a) The role of the founder and prophet and his relations with both an inner circle of leaders and the wider laity. Connections are proposed between the frequency and type of ideological changes, and his relations with both types of followers. The analysis employs a modified version of Weber's concept of charismatic authority.
- (b) The social processes of recruitment and commitment with particular reference to the redefinition of their social situations by members. The significance of healing, 'deliverance' (exorcism), and codes of conduct in everyday life are examined in detail. From this propositions are made concerning the communication and meaning of faith and doubt in God's Army.

While the wider social and religious context of the growth of God's Army is not a major problem considered, the importance of such

contexts for a fuller understanding is considered at appropriate points. This is done by reference to the few other studies of Australian religion, documentary sources from the Pentecostalist movement and sociological interpretations of social change.

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university. To the best of my knowledge and belief, this thesis contains no material previously published or written by any other person, except when due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

Josephine M. Dey.

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PREFACE

In this study I have applied ethnographic and historical sociological perspectives to the study of one unfinished episode in the growth of 'ecstatic religion' in Australia. This began with the arrival in Adelaide of a man I shall call James. From his own account, his arrival was in response to a prophecy made about him by a shadowy legitimating figure, a pastor in New Zealand. More certainly he was invited by a small group of sponsors to initiate a revival and extension of their theological position which consisted mainly of a racial doctrine of the divine responsibility of Anglo-Saxon peoples called British-Israelism.

James was raised in the recently established tradition of Australian Pentecostalism, itself an outshoot of British, Commonwealth and American missionary efforts. After his arrival in Adelaide in 1945, he succeeded in instilling Pentecostal beliefs and practices among many of his British-Israelite sponsors. With this nucleus of followers he went on to attract a few new followers from the various Pentecostal groups already established, and also disenchanted members of mainline Protestant churches. Over the following three decades his influence grew, both in Adelaide, and more widely in Australian Pentecostalism. The congregation of what I have called God's Army grew and became quite diverse in its social composition. A definite form of church government or "Oversight" emerged to administer local and foreign missionary efforts, finances and various enterprises ranging from a modern assembly complex to a school and Bible college. A career structure of elders and pastors and minor officials developed.

In his early years in Adelaide James encountered several challenges to his leadership, which took the form of largely implicit denials, or

extensions of his teaching. By the early 1960s, however, these declined and until his death in 1977, he exercised leadership which was publicly based on acknowledgement of his personal revelations and ministry.

Both of these phases however were marked by changes in the ideology of God's Army, as announced from time to time by James. Doctrines relating to healing, mental health, the preservation of family life, 'deliverance' (exorcism), and Christian conduct in everyday life, followed each other. These were reflected in situational selection and emphasis of certain portions of ideology by various sections of the congregation. The result has been that a good deal of actual diversity of experience and pluralism of doctrine underlies the insistence that all think alike and that very little change has occurred in God's Army or in James since 1945.

My thesis describes and analyses these aspects of change. However, I have not tried to do this by adopting a chronological approach which traced the major steps through the thesis. Nor have I adopted a 'community' frame of reference to account for social relations. The first part of the study is based on a critical view of Weber's concept of charismatic authority and attempts to analyse relations between a leader who claims to embody 'higher' directives, his lieutenants and the wider followership. The second part takes advantage of the conclusions of the first part and analyses the social process of recruitment and commitment employing as a framework the idea of the social construction of reality and related concepts from symbolic interactionism.

INTRODUCTION

In this thesis I study the emergence of a Pentecostal religious group in Southern Australia at the end of the second world war, and trace some of the subsequent developments within the group over three decades. The group I will call God's Army, in the interests of their own privacy, but as its name changed several times, I will, where appropriate, use other names and pseudonyms. At the time of my fieldwork (1976-1978) their membership numbered six to seven hundred, and they also had a number of less formally attached adherents, some of whom had membership in mainline churches, but who attended God's Army services for "inspiration".

The distinctive belief of Pentecostals generally is in the present day reality of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, now being "poured" out on Christians in what is called the "latter rain". The first incidence of Spirit baptism occurred at Pentecost when the Apostles were enabled to speak in "many tongues", so that they were understood by all present. In God's Army the sign of Spirit baptism is called "speaking in tongues", and consists of a flow of sounds that are not native speech to the utterer. The validity of the glossolaic 'message' is typically verified by a pastor or elder in God's Army, and this is part of a relatively recently adopted, generally more formalistic approach which is also apparent in their new requirement that pastors be trained.

For a Pentecostal, Spirit baptism confers a reserve of strength, and a personalized relationship to the deity. The accompanying "tongues" are believed to be a "sign for the heathen". Thus inner certainty is combined with a proselytizing rhetoric. That Spirit baptism is now a

frequent occurrence is an indication of the imminent return of Christ to reign on earth. Therefore, a subjective sense of grace, a mission of conversion and a millennial perspective are symbolically combined in Spirit baptism.

For God's Army members, Spirit baptism is, however, not essential for "salvation", which is assured by faith alone. In this they differ from some other Pentecostal groups.

The Holy Spirit may confer on individuals other "gifts", for example, prophecy, interpretation (of "tongues"), healing, miracles, wisdom, and discerning of Spirits, but this is done with relative infrequency, and is usually situational, that is, it occurs in response to particular cases, and is not continuously available to the possessor as is Spirit baptism.

With respect to other local Pentecostal groups, God's Army has several distinctive beliefs, but these are not now a barrier to mutual interchange, and have never caused a complete breakdown of relations as far as I can ascertain. The first of these is God's Army's adherence to a demonology, which allows that Christians may be "possessed", and their consequent practice of "deliverance" ministry on Christians. This theory and practice, while it does not exclude relations with other Pentecostals, is not universally shared with them (i.e. the practice of deliverance on Christians), but it does provide a point of commonality with some Anglicans. A second prominent feature which distinguishes God's Army from the other major Pentecostal church in town, Assemblies of God, is their local church style of government.

God's Army, like other Pentecostals, is part of the current worldwide flowering of enthusiastic religion. Their members are, at

conversion, "born again", in that they believe themselves to become "new" people. They are also fundamentalist, evangelistic and millenarian in their orientation to other churches and the sociopolitical world generally.

Their fundamentalism is publicly expressed in their opposition to the 'theory of evolution', which antagonism can be seen as forming an important part of their claim to be a "Bible-based" religion. But, in that the 'theory of evolution' represents the 'prostitution' of science, its perceived deceptiveness legitimates much broader antagonism by God's Army against other areas of science and technology, particularly the biological sciences and pharmacology.

God's Army's evangelism may be seen in several aspects of performance. The weekly Sunday evening "revival rally" incorporates an evangelistic sermon, and "altar call", and many other God's Army affairs are outwardly directed in that members are urged to -ring unconverted friends and family. A number of activities are arranged over the course of a year which are specifically directed towards recruitment. I must add that although the evangelistic efforts are outwardly oriented, I will later demonstrate that the internally experienced effects are of major importance.

An overview of pentecostalism in the United States and Britain

The modern Pentecostal movement, of which "speaking in tongues" (glossolalia) is an integral part, traces its origin to Topeka, Kansas, where a Charles F. Parham had established a Healing Home and Bible College. From the year 1900, there was a concerted effort among the inmates to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit, of which "speaking in

tongues" was considered to be evidence. From there the movement spread rapidly, and by 1906 a group was established in Los Angeles, and in 1907 the Apostolic Mission in Chicago was holding "tarrying"¹ meetings.

Wilson suggests that in many cases Pentecostalism was heir to the earlier holiness movements which themselves had sprung up in the wake of Methodism. These movements for which personal virtue was paramount, emphasised the joy of worship, and scorned hierarchical organization. The holiness movement was among a number which emerged in the early nineteenth century, in the American revivalist tradition that had been part of American frontier religion since the Great Awakening of 1734. Wilson suggests that these sects sprang up "to revitalise Methodism" (1970:54), since the themes that they emphasised were largely based on Wesley's teaching. These sects are often radically anti-Catholic, an attitude acquired after Roman Catholic migrants became an important section of more urban American society. Thus Pentecostalism may in its origin be an adaptation of Protestant rural migrants of the lower classes who settled in competition with Catholic European migrants in the growing American cities.

Gromacki (1967) suggests that the activities of particular 'key men' were responsible for the way in which Pentecostalism grew. Wilson's thesis is that the 'tongues movement' in the early twentieth century was a collective response to the anomic conditions generated in American cities of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. My suggestion emphasises conflict and competition rather than social disorganization and anomie as a more useful perspective on origins. However, this idea will only be

¹Meetings in which Spirit baptism is sought.

explored in this thesis in as far as it relates to the rise of God's Army.

The greater efficacy of mass communication, Wilson suggests, was also important (1961:32). The "power of the Spirit provided compensation for the otherwise poor, neglected, uneducated and powerless" (1970:68) while the teachings legitimised emotional outpourings, and channeled their expression into "harmless" activities, i.e. those which would not further expose them to oppression from powerful groups.

Pentecostals took on denominational characteristics only slowly. The most effective early sects were those already formed around other issues, such as the small holiness movement on the borders of Tennessee and North Carolina, which adopted Pentecostal beliefs in 1906 and became the Church of God. In the same year a negro holiness body in Mississippi embraced Pentecostal teachings.

Assemblies of God, now by far the largest Pentecostal group in America, was formed by the merger of a number of independent churches, and unlike its namesake in Australia, has continued to emphasise congregational autonomy. (The theme of local church independence has been an important one in Australia, however, tending to order relations between and within sects.)

Although in the early days Pentecostalism focused its attention on Spirit baptism, it was increasingly important in conveying to its members the values of evangelical Protestantism, and these, says Wilson, are values which have been prominent in the development of industrial society. Here he appears to be operating a thesis similar to that which E.P. Thompson (1968:385-411) uses with regard to Methodism. Thompson sees several factors operating to produce more satisfactory and more

satisfied workers. The Methodist ethic transfers expectations of happiness from the present to the future, and the discipline in every aspect of life provides motivation from within, which he considers, following Fromm, as far more effective in harnessing energies than external sanctions. Thompson goes on to point out that in its later growth Methodism developed explicit ideas about obedience to authority, including political authority, which reduced earlier tendencies to political radicalism and industrial militancy. These points will be raised later, because the history of God's Army has been marked by sociopolitical criticism of a conservative nature.

The development of Pentecostalism in England appears to reflect trends in the United States. Having been carried to England in 1907 by an evangelist, Pentecostalism grew in independent and purely local bodies, whose leaders often remained committed to their denomination.

The Pentecostal Missionary Union was established in 1909, and although it provided something like a separate faith, it retained considerable emphasis on evangelical revivalism. It was in a Bible School established by the Pentecostal Missionary Union that George Jeffreys, founder of the Elim Foursquare Gospel Alliance, was trained.

Post-war revival campaigns organized by Jeffreys initiated a rapid growth phase for Elim, and by 1920 there were fifteen associated assemblies in the British Isles.

The spread of Pentecostalism in Britain was furthered when, in the mid-1920's, Assemblies of God missionaries from America formed an association of separate missions, which grew to seventy in number. About the same period (and even earlier in the case of South Africa), both Americans on missionary visits and English people in the course of

post-1918 migration began to spread these views and the religious practices associated with them, in the colonies of the Cape Provinces, Natal, Australia and New Zealand.

SECTION 1
HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT



CHAPTER I
THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

It is quite common that historical treatments of religious institutions deal with the forces operating at their foundation and early growth, but frequently downplay the significance of internal and external changes which shape their subsequent development. Here I refer to analyses which, in seeking to relate events and situations causally to previously existing situations, lose sight of the fluidity of the actual relations between 'dependent' and 'independent' variables. Stark (1967) is guilty of this when he relates the rise of Elim and other 'dissenting groups' to the 'gloom' spread through the working class by the English economic crisis of the 1930's.

A more interesting analysis of sect development is E.P. Thompson's (1968) study of the Methodism of the eighteenth century. He demonstrates the interplay between the emergent Methodist organizational praxis, and the concurrently developing labour unionism. More importantly he shows that the emergence of the latter had consequences within Methodism.

Among sociological historians generally, there is recent recognition that the viability of small autonomous religious congregations depends as much on the flexibility with which ideology and praxis continue to align individuals to a transcendent universe, as it does on preexisting social or personal strains, and the ability of a prophet-leader to articulate them. Sociologists' studies of religious innovation have either focused upon variables tending to produce anomie, and ensuing adaptation (e.g. Aberle's (1966) work on peyotism, and Wilson's (1970) study of the urban sources of Pentecostalism, respectively), or they have

followed the widely-criticised theory of exemplary leaders based on Weber's (1964) category of charisma.

That is, there is a tendency for historical analyses, in that they fail to deal explicitly with the changing recruitment and commitment bases of individuals' ongoing membership, to be static in their approach, despite their use of diachronic data. For example, Beckford's (1975a, 1975b) study of the foundation and growth of Jehovah's Witnesses in late nineteenth century Pittsburgh places heavy emphasis on the organizational abilities of Charles Russel, the founder, and especially on his policy of the deployment¹ of new recruits into proselytism. One of Beckford's concerns is the general neglect of a perspective which recognises recruitment processes as the "outworkings of particular forms of organization" (Beckford 1973:66). He specifically denies the applicability of a notion of charismatic leadership to the early rise of the Watchtower movement (Beckford 1975b), claiming that Russel was concerned to create his image as, firstly, an administrator, and secondly, an 'exegetist of Biblical prophecy'. I maintain that both of these, but particularly the latter, might easily be perceived² as conferring charismatic qualities. Beckford therefore loses sight of several other variables which may have contributed to the early success of the Watchtower movement.

It is necessary that historical analyses recognise the efficacy of particular religious ideology and practice in tying individuals into a transcendent universe, and continuing to do so. In that he gives

¹Lofland (1966) uses this term to describe the readiness of a religious member to perform an appointed duty. A deployable member was fully willing.

²Weber's conception of charisma depends on the *perception* of the qualities of the leader by his following.

prominence to the theme of 'moral regeneration' in millennial movements, Burridge (1969) does this. The prophet he sees as an 'articulator' of the subliminal dissatisfactions of his followers.

In this respect his argument is similar to that of another diachronic analyst of 'sect' development and political movements, Norman Cohn, who employs the concept of 'marginality' in explaining availability for recruitment. Cohn (1970:282) writes:

Revolutionary millenarianism drew its strength from the population living on the margin of society... from the amorphous mass of people who were not simply poor, but who could find no assured and recognised place in society at all.

Out of the mounting social tensions of such a society would arise 'prophetae', usually of a different social type from the disaffected followers, and capable of harnessing their anomie into a commonly perceived cause. This was possible, according to Cohn, because the charismatic prophet offered followers "the prospect of carrying out a divinely ordained mission of stupendous, unique importance" (1970:285).

Bryan Wilson (1975) also has an analogous argument concerning the rise of millennialism, but locates appeal in the ability of the movement to create faith in a projected, redressive social order.

The way in which the commitments of individuals once inside the movement are altered by their new self-perception is given little importance by many of the aforementioned authors. Burridge is an important exception. Neither are ongoing social processes in the wider society, including the dialectical relationship between movement and society, seen as bringing about changes in the recruitment base. (Here Thompson's study of eighteenth century Methodism which I earlier mentioned is an exception.)

Cohn's argument incorporates at least some aspects of the charismatic notion of leadership, by postulating the 'prophetae' as the 'magnetic' articulator of the disaffections of the dispossessed. But, unlike Weber's notion of charisma, which is more dynamic, Cohn's does not advance beyond explaining an initial aggregation.

The concept of charisma as delineated by Weber is a comparative one, being one of three ideal types of possible legitimate authority. Charisma, in contrast with traditional and legal-rational authorities, is based in the belief of those to whom an order may be addressed, and in the personal characteristics of the order given. In that all empirical situations of authority will be mixed, that is, two or more elements will be present, the typology incorporates some flexibility.

Worsley (1970) has a critique of the concept of charisma which claims that it focuses too heavily on the relation between a leader or prophet and the rank and file. This is said to detract from the important role of intermediate ranks in complex social movements. Such a criticism may be seen rather as a warning against crude usage, than as a dismissal of the usefulness of the concept.

The usefulness of the charisma concept to explain an increase and innovation in ritual and mediumistic activity following disintegrative social change has been denied (Garbett 1979). Also the conceptual contrast between charisma and tradition tends to distort historical situations which cannot be arbitrarily divided in this way. Again, this is a reasonable caution.

I suggest, however, that Weber's charisma concept remains most useful particularly as a source of problems rather than answers, in the study of religious movements. This seems particularly true where the

religious group is founded, and where the locus of power remains embodied in the person of the founder.

From my standpoint, the principal limitation of Weber's theory of charisma is that it takes little account of the cognitive interplay between the prophet and the led. In effect, Weber's religious followers 'vote with their feet' only. The dynamism in his theory comes solely from organizational exigencies. Both elements, the passivity of the laity, and the organizational imperatives, are basic to his theory of charisma. They are the foundations of his theories of social change and politics (Freund 1968), and as such have been widely criticised.

Bryan Wilson, in his study of the role conflicts of a Pentecostalist minister, demonstrates with a number of instances the stresses which arise over time between a pastor and his flock (Wilson 1967). For example, the rigorous moral standards required of a Pentecostal minister, coupled with his obligation to exhort his flock to the adoption of similar standards, conflict with the human sharing with his congregation that is also a part of the expectation he must fulfil.

Wilson makes a number of insightful comments on the mutual adjustments between minister and assembly, but in sum they amount to little more than *ad hoc* functionalism. The only generally integrative suggestion that he makes is that a functional explanation of the emergence of Pentecostalist ministry might be put forward, since it is that institutionalized role which is largely responsible for preventing the assembly from dissolving into 'internal dissensions and fractiousness' (1967:149). The argument has some merit, but it does not allow scope for consideration of the content of the relationship between minister and congregation.

In fact, the kind of functionalist analyses which Wilson develops is based on the latent manifest distinction proposed by Merton in his methodological essay (Merton 1952). While such a distinction is important for functionalist explanation, it tends to exclude or relegate the full range of relationships within a group, and communication within it, in order to demonstrate how dysfunctions are prevented from disrupting the social system. This is accomplished by the emergence of functions (usually latent) with an integrative symbolism, the effect of which is to combine interests. Attention is then focused on exchanges between people in different categories (e.g. clergy and laity), rather than within groups.

From my point of view, however, both are equally important, because the content of both types of exchange will bear on the course of action and *vice versa*, as Robert Lauer (1976) has shown in his 'interactionist' analysis of social movements. Lauer's paper deals with the emergence of the L.S.D. movement and the messiah-like status it accorded Timothy Leary. Lauer (1976:58) concludes that

The motivation to join a movement is a function of the intersection of the movement's self-definition and the societal definition, with the individual's interests and felt needs.

The movement, he says, failed because its appeal was to people who were in other ways well-established in the social order. This is confusing in view of what he claims earlier:

The development of the ideology and program of the social movement occurs during the interaction between the movement and the larger society, and may be characterized as a selective process in which (a) the stance of the movement *vis-à-vis* the larger society is defined; (b) the rationale for group behavior is more sharply delineated; (c) the goals of the movement

are clarified through a narrowing of their scope and an increasing specificity; and (d) through trial and error effective means are sought for attaining goals in the face of social resistance (1976:56).

However, a 'self-definition' developed in this way does not help us to explain the movement's failure in Lauer's terms. His is an a *priori* explanation of failure, rather than an interactionist one. It seems more feasible that the interest of those people initially attracted could not be sustained, because of a failure to develop ideology with sufficient respect to the 'larger society'. As the official pressures intensified, Leary failed to produce ideology which could maintain a following.

By this I do not simply mean that Leary failed to construct a world-view of the 'L.S.D. society', which he actually did in a number of books, speeches and 'happenings'. However, as several recent writers on ideology have pointed out, an ideology is not merely a set of ideas, it is a structure of theoretical work which necessarily means that it must have an 'apparatus' (Althusser, 1971). An apparatus which is envisaged as a set of actors working at different levels in society, does not emerge automatically from the existence of a particular world-view. It is brought about by exchanges between men who transfer between themselves the products of ideological work, for example, psyche satisfaction, material rewards and reputations.

The L.S.D. movement failed 'ideologically' in this respect because Leary was unable to sustain his own reputation against attacks from the wider society. This failure occurred in part because of the lack of reliable mechanisms for transferring reputation 'upwards'. This idea is currently being developed in anthropology by analysts such as Bourdieu

(1977) and Garbett (1979) using the concepts of symbolic labour and symbolic capital.

An alternative view of the production of ideology has been developed by Berger and Luckmann (1975) in their discussion of 'legitimacy'. They argue that the production of legitimacy must take place at a number of different structural levels, of cognition and emotion, from cosmic to mundane. They imply that if the intermediate levels are underdeveloped, then the whole structure may cease to operate. Conversely we might then enquire of any expanding or changing religious group, to what extent intermediate ideological structures develop between the changing cosmic level and those of the mundane practices of members.

Both of these ideas will be employed in this thesis, in conjunction with a critical use of Weber's theory of charisma.

My own data from God's Army lead me towards a position on the historical development of leadership within a religious group, which draws partly, but critically upon Weber's concept of charisma, and more generally on his discussion of prophet and prophetic action. In his outline of charismatic authority, Weber writes:

The genuine prophet, like the genuine military leader, and every true leader in this sense, preaches, creates or demands *new obligations* (Weber 1964:361; original emphasis).

It seems that Weber refers to obligations which are distinctive and radical in respect of traditional and routine relationships in the society. Here we may draw a parallel with Burridge's analysis of millenarian movements in which he points to the primary importance of the articulation of a new morality, which is part of the process of the reconceptualization of the self in society (Burridge 1969). Mary Douglas' anti-ritual theme has similar connotations (Douglas 1973).

For my particular data, relating to an evangelical, conversionist Pentecostal group, I would suggest that successful sustained leadership has depended partially on the continuous creation of novel 'obligations' (and therefore innovative relationships) in this Weberian sense. This has occurred both at an organizational level, which is what concerns me in this section, but also on an interpersonal, informal level, which I consider in a later section.

In my view the important aspect of this 'newness' is that it is not arbitrarily introduced, but is the outcome of interaction between a leader, his laity, and significant groups in the wider world. One important product is an explanatory and curative framework of relations and beliefs which may be applied by followers to their 'this-worldly' problems. I do not suggest that this is a necessarily conscious and fully formulated strategy on the part of the leader.

Another related facility appears important and that is the ability of the prophet to reconstruct the meaning of events after their occurrence. By this I mean events such as disruptions within the religious community, which by appropriate interpretation, assisted by 'divine' guidance, the leader may use to augment faith and cement good relations within that community.³ Although the ideology produced in both these cases be new and challenging, it must also be such as to come within the ambit of the group's existing world-view, i.e. the prophet must construct appropriate legitimations at the intermediate level to relate the events to the cosmic order.

³This has parallels with the individual processes of reconstruction of the past (Berger and Luckmann 1966), which the prophet also has a role in facilitating.

The most important aspect of this argument is that events and people shape the behavior of the charismatic leader, and that the perpetuation of his status requires that he continuously adjust action in accordance with the prevailing social situation both inside and outside the sect.

This view recognises that over time changes occur in both the internal and external social environment, and that the charismatic distinction of a leader must be legitimated within that new situation.

The original basis of recruitment may, as Weber said, be 'personal charisma' but the appeal must be related to an audience as he also recognised. For God's Army, an enthusiastic religious group, this process must be continuous. Here the processes of routinization do not obviate the necessity for appropriate 'demonstrations' of charisma, in fact the resistance of some aspects of routinization in this manner has considerable significance within God's Army.

CHAPTER II
THE SUBSTANTIATION OF LEADERSHIP

I will now outline the history of God's Army and its leader-founder, James, and in doing so I will highlight the features of this account which seem to me to illustrate the means by which James was able, throughout his lifetime, to retain a growing and devoted following.

My sources include the 'official' version, given by one of the pastors, a graduate in history, who has written a history of Pentecostalism in Australia. Another is a series of monthly magazines, edited and often largely written by James, which were first published about three years before his arrival in Adelaide. Through the years the magazine has been continued and updated by God's Army and is now called *Power*. A major source which has served to qualify the more formal version has been interviews with long-term members.

Members' accounts

The ordinary members' knowledge of God's Army history and events is generally limited. Asked for the history of the group, they give brief accounts of the foundation of God's Army, sometimes talking of the hardships and deprivations suffered by James, but they know little else, and they do not see a detailed historical knowledge as important. "I don't know if it is important to me", said a 29-year old male member of several years' standing, when I asked what he knew of the history. Neither do members perceive that changes have taken place. The lack of remembered events between the foundation, more than 30 years ago, and the present day, represents the unchanging nature of their faith. "It's just the

same", even long-term members will claim, "there are more of us, that's all". "Pastor James had a vision in New Zealand that he would start a revival in Adelaide that would spread all over Australia and New Zealand, and now it has happened." The waxing and waning of ideological currents is unheeded, other than for the British-Israelism doctrine (which I outline later). "I think that British-Israel used to be fairly big in the early days", is a judgement that is common but expressed with no sense of significant change.

It is not unusual for anthropologists to find such condensations, coupled with assertions of constancy, in folk-histories. But within God's Army, where there is a readily available written record describing a number of aspects of the group's history, more explanation is required.

An important factor is that knowledge of some historical events is suppressed on the grounds that it is "not necessary for most members to know". Among such restricted information is that about some instances of excessive spirituality and splits that have been experienced by God's Army, even though these appear to have occurred more than 20 years ago. Some members claim that Pastor James' assembly has had no schisms.

While James was alive, he represented to assembly members the embodiment of the group's history. His presence and guidance was constant through the years, he tied the past to the present, and made irrelevant the content of history, considered in the conventional sense of records and texts. As a prophet, he progressively revealed his vision, so that the biography and the person came to replace history and events as the structuring device for understanding the past.

The only important temporal fact was that James had fulfilled his vision, and the prophecy that was made of him in New Zealand. The fact

that he became the embodiment of historical change was perhaps his preeminent resource within God's Army. One or two personal aspects of James are remembered also. This man that preached in the powerful voice was once an asthmatic, cured by a visiting evangelist. The same man, so concerned for their welfare, and ready with a friendly word, was once painfully shy. In that he could be seen to embody aspects of the transformations sought by his flock, James may be regarded as falling into Weber's (1965) category of the 'exemplary' prophet.

God's Army is therefore the locus within which personal histories are transformed (as will become apparent later), but as with a forge, must remain unchanged itself. Like God, God's Army, since its foundation, has always been available to save the repentant.

The pride that members feel for their church is connected not to its history as an organization, but to its demonstrated, and particularly its continuing ability, to transform peoples' lives.

The formation of God's Army and early Pentecostalism
in Australia

For members, James' history and that of God's Army starts in New Zealand, where during a time of prayer he received the 'vision' of his future in southern Australia, and on the following night was the subject of a prophecy. The prophecy was uttered by the local New Zealand pastor whose church James was visiting. On my first interview, James quoted it to me, saying the words were burned into his memory:

The Lord would have you to return to your own country
for he has prepared the way and opened doors over
there for you. But in due time you will return to
these environs, for the field in which you will
minister will not be confined to either country but
will extend over both.

This was further confirmed the following day, in Wellington, where a pastor greeted him with "We feel that the Lord wants you to return to Australia and establish a work there". These events took place in 1944. James was 24.

The coincidence of the vision with the prophecies was important in substantiating their divine source, especially since God's Army belief holds that God (as opposed to Satan) always gives confirmation of His directives. Burrige (1969) has made the general point that the message of a prophet must have an apparent source beyond ordinary human experience.

James was converted at the age of eight under the ministry of C.L. Greenwood, a Melbourne-based evangelist who had the "Baptism of the Spirit". James' father was converted at about the same time, but by another evangelist, Van Eyk, from South Africa. At the time the family lived in a small Western Australian town, next to the general store, which was run by James Sr.

Subsequently James Sr. began ministering for the Apostolic Church, which arose as one of the small groups which had developed in Perth out of the contemporaneous ministries of Greenwood, Van Eyk and W. Buchanan in the 1920's. They adopted the name after reading magazines put out by the Apostolic Church in England (a church which had arisen out of the Welsh revival of 1904-5). The small Perth group wrote asking for an Apostolic minister. In 1930 William Cathcart, a Scot, arrived in Perth in response both to their plea, and a "call of God".

By 1935, however, the family had moved to Brisbane, and here James was baptised by total immersion at the age of 15. The God's Army historian also records that it was a cold winter night, and that the water was unwarmed. He notes that one year later James received the 'baptism of the Holy Spirit', which so overwhelmed him that he continued to pray long after other members of the meeting had left; only the pastor stayed with him.

James' youth occurred during the Depression, when an itinerant mode of life became of necessity quite common among those seeking work. The same appears to be true of Pentecostal ministers. James' father became minister of a small independent Pentecostal assembly in South Brisbane in 1937, and here in 1939 James preached his first sermon, whilst his father was evangelising interstate. In the same year, by request, James took over a waning assembly of unrecorded affiliation in Ipswich (Queensland). Six months later he was offered the pastorate of an Assembly of God at Wynnum (Queensland). After a short period he took up an itinerant ministry through Queensland, Western Australia and Victoria. This evangelical roving seems to have been typical of the Pentecostal ministers of the period, who crossed and recrossed the rural and small urban regions of inland Australia.

In 1941 James Sr. returned to Perth in order to establish Assembly of God meetings there. He was accompanied by two sons, who soon after are recorded as being on an 'extended' campaign in Ballarat (Victoria), also for Assembly of God. At this stage, James Sr. had been Apostolic, independent and then Assembly of God by affiliation, and all within about five years. Pentecostal ideology was not yet concisely formulated, and doctrinal rivalry was often a matter of individual emphases and styles.

Australian-born Pentecostal evangelists, like the American, British and South African ones of the 1920's, being largely itinerant, left behind small local groups in the wake of their 'campaigns' and brief tenures. These were then subject to the untrained and often contradictory ideology of local leaders.

Personal rivalry and the unpredictability of success intensified both the itinerant pattern and the doctrinal 'looseness' that was part of the charismatic process. These factors seem to have been most influential in the early career of James Sr. His son was more successful in establishing a territorial and doctrinal base early in his career.

The aftermath of the Van Eyk campaign in Perth in the late 1920's was that within four years there existed six assemblies, not because of growth *per se*, but because of fission. New converts had been left in charge; in fact James Sr. was one of three neo-converts appointed to leadership by Van Eyk. They rotated pastorship of an assembly month by month. Not surprisingly, three discrete assemblies arose from this arrangement. In 1930 they became the nucleus of the Apostolic Church (James), Elim Foursquare, and Assemblies of God. It was to the former 'assembly' that James Sr. returned in 1941 to assist a campaign being

conducted by Greenwood. The fission of congregations in this case became the basis for a distinct group of separate Pentecostal churches, which, we may infer, spurred on each other's evangelistic efforts. Here I invoke Wilson (1967) who has noted a tendency for schismatic groups to remain vigorous for as long as the parent body remains successful.

Another factor that contributed to the diversity and schism among the early Australian Pentecostal groups was the variety of foreign ministries by which it first entered the country. The first was one Smith-Wigglesworth, who visited in 1921 at the invitation of a Mrs. Janet Lancaster of Melbourne. From a Methodist background Mrs. Lancaster had come to believe strongly in divine healing and the baptism of the Holy Spirit. As a result she founded in 1909 what was known as "Good News Hall", where many are said to have received healing.

In 1922 Mrs. Lancaster invited Aimee Semple McPherson, who had a well-established evangelical ministry in America. Several informants remember attending her meetings in Adelaide, which received favourable publicity in the newspapers.

The ministry of Charles Greenwood also began in the early 1920's. He had received the baptism of the Holy Spirit under a South African, John Lake. Then also in the 1920's came Van Eyk and Buchanan.

In fact, the birth of Australian Pentecostalism reflected that of both American and English Pentecostalism. Diversity proliferated because of the essential and common ideology of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which in effect gave both 'assemblies' and individuals considerable autonomy. There was reluctance to thwart the "flow of the Spirit". In this Pentecostalism appears to have been similar to the early years of Christadelphianism as described by Bryan Wilson (1961) where each of the

local 'ecclesia' was the arbiter of doctrine. Thus, despite the fact that they all followed the founder Thomas' exposition, disputes over interpretation and procedure frequently arose. For Jehovah's Witnesses, where organization was the primary concern from the beginning, the same schismatic tendencies do not appear to have existed.

In 1941, then, when James and his brother arrived in Ballarat, there were, all over Australia, small groups of Pentecostals, some connected by a common name, such as Assemblies of God, but all subject to transient enthusiasms, and the career aspirations of more forceful members. It was in Ballarat in 1941 that James came to grips with an ideology being presented by another evangelist, and that was British-Israelism (to which I earlier referred).

Basically, British-Israelites identify British peoples with the ten lost tribes of Israel. Quite often, this identification extends to Western European peoples as well, much being made of names. (For instance, as described by an informant, descendents of Dan are seen in names like *Danube*, *Denmark* and "Scandanavia" [*sic*].) According to this belief, then, the British peoples are a party to the covenant made by God with the Hebrews, and this it is claimed may be partly seen in the greater "responsibilities" which have both fallen on and been undertaken by the British (i.e. colonial expansion). Countries colonised by English-speaking people, British-Israelites say, are included in the covenant, and they point to what they see as the policemanlike role of America in this century.

It may be seen that such a persuasion legitimates for the holder and also focuses a number of political views, by relating them directly to Biblical teachings. By 1935 it was quite widely debated in Britain,

where its main proponents were the British-Israel (B.I.) World Federation, a body whose members were associated with a number of religious groups, including Anglican and Pentecostal.

In 1941 awareness of British-Israelism was on the increase in Australia. Until that time James had rejected the philosophy, but the evangelist 'John Cooper' was persistent and attended one of James' meetings. 'After two hours', according to the formal record, James was persuaded. He subsequently discovered that in the same hour, his father who was at the time preaching against British-Israelism in Western Australia, suddenly came to feel strongly that British-Israelism "had the answers". This temporal coincidence became an important rhetorical device in accounting for the sudden change in doctrinal content, and, like the previous example, confirmed its divine origins.

The course of World War II had made the political ramifications of the British-Israelism perspective of much greater immediate interest, for British-Israelism contains elaborate insights and predictions on the course of world events and legitimates an extreme nationalism. The Assemblies of God, with which the James family were associated in 1941, did not recognise the validity of British-Israelism. This corresponded with the stand of Assemblies of God in Britain, but it also indicates that views in Australia were beginning to polarize. When James told Assemblies of God of his new-found convictions, the meetings he had planned with them were cancelled. His father also withdrew from fellowship.

British-Israelism had already disrupted British Pentecostals. In 1935 the newly-instigated Ministerial Conference of Elim passed a resolution to prevent the discussion of British-Israelism from Elim

pulpits. To many within the movement, this represented a loss of freedom which they felt to be unwarranted; among them George Jeffreys, one of Elim's two most prominent evangelists, and recognised as its Principal. Whether or not it was a move made specifically against Jeffreys, who espoused British-Israelism, it made apparent to him the curtailment of his powers within the organization.

Wilson (1961) reports that it was at the same time that Jeffreys set about establishing the World Revival Crusade, using an Elim church. World Revival Crusade became an evangelical wing of Elim, which separated revivalism from the ossification of Elim. It became an instrument through which Jeffreys could have some influence on the parent body. It appears possible that Jeffreys used the British-Israelism issue to obtain the chance to attempt a reordering of Elim's executive.

The God's Army historian gives no hint that James might have been attempting a reordering within Assemblies of God, but James had at least thrown himself into a controversy that formed a major distinctive element in the world-views of Australian Pentecostalism for some years. In view of subsequent events we must assume that from 1941, James expended considerable effort in attaining expertise in British-Israelism teachings.

British-Israelism did not lose its relevance to momentous world events even after World War II, because of the emergence of the Palestinian question, on which British-Israelism claimed to have immediate bearing. Since it threatened to plunge the world into war once again, the Palestinian dilemma was capable of arousing considerable emotion. It was in this atmosphere, between 1941 and 1945, that James, under the tutelage of 'Cooper', first became known in British-Israelism circles as a cogent speaker.

British-Israelism may not only have served to further the leadership aspirations of some individuals. The collaboration of 'Cooper' with the James family in the early 1940's entailed the working out of a coherent and general position which acted as a catalyst in the formulation of mutually distinctive views and also alliances among Australian Pentecostals, allowing stabilization and growth. The emotive value of the issue appears to have built up in the early 1940's, during which time the James family established a small newsletter, in which British-Israelism was heavily promoted. However, it was not until 1944 that Assemblies of God undertook a refutation of British-Israelism in the *Australian Evangel*. During this time it appears that the James family were ministering in four Brisbane assemblies called the Churches of God. The Churches of God not only promoted British-Israelism, or as they then called it "Bible Prophecy", they were committed to "local church liberty", that is, the independence of local assemblies. Both of these issues set them apart from the two major existing Pentecostal collectivities, Assemblies of God and the Apostolic Church.

These two groups retained the stance of the churches in Britain after whom they were named; but there appears to have been considerable indecision on the part of those ministering under these banners. This may be illustrated with an example from the early history of the Apostolic Church. At the period of its greatest growth, in the late 1930's, seven of its thirteen pastors had held ministering or elder positions in other Australian Pentecostal churches, though the issues which caused them to defect are not recorded. When James began meetings in Adelaide in 1945-6, the man he placed in charge had previously ministered in the Apostolic Church and before that the Pentecostal Church

of Australia. This is slender evidence but I suggest that, aided by increasingly effective communication systems, including their own magazines, the early 1940's was the time in which Australian Pentecostal churches forged their distinctive world-views, and established ministries loyal to those views. One of the issues which undoubtedly facilitated this, because of its germaneness to current events, was British-Israelism.

Before this, the evidence suggests that the issues which determined adherence to various perspectives may have been covers for purely personal loyalties. The scattered and isolated nature of assemblies certainly lends some support to this possibility.

In espousing British-Israelism, the James family had chosen an issue which, because of its immediate political implications, established its own loyalties, independent of their ministry, and did so not only for them, but for other Australian Pentecostals. It was also an issue which, at least by the mid-1940's, was discussed in other Australian churches. The Anglican Church, for example, had considerable interest in it.

This fact has a wider significance for James' later career, and to a lesser extent Australian Pentecostals generally. Nationalism, and a sacred political social role, forms a strong ideological strand of the recent history of the Anglican Church. British-Israelism, then, formed a bridge between Pentecostals, whose stress on ecstasy and enthusiasm had made them religious 'deviants', and the more mainstream religious. It was a bridge which, as I will later describe, had potential for recruitment purposes.

There is some parallel here with the way in which the Jo Hera movement as described by Barrett (1968) gained the affiliation of the Luo, because in contradistinction to the mission churches, it approved

polygamy. Although the polygamy issue had more immediate relevance to the daily life of the Luo people than British-Israelism for Pentecostals, it was the issue around which opposition to the established church crystallized, and formed a recruitment 'bridge' for both apostates and pagans.

The issue of local church autonomy appears to have been secondary to British-Israelism, in any case it was a Pentecostal dispute only. The newsletter published by James (*Echoes of Grace*) gave prominence to British-Israelism interpretations of world events, and its cover featured a Union Jack and an open Bible. The independence of assemblies may be one issue given impetus in the Australian arena by the momentum of British-Israelism.

That British-Israelism had its own momentum is demonstrated by the existence of a society called the British-Israel World Federation, which had branches around the world. It was the Adelaide branch of this group which in 1945 invited James to hold a series of meetings with them. My informants who attended James' first meetings in Adelaide, and were members of British-Israelism, claim that several people had contacted James individually about the possibility, and that this was in response to James Sr. writing and offering to send his son who had had a vision that he should start a "work" in Adelaide. It seems from my informants that several people had more than just a week's campaign in mind when they invited James to speak.

The British-Israel World Federation (Adelaide branch) was comprised of people with diverse Christian loyalties — Congregational, Methodist, Anglican and some Apostolic; that is, a few had already accepted the Pentecostal message.

James' meetings with the British-Israel World Federation were extended for several weeks, and informants say that a small prayer group was separately initiated during this period. In his final British-Israel World Federation meeting James (1946) reports in his newsletter: "I felt led to call on all those who confessed Christ and desired to dedicate their lives to God for fuller and more faithful service". Almost the entire congregation of about 150 people responded.

It is recorded that James intended to continue on to Perth, but was persuaded to stay and continue prayer meetings, which he did under the name of National Revival Crusade. They did not register as a church because they "wanted to be on the move with a message to the nation" (an informant). On these meetings, James reports in the same issue of the newsletter:

The NRC meetings commenced five weeks ago have been continued every Saturday night with great and increasing blessing and power. The positive message of the NRC has been arousing interest and commanding the attention of many. Above all, we rejoice that God is confirming the Word with signs following. When we see him healing, delivering from an irresistible appetite for tobacco, reviving his people and blessing all, then we know that He is anointing His Full Kingdom Gospel as preached by the NRC and Churches of God.

He goes on to report that from Sunday, November 4, 1945, Sunday night services are to be commenced.

This is always mentioned by members as the initial meeting of God's Army. About 30 people attended. Meanwhile, a Pastor Priest was being groomed to take over the assembly, because James wished to return to Melbourne and join Cooper's successful campaign. Priest, reported in the newsletter as having a "rich experience in Pentecostal ministry", had previously worked for the Pentecostal Church of Australia and the Apostolic Church.

It is said by informants that James introduced Pentecostal teachings gradually. Whether this aspect of his message was explicit by 4th November 1945 is not completely apparent. It would certainly seem so because of the projected pastorship of Priest. However, the first copies of the newsletter available to me, Nos. 43-6 (November 1945-February 1946) do not mention Spirit Baptism or the Spirit Gifts.

A number of the British-Israel World Federation members were most impressed with James' delivery, but were unable to accept aspects of the Pentecostal message. The majority who attended those first prayer meetings were of an orthodox church background, particularly Anglicans from British-Israel World Federation, for whom the religious justification of an imperial role had much appeal. Their strong commitment to the primary interest, British-Israelism, retained the attention of these people while the Pentecostal message was more subtly elaborated.

December 1945 saw James in Melbourne assisting Cooper with revival rallies, which were gaining attendances of 500-600. But in March he had to return to Adelaide because of the illness of Priest. In the light of his earlier vision, James regarded this as a 'sign' that he should base his activities in Adelaide.

Attendances are reported to have built up rapidly in the first few months. In the newsletter of May 1946 James reports approximate Sunday attendances since his return as "40, 60, 80, 90, 100, 130, 150". In the same newsletter is mentioned his continued cooperation with the British-Israel World Federation, where meetings of up to 200 were held. (This provides a demonstration of the continued drawing power of British-Israelism.) Informants say that James maintained an association with British-Israel World Federation until 1948, after which there was a

"cooling off". The same informant reports that those that remained with the British-Israel World Federation were largely those who "would not accept the charismatic" message. Because the National Revival Crusade held meetings every Sunday evening, regular attenders could not attend the fortnightly Sunday evening meetings of British-Israelism. Some alternated.

An Easter Convention was held in that first year (1946) under the combined auspices of the National Revival Crusade and British-Israel World Federation. The principal speakers were James and his father and brother from interstate. The titles of the addresses indicate that they were all around the theme of British-Israelism and "national repentance" (the God's Army historian). For each of the James', the ready availability of the ministry of other family members appears at this stage to have been an invaluable resource. It seems then, that until as late as 1948, the British-Israel World Federation, by virtue of James' access to their platform, may have remained a significant recruitment base for the National Revival Crusade, especially in view of the fact that the British-Israel World Federation adherents were well-known to many South Australian recruits.

Another pool of potential recruits was formed by the Pentecostal churches already existing in Adelaide. An informant claims that three Assemblies of God and one Apostolic church were already in existence in 1945. Several persons who became prominent members of the National Revival Crusade were drawn from this source, although such matters do not appear in the official history. The same informant confirms that the National Revival Crusade was a catalyst to the development of other Pentecostal churches in Adelaide, as I have suggested earlier.

The nationalistic, anti-communistic perspective legitimated by British-Israelism, may have increased its appeal to those who bitterly resented the strikes which Australia experienced in these post-war years and who saw industrial and political radicalism as sabotage. Great concern about the rising membership of the communist party is shown in the newsletter. The manner in which communism was regarded is indicated by the following extract from the newsletter for May 1946:

Revival of Nazism

Reports of attempted revivals of Nazism in Germany do not alarm us. We believe that a Communistic regime in Germany would constitute a far greater menace.

The rising popularity of the Australian Communist Party was viewed as confirmation of the British-Israelism position, that unless there was national repentance and return to God's law on the part of Commonwealth countries, they would be overwhelmed by the Forces of Evil. This perspective allowed members to view communists as people taken over by Satan, and therefore to disregard their claims for justice entirely.

British-Israelism and related political and prophetic issues were certainly the overwhelming concern in 1946, but a reading of the newsletter demonstrates other emergent teachings. One of them is, as I have mentioned, the matter of church government, in which area the National Revival Crusade were totally against centralised control. The newsletter of August 1946 points to several "Grave Dangers: of Pentecost.

Oversight has been snatched from the God-anointed servants by unanointed men who have made organizational ladders upon which to climb to prominence and power.

(This is a reference to Assemblies of God and the Apostolic Church.) This was said to have led to a loss of "the vital quickening and the convicting sense of reality of Christ's imminent return" (*ibid.*).

But more personal concerns are also demonstrated. These are with Spirit Baptism and its concomitant "speaking in tongues", and with healing, and the profound effects of salvation in the lives of converts. In each issue there are "testimonies" of miraculous cures, and lives snatched from total disaster by timely conversion. Their own description of their message was that it was "positive", and told of "Regeneration, Revival and Restoration for the Individual, the Church and the Nation, according to the Word of God".

These views were considered by the National Revival Crusade to be distinctive with respect to the general Pentecostal message of the late 1930's, which was based on a tradition of separation from the world. This manifested itself in the proscription on certain social activities, but also frequently justified personal attacks for such trivial matters as manner of dress. Calley (1965) has noted a similar concern with trivialities. The distinctiveness of the National Revival Crusade view was somewhat subtle, because a properly "victorious Christian" would, in any case, have no interest in worldly acquisitions and pleasures. This is manifest in an extract from the newsletter of August 1946: "Temptation victoriously met doubles our spiritual strength and equipment".

There is evidence that the inwardly-directed message differed from the publicly-directed appeal of the National Revival Crusade. Public anxiety over world events, local strikes, and power stoppages, was taken advantage of in the use of British-Israelism expositions. In September 1946 a meeting in the Adelaide Town Hall at which Cooper spoke on "Britain and Russia in Bible Prophecy" drew an estimated 800 people.

It is therefore not unexpected that while British-Israelism continued to demonstrate such drawing power at meetings, the newsletter, which was in effect an instrument of recruitment, should be dominated by that topic.

According to informants, while British-Israelism was often preached, James was concerned to deliver to them his message of "fullness of the Spirit". He did not however press Spirit baptism on them, but waited until they asked how to obtain that "fullness". There is only one report of a local Spirit baptism in the newsletters of that first year.

The prophet

Discussion to this point has been largely concerned with the historical context in which a new Pentecostal "work" crystallized in Adelaide in the mid-1940's. My data demonstrate that the origins of that work were based both in the activities of a small interested group (some members of the British-Israelism World Federation), and in the efforts, but also the personal qualities of James, the bearer of their prophetic message.

At this stage, I propose to draw aside from historical presentation and focus on James' activities in terms of a prophetic career. I have already stated that in my opinion Weber's (1964) concept of charismatic authority is a problem-seeking concept, and here it raises the question of the way in which authority as a non-forceful means of increasing chances of compliance, may be centred and retained in a person.

It is clear that in James' case, biographic structural and personal characteristics were important. Firstly, he had a history of itinerant 'apprenticeship', and the support of a close and interested family. Structural features are characterised by the tendency of Pentecostals to be on the look-out for great revivalists, an attitude fed by recurrent schisms. Finally, James' presentational and stylistic ways may be given some weight.

The ability of a leader to present himself as a possessor of qualities prized within that society are, I suggest, important, particularly for a group with ambitions of expanding, because the leader is often mediator between public and group. James' possession of physical qualities such as tallness and leanness, and other generally 'regular' qualities of appearance must be seen as favouring his career prospects.

I consider, however, control over non-genetic aspects of appearance such as facial expression and bearing, to be of greater significance. Here I mention qualities such as steadiness of gaze, smiling behavior and erectness.

The foregoing discussion has drawn marginally on interactionist studies of social presentation such as those of Goffman (1959). I will now consider some more exclusively social presentations and strategies in James' career, using some concepts from Goffman's (1959, 1972) work on social interaction. My purpose is to illuminate some aspects of the maintenance of charismatic reputation.

Just as repetition creates a potential crisis for religious enthusiasm by robbing actions of their inner significance, so full knowledge of a charismatic leader undermines assumptions on which the charisma may be constructed. Since charismatic character is always by definition extraordinary to the follower group, his involvement in mundane life must always have a profaning effect on their estimate of him. Some charismatic religious leaders have little problem here; they live in retreats, or among people, themselves removed from 'everyday' living. None of these is traditionally legitimate or possible in a Pentecostal group.

Goffman (1974) defines the problem generally in his study, 'Stigma'. Since there is always a gap between the virtual and actual self which is maintained in social life, and since information about the self is not only 'given', but also 'given off' (accidentally), social relations may be analysed as the management of information, and attempts to influence and repair reputation and identity.

What have been argued by Goffman to be universal properties of social situations, namely impression management and information control, may be seen to be particularly acute problems for the maintenance of charismatic reputation. This is particularly so when we remember that the authority-relation, in that it is ideal-typical, coexists in real life with at least one of the other two of Weber's ideal-types. James was defined charismatically by followers, who also supported his position as top office holder. In that these two different bases of authority are opposed to some extent, I suggest that this is another source of threat to the maintenance of charisma.

James' manner of dressing reflected a consciousness of his role. He, and to a lesser extent, his subordinate pastors attired themselves in smart business suits, and were always carefully groomed. The style gave an unambiguous identity to the wearer as part of the upper echelons of the assembly. James' style, in fact, was that of international revivalism (of which he was a part) in which sharp dressing, and other signs of affluence were beginning to represent spiritual virtue.

Photographs from the earliest days of God's Army always show James neatly suited. In those days too he adopted the habit of conspicuous menial work. With a portion of the small assembly drawn from people who were already Pentecostal, and whose attitudes to rank within religious groups were therefore ambiguous, he regularly performed tasks which were not required of ordinary members. He performed the chores of preparation for the meeting, and cleaned up when it was over, jobs which could readily have been delegated. That it was not, and that it entered the mythology about James in later years, indicates its role as neutralizing the negative aspects of his formal leadership claims, by inverting the

the hierarchical relation between leader and led. Since the means actors have of affecting definitions of themselves are limited, it is likely that attempts will be based on simple forms such as inversion.

A more complex example of the same type of inversion can be seen in his involvement of people low in the hierarchy, in highly esteemed activities. For example, a male informant who joined in the late 1940's as an alcoholic, and in what he described as an exceedingly low state, was after about six weeks' membership, invited to accompany James to Perth for a campaign. In addition to showing him around the city, James invited the informant to accompany him during visitation, making him feel both welcome and useful. This case is one of a series in which James drew members of low rank into central religious activities.

James, in addition to his personal attributes, undoubtedly possessed charisma in the Weberian sense of "complete personal devotion" (1964:359) to a recognised duty of the possessor. He sacrificed his personal life to his religious duty, living on less than the basic wage for several years. In the pursuit of religious excellence he underwent both physical and social privation. Fasting and praying into the night are two of the means by which he sought sanctification and communication with the deity. Such capacity to publicly invest large amounts of special time praying, studying and contemplating, also separate the totally committed from the office holder who is tied into a regular daily round.

In 1948 James married a girl from interstate. Wilson (1967:152) has described some of the difficulties facing a Pentecostal minister in the selection of a suitable mate, particularly the way in which a courtship within the assembly might affect the minister's 'wider affective

role'. At the same time, Wilson says, it is most important that the minister's wife be selected from within the sect. It was Elim headquarters' policy to relocate any minister who selected his fiancée from within his local church.

James' selection of a wife who had no other preexisting personal loyalties within his assembly can be seen to have had important consequences in his self-presentational policy. The prior existence of close personal relationships between wife and other assembly members might give those persons privileged access to aspects of the husband-wife relationship after marriage. This can readily be seen as undesirable. The management of a charismatic relationship to a group of people relies on the maintenance of personal distance, some of which can be afforded by norms of marital privacy.

Up until the time he married, James boarded with Priest and his family, in which he can be seen to have violated a rule which Wilson (*ibid.*) says Elim pastors follow, and that is not to become the property of any clique within the assembly. In that Priest was James' immediate lieutenant, the violation was not serious, but Priest had a number of children, and the sharing of family circumstances with them may have threatened his ability to maintain distance. Children can do this both by their action, and their unwitting talk of intimate matters.

A marital partnership presents different prospects in information control, especially where the partner has no previous obligations to the prospective audience. While a leader may himself convey 'vignettes' of his real religious self, its privations and ecstasys (and James did this both in his writing and in his relations with the assembly), such information is more appropriately and effectively conveyed by someone

else, if that person's relationship to the leader is such as to give the information credibility. This is especially true where privation is practiced in the pursuit of religious excellence, since for the leader himself to mention it might well be seen as a violation of qualities held essential to charismatic identity.

While I was studying God's Army, in the years before James' death, Mrs. James would sometimes speak of her husband at womens' prayer meetings. In many ways she spoke as a bystander (with a grandstand seat). She was not part of his spiritual life, and though she had her own, his was beyond her, and the rest of us. She conveyed this impression by speaking of the way in which she tried to persuade him into action of various sorts, or sometimes, of course, inaction, as when she tried to persuade him to rest rather than go jogging on the morning of his death. She could neither dissuade him from undertaking physical privation, nor persuade him to speak out and denounce those who spoke badly of him. She was not prepared to wait for God's justice as he was.

And it appears to be true that James maintained a social distance even from his wife (or perhaps especially). As a woman she was not capable of bearing the same spiritual responsibilities as a man, this he firmly believed, as did a majority of the assembly. But more importantly, he sacrificed what she must have seen as her own and family interests. This was done in a number of ways. He would always respond to requests for help. In the middle of the night he would leave her to go to pray for someone in distress, when the morning would probably have done as well. She also related that he sometimes had carried out deliverance ministry in their home, and that there had once been so much disturbance and violence from this that she had had to gather her baby in

her arms and take it outside under a tree until the deliverance was over. That was when she had resolved never to have another child, because she knew that a normal family life was not guaranteed.

All this behavior is justified in terms of what James perceived as his major duty, to God. I certainly do not wish to suggest that he deliberately undertook to alienate his wife, only that the fact that he did so had effects which enhanced his charismatic status. She, bound to him by love and duty, continued to 'present' him to the assembly, in prayer meetings and more informally. She was isolated both from him, and from the rest of the congregation, because her position forbade close friendships. Early in his Adelaide career, James decided that he could not accept informal social invitations, because to do so might eventually lead to accusations of favoritism. Thus even the normal couple-to-couple sociability was denied her, and she became what the biographers of religious innovators often document, a life companion who occupies only the shell of the role which family, marriage or long association gives. This 'excavated' role then becomes a public maker of the special status and charismatic reputation of the role other.

It is relevant to note here that Lebra (1976) writes of the Japanese Tensho movement that leaders may confer status on followers through association, but that a strategy which involves social withdrawal and formal hierarchy creation has less pitfalls. A Pentecostal 'work' is probably most vulnerable to disruption early in its formation when, even though the pastor provides strong direction, the enthusiasms of the assembly are untutored, and susceptible to other forcefully presented ideas. Indeed, as I will elaborate later, their original contact with Pentecostalism often leads them into the expectation of continuous 'spiritual' novelty.

Among some of the very earliest recruits of the National Revival Crusade were people who had been associated with other Pentecostal churches in Adelaide, and their change of loyalty is not surprising in view of the 'melting pot' conditions of Pentecostalism prior to the 1940's. But these people, because they were already possessors of Pentecostal knowledge, and had even been prominent in their previous assembly, represented a potential threat. Information on such matters does not appear in written records, and is not readily spoken of, but in addition to the important role delegated to Priest (who had come from the Apostolic Church), another Pentecostally-'adept' person, in a move that can be viewed as a type of co-optation (Selznik 1966), was quite quickly given the role of elder. Data from the newsletters show that this elder remained prominent in the assembly until 1949, and then all mention of him ceases. He left, taking a few people with him into what was probably a short-lived work. This was not the only case of a former Pentecostal disrupting the new assembly. These cases are explained by members as troubles stemming from matters of "personality", which rendered certain followers unreceptive to the Spiritual message. Another problem that was experienced with 'adepts' was that of over-enthusiasm. Two related factors appear to have been involved here. The first is that early Pentecostalism, in the tradition of the holiness sects to which it was historically heir (Wilson 1970), encouraged expressivity, and that this was still true of Assemblies of God and the Apostolic church. Second, it appears that James was already encouraging restraint in spiritual expression, as he certainly did later.

In the early days, while gatherings were relatively small, the career paths available to ambitious men within the group were limited.

To leave alone would necessitate their gaining recognition within another assembly before any move could be made. It is not surprising that several left first ensuring that they took a support group with them. As Weber stresses, the essential element of charisma is that it be recognised by a group of people. These are an important means by which the new prophet can be presented to a new audience, because they can interpret his vision to a particular audience, filling it out with appropriate biographical details which augment credibility.

Although, as Weber says, "no prophet has ever regarded his quality as dependent on the attitudes of the masses toward him" (1964: 360), it seems clear that their supportive presence goes some way towards sustaining the prophet's belief in his duty.

Breakaway prophets, in that they usually only wish to alter the original 'vision' to a minor extent, are attempting to draw a major fraction of their legitimacy from the original prophet. Their success, then, presumably depends heavily on how successfully they can make the 'vision' theirs, by such means as making their own amendments to be seen in the light of a natural succession to the original. I suggest that this provides a clue to the prophetic career which generally and particularly in James' case, seems to involve a restless search for successive but progressive redefinitions of the prophetic message. Where Weber (*ibid.*) stressed that a 'genuine' prophet had to announce a new obligation at the outset of his career, I suggest that such tension between a prophet and his nearest followers, creates a continual need to redefine the nature of obligations throughout his active life, as the lives both of Jesus and of the infamous Reverend Jones both indicate.

Consolidation

In 1948, the emphasis in teaching began to change. Spirituality produced its heady blooms. The newsletter¹ reports people baptised in the Holy Spirit in almost every issue. The other significant indicators are the reports of mid-week prayer and fellowship meetings.

Because of the experience of the Disciples on the original Pentecost, fire has always been a popular metaphor in God's Army (and other Pentecostal groups). Early in the year a Tuesday night "fellowship" was initiated which later was described as becoming a "burning bush". The newsletter of May 1948 reports under the heading of "Fire Falls in Adelaide" that they have started half-day prayer rallies, which begin at 2 p.m. and continue until the 'seekers'² meeting in the evening which usually takes place between 8-10 p.m. Eight to fifteen people are reported as attending during the afternoon, but the number grows after work. A "recent drought of the Holy Spirit has been broken by nine baptisms."

In the same issue a regular vestry meeting, one and one-half hours before the Sunday evening service is mentioned, because again several received Spirit baptism. Pentecostal enthusiasm was under way, and events are reported with a new extravagance of expression. Pastor Priest, in the 1948 anniversary issue of the newsletter, says:

Only the blessing of God could have brought about the very real visible as well as increased spiritual progression manifested in numbers of precious souls saved, scores baptised in water and, again, scores

¹It is further indication of a change in orientation that the newsletter changed its name and cover during this year.

²Those seeking the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

baptised in the Holy Spirit. Many have been the testimonies to Divine Healing as the Word of God has been fulfilled, prayer called for, hands laid on and prayer offered.

The same article reports that four meetings are held during the week in addition to those on the "Lord's day". In May 1949 the newsletter reported the holding of

a regular "Night Watch" prayer rally every week... These meetings commence at 10 p.m. Fridays, following the Youth Revival Crusade meeting, and continue into the early morning hours of Saturday.

On one occasion this "sacrificial prayer" continued until 6.30 a.m., but that mattered little because it "brought results".

Both earlier and later than 1949, newsletter descriptions of meetings are rare, and informants' memory of such information is vague. I will quote a description from 1949, which shows evidence of further development in the Pentecostal style of expression:

On Thursday night, 9th, the Pastor continued the series on Hebrews and there were mighty movings of the Spirit, and rich and deep messages in tongues, interpretation and prophecy at the close of the address. There were heart-searchings and tears flowing, and the power of God was felt in a real manner.

The atmosphere that was developing in the National Revival Crusade was such as to encourage members deeper and deeper into demonstrations of spirituality. This is exactly the atmosphere which nourishes the growth of "personalities" (as described earlier), because once a norm of spiritual expressivity is established, in that the behavior represents the Spirit, the imposition of appropriate limits is difficult. Because it was around 1949 that Duguid's name ceases to be mentioned, I assume that it was in this year that he experienced his "personality" trouble, and left the National Revival Crusade "fellowship".

The norm of spiritual expressivity which had developed rapidly had done so without corresponding behavioral norms, for the actual performance of prayer and worship. It was therefore possible for members to be expressive in innovatory ways, which presented the possibility that they might preempt the leader's capacity to develop the religious education of his flock in his own style. Members previously affiliated with other Pentecostal churches, as Duguid had been, and therefore more sophisticated in Pentecostal ways, can be seen as particularly dangerous in this respect.

Simmel (1968) suggests that there are some groups, including religious ones, in which "structures" limit competition between individuals, by producing instead efforts directed in parallel, toward a common goal. This argument is appropriate for an organization pragmatically directed toward "works" or recruitment, but expressive efforts tending towards burgeoning spirituality is likely to bring about another situation described by Simmel. This is "the jealous passion to surpass others in the attainment of the highest values" (1968:70). It is an atmosphere which "intensifies the accomplishment of obedience" (*ibid.*), leading to the excessive production of devotion, prayer, asceticism and money-giving. Doing the activity is its own reward, Simmel says, but this is presumably only so long as one's actions match or exceed those of others. Such an atmosphere seems likely to generate a search for new forms of expression, to retain the expected sense of fulfillment. Religious expression, even of obedience, might then spill over into schism.

The escalation of enthusiasm through which the National Revival Crusade passed in the late 1940's was partly the result of the millenarian

facet of British-Israelism. The second Advent of Christ was expected daily, because the course of world events were, by the British-Israelism interpretation, leading to a final bloody close. It was common amongst members to anticipate this in conversation, because one informant can remember admiring a friend's fruit tree, but they both agreed that they would not see it bear fruit.

The urgency generated by this perspective on events, exacerbated by the poor reception of Pentecostals at that time, seems to have channeled activity into displays of fervour.

So the message of national repentance actually facilitated considerably the second stage in God's Army development, that of individual repentance, or salvation, which was the theme developed and extended during later development of God's Army.

Constant referrals to British-Israelism interpretations had the effect of immersing members in world events, and providing them with the evidence that they were in the centre of action. That it legitimated excitement, urgency and involvement, probably was the perspective's strongest source of appeal, and is congruent with an argument put forward by Wilson (1961). This suggests that the attrition suffered by Pentecostal sects is due in part to their inability to maintain over time the atmosphere of excitement of the revival rallies in which the members committed themselves.

I am aware that this, as an historical account, lacks a number of organizational details. Many of these aspects are ignored by the God's Army historian, except in a piecemeal way. There is no written account of the means by which officebearers were chosen, salaries were allotted, etc., and members themselves are very vague on those details. Initially

James met meeting expenses, and lived as best he could from the collection. No indication of when his stipend was formalized is given.

Priest was a pastor *ab initio* but unpaid, and informants say Duguid was an elder, though they differ on how he came to hold the office; whether by election, or selection by James. James' policy, stated to me in an interview, was that he did not believe that it was 'logical' to consult a membership which includes young and inexperienced people, on a leadership decision. His usual method for deciding such matters was to "get the people to do the thing before you officially appoint them". The method he used to choose the first elders was to put the names of the prospective office bearers before the congregation, who then signified by a show of hands, whether or not they approved that particular appointment.

A "part-time paid ministry" was found necessary in mid-1952 after the extension of assembly activities both into weekly radio broadcasts and into the establishment of a "work" at Murray Bridge. The post went to an elder within the assembly. This, in effect, marks the opening up of full career paths within God's Army for James' lieutenants.

Of attendance it is written in August 1952:

The Sunday afternoon Communion Service now exceeds the 100 mark, with up to 130 in the evening meeting and accommodation strained almost to the limit.

Sunday evening attendance was recorded at over 100 in 1948, and is down to 80 in 1949, the year in which Duguid defected.

During those initial years, some informants say that joint social activities were arranged with other Adelaide Pentecostal churches, and this is confirmed by reports in the newsletter; showing that the ideological differences that they mutually maintained were not

insurmountable. However, relations with the mainstream churches generally remained poor with the exception of some individual Anglicans who continued to sympathise with the British-Israelism perspective.

Revelation

James' autobiographical accounts describe 1949³ as the year in which, despite the successes of the previous year, he became depressed about his own abilities to assist people. This dissatisfaction, by his own report, led him into extended periods of fasting and prayer, during which he sought an answer to his self-perceived inability to deal with certain problems.

This "crisis", as he often described it, led one night to several hours of prayer, in the early morning (all of which is recorded by the God's Army historian), at the end of which James received a "revelation" which he described in the following manner:

It seemed as though the words came from the risen and enthroned Christ himself. I found myself repeating them over and over. My friend seemed merely to share the "mercy drops" but he knew that the Spirit of the Lord was mightily present. To me it seemed that the heavens had rolled apart and that I had gained an entirely new concept of the authority of the risen and glorified Christ (James n.d.).

This incident constituted the first of a series of crises between 1949-55 undergone by James, out of which emerged a transformation of his ministry, and an examination of the objectives of God's Army. It was in effect the manufacture, or rather the emergence into prominence of ideologies more suitable than British-Israelism and introverted spirituality, to the changing social conditions. The concept was "the authority of Christ and the possibility of personal victorious living" (God's Army historian 1973) which led out into a more definite expectation

³This is the year in which reported average attendances dropped.

of healing by prayer, and also of deliverance from "Satanic bondage". Beside the emphasis of the "positive message" of Christianity, that is, the expiation of sin which Christ's death gave Christians, making guilt unnecessary in principle, the practical effects of this "revelation" were the increased interest in healing and deliverance ministry within God's Army.

James' innovative moves, coming at a time in which defections were occurring, and James could be seen as under threat, has interesting parallels with the career of Hubbard of the Scientology movement, described by Wallis (1974). When Hubbard found himself constrained by other members of the leadership, he moved out and proclaimed a new 'transcendental genesis' which he called the 'Science of Certainty'. By this means, according to Wallis, he reestablished a following, amongst whom he was able to promote a much more rigorous system of control.

Although it is claimed and widely believed that James was the sole receiver of this divine knowledge, Cooper⁴ revealed that following the war, his own poor physical and mental condition led him in the late 1940's into a stronger interest in divine healing. Cooper also says that the healing message led to a resurgence of interest in Pentecostalism, such as had not been seen since the days of Aimee Semple McPherson (the American woman evangelist who toured Australia in 1922).

Deliverance⁵ ministry does not come into any prominence in the newsletter until 1952, which was the year after James experienced his second "revelation", of the authority of Christ, which showed him the

⁴Personal communication 1978.

⁵The God's Army term for exorcism, the casting out of evil spirits.

contract-like nature of the relation between Christians and Christ, as laid out in the Bible.

The newsletter of October 1952 mentions "Remarkable Deliverances" in Adelaide, and says that several people have been delivered from "spiritual bondage, such as fear, jealousy, resentment, frustration, lying". "In some cases it involved the casting out of evil spirits." The same issue mentions a steady growth in numbers.

The following issue (November 1952) contains a section on Adelaide meetings, which, both because of the language it uses, and the picture it conveys, I will quote in full.

Deep conviction in Adelaide meetings

We are praising God for the deep Spirit of conviction moving upon so many in the Adelaide Assembly of the National Revival Crusade. Many are coming into a splendid experience of release from the bondage of unconfessed sin and are putting right matters involving other people. The tide of revival blessing is running very deep, and as a result a lot of folk are coming into a place of blessing and power in their lives and many new ones are coming into the voice gifts of tongues, interpretation and prophecy. The pattern for cleansing and deliverance in Adelaide has been according to the plain statement of God's Word.

(1) All known sin is to be named and confessed specifically and cleansed in accordance with 1 John 1:9. (2) "Faults", i.e. sins affecting or involving other people — must be confessed to those concerned in accordance with James 5:16. (3) When one is bound by a sin which cannot be overcome by confessions and walking in the Spirit, then the ministry of deliverance is required to set the person free from the spirit of bondage possessing or oppressing him (Mark 16:17). Much blessing has rested on this simple and balanced presentation of fundamental revival truth. To Him be all the glory!

This didactic description presages a statement in the newsletter of the following month, in which James makes apparent his disapproval of certain "unscriptural" deliverance practices taking place in Victoria.

The perpetrators of these excesses are unnamed, but several facts serve to show that Cooper, James' friend and collaborator of eleven years, was one of them. Firstly, the God's Army historian reports that while the name National Revival Crusade continued to be used by Cooper in Melbourne, the Adelaide "work" was renamed at this time the Commonwealth Revival Crusade. Secondly, Cooper receives no further mention in the newsletter. Thirdly, I was told that a rift had occurred between James and Cooper quite early in the history of God's Army, and independently it was thought that the differences concerned 'bizarre' deliverance practices. Such activities as "coughing" evil spirits into paper bags were mentioned.

James speaks of the claim that "sanctification" may be achieved by undergoing a series of "deliverances", of which one "brother" claimed to have had 55. Such "deliverances" were said to take place through the mouth, accompanied by some physical manifestation, such as coughing, gasps and sighs, and the "things" brought forth were expected to name themselves.⁶

However, James did not wish to elaborate further on the "fantastic, fanatical and extravagant claims of this dangerous doctrine" (December 1952), and he firmly denounced all adherents, both leaders and congregations, and affirmed the "uncompromising stand" of the National Revival Crusade against such "false doctrine". "Sanctification", he wrote, is achieved by true faith in the "truth of God's Word". James was threatened both by what he condemned as an "unscriptural" practice, and the innovative character of the methods used. In view of the mixed composition of his audience and his expressed desire to see the "work"

⁶The evils brought forth ranged from madness, unclean thoughts, bragging, spiritual impurity to anxiety and teasing children.

grow, he was unlikely to favour the growth of practices which outsiders to Pentecostalism could label as 'typical' Pentecostal extravagance. The acceptance of his position can be seen in the fact that it is now common for God's Army members to distance themselves from emotionalism and 'excess' by pointing to the fact that "unbalanced" people are attracted to their religion. James' stand on this occasion, and subsequent ones in the later history of God's Army, gave him over the years a reputation among Pentecostals of being conservative.

His 'conservatism' actually appears to have consisted in resistance to ideas imported into his assembly by persons other than himself, that is, unless his assent had been sought and gained. Thus later on the particular "ministries" of some members for healing, counselling, young peoples' activities, administrative innovation, etc., were recognised and encouraged, but patronage was necessary.

The basic doctrine of Pentecostalism gives a highly self-conscious value to the production of new "truths", and James continually aligned his leadership role with this value (though he never acknowledged the fact that his "revelations" were often extensions of practices previously introduced in America). It seems that ultimately the acceptance or rejection of any particular new practices and doctrines may be less important than the generation of perceived novelty and change which promotes a collective identity. The discussion and speculation based on progressive revelations which are raised at such times, allows members to reexamine their moral priorities from new perspectives. This takes place despite the fact that few of the ordinary members would feel competent to take the responsibility of actually arbitrating the matter. It is not, however, from any sense of inability that they feel

this, because Pentecostals are somewhat derisive of what they call "book learning", but it is because they usually see another or some others, as more capable of interpreting the will of God than themselves. This however is by virtue of divine "gift", not ability. Thus the ability to control expressive activity rather than the capacity to demonstrate theological sophistication is the key resource in Pentecostal politics, although the latter may be an important means to the former.

The ideology itself lends instability, because unlike knowledge-based ability, which is usually seen as acquired by a person permanently, "gifts" of God may be confirmed and removed by the Divinity and are not subject to human rationality. So while an ordinary member may not himself feel competent to make judgements in a number of matters, the person in whom he sees that responsibility vested can change. His loyalties are not guaranteed by ideology, and this is one of the reasons that charisma remains important in Pentecost. Continued demonstration of charisma by the leader is the sign of God's continuing favour.

Each new fashion in spirituality, therefore, presents the possibility that it is divinely inspired, particularly if it is known to stem from a person well used by God, such as Cooper would be seen to have been. It is only in hindsight then that members see clearly the proper path, and this may be partially responsible for their reluctance to discuss such matters, even 20 years later. The issue which actually involved them at the time, and gave reality to their desire to be in touch with the latest moves of God, was a red herring. The continued viability of God's Army as an assembly of people with some common experience of God depends as much on the spiritual innovations it rejects, as the ones it accepts. The issues are eventually forgotten, or actively suppressed, but

the process has focused their attention, and raised the question of their group boundaries. At least implicitly the question of the continued membership of some emerges; expulsion, however is rare. The socially integrative function of such incidents predominates,⁷ as within the process the leader finds the opportunity to reestablish his personal or embodied right to adjudicate.

The exercise of charisma by a leader under threat of extraneous innovation seems to occur in several modes.

James' reaction to Cooper's notion of "sanctification" was largely legalistic. He appealed to the Bible (which book is in itself charismatic to Pentecostals), and claimed his rival's ignorance of specific teachings of that book, and he demonstrated it with suitable extracts. He coupled this charge with outright claims of his own "uncompromising stance" on the "Word of God", and his utter rejection of "fanaticism". That is, he firmly laid claim to justice and truth, in most unequivocal language, as the following passage indicates graphically.

However, we have no desire to dwell upon the fantastic, fanatical and extravagant claims of this dangerous doctrine. We believe the above to be a fair and honest, even if conservative statement on the teaching and claims of those caught up in this error. Further, we take this opportunity of re-affirming the unyielding and uncompromising stand of the National Revival Crusade in Australia against this false doctrine and its complete dissociation from all (leaders and congregations) who accept or condone it. We stand foursquare on the Word of God and firmly against fanaticism in any form whatsoever (James, December 1952).

⁷Malcolm Calley (1965) has pointed to the integrative function of 'social conflict' among West African Pentecostals in London. He sees parallels, as do I, with the conflict processes among the Swat Pathans described by Barth (1959) and the gossip process analysed by Gluckman (1963).

James thus presented most forcefully the manner in which his criticisms should be viewed, placing the errants far from his sympathy, laying claim to truth by the force of his reaction, showing that his organization was not subject to the arbitrary whims of spirituality. On this occasion he laid claim to conservatism in the interests of truth, whereas at other times he has rejected that image, to follow new "leadings" of the Spirit.

More recently, there was an attempt at the congregational level to introduce "dancing in the Spirit", which practice has become popular among some Adelaide Pentecostals, including at least one group affiliated and owing its origin to God's Army. For a time James resisted open mention of the pressures exerted by the would-be innovators, but eventually, during a communion service (which fewer outsiders attend) he announced God's Army's rejection of such manifestations of spirituality. His appeal this time was to stability; that to allow the assembly to be swept by such a fashion paves the way for others, and since such issues are potentially divisive they are better rejected from the outset. All this was said in such a manner that it was understood that the wisdom of years was instilled in his remarks. With a world-weary expression he told of the assemblies that he had seen rise up and fall apart over minor issues such as this, and he pointed to the record of his own assembly which he had never allowed to be "swept away" by fads.

The other method which I observed James use to define a practice as undesirable was ridicule. An instance of this occurred following the visit of an American evangelist. The man concerned was a powerful and popular preacher, with a recognised healing ministry. The problem was that he expected his clients to fall down under the power of God as he

touched them. The God's Army position on such matters is that faith is demonstrated in believing, not in showy action, and indeed they are concerned to avoid emotional demonstrations on such occasions (which is part of their continuous concern for their public presentation).

James did not make his move until the visitor had departed, and then, with much regret he denounced the man's faults. "Why don't you fall down when I touch you?" "You can't be healed without being laid flat you know", he mimicked. "Perhaps you need a little push." The assembly found this immensely amusing, and here, as on other occasions when James joked, the laughter was loud and long. He refuted the man, but not the message, which, he said, he recognised as unequivocally inspired. However, constant vigilance was required by men in such powerful positions, with worldwide ministries, that they not be led astray (by the Devil and his agents).

These later two examples of repelling invasion show a style markedly different from the earlier one, and in fact occurred towards the end of James' career, when the social climate both within and outside the assembly had vastly changed. Appeals to stability as inherently desirable, and the use of ridicule were weapons which relied on his solidly constructed reputation in the leader-prophet role.

In 1952 Pentecostal ideologies were not firmly established, and neither were their leaders, whose careers depended to a certain extent on how persuasively they presented doctrines, old and new. A new doctrine was in fact a new opportunity to establish a claim to leadership. The appeal of a ministry under threat then had to be to something beyond with intrinsic authority to followers. The Bible is the only such object among Pentecostals (though in some sects the vision of the original

prophet is used, e.g. Mormons, while among mediums a spirit may provide legitimation [Garbett 1979]). Success or failure lay in the preacher's facility in making that absolute authority his.

The more recent threats James reported in terms of his already longstanding ministry (in an assumption of well-established charisma), and did not rely heavily on outside legalistic support. Neither of those two innovations constituted a real threat to assembly stability, as the earlier deliverance practices may have, but this I see as being because the assembly had a history, and thereby implied direction, rather than because the later two practices were less potentially appealing.

I wish to reemphasise the main point in the foregoing discussion, which was, that for God's Army and possibly many Pentecostal groups, innovation is important because it enables members to feel that they are abreast of "moves of the Spirit". It is ultimately less important whether particular doctrines and practices are accepted or rejected, because either way a proficient leader may interpret the experiences to the maximum benefit of his relation with the assembly. Actually attaining this reinterpreted role I consider to be the essence of charismatic rule over time, that is viewed as a career in the sociological sense. The achievement, however, is problematic. The range of methods available to a Pentecostal leader are likely to be considerably reduced by the social characteristics of his audience. The alternative of inaction, however, leads to routinization of his prophecy or charismatic succession.

The mid-1950's mark the start of a rapid rise in attendance at God's Army. In 1954 the average attendance was about 130 (very close to what it had been in 1948). By 1955 it had risen to 220. Ten years

later, in 1965, 300-400 were attending regularly, and in 1975 about 600 attended.

James' biographical writings suggest that he initiated the God's Army healing ministry after a period of intensive prayer, in which he "sought God" because of his increasing awareness of health needs both inside and outside God's Army. This period of prayer James referred to as the first of a series of "crises in his ministry", all brought about by his awareness of "needs".

There was a further "revelation" in 1951, as I have already mentioned, and again in 1953, James was "led" to spend many hours in prayer. This time he was given a greater appreciation of the power of faith in God's Word. The major force of this "revelation", informants told me, was again in the field of healing.

There is some evidence of increased concern with healing in the newsletter, though the message is muted in terms of a higher quality of life rather than cure of specific diseases. Thus one of the 1953 newsletters contains an article titled "The Secret of Dynamic Energy". The text of this article is directed towards reconciling readers to the loads that they have to carry:

Just as the fleetest yacht with her immense spread of sail has to carry corresponding ballast to hold her in equilibrium, so our lives are stayed by the weight of trial.

Everyday tribulations are part of God's preparation, and are precisely calculated by Him to advance the bearer's spiritual capabilities. Such teachings may be viewed as essentially stoical, going some way towards the psychic neutralization of problems including physical ones. However, they also carry the message that increased efficacy and well-being are the result of correct Christian practice.

The increase in numbers experienced by God's Army soon after the introduction of the healing and quality of life themes was part of a broader global pattern. In the 1950's in America a post-war revival occurred in which healing was a major focus. In 1950 William Freeman published a list of four steps to healing (Horrell 1975) which announced: (1) Know that Jesus had atoned for them; (2) It is God's will to heal; (3) Sickness is the Devil's oppression; (4) Set the time of your deliverance from the sickness. The implications of these instructions have some similarity with James' teachings of faith and positive living (that is, living an atoned life, unoppressed by past sins). The base to which enthusiastic Christianity was appealing was no longer to the economically and socially oppressed as it was in the early part of the century (Wilson 1970), but to those who felt, because of physical and personal problems, disenfranchised from a full and satisfactory life experience to which they felt entitled.

The new message, based on healing, was only possible with a membership which was much more representative of the social structure generally, and especially of the lower middle class. In Australia, and with regard to God's Army, it seems reasonable to infer (I have no direct evidence) that James' close observation of the American revival and its rhetoric, influenced his own emphasis on healing. By 1951, when James' healing ministry was coming into its own, a number of social structural changes were in progress in Australia, which resulted in progressive status differentiation in the occupational structure. This produced a rapid growth in the 'intermediate strata' of the class structure (Wild 1978), a process which can be seen as facilitating individually anomic situations.

The last of James' crises occurred in 1955. Again, driven by his consciousness of the unattended needs of people, he was impelled to fast and pray over a long period. Meals were missed, sleep lost, and important work neglected. "The Lord was preparing me to receive another key of authority" (God's Army historian 1973). During those days that James spent alone in his study the "eternal truths of the Word of God... were unfolded", and the result was a new emphasis on deliverance ministry. James wrote of this experience:

Every God-called minister must sooner or later come to a time when he will be challenged with the need for equipment from on high to fulfill his commission and fulfill the purpose of God in his ministry. Faced with this challenge he will either harden his heart, and close his ears to the cries of the bound, or he will seek from the Lord the supernatural ability that he needs to reproduce the ministry of Christ and set the captives free (James n.d.:33).

Many people from both inside and outside God's Army had approached him with problems with which he could not adequately deal, many of these with physical manifestations. The new emphasis on deliverance ministry accomplished several things. Firstly, as far as the sufferers were concerned it conceptualized the agency of trouble as largely outside their control, i.e. in the invasion of evil spirits, and secondly, it relocated the responsibility of cure with the minister. This distinguished it from the other three revelations which can be seen as emphasising the efficacy of individual faith, thereby placing the burden on the shoulders of the sufferer.

The new emphasis on deliverance separated God's Army from most other Pentecostal groups, particularly Assemblies of God, and also resulted in adverse publicity in a wider field.⁸ We must assume also

⁸Informants told me that derisory articles appeared in national magazines.

that it was the subject of considerable discussion inside the assembly. However, many people from other religious denominations came to God's Army seeking help. For a short while some local Anglican priests practiced deliverance in the style advocated by James, but were stopped by the church hierarchy (the Church of England had previously practiced exorcism until stopped by decree in 1552). From 1951 on James had a weekly radio program, in which he expounded views on disease and health. This lasted until 1959, when, after a discussion on the subject of deliverance with a Lutheran minister, the program was taken off the air.

The evidence suggests that between 1949 and 1955 interest in the Holy Spirit, and subsequently the faith-positive-living-healing message had led to a position where there was increasing utilization of their spiritual independence by members. The new message, and the means by which it was obtained (prolonged prayer and privation) reestablished the charisma of James, and located control of the new ministry firmly in him. Members were alerted to the insidious ways of the Devil and his agents who could use even Christians to achieve their ends. This aspect of the new teaching represented a personalized version of the old British-Israelism theme which saw Satan working through the agency of various world powers, particularly Russia (or communism) and the Papacy. As the Devil could be seen under British-Israelism directing political movements, he could now be seen in individual actions. The new weapon was double-edged, however, because while it allowed the denunciation of individuals, it also legitimated disclaimers of responsibility. In fact, the most common use while I was observing God's Army was to denounce prominent outsiders (politicians, pop-stars), and amongst members to disavow responsibility for past actions.

In addition to the increase in membership arising out of the success of the healing and deliverance ministries, the mid-1950's saw the first purchase of property by God's Army, a large suburban home which served as manse and deliverance centre. This was followed three years later in 1958 by the purchase of a city property as a permanent meeting place. The stabilizing consequences of property acquisition on religious movements is well recognised, as is the fact that it also represents an opening of career paths. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say that large commitments of money to property are only made when there is some strong evidence of a stabilizing congregation. Then both the reliable commitment of a certain population, coupled with the property open new channels of involvement.

However, the purchase of the second property necessitated the drawing up of a constitution in order to meet legal requirements. The constitution was to cover all the God's Army assemblies⁹ both in South Australia and interstate which had existed heretofore as a loose association. Two of the Victorian assemblies were not willing to become part of a formal association. These were two assemblies founded in the early 1950's by two relatively new converts, Longfield and Hollins, both of whom had experienced marked success especially in healing ministry. They had, however, a strong objection to the deliverance ministry practiced by James, and the official incorporation of God's Army triggered their dissociation. Additionally, some of their own teachings had begun to differ from those of James', specifically that failure to undergo baptism,

⁹Campaigns of James, and the work of Cooper had resulted in several "works" in Victoria and Western Australia, and country "outreaches" had begun in South Australia.

or breaking of fellowship meant forfeiting salvation.¹⁰ They were unwilling to forfeit their liberty to preach this, and since their dissociation, have gone further to claim that both water baptism and Spirit baptism are essential for salvation. These defections may be seen as tending towards a more exclusive delineation of the assembly, while James consistently followed an inclusive line after the mid-1950's.

The continued viability of the breakaway group which now has a branch in Adelaide, is interesting in the light of Wilson's (1967) suggestion about the continued vigour of schismatic bodies while the parent group remains viable.

The acquisition of property had thus led directly to schism, and it seems that just as property presents career openings, it enlarges the potential basis of dispute. For Longfield and Hollins it provided an issue that enabled them to make a stand against James, that is to deny his charisma and leadership at a time in which they were about to establish their own on other grounds. In as far as property may be seen by different members to symbolise different possibilities and conjunctions, it can be used to legitimate actions in this way. In this regard Calley (1965) notes the tendency for disagreement within Pentecostal assemblies to become more "acrimonious" following the acquisition of property. He also remarks on members' increasing concern with their relationship to society, and with respect to God's Army this may be seen to have been stimulated by fulfillment of the legal requirements of acquisition of property by cooperation.

¹⁰James preached salvation by repentance and faith, which is the generally acceptable Pentecostal formula.

A number of career paths appear to have opened up in the mid-1950's, some by the general interest in establishing new "works" around the Adelaide area, and others from the rapidly expanding healing and deliverance ministry, which made great demands on James.

In 1957 a healing occurred which, according to one informant, "really made" James: a young Greek man was cured of tuberculosis. When he first attended, Peter had already had six months of unsuccessful medical treatment. According to a person who was present, the young man attended a Sunday night meeting looking extremely ill. At the end of the meeting he went forward with the others seeking prayer. As he was prayed over, he fell to the ground "under the power of God", his glasses were thrown off and "have not been found to this day". For 20 minutes he lay still, and when he was able to rise, he was completely healed, including his defective eyesight. That cure may have achieved paramount fame at the time because medical validation enabled God's Army to publicise the healing widely.

For my informant, Ralph, that event was critical in dispelling his remaining doubts. He had initially arrived at God's Army as a 'seeker' who had dabbled with mainstream churches, but in God's Army he said he found a personal concern, and he was "overcome" by the preaching of James, which he felt to be "plain and clear". He was also struck by James' personal attributes, particularly the way he "gave his life for people". He would, for instance, visit a person four or five times in one day, should they require it. The demand for personal attention had already become so great that another full-time ministry was created in 1955.

In the 20 years or so since he contacted God's Army, Ralph had been healed by God eleven times himself, from three coronaries, tuberculosis, drowning and electrocution, among other things. It is not surprising that such an 'adept' as this should find himself to possess a healing ministry.

Ralph's ministry was originally legitimated outside the assembly. Soon after joining he started seeking out the sick by door-knocking, and says he was often "led" to homes in which there were sick people. Then on Sunday evening he would line up for prayers in the assembly with others who were seeking their own healing. Many 'miracles' of healing occurred, but the work involved was too great and James eventually suggested that Ralph pray for them himself. To legitimate his activities, Ralph became a collector for the tuberculosis association, and walked the streets in search of people needing prayer. Many of those he cured subsequently became members of God's Army, he said.

The foundation of Ralph's healing ministry is interesting because it occurred just after James' own control had been threatened by a ministry brought in in 1956 while James was on an evangelistic tour. The person responsible was James' brother, who along with his father had always maintained that James was too conservative in his approach to pastorship. This was the stage when James had just received his latest "revelation" on deliverance ministry, and it appears that his brother was less conservative in his approach to deliverance than James himself, and again physical manifestations of demons were expected in meetings (my information indicates that the problem was similar to that between James and Cooper). The assembly was split in its opinion of such practices, many people became very fond of James' brother, who used humour and a friendly style to promote his standing in the assembly.

Since healing powers are an important legitimator of charisma within God's Army, James' encouragement of a man already in his 60's, and therefore with little prospect of leadership, becomes understandable, especially since James remained aware of the possibility of schism throughout his life.

In Ralph's account, during his first year of membership, two relatives of his were found to have cancer, and in both cases arrangement had been made for surgery. Ralph asked James if he could pray for God to guide the surgeon's hands, which was not a practice that God's Army had previously considered. Both operations were successful, and it thereafter became common practice to work 'in conjunction' with the medical profession. Ralph claims to work with doctors frequently, and to be allowed into all the Adelaide hospitals. He is, he said, sometimes called in by doctors, but did not name them.

Twenty years later Ralph's healing ministry is recognised as second only to James', and he has refused several offers of pastorship from outside the Adelaide assembly. He works with an elderly woman who also has a recognised healing ministry. Here again a healing gift is found in a person who, because of her sex, is precluded from all God's Army offices of a spiritual nature, a safe repository for a specific charismatic gift. If charismatic gifts are encouraged among members, which by and large they are not (and neither are they sought), then it will be best if they occur among particular social categories that are unlikely to generalize such gifts into spiritual careers. Also, while such gifts are pursued under James' oversight, his is the career which benefits.

Ralph's ministry was legitimated outside God's Army, and later reimported, and so was that of Des Clark, who first attended in 1950-1 at about the age of 17. Clark had been a committed Methodist, and for a time attended his Methodist church and God's Army, until he was virtually expelled from Methodist fellowship. He had intended to enter the Methodist ministry, and held a local preacher's certificate from them.

Clark attended God's Army's School of Evangelism held at Sunrise House, in evening classes for two nights per week. In the early days too, James used to take the young men out into the park and talk to them. But Clark was already keen "to serve the Lord", and in about 1954 he obtained James' consent to holding weeknight meetings in his own home.

By that time his family had become less suspicious of God's Army and some were attending. His first home meetings were made up largely of his own relatives and some local Methodist friends. Those people must have provided good support, because about 18 months later the meetings had grown to 30-odd, and the group started to advertise locally by leafleting. They had also moved into a local scout hall for meetings.

In 1956 Clark formed a local assembly with official approval from James, but no financial support.¹¹ He had no doctrinal disagreements with James, and had in fact received very close training under him. It was James' and the elders' decision to grant him pastorship. He suggested that James' ministry was sufficiently strong to drown developing ministries in that assembly.

¹¹ Presumably James maintained that if Clark's ministry were viable then financial support would be forthcoming from members.

So within about five years, Clark, a man who entered God's Army with already strong career drives, was able to carve a career for himself, by aligning himself with James' vision, and becoming one of the "harvesters" of that vision. His career has continued in God's Army assemblies in South Australia and New Zealand, and he is now a popular figure amongst Adelaide assembly members.

It was while Clark was proving his ministry in suburban Adelaide that the Adelaide assembly became unmanageably large and another full-time pastorship was created. The man chosen had first been involved in God's Army in 1947 and had married the daughter of a foundation member. He was made a part-time pastor in Adelaide in 1952 in response to increasing demands of membership, but appears to have gone interstate in 1954 to look after two other works for some months.¹² He returned to full-time ministry in Adelaide in 1955. According to Clark, the decision to appoint Bothwick was made by James in conjunction with his elders.

The ambition, and career aspirations of other men within the assembly must have become increasingly apparent to James, and the disturbance caused by his brother in 1956 made evident the fact that a significant number of members could be unwittingly cajoled into supporting extravagant doctrine and practice. In 1957, by developing a concept of "team work" he undertook the control of influential men within the assembly, since when, he claimed in an interview, there had been no problem with "splits".

Here again, as in 1949, we observe innovation following a threat to leadership, as James reaffirms with his followers the divine legitimacy of his leadership.

¹²He had therefore demonstrated his 'deployability' (Lofland 1966).

Under the team work concept, there is no individualistic leadership in any area, and from my observations this applies as much to the committees of ordinary members who run the various groups as to the pastors and elders. Pastors also spend much time together discussing ideas; in addition to formal meetings they have a weekly lunchtime informal meeting, and approximately every two months they spend a whole day together for "freewheeling discussion". The elders and pastors, together named the "Oversight", meet together every month for a discussion of "general spiritual well-being", membership applications, future policy, guests and building plans.

James said that he channeled leadership through that team, but he would himself act unilaterally were a matter sufficiently urgent. His earlier response to leadership potential had been to "chop it off", as he had with Clark's assembly.

Thus suitably expressed career aspirations were tolerated by James as the membership of God's Army grew. When full deference was allowed to his priority and vision, then his verbal assent, but not material support was granted. As routinization of operations has proceeded, coupled with increasing membership, James of necessity has allowed organizational authority to rest with other men, but has successfully retained spiritual authority. Their authority remains 'derivative' (Wallis 1974).

Wallis (*ibid.*) writes that there are a number of strategies for coping with what he calls 'institutional fragility', but the most successful 'focuses' leadership in the founder figure, that is, the synthesiser of the original doctrine. The essence of leadership he sees as 'revelation', the maintenance of the sole right to propound new

doctrine as it is unfolded by the divine source. James developed this strategy well, and his task in many senses became progressively easier. As each passing year more firmly validated his original vision, the authenticity of his subsequent 'revelations' were better grounded. The newly aspiring, if they were wise, sought his patronage in approximate ways. Leadership crises occurred no more.

However, as I have already indicated, such crises, and more minor disturbances were not without their benefits within the assembly. Calley (1965) has also observed that religious enthusiasm slumps when sect life is undisturbed. I have some evidence from interviews with members, that in the 1960's some more minor issues came to the fore. These were not differences which threatened to disrupt the assembly, they were over trivialities such as dress, and attendance at public entertainment, intersexual behavior within the assembly, and permissible attitudes to other churches. Wilson (1967) suggests that schismatic groups are, in a sense, mutually supportive because they tend to become "keepers of each other's consciences" (36). Here the role appears to have been adopted by separate groups within a growing assembly.

One product of the transitions through which God's Army has passed has been the evolution of different interest groups within the assembly (I describe this more fully in a following section), and here I particularly include groups arising from the more mundane issues of the 1960's, because such issues tend to assume at least equal import with doctrinal issues. This I attribute partly to the fact that those are the disputes in which presentational (in the Goffmanian sense) aspects are involved. Confrontation can be accomplished without exchanging a word, and as such these differences can be drawn in as ammunition in more personal matters.

The new mastery which James developed was to perpetuate and then to preside over these disputes. This he did by adopting a publicly conservative, but privately (to the liberal) more liberal approach, each with its own rationale. At the same time, members holding more liberal opinions were (and still are) urged to take care in the expression and acting out of their views with such maxims as "never do anything that your weak brother fall". In effect James has run a system of privatized revelation, by which each of the groups came to believe itself to be in possession of the 'ultimate' truth, and each believed itself vindicated by the support of James. It may be said therefore, that James was 'de-alienated' in the sense used by Barnes (1978) in his historical study of charisma, and that is that his leadership strategy suggests that he perceives sacred symbols as subject both to change and to verification by personal experience.

The path to health

I now wish to return to a consideration of the emergence of themes dealing with healing and the body in God's Army. The discussion is still concerned with James' maintenance of charisma and spiritual authority by his ability to shed fresh spiritual enlightenment amongst his followers in a way which they subjectively experience as flowing logically from an extension of their past experience.

Early members, drawn to God's Army by the British-Israel theme, saw the world as the battleground of God and Satan, as each day events were related to the prophetic books of the Bible. Then as James gradually revealed his Pentecostal message, God's presence in their own lives and bodies became a microcosmic reality, of at least equal significance, and they were turned toward as inner experience of the deity. These two themes were not antithetical, however. A doctrine of national salvation lent force to a doctrine of individual salvation for, as Weber says, the "conception of the final struggle naturally produces a very powerful eschatological emotional dynamic" (1965:145).

Whereas mainline religions produce contact with the deity through ritualistic communal acts, Pentecostals are not so dependent for their ecstatic experiences. What they require is a means of presenting to others their spiritual ecstasy, thereby achieving objectivation and hence validation of their subjective experience (Berger and Luckmann 1966). As their religion is one which largely rejects the role of formal knowledge in favour of ecstatic experience, the presence of that religious ecstasy is demonstrated not by stable and predictable ritual acts, but by 'automatic' behavior, especially a loss of control of the tongue, which is simultaneously a disavowal of learning and formalism.

In this sense glossolalia is a doctrinal statement, a discursive symbol, at the same time it is an index of possession, a presentational symbol (Langer 1960). The availability of members' bodies to the deity for use is demonstrated by his control over their tongue, the most expressive organ of their bodies. By the emission of mysterious sounds, they signify also that God may use their tongues to convey important meaningful messages which are in no way dependent on their own rationality . (Thus they debase the rationality of their critics.)

To Mary Douglas the abandonment of control such as that found in Pentecostal West Indian Londoners, represents not a religious compensation, but a 'fair representation of the social reality they experience' (Douglas 1973:110), that is, with respect to their fellow Londoners. Here Douglas is illustrating her hypothesis that 'bodily control is an expression of social control' (*ibid.*:99). The West Indians, she says, because of their relative lack of articulateness with respect to London society, experience a relaxation of social control in the area of speech. For them the societal expectations are different. She appears to have neglected what the West Indians themselves believe about their religious experience. Presentation of the self as under control of the deity requires the production of behaviors not in the everyday repertoire, and esoteric speech is a readily available means.

The existence of an inner religious experience for members cannot in itself be an important basis of recruitment, since most religions claim to give their adherents "religious experience". The source of appeal of this newly individualistic group became the personal efficacy and power which its particular experience conferred on members. By the process of salvation they were enabled to regain control over

their lives: they in fact became "new" people. But additionally, their faith came to be seen as conferring power over physical conditions and illnesses and also mental states. The life style advocated by God's Army reinforced the effects of the new-found faith. This is similar to Burrige's (1969) argument about millenarian movements, that they essentially confer a new moral order with what is perceived as increased relevance to the existing social order, and in doing so reorder power to the benefit of adherents. The 'power' for Burrige is experienced in the political and economic spheres, but for God's Army the primary effects are in personal conceptualization, which has secondary consequences for economic and political¹³ activities.

The 'power' with which faith and "right believing" endowed members produced a number of healings, and renewed lives, but complete success was elusive, and at this stage it was 'revealed' to James that the invasion of Christian lives by demonic forces was quite common, and that a suitable ministry had the power to eliminate them. Each Christian body had become a potential battleground for the forces of good and evil, but the means of control had been revealed. Problems that had not responded to individual faith were treated by deliverance ministry. A higher level of bodily control was reestablished in the ministries of a few pastors.

Predictably, this initially resulted in a tendency on the part of members to see demonic possession behind all their afflictions, and this tendency must have been augmented by the elaborate theory of demonology which was developed. As it had been necessary to show by

¹³Political and economic themes certainly exist in God's Army as demonstrated by British-Israelism, but are seldom used in membership appeals.

bodily manifestation the presence of the Holy Spirit, it was also necessary to produce, in addition to the affliction, a physical manifestation of infesting Satanic forces. Demonic presentation in the sense of physical manifestation usually occurred only during deliverance, and appeared in the form of strange voices, violent action, and occasionally attempted seduction of the ministering pastor, according to informants.

Though it often took many hours, these demonic forces responded to the "authority of Christ", and came out of the bodies which they infested, often several at a time. Their exit was marked by vocal emissions, coughing, vomiting (the mouth is a well-recognised exit as are bodily extremities), and sometimes by their flinging the body to the ground as they departed.

God's Army had developed the ideology of an omnipotent God, and then found that such a deity was not subject to magical manipulation (Weber 1965). The elaboration of an existing theory of demonology produced a religion in which magical manipulation again became possible, albeit dualist. Spiritual battles were made observable to individual members in their own lives, and by some this has presently been taken to the extent that they see the activities of God or the Devil in the trivia of their everyday lives. The fact that they are Christian, they believe, makes them of more interest both to God and Satan. This ideology is reflected in the notion of the "victory walk" which for most is a precarious path, subject to the continuous sabotage of demonic forces.

In recent years the healing and deliverance theme has again had a shift of emphasis, probably triggered by two factors: (1) the failure of some cases to respond despite repeated deliverance ministry (recolonization can occur); (2) the readiness of some members to attribute all

afflictions to demonic forces, and thus absolve themselves of responsibility. It subsequently became apparent to James that members, by their attitudes and actions, could lay themselves open to demonic attack and ill health. The responsibility was being returned to individuals. Thus members could, by their poor eating and exercise habits, make themselves vulnerable to ill health, from which it would be irresponsible to expect God to heal them.

This new ideology drew strength from a group of members who had long been concerned with naturopathy, partly because they saw the actions of Satan in the ways in which drug companies and doctors poured poorly tested drugs onto the market. God had already provided herbal medicines. Many of the members of this persuasion were of long standing, and strong adherents to British-Israelism. They were therefore very conscious of the "outworkings" of Satan on the global scale.

When it began to be strongly advocated by James, however, this theme reflected a disaffection with medical practice and priorities current in the wider society also, and this was not coincidental, because one of the main God's Army lines of appeal had always been to those disillusioned with therapeutic institutions of the wider society.

Within God's Army the new healthy living philosophy was largely taken up by some more prominent younger members (in the 20-35 age range) and it was used innovatively, but usually symbolically on some occasions when small group meetings called for supper.

Through the agency of his family, James was known within the assembly to have a healthy and abstemious diet, consisting of a high proportion of fresh fruit and vegetables. He also publicly enacted disdain of the God's Army-provided beverages (tea and coffee) at large

God's Army functions, but the same drinks continued to be offered (perhaps as a foil for his disdain).

Because James' message was partially directed at the wider society, it could be seen by those members whom it suited, to be minimally applicable to them. Thus diversity of internal opinion was perpetuated in this area also, and was facilitated by the fact that just how a healthy diet was constituted was never spelled out *in toto*. The elder members, habituated to the Australian 'meat and two veg', could continue to believe that they were performing their dietary duty.

There was an additional factor, and that was that the most specific proclamations of 'good diet' came from Mrs. James and occurred at prayer meetings largely attended by women. Mrs. James' domination of these meetings (the only outlet her frustrated "ministry" was allowed by her husband), was already derided by a number of members. Women attending these meetings felt quite able to deny, though privately, the truth of dietary pronouncements.

James' leadership 'techniques' allowed the 'truth' to be seen in many ways.

Conclusion

As a conclusion to this section, I wish to draw together a number of major strands of my argument into an overview of the successful establishment of a prophet-leadership within an emerging revivalist group.

Prior to James' arrival there were in the Adelaide circles of the British-Israel World Federation, a small group of people whose interest in him extended beyond his espousal of British-Israelism, to his revivalist talents and his Pentecostalism. I suggest that their recognition of his 'clandestine' message was responsible for its gradual attainment of legitimacy amongst other members of the British-Israel World Federation. Generally it seems that prophets and 'charisma' do not arise in any automatic fashion from rapid social change and uncertainty, but as Weber's review of Palestinian history shows, a group of semi-apostates, or radical critics within a previous orthodoxy, engage in an active search for an exemplary leader.

The existence of the British-Israel World Federation, a body dedicated to providing a platform for British-Israelism, gave James a 'captive audience' to whom he could subtly address his spiritual message. Since the British-Israelism World Federation membership was already a self-selected group of questioning Christian activists, James' initial evangelising met with considerable success. Only after his dependence on this group as a whole declined did the emphasis of James' spiritual message begin to change. That is, the cessation of relations between James and the British-Israel World Federation was one of the factors which impelled him to widen the scope of his public appeal, since his major recruitment base was removed.

The shift from one supportive constituency to another was a dangerous leap as far as James' career was concerned. Without a strong organization or financial resources, James relied almost solely on his closest followers' claims about his exemplary vision.

While Spirit baptism had become and remained the major concern within the assembly, James publicly-directed argument began to promote spiritual healing, both physical and psychic. This was a message with a potentially much wider basis of appeal, and it is clear from my fieldwork that it resulted in considerable interest from individuals in mainline churches. It is important to note the individuated response. The move towards James did not take the form of collective action by groups within the churches. Thus James' second wave of recruits differed from the British-Israel World Federation group and had fewer interpersonal ties and less experience of activism. They were, as a result, more responsive to the changing nature of his prophecy.

In terms of the emergence of charisma the 'recognition' originally afforded James was not on the basis of the Pentecostal message which eventually emerged as his main theme. The British-Israelism theme did, however, justify the urgency of spiritual salvation for all. It seems likely that James' initial favourable reception was based on the new spiritual emphasis with which he invested the British-Israelism message. However, before he could transcend his sponsored status among the British-Israelism World Federation activists he had to develop a prophecy which moved beyond their religious tenets.

Throughout his career James produced for his flock 'new obligations', the source of which was perceived to be divine. At least twice, crises of leadership can be seen to have occurred immediately

prior to the new revelations which suggests that their production was not arbitrary in terms of time but can be seen as responsive. I suggest that such revelations must always be responsive to some extent, given that changes in the congregation, in the social composition of recruits and in the wider society are unpredictable. The counselling services gradually elaborated by James could better monitor these currents of change. Just as important was the expressivity inherent in Pentecostalism. Careful observation of personal styles of worship and spirituality allowed James to gauge his competitors, for as soon as spirituality was established within the assembly, it became important for any would-be usurper to establish preeminence in that field. The subject of prayer was also an important indicator.

The divine origin of James' revelations, established by the coincidence of his vision, and the New Zealand pastor's prophecy, was reaffirmed in the spiritual struggle and physical privations which he underwent before receiving them. These are the aspects of his revelatory experience which he documented and repeatedly stressed. Further affirmation of his apostleship was forthcoming in his life-style. In contrast with other prominent members, he withdrew from sociable relationships. Although he was always solicitous towards members individually, his concern precluded closeness. His reputation for abstemious eating and other self-denials provided every-day confirmation of his apartness from the rest of the congregation for whom moderation rather than rigorous denial was prescribed.

James' social distance conferred another advantage and that was it enabled him to manage the divergent groups of opinion which became apparent within the congregation. With respect to matters of "worldly"

behavior he allowed each group to believe that it had his support on the matter, so that each member could believe himself (herself) in possession of the real truth in contradistinction to some other assembly members.

What James did was to produce a theodicy of suffering for members. Firstly, he revealed a perfect, all-powerful God with whom members could have a personal relationship. Then, as they continued, despite their knowledge, to suffer, he found reasons for their ills which he located firmly in their own insufficiencies. The bountiful God, however, could provide the remedies for the price of sufficient faith. Their failures and successes became part of the great cosmic struggle between their God and the ultimately vanquished deceiver, Satan. In the words of Weber (1965:144):

The world process although full of inevitable suffering, is a continuous purification of the light from the contamination of darkness. This conception of the final struggle naturally produces a very powerful eschatological emotional dynamic.

SECTION 2

A CHRISTIAN LIFE

INTRODUCTION

It is part of Luckmann's thesis (1974) that the ways in which a religious life can be led are diversifying enormously in Western society, and, indeed, that religious existence is increasingly being led independent of institutional religion. In this process he sees the institutionalization processes of established religions as integral, in that these tend to abstract the generally pervasive nature of uninstitutionalized religion and concentrate it in certain temporal and spatial life areas. The institutionalization of religion parallels that in other life spheres, and pushes the individual's expression of his real self into the institutionally undominated interstices. It is here that Luckmann sees real religious identity, in his sense of transcendence of the biological self as being situated, and this he believes is finding new expression in society.

In prefacing my remarks about life within God's Army, I draw attention to Luckmann's hypothesis, partly because the way in which a Christian life may be led *within* that group appears to be diversifying in parallel with what he claims of the wider society, and also because I wish to return to his argument later. I have already drawn attention to some sources of this differentiation in the previous section.

For God's Army members, and probably for most adherents of enthusiastic religion, religious significance permeates all aspects of

their life, and is not confined to what occurs in church, or other religious meetings. Their religion is a prescription for life, and creates them anew. God and Satan wage their war within the life of each "born again" Christian, and they do so unceasingly. Their struggles are apparent both in the trivia of everyday life, and in local and global politics. Life is reinvested with religious significance and interest. I mean by 'significance' an intellectual ordering scheme capable of transforming categories of space and time at both abstract and mundane levels. By 'interest', I mean a moral and emotional attitude or mode of attention to events. Together these constitute in Weber's terms the processes of 'rationalization' and 'enchancement' (the opposite of routinization) and I wish to examine these with my data.

Firstly, I intend to analyse the way in which a life becomes newly invested with this all-pervasive religious experience (i.e. conversion), and then I wish to show its operation in everyday life, in what must be viewed as the continuous process of construction and legitimation of a "world-view" (Berger and Luckmann 1975).

In my examination of the history of God's Army, and the ideological themes which achieved preeminence at various stages, I have already discussed the emergence and continued existence of diversity of doctrine and practice among members. For example, many members of more recent conversion have very little idea of the content of British-Israelism, while it permeates the reality of some members from the pre-1950's.

The ideological flexibility is reinforced by the lack of a strict God's Army creed, salvation by faith being the most adamantly espoused view, with others being left to individual conscience. One of

my informants, who, however, later left, was even very sceptical about Spirit baptism.

Although these two factors have not contributed to an enormous diversity of opinion on doctrinal matters within God's Army, groupings of members are apparent. The differences lie not so much in what these members believe, but in the degree of importance with which they invest ideologies with respect to their own lives.

The successive prominence and decline of ideologies which has been the experience of a number of members, in effect leaves them free to assign their own status to these beliefs. The "leading of the Spirit" which they experience as Pentecostals creates further diversity in the translation of the God's Army world-view into individual legitimations of belief and action.

Variation, for instance, is distinguishable in the readiness with which members see the source of their troubles in demonic forces, their attitude to alcoholic drinks, the extent to which they see themselves as responsible for their own health, their beliefs about divorce, and numerous other areas. It is largely in the practical implications of belief that disparity becomes apparent.

There are several levels of leadership within God's Army — pastors, elders, committee members, leaders of group meetings — and it is quite noticeable that such people adhere more strongly to the notion of individual responsibility than many ordinary members. This appears in such areas as their eating habits, their unwillingness to use demonic possession as an explanation of unwanted behavior, and the lack of frequency with which they require pastors to intervene in some personal problem. These are people of intelligence and competence, whose lives

proceed smoothly (and would probably do so independent of their Christian beliefs). The pre-conversion histories of a number from this group lack the marked traumatic element which is common, and given prominence in conversion accounts (a subject I discuss later). The occupations of these people are more likely to place them in the middle class than ordinary members.

Another division, less predictable in the groupings it forms, appears between members who are intolerant ("world-rejecting asceticism") and those who are more flexible in their attitudes to participation in "worldly" activities. Here I have in mind attitudes to drinking alcohol, wearing make-up, participating in public entertainment. While there is considerable overlap with the first group, it is not complete.

Committed and evangelistic believers in British-Israelism form a most distinctive group, and are nearly all both elderly and long-term members (pre-1950).

There is too an increasing diversity in the recruitment base of members, and also in their economic aspirations. God's Army members like Weber's (1958) Protestants, have life-styles which make more likely the accumulation of capital. Over a number of years the economic success of some members, whether sought or unsought, may well serve to alter the perspectives and aspirations of others within the group, and it is likely that the intake will eventually be altered in favour of more prosperous persons.

My primary concern in this section of my study is to examine the conversion phenomenon as it is found in God's Army. The primacy of this interest on my part has been gradually awakened by the accretion of data pointing to the central role that conversion and related activities perform within the group.

Firstly, God's Army as an organization and its members individually direct a high proportion of their efforts towards proselytization and recruitment, which provide an outlet for the zeal of both old and new members.

Secondly, conversion experiences are a major topic of conversation between both members, and members and prospects. A conversion or salvation experience is the essential of membership in God's Army, providing as it does the birth of faith in the Saviour which is the foundation of the 'new' life. The way in which this is experienced, and the complete separation from the old life which conversion accomplishes, is a subject which is fully elaborated in both teaching and conversation.

Thirdly, evidence suggests that within God's Army conversion-related activities, particularly of the revival rallies, may perform a 'latent' function in reevoking in that emotional atmosphere, members' resolves and commitment to the God's Army life-style and the "victory walk".

I wish to examine these; the internal aspects of conversion and related activities, as well as the accomplishment of the externally-directed, overt, aim of proselytization, the salvation of individuals, which must be viewed as the product of at least two sectors, God's Army effort, and individual inclination.

CHAPTER III
INDIVIDUAL SALVATION

Many of the more comprehensive analyses of individual conversions have been primarily concerned with a search for common predisposing factors and dispositions amongst converts. Among these are the studies of Gerlach and Hine (1970), Lofland (1966) and Stark and Lofland (1965). The preconvert appears in these discussions, rather like metal-bearing ore, passing through a system of filters, according to its dimensions. Furthermore, the retrospective nature of conversion accounts emphasises the impression that the preconvert is passive and malleable. This is a bias of conversion studies which has been criticised by Taylor (1976), who considers the necessity of viewing the convert as actively involved in his own salvation. He calls for "appraisal of the experiential multiplicities involved in conversion" (*ibid.*:11). How is it that the prospect "converts", he asks, rather than how is he "converted"? Taylor, however, may be more interested in inner experiences than social ones.

Conversely, Beckford (1975a) is concerned with the sheer effort which Jehovah's Witnesses put into conversion of prospects in which the initial contact occurs usually through the activities of a 'Publisher', rather than seeking on the part of the prospect. The high percentage of members with relatives in the movement he also considered as indicating the importance of the "personal nature of the message's systematic presentation" (1975a:161). That the Jehovah's Witnesses direct their appeal towards concerns of the prospect, Beckford sees as most significant in their gaining sympathy where other groups fail. Long's (1968) study

of African Jehovah's Witnesses points to other variables in the convert-seeking process, namely the effects of both pre-existing social and developing economic interests in bringing in recruits.

Within God's Army evangelism is an activity in which the internal consequences (that is, in the maintenance of meaning systems and the furtherance of careers) are probably more important than the external ones (that is, on prospects). It is carried out by a high percentage of members, on an informal and unsystematic basis (in contrast to both Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses whose methods are formal and systematic) and it is the focus of action of many sub-groups of the assembly. A weekly evangelistic rally is held, which most members attend. The point that I wish to emphasise is that although both collectively, and often individually, considerable effort is expended by God's Army members on recruitment-related activities, an argument such as Taylor's (*op. cit.*) which emphasises the active engagement of the prospect, is not invalidated. Now present in God's Army are people who before their first contact were religious seekers. There are also many members who did not, by their expressed religious interest, provoke evangelism. Most in both these categories had originally been approached by someone known to them. (The major effort of God's Army proselytism is directed towards people already known to them.) Initially it is most usual that the name of the church is not mentioned, but on what are seen as appropriate occasions, religious matters are raised in general conversation.

Lofland's (*op. cit.*) analysis of conversion among the Divine Precepts suggests a state of 'tension', which is apprehended by the person himself as enduring troubles, is one of three factors which predispose prospects to conversion. My data too could be used in support

of a tension or trauma hypothesis. Most informants either specifically mentioned, or gave sufficient facts to allow an inference, that they were somewhat embattled at the time of conversion. Indeed, God's Army folk theory (as distinct from authorized dogma) says that people do not become interested in "the things of God" until they "have problems". Furthermore, the time at which God's Army members are most likely to approach prospects is when they are visibly troubled.

We cannot however confidently assume that a retrospective account is an objective description of the circumstances surrounding a particular conversion. Much of my discussion of conversion demonstrates the way in which the meaning of that event is built up for members, and my data lends itself to the conclusion that one result of God's Army reality construction practice is that members come to view their preconversion lives in a most unfavourable light. In a dialectical process the visible order of the new religious life and the perceived disorder of the old life are driven away from one another towards extremes in which both are seen in absolute terms. This, as I later explain more fully, I see as a major instrument in maintaining the cosmology of members.

In fact, it is more interesting that members wish to present themselves as having experienced preconversion tension or trauma, than whether they actually experienced it. That they could not manage their lives successfully without God is the message that they wish to convey, and often do so explicitly. ("I tried to do it in my own strength" is a statement often heard in God's Army which recognises the futility of such attempts.) In connection with this it is interesting that members often retrospectively see God as allowing ever greater problems to cloud their lives, forcing them to a recognition of their ultimate dependence on Him. Both their pre- and postconversion lives are subject to such interpretations, especially if they feel themselves to have strayed. It is quite

common for members to say with a wry smile that they "fought hard", which is an acknowledgement of their past foolishness.

My material has other parallels with Lofland's when he speaks of a "religious problem-solving perspective"¹ (1966:42). The data from my survey and interviews shows that most members were brought up in, or had some period of contact with a mainline church. A number were still involved with some other religious group when they first contacted God's Army. A relatively high percentage (43%) in attending a number of churches, had demonstrated 'seekership'. Such histories may be supposed, if not to encourage a tendency to adopt holistic solutions to problems, at least to furnish the ability to do so.

Most informants had, as had Lofland's, a close and prolonged contact with a member prior to their conversion. The others appear to have had a close association with a member after their decision. The "cult affective bonds", Lofland (*ibid.*:51) said, were what led the prospects to consider the Divine Precepts' message seriously, if the other predisposing conditions were present. Within God's Army the 'decision' may already have been made before a significant friendship was formed with a member. Rather than being an emotive influence, I wish to view such associations as an efficient and effective way of conveying essential information from member to convert. This cognitive aspect of a conversion process tends to be absent or minor in the theories to which I have referred, and I believe this is one of their major failings. Receiving and using relevant information, including information about expected states of emotion, is an important part of the way a person participates in his own conversion (Taylor, *op. cit.*).

¹This concept is close to Turner's (1974) root paradigm and refers to basic modes of interpretation which individuals use.

Most importantly, it allows the communication from member to prospect of very personal religious legitimations of action, that is, the microaspects of the religious world-view in its intimate relation with the everyday life of the member. According to my argument, this is the area in which members' purely personalized styles of religious justification will emerge, legitimated, by their personal relationship with their Savior. What the prospect learns from the member is not so much the intricacies of ideology, but the deployment of that ideology in the service of everyday events.

It is the satisfactory development of this ability which, I contend, ultimately determines the type and duration of commitment a prospect makes to God's Army. This is irrespective of the actual conversion experience, by which the convert is conceptually immediately separated from his past and placed in a new career path. That is a step which depends on the interaction processes within the group, and between members and the convert. The 'proof' of the ideology with which a recent convert is presented, is in the facility with which it may be utilized in the convert's life, both inside and outside the church group, and it is here that God's Army ideology, because of its partial granting of autonomy to the member provides much flexibility. But, in addition, it must be able to encompass satisfactorily both past and present experience, as well as future expectations, and the full extent of its ability to do so only emerges over time.

The explanatory ability of God's Army ideology will be enhanced for attenders who limit their life-styles by making the church the focus of their social life. This is a common pattern among those who become long-term members, and reduces the likelihood of encountering experiences

which seriously tax the legitimating ability of the world-view. When this is coupled with a past life in which the range of experience has been limited, it enables the member to operate an ideological 'hard line'.

Those whose past social experience has been wider are sometimes visibly less able to utilize belief without personalized adjustment; two of my informants, Carolyn and Mavis, are examples. Some others, especially those with a history of alcoholism, are able to take the 'black' view of their former lives which is eschatologically encouraged. I suggest that experiences in which individuals lose control of their own actions, such as alcoholism and some social group experiences, may predispose those who recover towards the adoption of a holistic world-view in which the past is most adversely regarded. Those who construct their own position in past adverse social experience, as victims, by contrast, are not so willing as the ex-alcoholic to accept rapidly the entire holistic world-view. This is because they may retain ability to perceive their experience as related to the power exercised by other individuals over their lives. We may expect the reformed alcoholic to experience particularly poignantly, the new control and power that he has in his own life. This relates to the dialectical process of separation of past from new life, to which I earlier referred, and will enable him to accomplish a greater separation.

I do not intend to imply that a God's Army member should be able to legitimate any action he or she might covet in ordinary life. I believe that an essential aspect of the viability of God's Army ideology is that it unequivocally prohibits some activities and simultaneously affects members' perceptions of their wants. The ability to resist some temptations is an important index of the power conferred on the member by his 'new' life. But before one can resist one must experience

temptations, which, to be real tests of power, must be found within what is frequently the very respectable life of a member. It is therefore necessary that a member should begin to define himself or herself as drawn to activities not actually experienced, or experienced only in some moderate degree.

One of my informants renounced the drinking of alcohol not because she believed that it was intrinsically wrong, but because she felt "challenged". This was a person who quite regularly drank wine socially, but in no way had a 'problem' with alcohol. Her rejection of drink was quite different from that of the reformed alcoholic, in that it was something that was not necessary. The voluntary nature of this sacrifice may have increased the member's sense of control in even the trivial aspects of her everyday life. Interestingly, she was considerably overweight and constantly 'dieting' without any weight loss. Objectively, over-eating may be viewed as 'compulsive' which might trigger the decision to diet as a test of power. However, dietary ideology remains varied throughout the assembly, and obesity is not yet generally considered a comment on spiritual state.

A different rejection of alcohol is that of young people, whose previous use has been minimal or lacking. Consciously it represents an attempt at asceticism, but it is also part of a reluctance to face experiences that have the possibility of disconfirming a strongly espoused world-view and threatening identity, that is, it is a defensive posture as Sennett (1970:9) suggests. Here we may perceive some symbolic aspects in the renunciation of alcohol, since many other "worldly" activities are actually not widespread in society generally, and thus become somewhat hollow in rejection. It is also significant that the consumption of alcohol is something in which some members are known to

indulge, even some pastors, so that abstinence may assume a competitive aspect of which Simmel (1968:70) writes. In this connection it is interesting to note that Gusfield's (1972) major concern in discussing the American temperance movement was to examine abstinence as a means by which a group symbolically laid claim to status. The decline of 'morality' within God's Army (that is, the increasing tolerance of worldly values), may present some members with the opportunity to reestablish personal status on moral grounds.

Before continuing to further analysis, I will present some members' accounts in which aspects of pre-conversion, conversion and post-conversion life-styles and attitudes are included. These histories are chosen to demonstrate a range of experience, rather than for their typicality of ordinary members. I have included the account of a would-be (and succeeding) pastor, an eventual backslider, a person who "walked in off the street", and a person who left "fellowship" but returned later.

The accounts of conversion experience as described by the members varies from highly rationalized to emotional.

Mark

Mark's history demonstrates the carving of a career within God's Army, which, his account suggests, begins almost at first contact.

His conversion, in that it was highly rationalized, is atypical of ordinary members', however it included quite usual features such as the "real release". I spoke with Mark a number of times, but it was not until our last interview that he suggested to me that his conversion was "dramatic".

There were a number of unusual features about his preconversion situation; in fact, he was highly successful in a number of areas. His subsequent construction of that time is therefore interesting.

When I first spoke with him, Mark had been involved with God's Army for five years. He was already a youth leader, and involved in counselling, the communion roster, and visiting people with "deep needs". A little later he was considering, and being considered for the full-time ministry, and had already been offered pastorship by a country assembly. At our first meeting he was still only 22, and undertaking full-time tertiary education. He had also been through the God's Army Bible School.

Mark's parents were European market-gardeners who had migrated before his birth. Insofar as they were religious at all their outlook was orthodox, and their political sympathies were left-wing democratic.

At school Mark became heavily involved in social and political activity. He was very active in the Vietnam Moratorium campaign, but snooker was his consuming passion, and he played in the State Junior Championship. Card games also took much of his time.



Mark describes himself as having been dominant in most groups, knowing many people, but having few close friends. He was first introduced to God's Army by a male school friend whom he had known since primary school, though the friendship had not been continuous. This friend was converted, and received the Spirit Baptism simultaneously at an Easter camp he attended. Though Mark had been aware that he was attending a camp, he had not been told that it was a Christian affair. Following his profound experiences at the camp, however, the friend lost his reticence and talked to Mark enthusiastically. He also invited him to a mid-week youth meeting.

By this time Mark says he had a bad reputation at school. In addition to his Moratorium involvement, he was not working and had failed a year. He was also in the forefront of conflict with teachers.

Neither was his family situation easy. He was not very close to either parent, particularly his father who was much older than his mother. One of his three sisters had walked out because of conflict. He said that he felt that his parents just did not understand kids. Mark now sees that he used to treat them very badly.

Mark attended the mid-week meetings for about one month, and says he found it "strange" but he was not antagonistic. "They were on fire, speaking in tongues and prophesying", but he "knew that there was something real in the experience".

When Mark attended a Sunday service he was "really impressed with the joy and happiness, and surprised at the freedom and the number of young people". He said "There was an atmosphere that I knew was God". "It was electrifying. I knew that I was in a wrong relationship with that presence." He says that his experience with orthodox religion had obscured the real message of Christianity from him.

He attended a couple of Sunday services then, partly because of the misgivings of his parents, particularly his mother, Mark cut off contact with God's Army in order to study and think about Christianity uninfluenced. He read the Bible, particularly the New Testament, and "thought through issues". He also had some discussions with a number of the Youth Committee whom he found most helpful. Mark says he likes to consider himself a thinker and philosopher, and it was very important to him that he make his decision "rationally", without emotion, that he weigh the evidence and decide.

After two months he had made his decision, and attended a Sunday service to make his public commitment. Because he used to "witness for Christ" before he was "saved", he realises that he had been "convinced in the mind" for some time, but salvation requires an "act of will".

That Sunday I came all prepared; I was at the front first, rejoicing, all fears, doubts and guilt were alleviated, I was truly converted there. There was a tremendous feeling of relief of guilt, and lightness. I distinctly felt something. I am not highly emotional, but it was an emotional experience.

D.H. tried to counsel me, but I said I didn't need it. When I left I felt as though I were floating on air. I knew that I was saved, and that my guilt was dealt with, I knew it as an experience. [It was really a dramatic conversion - this opinion was ventured at a much later date.]

From that time Mark found that he was able to pray, and knew that he was in communication with God.

After that, he said, his behavior became quite different. There were "some things which broke off in the first few months; after six months God was speaking directly to me, telling me what to give up". Smoking proved difficult, because Mark had been smoking since the age of 11. After six months Mark was at an Easter camp, and there a pastor "rebuked the power behind the nicotine". He has not smoked since.

Mark did not break with his old friends until after he had made his commitment. He still went to pubs and dances, and even boasts that he "won a best friend to Christ in a pub".

After becoming Christian Mark returned to school to repeat his previously failed matriculation. He also initiated a Jesus movement within the school, and says 60 students became Christian in one year. They were finally holding five meetings per week; he was as amazed as everybody else. Mark brought God's Army pastors to the school, and he himself baptised 30 students at the beach. "The miraculous happened at that school."

Some of those involved were his old friends from the Moratorium. The turning point came, Mark says, when the three best brains from the matriculation class joined, then the other "matrics" began attending.

Mark's younger sister was converted after six months, but his parents were at that stage very antagonistic; perhaps, Mark thinks, because he did some "foolish things in trying to convince them". His mother subsequently became more understanding, and his father less antagonistic. Mark says he took time to develop a relationship with them, and he remained living with them until he was married (about two years after I first spoke with him).

About one week after his decision for Christ Mark experienced a period of profound doubt, during which he could not pray or effectively read his Bible. He felt "cut off from contact with God", and said that it was not just his questioning nature, because he had already done his thinking. It persisted for two to three weeks until he "told Satan to go away", and "communication with God opened up again". He subsequently came to see this as a "demonic attack" and said he "felt it as a very real force".

Five to six months after he was saved, Mark was baptised in water, and another two weeks later he received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. Several times he "had prayer" for Spirit baptism, unsuccessfully, and it was late one night, after such prayer, that he did receive it.

His certainty that he would obtain the Baptism of the Holy Spirit on this night led him to stay awake praying, until at 4 a.m. he felt "right now I am going to launch out in trust. What I had to do was receive, not ask."

I sensed faith, and knew that God was filling me. I launched out and the words flowed like a river; there was tremendous power. It was a very deep experience, like heat and warmth covering me all over. Speaking was a release of joy.

After his Spirit baptism Mark said Christ became "much more real", but he was also far more aware of satanic forces and the battle within him.

Mark's passion for snooker gradually declined after his salvation, and he realised that other things have more value. Now he plays only infrequently as "relaxation" and says he enjoys it better.

About 18 months after becoming involved in God's Army Mark undertook the Bible College course, while he was also involved in full-time tertiary studies. He says that accounted for every night for two years. He was then and still is involved in counselling, which frequently involves visiting people.

Mark and several other prominent young members became very involved in the needs of teenagers, and out of their discussions arose a program, catering for the spiritual and physical needs of teenagers. "Experts" in such fields as spirituality, communication, relationships, etc. were imported as lecturers and discussion leaders to cater for

people from 13 to about 16 years of age. He was also on the committee of the young adults group.

On one of the occasions on which I spoke with him, Mark said that he was fasting, and would do so for the whole week, provided that it did not cause too much disharmony at home. The fasting was occasioned by his involvement in "deep counselling" and also because of "some needs in the assembly", one of which needs was a member, dying of leukemia. This was a purely private campaign of faith-building on his part, though he said that a number of members fasted, especially those involved in deliverance ministry. "Combined with prayer", he said, fasting was "a tremendous spiritual weapon". Its effectiveness came from the fact that it "reveals the genuineness of compassion and also builds up faith". People often came to him for help, or brought cases to his notice, he said.

When his tertiary training was completed, Mark took on part-time teaching, and gave the rest of his energies to God's Army. About 15 months after I first spoke to him he had become involved in preaching in rural assemblies on some weekends. He had also, he said, turned down an offer to move into full-time ministry. "There is plenty of scope here it is still so large and Pastor James does not bind people, he allows freedom of expression."

The previous year he said he had been approached by a small Greek group who wanted a pastor. He could not take it on full-time because he was still studying, but he gave them Saturday afternoon each week. "About 30 families were reached." But Mark became involved in visiting, and found that many people had "desperate needs". "People are not usually interested unless they are in need", he said in an aside. Some bad

relations developed between the families, and Mark refused to continue unless this were changed.

On this occasion Mark also said that his mother had begun to do hospital visiting with him, and was reading the Bible.

Mark also said that at 19 he had "definitely felt the call of God" and had, from that time on, acted as though he were going into full-time ministry.

On another occasion, Mark talked about his relationships. Largely, he said, his contact with people had been on a "spiritual level". His first main friendship within God's Army had been with D.H., a youth leader, with whom he used to discuss matters before his conversion. After his salvation he also spent a lot of time with Pastor S., "because I had a lot of needs". He also spent time with two other young men, prominent in the youth groups. Mark has not "depended on friendships, or gone out of my way to make close friendships", partly because he became "so heavily involved in the spiritual side and work".

He has been out, over several periods, with K., the daughter of a pastor, whom he first came to know at Bible College. A bit later they started going out, but he says he did not deliberately get involved, "there wasn't the need". Twice they made the decision to cool the relationship when it seemed to become too serious. He said that they (he) "didn't believe in blind love", and felt that they could not continue until there had been "certain changes in us". When they came together the last time it seemed to be the "right time". "She is the closest friend I have ever made." Now Mark tries to keep one night a week free to spend with her, otherwise, he says, "communication barriers can develop".

Ben

Ben was one of a number of single males in the age range 20-30 who regularly attended God's Army services and young peoples' prayer meetings. He was devout, and a very softly spoken person, though strong in build. One of his involvements with God's Army was as a storyteller for Joytime, the childrens' afternoon meeting.

His conversion was interesting in several respects. Firstly, he had had no previous contact with God's Army, and secondly, his conversion was of the type I call involuntaristic, that is, his account has elements of abdication of responsibility for the decision.

After his conversion, his social life became centred on God's Army, and as his account shows, he deliberately refrained from such activities as gaining worldly knowledge. He did not, however, appear to be pursuing a career path within God's Army, for although devout and expressive in prayer, he was never forceful, and appeared involved in the business of being an ordinary member.

At the age of eight, Ben came from central Europe with his parents in the mid-1950's. The family, which includes three male children, was Roman Catholic, but very infrequent attenders. The father, since retired, worked as an unskilled labourer after arriving in South Australia.

Ben used to attend mass weekly until he reached his teens, when his interest tapered off. He left school in the middle of matriculation year, and found a clerical job almost immediately. Thereafter his employment history became varied. He had several clerical jobs, a process worker's job, and was a gardener for a while. Before converting, he had been unemployed for nine months.

Ben's view of himself prior to his "salvation" is extremely dismal. He says that he was becoming unemployable, a "bludger", he used to gamble, and had begun experimenting with drugs. This latter turned out to mean that he had smoked marijuana about half a dozen times. He says that he was conscious of a number of pressures from earlier days, and many things were wrong with his life.

One Saturday he went with friends to a festival in a winegrowing district near Adelaide. They had a "joint" from which he remained "high" for an unusually long time. The following day, still in the winegrowing district, he felt depressed and thought that he might have become "hooked". He spent the day with his friends, fooling around. ("I guess I wanted to be recognised", he said in retrospect.)

Ben says he became very depressed while hitching home, and unwilling to return to his life situation. He remembers wanting to be high again, to escape, and says he had a psychological dependence on marijuana.

He thought to find some friends in a cafe that they frequented, and started to walk through town towards it, but half way there, he turned around and started back to the bus stop. As Ben passed a theatre in the main street, a man placed a hand on his shoulder, and invited him inside. He was introduced to a young woman and led upstairs, before he realised that it was a religious meeting. By the time he had collected his senses and decided that he wanted to leave, he "had a young lady on each side", and he was also feeling very tired, so he stayed.

The atmosphere of the meeting was unique, "there was something there", he said, and when people started praying "you could feel the compassion and sincerity". A New Zealand pastor preached, and Ben lost his desire to leave. The pastor was speaking of his pre- and post-conversion experiences, and "how Jesus had changed his life".

Ben became aware of "an inner fight, like something was fighting over me". He remembers folding and unfolding a chorus sheet, "perhaps it was conviction of the Holy Spirit".

The preacher wasn't saying repent, but rather give yourself over, like a head of wheat. Give the whole lot and God will sift it and give back the good, and the rest will be scattered. He spoke of his own life. Give all of your life, good and bad, the things that you are trying to escape. Surrender your whole self.

I broke out into a sweat from the effects of what was happening inside, and my body started to tremble. This was at the time of the appeal. I hadn't bowed my head, and was still looking around. My hands went to my face, he was asking people to give themselves, and then both my hands went up as if it wasn't me. It needed an inner 'yes', but it was as though someone had gently taken my hands and raised them. My eyes were closed, but as my hands were lowered I knew that something had happened. I couldn't understand, but there was a peace in my mind that can't be put into words. The feelings of badness, and the weight of the problems had gone, and I looked around as though I had new eyes.

The peace was similar to being high, but this was the real thing. The way to escape is not to escape.

The girls urged him to "go forward", but Ben knew that he had no need.

Since then there have been so many changes to Ben's life that he often finds difficulty in remembering the pre-Christian days (only four years ago). "God started working in my life." He sought forgiveness from friends and relatives for past sins. His reading habits changed; he gave up snoking (two weeks after conversion).

This happened when Ben was "witnessing" to some friends. One of them asked why he was still smoking, and he too wondered why. In an extravagant gesture he held up the cigarette that he was smoking and butted it out. "This is the last cigarette I will ever have — before God", he said. And then he threw away the packet. In a shiver he felt as though something had "left" him.

Within three weeks he had a job and has had work ever since. About a month after first attending he received the Spirit baptism in a meeting with a visiting evangelist. The preacher called for those seeking Baptism of the Holy Spirit and "my faith reached out and I was baptised without any prayer from him". Once before he had "gone forward" to receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit unsuccessfully, but "maybe my believing wasn't right".

Ben was baptised in water about two weeks after his Spirit baptism, which was "about as soon as he could be". This he said because the description "act of obedience" often applied to water baptism, he found very cold.

His acclimatization into God's Army was very much facilitated by a young man, R., whom he met at Crucell (young peoples' group). R. encouraged him, and would discuss problems with him. Ben felt that there were some areas which he would not have adequately faced without R. Most importantly, R. helped him to explain what had happened. "You need someone to teach you, something to ground your faith on."

Ben explained that Christian growth involved many fundamental changes in attitude. As a "young" Christian one might pray for changes to occur in a person who "bugged" you, but maturity will mean that you change your attitude to him. He also mentioned the example of a back injury he had received. "I am healed in Christ, but still have my back complaint. I am believing for healing and it is no longer an issue, just a nuisance." On becoming a Christian he decided to drop his legal claims for compensation.

Ben's faith made him much more aware of Satan, and of wrong and right. Natural man, he says, gives into temptation, but fighting it as

a Christian is aided by remembering who is behind it. There are "trials" when you become Christian such as "getting rid of the old things that are not pleasing to God". However, some habits of thought or deed "drop off" quickly. Ben would like to play sport but he doesn't, partly because most of his energies go into God's Army and also because he feels it necessary to "bring the flesh under subjection to the Spirit".

While he was gardening Ben was tempted to study botany, but he felt that to spend so much time on matters not related to God would be a waste. He also contemplated studying chiropracy, but found that it was a four-year course. Eventually he decided that should he study, it would be at God's Army Bible School.

I asked Ben if he had ever had "deliverance" ministry. He remembered having several struggles when his "old life wanted to hang on". One night he was lying out on the back lawn, talking to God, and he was conscious of "having a release", after which the problem "departed from his life". He feels that at that time he was "delivered" of an evil spirit.

Ben first approached me soon after I had distributed some questionnaires amongst the assembly. He was disappointed because he felt (as did I) that there was insufficient scope allowed by the questions adequately to describe the Christian experience. He wanted the opportunity to describe it in a more real way.

Carolyn

Carolyn's history is included here because she was illustrative of a convert in the process of deepening her commitment to, and subsequently detaching herself from, God's Army. I met her soon after she began regular attendance, and was able to follow her progress through God's Army until she eventually lapsed from membership. She had a tertiary education, and was analytical of her own feelings and actions to some extent.

From our first meeting she conveyed some detachment from aspects of God's Army praxis, and to me, at least, gave indications that she was 'experimenting'. For a number of months her conversation suggested that her commitment was deepening, but her detachment started to return. When I last saw her she had begun attending a mainline church.

At the age of 32 Carolyn found herself in the midst of a most difficult marriage, and just out of hospital with her second child. There were no friends whom she could describe as her own, her husband "got rid" of those. Her workmates were distant because of what they knew about her husband's public crusading in the moral freedom field, and her only regular contacts were friends and relatives of her husband. And these, according to her report, were two friends from school days, and their wives.

Jack, Carolyn's husband, though a professional person, was left-wing in a moralistic style, so that her kids had been brought up to "kick cops with their breakfast". As she described him, he was very anti-emotional, and would label as "womanly crap" any attempt of hers to

describe her feelings. "It is your business to be bright and chirpy all the time", he would tell her, though usually in a bad mood himself.

Jack was utterly unsupportive in domestic matters, and furthermore reacted adversely to the arrival of a second child, showing no understanding of the quantity of attention required by a new-born baby. Under his domination, household matters had taken lowest priority, and no regular sleeping and eating patterns had been developed either for the oldest child or themselves.

Socially, Carolyn and Jack "did everything together", and she had regarded their relationship as close, but later came to see it as his domination of her.

In the time after the birth of her second child, while she was still depressed (probably to some extent due to Jack's reaction - a psychiatrist had advised her not to have a second child because of Jack's instability) she went to stay with friends while the house was being renovated. These were Jack's friends, but she also had developed considerable affection for them. Although she had never been able to talk to anyone of her problems, Carolyn one evening found herself pouring out her troubles to David, who confided in her that since he had had some business problems, he had been attending at several churches, and unknown to Carolyn and Jack, had "committed himself to the Lord".

David asked her if she would like a prayer, and as he prayed Carolyn realised that it was "what I had been waiting for". She felt a sense of "overwhelming relief", and realised that she had believed in God all through her marriage, but had not been able to admit it. The relief she experienced on admission of that was tremendous. She also said that when David first prayed for her, she knew that she "was going to turn religious", and accepted that there would be profound consequences.

Subsequently Carolyn attended God's Army because David described it in such glowing terms, but she also tried the Roman Catholic church because Jack's family (his mother) were Roman Catholic. It was, however, on her second attendance at God's Army that she "went forward for salvation", in acceptance of their teaching that a public act of commitment is necessary. After that she continued to attend God's Army, though she did not necessarily feel at all times that it was her "spiritual home".

Carolyn had been brought up Church of England, and attended an Anglican private school. She started going to Holy Trinity Church at the age of 14, when she says they were just starting to speak of "knowing Jesus in a personal way". The younger set at that church were "very cliquy" and hard to break into, and at about 18 years she drifted out again.

At 19 she started going out with Jack who was among other things a nominal Roman Catholic, and very scathing of Church of England. Before she married him, Carolyn was required to attend a course of instruction in his faith. It interested her largely because of its historical content, but she was disturbed by the requirement of praying to the Virgin Mary and the saints. After her marriage she didn't attend any church.

The birth of her second child, then, was the event which awakened Carolyn's and Jack's awareness of their respective discontents with their situation. She, in the midst of post-natal depression, became aware of her dependence on Jack, both intellectually and physically. The new child precluded her from the old pattern of complying with his every whim, and she was left alone to cope with the household requirements. Jack found that he no longer had a wife who was able to support him socially when he

required it, and she had additionally begun placing new demands on him, as well as failing in the domestic situation. The week after Carolyn had made her public commitment, Jack announced that he had a girl friend and was leaving. "It's just as well I had something else to think about by then", she said. She had already faced the fact that because of anti-religious friends she must sever herself from her old life. Her overwhelming emotion was a "sense of relief", of the successful completion of a search, and the ability to rest.

Because of their children, Carolyn was unable to avoid meetings with Jack, who took every opportunity to ridicule her new religious enthusiasm, as, she said, did their mutual friends. She felt unable to take the children to God's Army, because of the threats he made against her. He also took advantage of her financial dependence on him by arbitrarily refusing to pay for such services as the electricity, and he was unreliable in the arrangements he made with her about his access to the children.

This early period of the separation was one in which Carolyn came increasingly to depend on God's Army service and activity. Very soon after her "salvation" she availed herself of the counselling services of a pastor, and for some months this remained a regular event. She also attended a weekly class, and mid-week morning prayer meetings. These she said gave her a "weekly interest" and put her in contact with church people. She was "pretty desperate" in those days, she said.

Of the services, she said she felt "uplifted and strengthened by attending", she also liked the "joyfulness, enthusiasm and honesty, the real believing, the words of the hymns seemed meaningful, and the people really looked dedicated".

Carolyn, however, never became an unreserved God's Army devotee. She initially found what she described as the "Devil emphasis" difficult to accept, and she continued to do so. She reported to me that she used to argue both in classes and with her counselling pastor about the reality and value of Spirit Baptism. Among the pastors her main admiration went to Pastor S. who counselled her, and whom she saw as more traditional and "Anglicanish" than the others. (Of her initial attendance Carolyn reported that she had thought all the pastors looked like "used car salesmen".)

Of Spirit baptism Carolyn's view in those days was "why not speak so that we can all understand?" She said she would not be convinced until she received it herself. In response to their argument that Spirit baptism provided a very personal and special way of communicating with God, she felt that she could adequately express her feelings anyway (she who was trained and had practiced as a teacher).

During the initial few months of her contact, during which she was an active attender, the counselling she received was directing Carolyn towards an independent, but God-reliant life-style. I observed and listened to her self-reports during this time. Housekeeping and proper childcare became her predominant concerns, as she actively strove to conform to those God's Army ideals which she saw as useful. However, she was always aware of alternatives. Her new status as a deserted wife, financially dependent on a tyrannical husband, and tied to the house by her children formed a very stark contrast with her previous ways, but more importantly she did not perceive it as a necessary state. As a teacher she had previously had some financial independence, and she always realized that her bound condition was related to childcare.

Pastor S. was pointing to the benefits of a single life, and the achievement of independence, but always with a view to eventual reconstruction of the marriage. Carolyn described herself as "spending the whole day with Christ, like marriage". She had come to regard sex as binding mentally and emotionally, partly because of the way in which she had come to regard her relationship with Jack, and also in response to the teachings of Pastor S. She wanted to remain "self-contained" and said she was "sublimating everything to Christ". In practice this meant that when she was "tempted to ring a chap", she would "put it to Christ as Confessor and Comforter". She also told me that a book by one of the God's Army pastors recommended masturbation for people that had problems with sexuality.²

Another dissatisfaction which Carolyn experienced during her early contact with God's Army was to do with their failure to offer any material help. She did have some financial problems because of the arbitrary manner in which Jack would decide to pay or not to pay household bills, but her most bitter complaint was the way in which she was utterly tied by the two children, with which she was never offered any help by the church, or individual members. At first she could not understand the unruffled way in which Pastor S. would receive the news of her husband's latest foul play. Later she came to see it as his way of helping her to calmness and independence herself. Another member to whom she complained about lack of ability to get out said that it did not matter if she couldn't get to church, that her daughter didn't go for a long time when her children were young. The lack of recognition afforded her own needs shocked Carolyn.

²This view would certainly not be espoused by other pastors, or members.

Then she began to report that she had "had some prayers answered". There was an unpaid electricity account about which she prayed. After that Jack offered to pay it.

She also took a "step of faith" and put her last three dollars in the collection plate at church. When she got home she found \$41 that she had forgotten about hidden in a drawer.

About this time her younger child developed an ear infection which was said to require surgery. This too she prayed about, after which the operation was unnecessary.

Part of the new role which Carolyn was developing involved more authoritarian behavior towards the children, and involved some reassessment of the way she saw the role of women in the church. She had initially been very aware of their disenfranchisement, but partly as a result of going to their homes, had come to appreciate the supportive but spiritually independent role that many of them played. Where she had seen "putdown", she came to see strength of character and quietness. Family matters became more important than career, and her views, she said, became more consistent with God's Army on the matter of "R" films and sex shops. She came to believe that such things adversely affected values and life-style. She started praying about her housekeeping ability.

When I next talked to Carolyn a couple of months later she had finished the course in practical Christianity in which she had immersed herself. Christmas had intervened, a period during which Jack had been so unpleasant that she had had to "disappear for several days".

Because of Jack's intimidation of her she had allowed her friend Bill to move in with her, for protection, she said. (Bill was one of two men with whom she had been going out when I previously talked to her.

She then described him as nice, stable, unexciting and solicitous of her welfare.) Earlier, during her sessions with Pastor S. Carolyn had raised the possibility of having another woman member share her house, but had been told that a young Christian woman could not be subject to that situation. After Bill moved in Pastor S. suggested that she could live at "Church House" for a while, but she regarded the offer as too late.

In her forthright manner, which she claims is partly the result of taking a COPE course, Carolyn informed Pastor S., and her other immediate contacts in the church, of her new situation. The pastor was not nearly as antagonistic as she had thought he might be, she said. His main concern seemed to be with "appearances", but other than that it was a "matter between her and God". She understood that the pastor's message was that some of the older women in the church would "not be able to handle it", and that she should be very careful whom she told, so as not to "bring on a crisis". He also gave her to understand that many members would have absolutely no understanding of what it would be like to be involved in her situation. (It seems that understanding of such situations was not encouraged either.)

The upshot of this attitude of God's Army was that, although Bill was a Christian man, Carolyn felt unable to take him to church with her, because of her inability to describe the relationship between them. His presence had to be concealed. Carolyn again began attending other churches, this time in Bill's company in order to find some mutually satisfactory fellowship. She did not at this stage cut contact with God's Army, which had many positive aspects for her.

However, her old resentments about the lack of proffered help during her early fellowship began to be expressed again. She also came

to see the communion service as being at a very inconvenient time, and her doubts about their satanic "preoccupation" came to the fore again. She saw another drawback to God's Army in its refusal to marry her, a divorced person by this time, in church (though they would allow her to hold a reception at "Church House").

Carolyn and Bill eventually found an Anglican Church where the minister was quite sympathetic to "charismatics". After they had both obtained divorces, they married in a registry office and Carolyn reported that she found it "nice and easy to be a Christian lady staying at home, subject to a man, and not having to worry about her own development".

Mavis

There are a number of interesting features in Mavis' history, which led me to give a version of it here. In addition to being an unashamed evangelist, she was a ready and frank talker.

Her conversion account illustrates most graphically her desperate preconversion situation, and subsequent involuntaristic conversion, which so radically altered her outlook on life. However, I feel that the most valuable aspect of her history is that it illustrates some of the aberrations which are possible in Pentecostal life, because of the autonomy which "spirit leading" gives to members.

When I first talked to Mavis she was aged "about 60", and had first attended God's Army 20 years earlier. She had been brought up in

the Methodist faith, and says she had always been conscious that "God wouldn't let you do much wrong", and that loving God was the most important aspect of Christian life.

During World War II Mavis' husband received head injuries, and when he returned was both "psychotic and alcoholic", despite which she stayed with him for 17 years, but finally left "because of the children".

To support herself and the children, she ran a pastry shop and catering business, which made great physical demands on her because she had to start work very early. She had no time to herself, and she knew that people were stealing from the shop, but could do nothing about it. She became "sicker and sicker".

During this time she received visits from a woman member of the Church of Christ, who would "do little things for her", while evangelising. This continued for 18 months, during which Mavis felt she had no time to comply with the suggestion that she attend God's Army. Finally the woman came around one day and asked for a lift to town. They went to the ballroom where God's Army was then holding meetings.

Pastor James was preaching to about 250 people and Mavis said his words were "anointed". She cannot remember what he said, but when the "altar call" came, her hand "was raised" and she was "propelled forward by the Spirit of God". Her actions were involuntary, she claims, and she often suggested to me that one day the right message would be preached, and I would find myself "going forward" without an act of will. In fact, Mavis suggests that on that occasion it would take an act of will to resist going forward.

Another theme that Mavis espouses is that reasoning has little to do with salvation, thinking can often "get in the way" of coming to terms with Christ. "The heart" must be allowed to take over.

Before going to God's Army Mavis said that she was finding the pressures in her life increasingly intolerable, and her thoughts had begun to turn to suicide. However, the "Spirit of God came into her" that night, and she was "healed from top to bottom". She became "an enthusiastic Christian that you could hit on the head", and has been joyful ever since, though she has experienced "ups and downs". At every meeting, she was present, she said.

Her enthusiasm in those days was of the kind that approached strangers in the street. Mavis' life experience had given her great sympathy with alcoholics, and to these she would offer a different kind of Spirit. Later on she came to regard such behavior on her part as the actions of an immature Christian, full of fire, but as yet ill-directed. She wanted to save the world single-handed, but now knows that time must be allowed for the work of the "Holy Spirit in people's hearts". Unsolicited evangelising of strangers, she now understands, can repel as often as it draws. People must be gently led to an understanding God.

After her salvation, Mavis' behavior was such that her brother-in-law (another alcoholic) thought that she had gone crazy, but he went to God's Army to find out. He came home saved and with his ulcers healed, but still an alcoholic; it took 12 months to conquer the drink, during which time he lived with Mavis (about which she was most uneasy). Later they married. "Finding Christ was his salvation, he found the reality there", she said.

When Clark started his suburban meetings in the mid-1950's, Mavis and Bill attended those, because they were closer to home. After their marriage they started holding mid-week meetings in their own immediate area (Taperoo) at which Pastor Clark officiated. This work he took on,

in addition to that of his own assembly, at Port Adelaide, but the latter was growing so rapidly that he soon found that he could not carry on at Taperoo.

But "God gave Bill and I a vision of the Taperoo area", said Mavis, so despite the advice of the God's Army Oversight, they continued their work, and sought oversight from Assemblies of God.

She now sees that decision as rashly made, and largely because Bill, her husband, was still a very young Christian. Maturity, she says, brings a willingness to go along with the Oversight "even if they are wrong because God works it out in His way". Their inexperience allowed them to be "falsely led"³ out because of their disagreement. The Assemblies of God Oversight was unsatisfactory but they persisted with it for some time because of their "vision". Taperoo is a dockside suburb in which heavy industry is interspersed amongst the housing. It also has large areas of swamp, and is one of Adelaide's most disprivileged areas. It is not surprising that Mavis still believes that there will be a "mighty move of God in Taperoo".

Of the pastors provided by Assemblies of God, none were really "called men", said Mavis. One was disowned by Assemblies of God because of sexual aberrations with young girls. Generally their attitudes were "too hard" especially on drinkers and smokers, and they were very antagonistic to the deliverance ministry of God's Army.

When she pulled out, Mavis said, she had a "spirit of rebellion", which kept her out of God's Army for many years, despite her salvation experience and the miracle healings she had seen during her time with

³ This refers to satanic "leaching". Satan is viewed as constantly attempting to mislead Christians.

them. (An aunt of hers with cancer of the spleen had been given three weeks to live when she went to God's Army for prayer. She was cured, and lived for 12 more years until she died of old age. Bill had his ulcers healed when he was saved.)

Mavis' dissatisfaction with Assemblies of God and the "bondage" into which it brought many people ran parallel with frustrations in her own life. She says, "There is a Devil which brings me to nought all of the time because of my own foolishness". She and Bill ran a boarding-house for alcoholics, but they stole from her. Later they took in girl students, but these never had enough money. In the end they lost their house.

Initially the Taperoo group flourished, but "things went wrong" as soon as the first Assemblies of God pastor resigned to go overseas. Some of the pastors tried to frighten people to the Lord, smokers and drinkers were condemned. "Get that box (television) out of your house, thus saith the Lord - that's what they are like." Her husband was "brought into bondage", he would allow no television or make-up, and they had to live like paupers. "Assemblies of God makes people so much bound to the church that the children suffer because of straining towards parents' standards", said Mavis.

This was brought home to Mavis when her daughter became pregnant out of wedlock. Mavis realised that "she did it for an outlet for emotion" because there was not enough love and tolerance in their community. Then "Christ showed" her that there "should be no bondage, if there is the love of God in a home then kids can go to what they want". She only found this "liberty", she said, because she asked the Lord, it was a personal revelation to her. When she returned to God's Army she found it there

too -- "the pastors were liberated". As a further example she suggested that many people in God's Army are "business people and would be shocked not to have a drink with dinner".

Finally events in both their personal and spiritual lives drove Mavis and Bill away from Adelaide, to live in Canberra for several years (she has a son there). Before returning to Adelaide, which they did about one year before I first talked to them, Mavis went to New Zealand and stayed with Pastor Clark whom she had not seen for 13 years. During her three-month stay he prayed for her and she was "delivered of" her "spirit of rebellion".

"Satan can make you think that you are walking with the Lord when you ain't; you must let the Lord open the doors", she said. Now she is much more cautious and "one hundred percent with the Oversight".

Mavis and Bill are still very concerned for the Taperoo area and during my fieldwork period, though their financial position was not sound they hired a hall that they had used before, paying for it themselves. In this they were planning to hold after-school childrens' meetings ("Joytime"), adult mid-week meetings, and Sunday school. The Oversight felt unable to give any financial assistance with this project, because of its commitments to a building program for the Adelaide assembly, I was told. In the end, meetings were never held in that hall and the lease was allowed to lapse leaving Mavis and Bill with a debt of several hundred dollars. They did start holding weekly prayer meetings in their home, however, at which a pastor from Adelaide officiated, and this group survived and grew. The debt was apparently untroublesome to Bill and Mavis, who paid it off slowly, and said that "God would work it all out". Small sums from the collection at the weekly meeting went towards paying the debt, but the responsibility remained with them.

The use of a school hall for meetings with primary school children was obtained. These "Joytime meetings" ran for several months, until the disruption caused by some attenders got out of hand, and it was thought better to discontinue. Bill and Mavis also initiated Sunday school meetings during this stage.

Mavis was very interested in counselling, and felt that the years in which she rebelled had given her much greater ability to understand the problems of "worldly" people. "All things work together for good" was her "personal scripture". Some of the members she felt are quite unsuitable as counsellors because they were far too directive and authoritarian, "even some that have been in for years". Mavis believes that it is most important to show people the love of the Lord, and that once they believe, and place their lives in God's hands, he will work out their problems in His own way. "Lives cannot be changed instantly", she says. Because of this belief, she says, she advised a woman living in a *de facto* relationship not to reveal it at church, just to tell God about it. But she is unsure what James thinks of this, and wishes to discuss it with him. Mavis' views on this subject are not typical.

Jane

The following history, that of Jane, I chose for several reasons, the primary one being, that although she attended services regularly, she was not an official member. In this respect I believe her to be typical of a small group in God's Army. She was also one of a high proportion of

people in God's Army who were migrants to Adelaide. Since leaving art school, she had undertaken some training in nursing, a typical form of employment for single female members.

Jane was involved in the young peoples' meetings which I observed, but did not hold any executive positions in any of these groups, perhaps because of her unpredictable hours of employment.

During my study of God's Army Jane's address changed constantly, but her living arrangements usually involved sharing with another female member, often in the houses of people temporarily out of town. She was however an independent, self-reliant person, who by the time I met her, needed little pastoral attention for her health problems, which she had come to believe in facing herself.

When I first talked with Jane, she was 24 and had lived in Adelaide for a little more than two years. She and her fellow siblings (two sisters, two brothers) had all been born in England and had migrated with their parents to Hobart in the early 1960's.

That Jane had health problems was obvious, but she also told me that most of her first six years of life were spent in hospital. She had as a baby had a collapsed lung, and she since coming to Adelaide had had a series of operations to correct ear, mouth and respiratory problems. She was still subject to respiratory infections, in fact. She appeared to suffer from chronic bronchitis, and her speech was a little indistinct. She was however an intelligent and articulate person, certainly no longer held back by her physical problems.

During her childhood, Jane's parents were both Salvation Army officers, but their migration to Australia initiated the breakdown of

their relationship with the 'Army'. Jane's mother dropped out first, because of what she perceived as the hypocrisy of others. Jane left soon after, at the age of 14 (she had always resisted wearing the uniform). When she spoke to me she said she "felt that if something as vital as the word of God is planted in you as a child, then you must be very strong to ignore it".

Jane completed high school in Hobart and went on to art school, where she found the environment encouraged discussion of religious and moral ideology. The discussions were "deep" and encouraged Jane to serious thought. None of her fellow students were Christian as far as she was aware.

In her second year Jane was befriended by a female fourth year student (which was unusual) who had never been part of their discussion groups. She was Christian, and Jane used to "ask her questions", but said that she never mentioned God or Jesus. However she said, "I was aware of something about her".

Their relationship became close, and each used to confide family problems to the other. Jane even moved into her flat for a while. Soon after that the friend started going out with a "guy". Perhaps Jane mentioned this because she felt excluded. It was, in any case, soon after that that Jane made her "decision", sitting in front of the fire at her friend's place. She had not at that stage been to a Christian meeting or service, but she decided, after a struggle, to go to an interdenominational Christian camp. It was not an easy decision because she had "made so much of her non-Christianity before", but Jane had arrived at the view that Christianity provided the only feasible explanation of the world.

The camp brought all her concerns to the fore, and Jane can remember sitting "hassling it over". In the end she went forward to make her commitment because "Jesus did everything publicly for our sake". She was "very tight" emotionally and started crying, but she "knew a terrific release, making the decision and knowing it was right". It was "like being colour blind and suddenly receiving colour sight, then you know colour without the intellectual knowledge of the construction of light".

A few weeks later Jane went by herself to a prayer meeting that her friend had mentioned. She was slightly "shocked" at the style of the meeting, "people prayed with such assurance, almost audacity". She "knew God was there, and wanted to return". She was also struck by the fact that their prayer was relevant to everyday life.

Jane did not attend Sunday meetings immediately, but she went weekly to the prayer group. She says she began to make more friends of her own, though she attended for spiritual, not social reasons. A number of younger people began attending meetings and services, and many of these became good friends, though Jane's friendship with the art student began to "drift", probably because of her blooming romance.

About a year after first attending Jane was baptised in water, and then in the Holy Spirit. The church she had been attending was the Hobart branch of God's Army.⁴ About that time it experienced some troubles, because people from other churches attended meetings there. Accusations of "sheep stealing" resulted, and the pastor requested that

⁴This branch had been established about four years before, and was originally associated with the Apostolic church. Following a disagreement on the question of prophecy the independent pastor sought association with God's Army.

they make a decision. The numbers dropped back, but built up, as gradually people returned.

Baptism was an "act of obedience" at the time, the full relevance did not become apparent until later. But Jane actively sought Spirit baptism because she could see that "others who had it were on the hot line". She said she realised that it was the "key to the kind of faith they had". She found it difficult because she did not know what she was asking for. Finally, she sought out a community who had a ministry of praying for the Spirit baptism and decided to stay until she had received it. It happened that night. With it she said she had "more control of her life". "God controls mind and actions more."

Jane also felt that Spirit baptism had enabled her to grow more rapidly than she otherwise would have, and she had been able to develop new areas of herself. It also resulted in the exposure of things she had not honestly faced before.

While still in Tasmania, Jane started training as a nurse, but found that a number of her health problems recurred. She persevered and "placed her faith against" some of them, but after a while obtained employment from a church member who ran a coffee shop. She worked there until she received an electric shock from a coffee urn which caused her to cough up blood. After that she was "organized" to Adelaide by her friend the cafe owner.

Jane feels that she was sent to Adelaide because of the excellent deliverance ministry available (deliverance was not practiced in Tasmania). She intended to stay three months, but stayed because she felt "peace", which she said "often lets you know when you are on the right track".

During her first three months in Adelaide, Jane underwent deliverance ministry, largely to improve her health. The main problem,

she said, stemmed from the time she was a teenager when the "pressure of her differences" resulted in an inferiority complex. She had also previously "had a lot of prayer for her lungs", but found that because she had had the condition for so long it was "harder to put faith against it". The deliverance ministry because it removed her negative attitude to her health, enabled her to "move outside with a healthy frame of mind, even though my body was not completely healthy".

Soon after she felt sick again, but she knew that the sickness was not real, and "rebuked" it. In ten minutes she felt better. Though deliverance had appeared most frightening to her when it was first suggested, it came to seem simple and natural. She only required one session.

On a number of occasions Jane has received healing as a result of prayer. Soon after she started nursing she was badly stricken with chillblains. Sitting on her bed one evening she prayed "Lord, I have to use these feet", and she has never again had chillblains. Usually she prays for herself, or has a friend pray for her. Soon after receiving the Spirit baptism she succumbed to a bad ear infection, and that time a girl friend prayed for her. The condition gradually cleared, and has never returned badly since. Jane said that she was not prepared to be "too open" with guys, and had recently realized that her defensiveness was the result of having a relationship with a non-Christian. In doing so she believed that she had put unnecessary pressure on herself, and the relationship was necessarily tense because they were "both looking for things in each other which were not there".

Her failure to take out full membership she attributed to "reservations" she had about the Adelaide assembly, which she found "far

more middle class and complacent than in Hobart". In Adelaide she often felt "suffocated".

The God's Army teachings on victorious Christian living, Jane felt, excluded personal experience, which she considered important. "You don't learn when everything is going right." She considered that a number of members showed "lack of understanding".

It is my belief that the accomplishment of an individual's conversion to God's Army incorporates a significant element of serendipity, and that there are two areas in which this has importance. The first consists in the particular life circumstances in which a prospect is involved at the time of encountering God's Army ideology. Secondly, the personal variability in the God's Army outlook to which I have previously referred is such that initial meaningful encounters with members can be extremely influential in engaging the interest of the prospect or otherwise. The organization partially recognises this fact and, on the basis of visual assessment, attempts to assign an appropriate counsellor to each of those who goes forward for salvation.

The significance of these two areas of chance can be demonstrated by an interactionist perspective because of the emphasis it places on the construction of 'world-views' as a mutual activity. It is necessary that a prospect be approached at a time at which he can be persuaded to contemplate the possible viability of world-views other than his own. In recognition of this, God's Army members often first approach prospects when they are visibly stressed. It is also necessary that the presentational characteristics of both actors, preconvert and adviser, be such that they are able to undertake a mutually meaningful exchange.

Retrospectively factors leading a convert to show willingness to contemplate new world-views may be interpreted by him(her) as stressful, whether or not they were experienced as such at the time. A number of God's Army members instead of recalling preconversion stress, used terms denoting dissatisfaction or aimlessness in their accounts of their then current life-styles or religious involvements. They framed their past lives in terms of general ontological insecurity and inauthenticity.

However, bearing in mind the situated character of such framing of conversion accounts, it may be useful to invoke Jack Douglas (1977:21-2). These self-analytic elements allow the person to regain consciousness after actions such as acts of conversion, in which the emotional content was high. The act is required to impute the preexistence of the state of aimlessness or dissatisfaction.

The predisposing and situational factors as objective facts, in Lofland's sense, are demonstrated in my data, but refer mainly to recruits who entered God's Army under extreme circumstances, e.g. alcoholism, family breakdown, or disease. These are a small minority of God's Army recruits which casts an immediate doubt on the validity of Lofland's funnel model for God's Army. In the case of the Divine Precepts preconverts were people who were 'faced with the opportunity or necessity for doing something different' (Lofland 1966:50). They had, for the most part, no significant ties with other people outside the cult.

My data do not suggest that many God's Army members found themselves in their preconvert phase in a situation in which change was imperative. Nor have they lost all significant associations with non-members, though several of the examples I describe do appear to have suffered from diminished sociability. Generally, God's Army members may not be so rigidly categorised in terms of their preconversion state as the Divine Precepts.

Conversion into the two groups is accomplished in a vastly different manner, the one gradual, the other rapid, and members' retrospective constructions of the event, depending as it does on a mutual construction of meaning within the group, will vary. The Divine Precepts however do not emphasise a discrete temporal act of public commitment, the necessity of which dominates God's Army's perception of the event.

A common property of all my informants, and one which I believe to be most important, is their previous experience of Christian religion, usually initiated in their youth, and very often establishing a pattern of active involvement. However, the prime importance of this involvement I see as the ready access it gives the informants, as preconverts, to the basic options of Christian ideology and practice. There are two ways in which I see this as being influential. Firstly, the prospects have some familiarity with the content of Christian ideology, but this they share with most members of Australian society. More importantly, these prospects who have actually participated in Christian life-styles previously, have experienced in operation a 'world-view', or, in Berger and Luckmann's (1966:110-22) terms, a symbolic universe, i.e. overarching system which binds together the ideological legitimations of lesser world events and institutions. Most members' previous experience of Christianity stems from childhood, a time of life during which the individual's still limited social perceptiveness allows matters which are later affairs of faith to achieve facticity, in Berger's sense of a reality external to the self. That is, children are capable of sustaining a life totally encompassed by God. In part this can arise simply because their parents, or significant others, tell them it is so. But parents are able to employ this 'world-constructing' power over their children because of what I shall call the 'unsecularized' nature of the child's consciousness. It is only gradually, in a dialectical process of differentiation, that the childish consciousness and the external world simultaneously assume increasing complexity, as theorists such as Piaget (1951) have argued. As part of this, the child eventually comes to see the separate domination of life areas by separate institutions, and simultaneously, his everyday conscious

experience falls into separated mutually insulated compartments. The individual is then forced into the reality of the constant compromise of everyday life.

For some people, I suggest, a correlate of this process is to experience a failure to understand life happenings, accompanied by a sense of loss of power, because of the perceived failure of a moral system to control the actions of both the self, and others. The collapse of an all-pervasive world-view requires that particular circumstances be invoked in exegesis of any particular action. Dealing with that action then becomes infinitely more problematic.

Luckmann (1974) has argued that 'church-based religion' (which I call mainline religion) has clung to the semblance of possession of an all-embracing world-view. However the increasing domination of some life areas by other institutions has forced the abdication of church-based religion from its former role of norm specifying in many areas of social life. The goals towards which many enthusiastic religions and cultic groups explicitly strive is a reinvestment of the whole of life with religious significance, which requires them to re-specify the content of norms of conduct in the everyday world, often in conflict with non-religious norms.

While such a program will usually appear irrational to people whose view of religion is of an institution compartmentalized into special areas of life, it is a mistake to assume that this view is the only one held. In Australian society it remains possible for the childhood experiences of some people with a symbolic universe to render them susceptible to the appeal of enthusiastic religion. This argument must necessarily be tentative, since, as Berger and Kellner (1970) point out,

human identities are, through the process of 'conversation' in a continuous process of construction. Depending on the maintenance of some significant others, a symbolic universe may remain real to a person, but latent. An encounter with an evangelist may then be responsible for 'alternation' to that previously latent world-view. Carolyn gives an account of herself which leads me to suggest that she experienced such an 'alternation'. However, her postconversion claim that she had always believed in God is a retrospective assessment which as such may unwarrantedly attribute purpose and pattern in her actions.

We may also examine the question in terms of what 'advantages' totalistic world-views offer to their adherents. It is here that I see control as a key factor. New controlling forces are enabled to operate within the member as he is taken over by the deity, and in addition the reduction of options for action increases self-control and decisiveness. This, I propose, is responsible for the new "power" of which many enthusiastic converts are conscious. The all-encompassing world-view also offers an unambiguous interpretation of events and behavior, and a sense of the moral command of situations even where the same world-view is not operated by all individuals. Totalistic world-views, reinforced by behavioral codes, invest adherents with a sense of 'ought' which they may freely apply to others, and themselves in relation to others. Courses of action are clarified.

What I suggest is that preconverts to God's Army at some stage before their conversion obtain some sense of the operation of that world-view. This may be from the long-term memories evoked by the recent encounter with the God's Army view, or it may depend on the more immediate impressions formed by contact with members, and/or meetings. The potential

efficacy of the God's Army world-view in the member's own life becomes at least liminally apparent, and they perform their act of public commitment. Again, following Jack Douglas, I wish to emphasise that the individual's level of awareness of the implications of his actions may be minimal prior to the action. Thereafter, member-fostered awareness (with which I deal later) of the potential use of God's Army ideology begins to grow, and it is this which determines the level of commitment at any point of time.

My discussion of the religious experience of preconverts cannot be seen as a rough equivalent of Lofland's (1966:46) claim for the Divine Precepts, that they (a) believed in an active supernatural realm which could intervene in the material world, and (b) had a 'teleological conception of the universe'. Lofland's material is here derived from retrospective biographical reports, subject, as I have already described, to 'reconstruction'. Additionally, Jack Douglas' perspective raises the question of the extent to which adherence to a certain belief may be claimed, if an individual was not at a particular time operating in terms of that belief. My argument, which cannot, because of limitations I have already acknowledged, be made as strongly as Lofland's, is in terms of familiarity with the potential of all-encompassing world-views, and with willingness to adopt such a view which possibly has roots in childhood experience. In addition, the situation of the prospect must be such that he/she perceives, at some level, potential advantages in the application of the God's Army world-view. It is impossible to be more specific than this because the options of the preconvert always remain open, and the situations in which each of them find relevance for God's Army ideology are infinitely variable.

What is important about my argument in contradistinction to Berger's (1963:76) contention, is that conversion (alternation) not only transforms the past, but that its potential to transform the future is also perceived at some level.

A high percentage of survey respondents (73%) were born into families which had Christian affiliations of some kind. All interviewees had Christian backgrounds, many of which, at least at some stage, had involved a high degree of participation. This raises the question of whether some religions create in some participants expectations of a spiritual or ideological nature, which they cannot sustain, at least over time (which is part of a question that I have addressed in the first section of my thesis).

If we examine the members' biographies which I have presented, some Christian ideology is present in childhood. It is interesting that Mark, who claimed that his family were nominally Greek Orthodox, says that he was most influenced by his father's fervently democratic, 'communistic' outlook. I here make explicit my inclusion of such strongly-held political beliefs in my usage of the concept of overarching world-views.

The members' histories which I have presented all demonstrate immediate preconversion experience which, from what facts can be surmised to be objective, show situations which were potentially stressful. I cannot say, however, that each informant experienced stress or distress, only that their situation was such that they were prepared to change their life-styles.

Mark, for instance, was born in Australia to Greek migrant parents, a situation generally recognised as potentially problematic for

both parties. Towards the end of what had been a successful high school career, Mark became heavily involved in political activity and snooker, and began failing in his academic work. Although he was well regarded by his peers, his relations with school staff deteriorated.

His home situation was riven with conflict as he and his three sisters resisted the authority of his parents, whose religious ideas were still Greek Orthodox. One sister left home.

By converting to God's Army, Mark adopted a separate moral authority, which could be objectivated as more powerful, and all-pervading than his father. In doing so he was able to accomplish several separate manoeuvres in his life. (1) He preempted his father's ultimate moral jurisdiction over him. (2) His espousal of the God's Army world-view ensured that his work-oriented priorities would be reestablished over his political and sporting ones. (3) Because of the Christian nature of the world-view that he adopted, he left open the possibility that he could eventually establish warm relationships with his parents. He effected the reestablishment of order in a life which showed signs of becoming chaotic, without a capitulation to parental authority. He has subsequently completed a teaching degree, established a career within God's Army, and regained close relations with his parents.

Carolyn's conversion can be seen to have provided several useful tools in her marital situation. (1) It removed her from her husband's moral domination, (2) and did so in a manner which, because of his left-wing political views, was bound to 'sting' him. (Here we see an element of deviance in McHugh's (1970) sense of deliberate rule violation, a point on which I shall elaborate later). (3) Her adoption of a world-view with strong proscriptions for marital relations and childrearing practices

that additionally have wide general recognition and support within society, provided her with leverage in those situations. (4) She obtained a sense of moral certainty.

Jane's preconversion situation was marked by her continuing ill health, facial and vocal disfigurement. Her relationship with her parents was difficult, particularly with her mother, who, because of Jane's delicacy, had always been over-protective towards her. Her recent life had brought about the resurfacing of spiritual questions, possibly for her particularly difficult because of past associations with the Salvation Army. In addition, her closest friend and confidant, who was also her religious adviser, was becoming involved in a relationship with a male that eventually led to marriage.

Jane's conversion then may be seen to have (1) disenfranchised her mother's claims over her; (2) attempted to reestablish a hold on her straying friend; (3) established a subjective identity with her friend; (4) provided a potential community at a time at which she was somewhat isolated; (5) reestablished her spiritual priorities.

Mavis and Ben, who both, in effect "walked in off the street", because neither had made the decision to attend God's Army, are also the members who minimise their own involvement in their "salvation".

The sermon and altar call impressed both into a commitment that they had not contemplated. In effect, outside forces in the shape of the sermon and altar call did intervene by structuring their emotions, and offering interpretations of their present circumstances. Mavis felt as though James was speaking personally to her (and often told me that one day I would feel the same), and this is in fact a common way of experiencing the "call" to salvation. She had no reason to resist, since she already

"believed", but in the unenthusiastic way of those who are not "born again".

Ben, who had for a time held atheistic views, was conscious of an internal struggle in which he however was hardly involved. "Something was fighting over me." This is another quite typical way of reporting conversion experience.

Both these members, by their retrospective exegeses of their respective conversion experiences, suggest that their major interest was in obtaining and giving proof that cosmic (God/Satan) forces could intervene in their lives.

In her account Mavis' God had previously been somewhat impersonal. Suddenly she knew that He had a real and immediate interest in her life, and so did His adversary, Satan. The source of her problems became clear, as did the means of their rectification. The past was explained, and a new future opened up, a future in which problems were to be framed as attacks of Satan and thus contained. The newly acquired holistic worldview removed the necessity to ponder on each new circumstance, such as the reasons for which people thieved from her, or the causes of her tiredness. The answers she was seeking were no longer to be found in ill-will and misfortune, and other disparate causes, but were given coherence in the person of Satan. Once Mavis realised that other people were not the source of her problems, the quality of her social relations improved, and she could behave joyfully and lovingly. This perspective is indeed reflected in Mavis' presentational style.

Mavis' salvation also gave her a project, that of "winning souls", upon which, according to her account, she embarked with enthusiasm.

Before their conversions both Ben and Mavis appear to have lacked a project in the sense that they had no practical aspirations which might eventually lead to the alleviation of their respective situations. Mavis had no prospect other than the daily fact of her shop and kitchen, and Ben had only the prospect of continued unemployment, alleviated solely by the prospect of smoking marijuana with his friends.

Conversion gave Ben a very immediate promise of change, and that was in the chance of pleasing the "young ladies" on either side of him. More importantly, it allowed a conceptual reorganization of his life, both past and future. It provided him with both the reason and the means for doing so.

Gerlach and Hine (1970:159) suggest, following Hoffer (1958), that it is not meaning but attitude which provides a doctrine with efficacy, and that the certitude stems from the act of commitment which involves what they call 'cognitive closure', a climax of the 'cognitive restructuring process' (*ibid.*:161). I suggest that it is the nature of the belief system which necessitates the 'leap of faith' or commitment.

My data is illustrative of a contention which says that the efficacy of a doctrine stems from its meaning, and the way that that 'meaning' can be seen to explain and give purpose to people's lives, past and future.

'Certitude' is not a property of doctrine, it is conferred in the social process by which we all maintain or restructure the world about us. The necessity of a commitment process acknowledges the lack of 'certitude' of any set of beliefs. Once such a set of beliefs is adopted they require the continual servicing of certain types of social interaction in order to maintain them. (I address this question more fully later.)

Jules-Rosette (1975:61) writes of her own conversion to the Apostolic church of John Maranke:

For each new member, the conversion experience restructures basic expectations about and representations of a previously known reality.

However, she sees no permanence in the interpretation of events which it provides, but each emerging situation requires the production of new and reinforcing evaluations. This is more congruent with the view of conversion to which my study has led me.

I believe that members adopted God's Army ideology, not because of its 'certitude', but because of the nature of its content. Primary among these was the fact that it addressed itself to ultimate cosmological issues, and was also capable of interpreting members' life events in terms of ultimate forces, i.e. it was transcendent of the everyday, and could be used to lift members' lives out of the mundane. Both Ben and Mavis came to perceive that the cosmological forces were acting in their lives at the moment of conversion, and had been, prior to that.

The other most important aspect of conversion was that it enabled members to make conceptual, and hence real changes in their lives. Such changes could only be effectively made because of the respected nature of Christian ideology in Australian society. The authority figure converts adopted (God) was inherently more powerful than the actors with whom they were involved in their worldly struggles. New paths of action could be legitimated, and ensured of a recognised supportive system.

CHAPTER IV
RECRUITMENT PRACTICES

The basis of God's Army's externally directed appeal has undergone several changes since the group's foundation, and its main thrust is now towards those dislocated by individual circumstances, physical or social, from society. A related phenomenon, described by Beckford (1975a), also occurs in God's Army, and that is a change in recruitment pattern over time, related to changes in the presentational style of members, collectively and individually.

Modern society is such as to make the potential recruitment base extremely wide, since the sources of dislocation may be expected to diversify with social differentiation. Economic change in Australia created in all large urban areas social mobility which allowed the proliferation of individual ambitions, and material and social expectations, hopes which in many individual cases were frustrated (Wild 1978: 52-65). Neither have the more arbitrary tragedies of sickness and premature death disappeared, and the incidence of recognised nervous indisposition, and more serious mental problems is increasing.

Indirectly, however, the God's Army appeal is to dissatisfied Christians, those whose *religious* life has ceased to have reality. To these people God's Army promises a "real experience of Christ in a personal way". Several of the mainline denominations stem from the enthusiastic, evangelical tradition which is now the God's Army style. The full routinization of such bodies must inevitably lead to a frustration of the spiritual expressivity of some members for whom the enthusiastic tradition was paramount. Such groups fail to feed the expectations they create in their adherents, who may *then* become 'seekers'.

This proposition may be contrasted with the more frequent analyses which relied almost exclusively on the view that economic and social disadvantage, experienced as relatively depriving, led to availability for recruitment. But these arguments have difficulty in showing the way that such definitions of the situation were socially established for pre-converts, even when they were living within small-scale communities (Aberle 1966). When applied to God's Army, where pre-converts have no prior relations with each other, they fail to account for the fact that life trauma may be experienced by individuals as unique and isolating. The significance of life traumas must be considered alongside that of social traumas, such as blocked social mobility, status skidding and powerlessness.

The recruitment activities of God's Army are predominantly of what Lofland calls the 'embodied' kind, in which individual members confront individual 'prospects' (Lofland 1966), or less commonly, groups of members confront groups of prospects.

My survey material confirms that relatives, friends and close associates are those most successfully recruited, and probably those most heavily proselytised.¹ Also recruitment policy suggests that the most suitable targets are those to whom members have long-term access. Recruitment can then proceed to some extent indirectly, by example, and by allowing the target to observe for himself the advantages of Christian behavior. Direct proselytization is often considered unwise, but any interest shown by the prospect is taken advantage of, and "sharing" or "witnessing" will occur if the member feels "led" (by the Holy Spirit).

¹A God's Army survey run in the late 1960's found that the most common mode of introduction was through friends and relatives.

Members also hold themselves ready to discuss religious matters in both public and private situations, as circumstances allow. One of their major concerns in proselytizing is to demonstrate that theirs is not just another dead religion, but provides a "real personal experience of Christ". They are, however, well aware of the dangers of aggressive recruitment methods.

A favourite phrase of members speaking of their preconversion encounters with other members is "They had something that I wanted", and this is what they, in turn, attempt to convey to prospects. The properties which members as opposed to prospects are conceived to 'have' are "a real faith", a "real love of Jesus", "joy", and "a real concern for others", and this they attempt to convey in their demeanor, their readiness to help, their firm resistance to smoking and swearing, and their ready energy.

The other forms of 'embodied' approach used are both more formal and more formalistic, in that they are occasions organized by God's Army or subgroups within God's Army. One is called "street witness" and involves individuals approaching strangers with a verbal religious message, or more often in my observation, a pamphlet. Such occasions, which always involve a number of people, are planned many weeks ahead. The focus is often some sort of musical group, singing Christian songs, around whom members concentrate their activities. They very seldom approach strangers 'cold', without the legitimation of giving them some piece of paper, and usually only discuss their religious views if some member of the public initiates the talk.

Music and related non-discursive activities, such as standing with banners, done in the street seem to have the effect of creating a

small zone where the ordinary rules of impersonal interpersonal conduct relax their force. This allows religious evangelists to approach strangers in more intimate terms. This may be seen as an attempt to create a 'religious place' in which Lofland (1966:90) says the rules of engagement between strangers are open, in contrast to the usual situation in public places.²

However, most members express great trepidation at the prospect of "street witness" and regard it rather as a personal challenge than as an effective means of recruitment. The organization of such occasions, however, promotes much mutual interaction of members, and provides outlets for activity, ambition and prayerful behavior. I will give more consideration to this topic at a later stage.

"Outreaches" provide the same opportunities for members. They usually consist of a series of "revival rallies" held over a period of several days, and specifically designed to be such that members may bring along friends and acquaintances, with the promise of meeting "many nice people". After the service a supper is provided, which is the occasion for intermingling of members and prospects.

For several weeks ahead members urge their friends to attend, with such encouragements as "'X' has a great message", or "I'll introduce you to 'Y' there, you'll like her". Such activities are heavily attended by members, and so are well peopled. They usually include several "items", often singing, from members, and are climaxed by a sermon delivered in an emotive style. Most often "Outreaches" are held in towns or suburbs in which there is no God's Army assembly, a local hall being hired for the

²Here Lofland acknowledges Goffman as his source (1963:Chapter 8, especially pp. 124-39).

purpose. Several members to whom I have spoken "came in" through outreaches which, because they rely on the informal personal aspects of proselytization, are probably more effective than "street witness" in accomplishing their overt purpose.

The primary form of "disembodied" access to prospects during the time in which I was involved with God's Army consisted of a weekly advertisement in a prominent position in the local Saturday paper, the cost of which was \$185.00. This price made its cost-effectiveness rather high,³ however, despite the fact that its viability was continuously under discussion by the Oversight (so I was told), it continued to appear.

The main feature of this advertisement was usually the title of the Sunday evening (revival rally) sermon. Over a period of two years, about two-thirds of these were directed towards people suffering from feelings of insecurity, or physical or social inadequacy. Among these I place titles such as "Are You Really Living?", "A New Dynamic for Your Life", "Manage Your Moods", "Health and Prosperity", "Living Like a King", "Plug into God's Power Source", "Healing, Peace of Mind, Power for Living". Others were directed towards a cosmic (biblical) explanation of current events and conditions, political, social and seismic. Among these could be included "A Red Planet?", "Strikes, Unions and Government in Your Bible", "Is the Great Tribulation at Hand?". Others might be called curiosity-arousing - "Haunted Houses, Horoscopes and Heaven", "You Only Live Twice", "One Thing God Cannot Do", "Millions Now Dead Will Soon Live Again".

Thus the major instrument of formal approach from God's Army to

³The God's Army survey of the late 1960's showed 5 percent of the membership first had contact through the advertisement.

the public defines the type of recruit that they expect to encounter, those who are lacking in energy and health, unable to control their moods, and conscious of their lack of involvement in the better aspects of life. (After conversion, members' views of their former lives are congruent with this proscription.) More importantly the advertisement also specifies God's Army's success. These are problems which members no longer experience.

Members with whom I raised the topic would have been most disturbed to see the advertisement withdrawn. They made such remarks as "While it's there God can use it; He knows who needs to see it", "The cost is irrelevant because God will supply the money for His Work" (a sentiment of which the Oversight is apparently losing sight).

I suggest that, like many of the other recruitment activities, the advertisement has important consequences for group coherence and individual meaning construction. The cosmic symbolic order of Berger and Luckmann (1966) must establish its relevance for all including outsiders who may be viewed as subjects for 'therapy' (inclusion) or elimination (exclusion). 'Disembodied' and mass appeals through the media form one of few ways in which members can experience this relevance.

God's Army, like other Pentecostal groups, has developed in an atmosphere consisting of hostility from mainstream churches, and apathy, or at best curiosity from the general public. In addition, their own view of the outside world is coloured by their belief in its colonization by Satanic forces. Taking account of these influences we may see the advertisement as a synoptic self-presentation which points to the areas of their success, and demonstrates their continuing viability.

Additionally, the tension with the world which they as a soteriological religion experience particularly acutely (Weber 1965), is symbolically bridged by their joint enterprise, the advertisement. Its potential is unlimited. Faith has divided them from the "world", but it is the same faith which allows them to cast their line back into the world in hope of further "salvations".

Now that I have provided an overview of the recruitment techniques which are found in God's Army, I wish to return to a consideration of the most successful mode, the informal embodied approach.

Remarks that informants have directed to me suggest that they find problematic the selection of an appropriate demeanor for such occasions. Some have suggested that to appear too "unworldly" frightens prospects, and gives the false impression that members are not ordinary people. Others adhere to the belief that an uncompromising espousal of principled and moral behavior will have the effect of both "convicting" (producing awareness of sin) and inspiring their audience.

Members then, are well aware of the performance⁴ characteristics of their proselytizing activities, and I suggest that this awareness is heightened by their perceptions of the gulf between themselves and "worldly" people. They, the possessors of a "new", God-given life, have spent their Christian years involved in a conceptual process of maintaining separation from the "worldly", and ironically these creatures whose ways they believe are so vile are the very ones to whom they must direct their appeal. This is related to the problem of covert approaches described by

⁴I use this to bring out the dramaturgical aspects that Goffman (1959) has pointed to in the everyday accomplishment of goals where other people are involved.

Lofland (1966:91-5). Both concealment and openness created difficulties for the Divine Precepts when they used the meetings of other religious groups as recruitment grounds.

By pursuing recruits from amongst persons that both know and are known to them, they reduce to some extent, the anxiety of being 'found out', that is, suddenly revealed as Pentecostals. Their perceptions of those they proselytise can then be tempered by the familiarity which, in discerning some favourable properties, sees that the "hand of the Lord" is already on that person.

The dilemma is well illustrated by a story which one of my informants told of her place of work. Her policy is not to volunteer her affiliation unless asked, but at the same time, do nothing to conceal it. (This has the disadvantage that when in conversation, her loyalties become apparent, which is usually after some time, the fellow interactant may feel deceived.) One workmate eventually asked her "Are you a Bible-basher or something?", to which she replied "Have I Bible-bashed you?"

This remark of the workmate clearly reveals his aggravation at what he probably considered deception on her part. But the basis of this annoyance is the interactant's knowledge or suspicion that he has previously allowed himself some remark or behavior which, given full knowledge, he would not have.

Her frustration is also apparent in her response, indeed, he was criticizing her for something she had purposively refrained from doing.

To be perceived either as a "Bible-basher" or a deceiver, or even both is counterproductive for the purposes of recruitment, and some of the accounts I have heard suggest that, at their work place, members may act so as to precipitate workmates into an early knowledge of their

affiliations. One informant appears to have done this by her expressed aversion to swearing, which in women is paid some deference. Her boss' acknowledgement of her Christianity in his cessation of swearing in her presence was deference of a kind which he would probably have been prepared to show any woman who insisted upon it. Thus the member managed to set herself apart, but not to the extent where it became possible for workmates to regard her as unreasonable in her demands. The more positive aspects of the evangelistic Christian role could then be acted out without the fear of sudden unmasking.

Male members would be unable to operate an aversion-to-swearing-awareness precipitation in Australian society without acquiring a label of another kind. I have no direct evidence, but some indirect, to suggest that one means they employ is punctilious courtesy, especially to females. In so doing they may obtain an opportunity to convey their position to at least one person within their work place. They may then confidently expect that that person will inform other workmates. A female person is more likely to (a) react favourably to their courtesy, and (b) comment on it, enabling the member to reveal his affiliations.

In sociable situations, too, a number of members believe that the presentation of an ideological 'hard line' is unwise. These, the more moderate members, frequently express dismay at the advice that they know to be proffered by some other members in counselling prospects. "It will drive them away." These members also see that their normal social drinking of alcohol is advantageous in a recruitment strategy. The one member whom I met who smokes, was also prepared to justify her habit in terms of what she saw as maintaining a wider access to "worldly" people. Lofland's (1966) Divine Precepts used the practice of introducing prospects slowly to the more esoteric aspects of doctrine.

Other members with a more restricted and restrictive view were critical of what they saw as the overly permissive counselling practices of some of the pastors, particularly those who were adopting popular secular techniques such as transactional analysis. These, however, are the members whose views came to me secondhand, through pastors and other members, and I suspect that their involvement in outwardly-oriented activities were low. I have the impression that they were the late-middle-aged and older, long-term members, whose involvement in the secular world was minimal. The other conservative group was found amongst some of the very young members (teens, largely) in whom, we may hypothesise, following Sennet (1971), to exist a reluctance and inability to cope with the full range of emotional experiences offered by the wider society.

Having demonstrated some of the presentational problems which members experience in recruiting, I wish to examine some of the verbal forms which are common in proselytization. These are drawn from my own field observation and from informants of more moderate inclination.

Although they work actively to recruit new individuals, members believe firmly that the major burden is carried by the Holy Spirit, which opinion they convey quite early to their prospect. Members believe they are largely the instruments of God, who "works within the hearts and minds" of those on whom He "has His hand".

For the member, this belief had the advantage that it could insulate him from the actual results of his efforts, both by his knowledge that it was not he who had failed, and also by a belief that if indeed the "hand of God was on" his prospect, then eventually that person would succumb.

The prospect was intended to realise that he was already operating in response to God's will. The fact of a prospect's appearance at church indicated to members that "His hand is already on you", as they said to me. Members also lost no time in indicating to prospects that they were "praying for" them. "I bet there are a lot of people praying for you", one member said to me. They also speak of "upholding in prayer" persons whom they hope to recruit.

This is all part of a process in which members present themselves as disengaged from the real 'hurley burley' of recruitment. They are the puppets of the Holy Spirit, speaking only when He "leads", the words that He "gives" them. At these times they speak of the "joy" that they now feel, the "real release" that they have obtained, by "handing over to the Lord" all of their problems. "He is the Lord of the situation in your life at this moment", said one pastor at a revival rally.

These members appear to encourage in the prospect an involuntaristic view of himself. It is necessary to "open your mind to the Lord", and "let him complete His work, that He has already begun". The prospect must be encouraged to consider himself already colonised. Members will describe how they themselves struggled fruitlessly against the inevitable, before their own conversion, how they attempted to do things "in my own strength", rather than "leaning on the Lord". Their model of conversion is of the cataclysmic self-surrender type in which the emotions hold sway. A pastor interested in my spiritual welfare, when I told him that I had some 'intellectual reservations' about the God's Army faith, advised me: "If you accept Him in your heart, He will take care of your mind".

Other members also advised me that conversion was "a thing of the heart", and that I should leave my head out of it. This, however, was

not the opinion of all members to whom I spoke. Several were horrified when I told them of this advice. They believe that their faith is completely amenable to rational processes. One of them once remarked to me that anyone who was "completely truthful with themselves would come to God". These 'rationalists' speak favourably of persons who systematically study the Bible, and reflect on it, and finally in an unemotional manner "accept the Lord in their heart". The reputation of enthusiastic religion for emotional volatility is not one of which they are proud.

Represented in this folk theory we see the germ of William James' (1974) categories of conversion, but in God's Army the 'type by self-surrender' is the predominant model. I will examine the reasons for which this is so later in this section.

Another suggestion which was several times made to me was that "there are all sorts in this church, doctors, dentists, politicians", whereas in fact these professionals are represented in very low numbers. This suggests that members are conscious of their generally unintellectual image. It also implies a liminal recognition that the highly educated may "surrender their wills to the Lord" less easily than others. It is very important from the members' point of view that it can be done.

On several occasions, both at classes and prayer meetings, I was able to hear discussion of the problem that several women had in persuading their spouses to convert. On each occasion they were charged with the responsibility for the salvation. According to God's Army theory, spouses, and family generally become interested when they observe real, long-term changes in the behavior of their partners. Words are not sufficient, and may even be counterproductive, it is the new loving thoughtfulness, the self-discipline and the joyful demeanor their partner

demonstrates, that will awaken interest. To some extent the reputation of spouses within God's Army is dependent on their ability to move their partner to a high level of commitment. This is more usually a female problem; one of my male informants had his projected 'career' within God's Army destroyed by his failure to elicit a suitable degree of commitment from his wife.

Conversion accounts reinforce belief in the importance of presentational style in evangelising significant others. Many members told me that they had just had their curiosity aroused on observing the changes in behavior of a friend or relative. Several of these people also claimed that their initial reactions had been very negative.

Rather than considering recruitment rates and processes as outworkings of particular forms of organization, as does Beckford (1973:66), I wish, while retaining sympathy with Beckford's perspective, to place analytical emphasis on the way in which recruitment techniques and processes contribute to the functioning of the God's Army organization.

I intend to examine the ways in which recruitment processes contribute to the establishment of both the organization, and its meaning systems as 'facticities' (Berger and Luckmann 1966) for the individual members who make it up.

What I have related of God's Army missionary efforts demonstrates that their methods are quite different from those employed by Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, and Lofland's Divine Precepts, each of which is also very heavily committed to evangelism. (Coincidentally, the four groups are characterised by growth rates in excess of those for mainline churches.) Those three groups expended considerable effort in the evangelism of complete strangers, and several accounts including Beckford's

report of Jehovah's Witnesses, suggest that this is as much to provide an outlet for the energies of converts (including recent converts), as it is from ideological compulsion.

For God's Army the target audience consists of those already known, or those with whom there is everyday interaction; and their approach is less direct. One of the problems which engages Lofland (1966) is the internal consequences, on members' faith, of unsuccessful missionary endeavour. For the Divine Precepts, their perception of success or failure was very dependent on the constructions placed on events by Miss Lee, the leader (*ibid.*:193-244). I suggest that both the audience chosen, and the methods employed by God's Army have significant consequences in insulating members from missionary failure.

Firstly, by using 'indirect' methods, that is, obtaining the confidence of people before speaking, and "sharing" experiences, rather than directly forcing God's Army philosophy on prospects, members avoid direct rebuff. In addition, the fact that they have had an opportunity to "share" or "witness" gives them considerable joy. They largely see such opportunities as created by the Holy Spirit, and often wait several months before an appropriate occasion is presented, especially in the work situation.

Secondly, in that they are already known, and connected socially, or through the work situation, to their targets, God's Army members avoid the abruptness with which many people respond to evangelism from strangers. The social setting in which the proselytism takes place is usually such as to preclude an immediate withdrawal by the prospect.

The maintenance of pleasant relations with those who resist evangelism over a long period of time has been described to me by several

informants, and the instances mostly relate to their work place. Thus one young male informant developed a sparring relationship with a girl at work who was uninterested in his faith. He was nevertheless extremely pleased when the opportunity arose for him to "witness" to her.

These factors all allow members to nourish some hope of "salvation" for some of their more refractory targets. What I wish to suggest is, that in addition to those 'mechanics of hope' which Lofland demonstrates among the Divine Precepts, the methods employed by God's Army confer further benefits. The result of the God's Army method is that their 'hard-line' attitude towards the "world" is usually broken down in the case of each of their prospects, by the member's knowledge of the particular circumstances of that person. This can occur at the same time that the member maintains his intractable view about the "world" in general. The 'flushing out' of prospects allows a less than black-and-white view of them, and the 'shades of grey' allow the member to service his hope. In accordance with God's Army belief, the member perceives indications from the prospect's behavior of the operation of divine influence. In effect, the prospect is therefore seen as already dissociated from the "world", with the consequence that it eases the member's association with him or her.

Members' conversations led me to suppose that conversion (their own and others'), and the related phenomenon of spiritual growth were a major concern. There was much discussion, especially in classes and prayer meetings (i.e. semi-official occasions), but also in many of the private conversations to which I was party, of the techniques of recruitment, whether prospects were "really coming through in the Lord" or were being "held back" by some aspect of their lives, often an emotional

involvement with a non-member. The organization of recruitment-related activities, such as those described, and also the more socially-oriented 'coffee-shop' and 'picture' nights of the youth group required considerable effort from some members, and were always the subject of much discussion beforehand and after.

There is indeed, valuable insight to be gained into God's Army from regarding, as Beckford urges (1975b), recruitment rates and processes as the product of particular organizational forms.

As Lofland (*op. cit.*) has described, evangelism produces significant strains on individual faith and therefore organizational coherence. He showed with his interactionist perspective how Divine Precepts' ideology, and the skill of the group leader were summoned to stabilize the faith of individual members. Beckford (1973), by contrast, points to the organizational benefits of particular approaches to recruitment. For instance, he points to the phenomenon of the stability-conferring effects of the systematic missionary approach of the Mormon church. A related phenomenon he says is the involving aspects which recruitment drives have on what he calls 'marginal participants' (1973:67) in new religious movements.

Beckford's (*ibid.*) observations lead him to differentiate between what he calls 'conversionist groups' and 'recruitment organizations'. The pressure of numbers which the activities of the 'recruitment organizations' create he saw as leading to bureaucratic complexity. However, tendencies toward stagnation were thwarted by 'the unceasing production of new recruits' (*ibid.*:68). I feel that in God's Army also the steady production of new recruits and prospects has important consequences for the viability of the organization, and I intend to examine this from an interactionist rather than organizational level.

The flow of new recruits and prospects, brought for God's Army as for Beckford's Jehovah's Witnesses, favourable statistics of growth, which could encourage the efforts of missionaries. However, in God's Army less attention is paid to the recorded figures; it is the turnover of bodies, real people, who are seen at meetings, and observed to "go forward for salvation", which spurs on the efforts of members.

The Sunday revival rally is attended by most members, and every week they have the evidence of their joint success as new attenders go forward. In Beckford's terms, God's Army is a 'conversionist group' as well as possessing elements of a 'recruitment organization', and as such experiences the additional benefit of the enactment of conversions at formal meetings, where they become the mutual property of members. This attitude towards conversion is assisted by the Biblical assertion that there is as great rejoicing in heaven over the repentance of one sinner as of many.

Because conversion within God's Army involves only the acceptance of God "by faith", it can and often does, occur in an instant. This practice forms a marked contrast with religious groups who require prospects to undertake lengthy schooling before they become eligible for membership, for example, Jehovah's Witnesses and Christadelphians. Although some 'converts' never again attend, their salvation remains, recorded by God's Army. Here again we may employ the notion of 'symbolic capital' (Garbett 1979) in the following manner.

The 'raw material' of conversions is transformed in the revival rally into the 'property' of the collective assembly. As such it is at the disposal of leading members particularly, and can be employed as a means of enhancing their own reputations, both within and outside the

assembly. It has become 'symbolic capital' with which God's Army's efforts may be furthered.

Many converts, transient or not, bring something else on which God's Army feeds, and that is their conversion histories, the tale of their preconversion circumstances and the changes that salvation has wrought in their lives (there are a number of instant benefits). These, especially the dramatic ones, become general God's Army property, and are passed around between members, and quite frequently repeated publicly at prayer meetings. They show the Lord working, and give evidence of the spiritual depths from which he is capable of rescuing 'His chosen'.

Conversion accounts form a very significant proportion of the verbal efforts directed towards prospects, but I have not yet considered them because of their additional much wider relevance in God's Army. Directed towards both prospects and other members, they constitute probably the most important socializing influence within the group. Members ease prospects towards conversion with their assertions that God is already in control; conversion accounts then hold the formula by which prospects may accomplish the transcendence for themselves.

CHAPTER V
ACHIEVING SALVATION

Many discussions of conversion, both of the political and the religious kind, give little recognition of the subjective individuality of the experience. The perspectives which have been most culpable in this respect are the psychophysiological arguments such as Sargent's (1957), and those of some sociologists, the main interest of whom has been to explain the conversion phenomenon in terms of the uniformities of past experience on the part of the saved, as, for example, in some millenarian studies (e.g. Wilson 1975). Both approaches focus on a narrow range of the available conversion experience. I wish to examine the salvation experiences of some God's Army members as a recognisably small but defined part of the spectrum of such experiences.

The perspective that I will adopt was foreshadowed as early as 1902, in the writings of William James. James recognised one aspect of conversions which has often been ignored, and that is that the "particular form which they affect is the result of suggestion and imitation" (1974: 168). In this statement James may be seen to have acknowledged implicitly, both that conversion accounts are retrospectively structured, and that the group into which the conversion is accomplished usually provides the accounts of the experience from which the convert structures both his own account, and his experience.¹

These are themes which have only recently reemerged in sociology. For example, Beckford (1978), in his recent article "Accounting for

¹That James was beginning to think in this direction is indicated in his NO. 5 footnote on page 168.

Conversion", is concerned to show that within the Watchtower movement accounts of conversion are constructed according to an internal rationale of organization. Jehovah's Witnesses, he says, do not locate their salvation at a crucial turning point but talk in terms of "a steady progression of mental states marked by subtle and sequential qualitative changes in outlook and action" (*ibid.*:253).

Beckford however completely misses the point of analysts such as Berger and Luckmann (1966), Berger and Kellner (1970), and others, that the individual's experience of reality is structured by the commonplace accounts of his group peers, i.e. it is not only the way of accounting for conversion that is structured by prevailing modes of expression, it is the actual experience itself. This latter point is one with which my discussion will be particularly concerned.

It is quite true, as Beckford says, that actors' self-reports cannot be assumed to be the objective accounts of experience that some ethnographers (e.g. Lofland) have assumed. However, Beckford's argument suggests that Jehovah's Witnesses deliberately design their accounts by acting in a selective manner towards their pool of experience, so as to impress their audience.

Although I would not deny that religious converts tailor their statements with respect to a target audience, I do suggest that within God's Army at least, prevailing modes of expression become, without conscious design, the templates of experience, i.e. the perceptions of prospects begin to undergo a restructuring process as soon as they encounter God's Army. It is also useless to talk about actors' reports and objective reality, as though one could by some acid test show the disparity between one and the other. Without the recognition of the

reality construction argument, Beckford's account offers us no more than the suggestion that people learn both consciously and subliminally from their regular associates. Rather, it is, as Berger says, that

Most of us acquire our meanings from other men and require their constant support so that these meanings may continue to be believable (1966:78).

To take the argument a step further, the course of action undertaken by an individual is not the highly rationalistic series of steps it is often supposed by sociological theory to be. This theme has been well elaborated by Jack Douglas (1977). In his words:

most of our experiences in everyday life are only semiconscious; the consciousness of them emerges as we do them; it does not precede and determine them (1977:21-2).

Douglas' main concern is to reinstate emotion as a source of action in social theory, to show that relatively few activities are "carefully, consciously planned". 'Consciousness' certainly emerges during action, but this need in no sense be the final 'consciousness' of that piece of behaviour. Subsequent events and interactions may radically transform the significance that an individual attaches to particular items of past behavior. The world that an individual inhabits at a particular point in time produces its own perspectives on past events. This argument has been well laid out by Goffman (1974:123-35) in describing the 'prepatient phase' of the inmates of mental institutions. After admission, the patient's view of preadmission events and motives of significant others incorporates a notion of conspiracy which binds discrete happenings into a purposeful whole. In a like manner the full significance to an individual of religious conversion will only emerge

over time, and this will always be informed (though not necessarily directly) by interaction with other members.

With conversion in mind, I wish to reiterate two points:

- (1) very few individual actions are highly rationalized beforehand;
- (2) any past event from an individual's biography is subject to interpretation in a multitude of perspectives for the purpose of his present life-style. Berger (1963:76) made this point very strongly when he said 'conversion is an act in which the past is dramatically transformed'.

The first point suggests that we may have at least two types of conversion, a highly rationalistic kind, and a purely emotional response. Again, William James (*op. cit.*) has travelled this path before us. He writes of two types of conversion initially identified by Dr. Starbuck, which he called the *volitional type* and the *type by self-surrender* (*ibid.*:172). The first of these James describes as a piecemeal building up of a 'new set of moral and spiritual habits' (*ibid.*), the second as a handing over of personal will which forms a 'vital turning point of the religious life' (*ibid.*:175). It is essential, he reports Starbuck as saying, that the volitional type incorporate some elements of self-surrender. Group interaction and practice has a profound influence on an individual's perception and construction of his own conversion, as I will demonstrate from my own data.

I now wish to round out the second of the two points concerning conversion by considering Berger's claim that conversion is primarily concerned with transformations of the past. The view is an overstatement, in that it may easily be argued that any act of 'alternation' has definite implications for the future ('career paths') as well as interpretations of the past. What conversion must be seen to achieve is a radical

separation from the past life, and theoretically this can be done merely by transforming views of that past, but it is very seldom that this will be sufficient. One of the chief values of the reordering of a biography is the way in which it legitimates a new course of action for an individual. This is achieved both by viewing the old life and values as something which no longer have any hold on one's actions, and by viewing events as having inevitably directed the self toward the climactic point of conversion. The latter view is particularly relevant to religious conversion in which the guiding hand of the deity is frequently seen as making eventual conversion inevitable. This legitimates the conversion of a member who views himself as having struggled futilely against an unequal adversary. Such accounts may be expected of conversions of the 'self-surrender' type, in which the member wishes to absolve himself of responsibility for the decision.

Several members' histories may be employed in illustration here. Carolyn's conversion allowed her to adopt a more conventional nurturant role towards her children, and generally to resist a number of her husband's views. Ben and Mavis came to see their preconversion existence as "directed".

Many Christian religions demand no discrete public act of commitment, regular attendance at services being considered sufficient indication of a state of salvation. The attitudes of the members of these churches are not questioned, and no demonstrations of faith are required. The American survey material of Glock and Stark (1968) suggests that a proportion of such attenders do not even believe in a deity, so we must assume that their concern in attendance is social rather than eschatological.

It is amongst 'enthusiastic' religions such as Methodism in the days of Wesley, and Pentecostalism today, that a definitive public act has become necessary. Here again we must acknowledge a debt to James (*op. cit.*) who noted of Methodism that unless there had been a 'crisis', 'salvation is only offered, not effectively received' (*ibid.*:187). This act of 'self-surrender' James also saw as being integral in progress towards what he called the 'Christianity in inwardness' (*ibid.*:176), which was a state in which the individual could experience 'immediate spiritual help' (*ibid.*), very similar to the anti-ritualism which Mary Douglas described 70 years later in part as an 'exaltation of inner experience and denigration of its standardized expression' (1973:40).

Part of the anti-ritual syndrome she saw was 'preference for intuitive and instant forms of knowledge' (*ibid.*), and the rejection of institutions as mediators between man and God; these were part of the mode of expression of 'alienation from the current social values' (*ibid.*). This is the alienation and hostility of which enthusiastic religion is expressive. Very often such religions have grown out of a critical attitude to mainline Christianity, and actually experience relations of hostility with them. This antagonism to mainline religions is part of a hostility to the "worldly", of which those religions are seen to have become part. In that hostility is a self-presentational mode, its selective expression towards particular targets, such as other religious groups, better enables enthusiastic religions to highlight what they consider their own distinctive features, as compared with attacks on well-diffused iniquities of 'the world'. They emphasise the reality of the spiritual experience which they offer by attacks on ritualism and formalism in other churches. As Weber (1965:151) says, 'once emphasis

has been placed on this inward aspect of salvation the bare and formal magical ritualism becomes superfluous'.

Another characteristic of religions which emphasise the conversion experience is that the salvation of adherents is achieved through faith, and the act of conversion marks the point of awakening of that faith, often in an unseen savior who has 'paid the price' of the 'renewal' of the convert. Salvation rests on what Freund (1968:179), after Weber, calls an 'authentic pistis, a confidence in the revelation of the savior and in his promises', and sacred learning (gnosis) is no longer important.

They are also often the Christian religions whose beliefs and practices show elements of asceticism and mysticism in the Weberian sense of instrumentality and vesselship. Worthiness to act for or receive the deity is partly dependent on freeing oneself from 'worldly' dependencies, hence the notion of 'renewal', or being 'born again' as an essential precursor to the Service of God is common.

The hostile relations that such groups experience with the 'world' are a function of this marginal or independent position which they adopt, the radical view which they hold with respect to the source of contemporary social problems. In this way Methodism, in the eighteenth century, was aligned with unionism in what E.P. Thompson (1968) called the 'Dissenting Tradition', each lending the other some force. Modern Pentecostalism is part of what is becoming an increasingly expressive reactionary section of society, and there is some evidence in Adelaide of cooperation between the political and religious segments of this section of opinion. Historically such movements were generated out of crises of urbanization, which Wilson (1970:71) sees as productive of conditions of anomie. More recently the means by which people become disaffected from society are

less predictable, and I suspect that what we see is the deliberate selection by religious groups of target areas in society, which may have little to do with the way in which individual members of a religious group have become dislocated, i.e. the issues espoused are not normally recruitment issues. The publicly espoused views are conservative, so as to generate a wide basis of support (e.g. abolition of child pornography, preservation of the family), but to the committed, the underlying, more reactionary, issues (restriction of sexual freedom) are also a primary concern.

What I see as important is that because a religious group holds to marginal views and practices, a definitive act of commitment is required of a person seeking entrance, as much for the sale of the *already* committed as for the convert. The appropriate accomplishment of a conversion is a guarantee, and a demonstration. It is an event on which the constructions of the religious community may be built. This may be of more importance in a modern society in which the individual biographies of members may have little in common when compared with their counterparts during the early days of Methodism.

I must, in view of the foregoing discussion, take issue with Mary Douglas' (1973:102) characterization of what she refers to, following Durkheim (1915), as 'effervescent' religions, by which she means religions in which

Emotions run high, formalism of all kinds is denounced, the favoured patterns of religious worship include trance or glossalalia, trembling, shaking or other expressions of incoherence and dissociation.

These, she says, are a feature of the early life of revivalist movements, but may be perpetuated as the usual form of worship if 'the level of

social organization be sufficiently low, and the pattern of roles sufficiently unstructured' (*ibid.*:103). The conditions in which 'effervescence' occurs she states are characterised by the simultaneous presence of several sets of factors. The first is weak control from grid (by which she means the 'scope and coherent articulation of a system of classification' [*ibid.*:82]) and group. Douglas also suggests that such groups have little interest in symbolic differentiation of inside from outside, and that this is replicated on the social level.

My previous discussion has provided some evidence that for God's Army, and I contend for a number of enthusiastic religions, which could equally be seen in Douglas' outline of 'effervescence', symbolic boundary maintenance is imperative for the achievement of an act of faith, and control is also a value toward which they are favourably oriented.

Such a criticism highlights what I consider a serious flaw in Douglas' argument (to which I have already pointed in a previous section), and that is her failure to address the intentions of the groups she characterises as symbolically expressing their own social situation *vis-à-vis* society by their 'inarticulateness'. Glossalalia is viewed by God's Army members, as are some of their other modes of expressivity, as more highly controlled than their own speech because it is God-given. They also have a concept of allowing their "tongue" to "mature" or "develop". Control is a value which they are firmly committed to establishing within the group, especially with respect to presentational modes of group members, i.e. dress, but also with respect to health and behavior and emotion. 'Religion of ecstasy' and 'religion of control' (*ibid.*:104) certainly do not here appear to be mutually exclusive categories. In fact, it can be said in the case of God's Army that

'control' is in some senses productive of 'ecstasy'. That members strive after the Spirit baptism (which brings glossalalia), some times for many months, suggests that it is not abandonment of control which is involved.

From my point of view, the more serious difference that I have with Douglas stems from her claim that lack of interest in symbolic expressions of 'inside' and 'outside' are important conditions for 'effervescence'. She herself says that such groups reject 'formalism' (*ibid.*) which must include sacred knowledge and works. What then is the basis of their religious justification if not faith, which requires an enormous symbolic leap from non-believer to believer? My data illustrate this point further.

The foregoing discussion has been concerned with two major points, the first that the way in which a religious member experiences and recounts his own conversion is dependent on its treatment as a topic and activity within the group. The second point is related, and that is that there is a strong relationship between enthusiastic religions (Such as God's Army) and the frequency of discrete, usually emotive conversion events amongst those seeking membership.

With these points in mind, I wish to examine data I have obtained from within God's Army, giving particular consideration at this stage to conversion as a discussion topic and as described while "witnessing", and also to treatment of conversion histories in the magazine *Power*. These are major ways in which proselytization is carried out. The message is not only the overt one of the benefits of conversion, but also on another level the way of "doing conversion" is communicated.

As I have previously explained, the views which members have on ideological and practical questions are not uniform, so that when I

obtained detailed information about the conversion of particular members, different approaches were apparent, and I do not want to suggest in my argument that the social processes within God's Army lead to uniform experience and accounts of conversion. There are, however, a number of well-known cases which, because of their dramatic nature, circulate amongst members and are produced for 'prospects' and anthropologists. Knowledge of these spreads rapidly amongst members because the "testimonies" of recent converts are always a matter of interest, and form a frequent basis of conversational exchange. This process is aided by the regular publication of salvation histories in the assembly magazine, which is widely read by members, and also constitutes an important instrument of 'disembodied' (Lofland) approach among the recruitment methods which God's Army uses. This it does as part of the 'embodied' approach which is the most common method of recruitment in God's Army, because members lend and give copies of *Power* to those whom they hope to influence.

This tendency both to discuss and publish the most spectacular salvation histories, I contend, has a latent function for the way in which conversion is 'constructed' within the assembly. The most widely quoted cases are those in which the conversion represents the most dramatic change in life circumstances. The subjects were often alcoholics, "drug addicts", people leading lascivious lives, men who were tyrannical towards their families, cripples and terminal cancer cases. The contrast between that old life, and the new one was complete.

The context in which these accounts occur is one in which conversion is a frequently occurring phenomenon, and can happen to individuals who are completely untutored in God's Army ways. Conversion

quite frequently happens to an individual at his first attendance, at a stage in which his contact with members *may* have been infrequent.

Conversion accounts can both set the stage for conversion, and they can initiate the process of interpreting an individual's experience after the action has been taken.

For the purpose of demonstrating their form, I would now like to present several of the most frequent "testimonies" which were proffered to me from the time I first started speaking with members. Quite often members were deprecating about their own "testimonies" and would say "you should speak to X, she(he) has a terrific testimony". They would, however, frequently offer their own account of one of a few "testimonies" which were apparently known throughout the assembly. These were invariably presented in a very dramatic light. One of these referred to the T twins.

The T twins were two really wild-looking youths who wandered into a God's Army meeting one evening. They were obviously hippies because they had bare feet and Afro hairdos. And they were on drugs.

There were a lot of members praying for them that night. They both made a "decision for Christ" the next week. Since then they have changed beyond recognition; their appearance is neat and clean,² and they both have regular jobs.

Another "testimony" to which I was often referred was that of Rosemary.

Rosemary was crippled and her growth stunted when at the age of eight she was left by her mother, in the middle of a thunderstorm. After that she spent much of her life in hospital. She tried several religions.

At the age of 17 she was in the Home for Incurables, and that is where a God's Army pastor prayed for her. She was cured but did not tell the nurses immediately

²One informant told me that he had to suggest to one of the T twins that he did not need to get his hair cut so often.

because she had been warned to break the news slowly. However, one day they found her walking around her room.

She is now married, and miraculously, because she is still the size of an eight-year old, has two children.

Then there is the case of the alcoholic mother.

Jenny's father was an alcoholic and gambler, and he was also violent. She started drinking when she was still a teenager, and though for a while she used to be the life of the party, she went steadily downhill. Eventually she nearly killed herself, and just had the strength left to "call on the Lord". Immediately she felt her strength returning. She has not had alcohol since that day and has no desire to drink.

One important aspect of these stories is that they all relate to people who are still in the assembly, that is, they are "proven testimonies". But these are not the only histories which are invoked. Informants frequently referred to friends of theirs, saying "he/she has a terrific testimony for the Lord" or "the Lord is really doing things in his/her life". One of these was J. Mavis' friend, who had a very difficult husband and a cancerous condition. She was cured of the cancer, and was given extra strength to tolerate her husband.

Another testimony frequently referred to by older members is that of Peter P., who came in one night in the mid-1950's with a case of tuberculosis that was not responding to drug treatment. When prayed for he fell to the floor and remained there motionless for 20 minutes. He was completely healed, and also "saved". After that, he used to speak about his healing all over the city.

Every week the latest converts bring new testimonies which circulate among members and the most dramatic cases are written up and printed in the magazine *Power*. These are given most spectacular titles such as

"I was the Devil's Football", "Born Terrified", "Nobody Loves Me", "The Gates of Hell" and "A Thousand Miles from God". Several of these are reproduced in full in Appendix B.

The most salient feature of these written "testimonies" is the detail and care with which they describe the preconversion condition. One of them, "The Gates of Hell", is the story of a former member of a 'bikie' gang. He describes riding through town at 100 m.p.h., how girls were tricked into pack rape situations, gang wars, and homosexual bashing. He also became interested in spiritualism, and first attended God's Army because of an advertised sermon on exorcism. He was saved that night, and has subsequently had deliverance ministry, since when he has felt a "real calling of God", and feels that he will be able to help people because of "understanding their needs".

While the preconversion sections of the histories dwell on the details of degradation, the post-salvation portions refer more briefly to the attainment of conventionally sought goals: marriage, home, children, and, sometimes, to spiritual successes such as Spirit baptism.

Where such written accounts are of less dramatic conversions they sometimes appear to take the form of changing an ordinarily sordid preconversion experience into something of grosser proportions, as in the account "Nobody Loves Me". The same tendency is true of verbal accounts too. "On drugs" for at least one informant turned out to be half a dozen smokes of marijuana.

Though this style of presenting conversion accounts is most noticeable in verbal and written "testimonies", it was apparent in the extended conversion histories which I elicited by questioning from informants. Even Mark, the self-styled "rationalist", claimed that his

was truly a "dramatic" conversion. The guilt engendered by his "worldly" life was lifted in a rush of emotion unusual for him. Ironically the awareness of sin appears at the time in which it is forgiven.

Mavis and Ben provided me with histories very much of the 'type-by-self-surrender' of James (*op. cit.*) which I shall call involuntaristic. Here the operation of faith is complete. These informants did not even wish to take the responsibility of making the "decision for Christ" themselves. The contrast between their present and past lives is painted most starkly, because it is not bridged by anything but faith. Their "salvation" 'happened' to them in the space of an evening, and apparently with little mental engagement. It is because of, not despite their lack of rational involvement in their own conversions, that these two informants experience the most radical separation of old life from new. They did not construct meanings for their actions before taking them (Jack Douglas *op. cit.*) but allowed the meaning to flow from the action. Having no 'meanings' of their own for the actions, they were able more readily to assimilate the meanings available in social interaction (Berger and Luckmann 1966).

Thus both Ben and Mavis were more open to make the 'ideal' model of conversion their own, and that I contend is the model of testimonies and the magazine. The events in their lives were and are dependent on the "outworkings" of spiritual forces, both good and evil, and has little to do with their own volition.

Conversion accomplishes, in a minute, the cosmic transformation of an individual from a destiny of certain death to certain life. "Testimonies" by their black-and-white formula help the newly converted to make the transcendence from old to new as rapidly as possible. They

convey the 'reality' of the distance that the convert has travelled merely by "accepting Christ as Savior". Old meaning systems are rendered irrelevant and conceptually unsuitable for any kind of service. Testimonies immunise both old and new members against the continuous tendency of life in the everyday world to undermine clarity of vision for right and wrong. In fact, testimonies in company with ideology, to some extent, detach experience from mundane reality, and place it in the realm of spiritual battles, where it is safe from "humanistic"³ conceptualization. Members are continually compelled to interact with the "worldly", and may be particularly susceptible to the destruction of their clarity of vision by significant others who are non-members.

The whole system requires constant servicing in the form of fresh testimonies which represent conversion in the black-to-white formula and advance or maintain the meaning systems of members, in the manner in which Berger (1966) suggests is required. I am tempted to conclude that soteriological religion lives on 'enthusiasm' as a functional necessity.

Several of the foregoing arguments are raised in my next chapter.

³Humanistic beliefs are seen by God's Army members to be very dangerous.

CHAPTER VI
THE REVIVAL RALLY

As I have previously mentioned, prospects are encouraged to attend God's Army meetings, especially the Sunday evening revival rally, although smaller meetings are often considered by members to be more suitable for initial contact. A Methodist couple, related to a long-term member, were thus invited to attend mid-week prayer meetings, and after several weeks changed their allegiance to God's Army. This prayer group was small and very informal. The main action centered around Bible reading and exposition by a pastor, who illustrated points with experience from his life and ministry, in a touching and simple manner. Following this came refreshments and "fellowship". Usually only 8-12 people attended. The times of prayer did not include exercise of the "Spirit Gifts", but consisted of private (just audible) prayer, interspersed with individuals "leading in prayer" (that is, praying aloud in English). Generally the atmosphere was very friendly but not relaxed. The pastor shakes hands warmly with everyone, and his wife exchanges kisses with the women. Sharing of testimonies and experiences is encouraged.

People that actually "commit their lives to the Lord" in small meetings or amongst friends are encouraged nevertheless to "go forward for salvation" in response to the "altar call" at a revival rally. It is important that the "decision for Christ" be very public, because "He answers publicly for us".

The major feature of a revival rally is the sermon, which, from my observation, is designed to crystallize thought and galvanize resolution in such a way that prospects present will respond to the "salvation call" which immediately follows.

The sermons are lengthy (about 40 minutes) and fall towards the end of the meeting, so that the "altar call" and subsequent prayer for healing are usually the last formal features of the meeting.

The hour or so preceding the sermon is filled with such activities as the singing of choruses and hymns, taking the offertory, reading and praying for the "prayer requests", general prayer and worship, giving out notices, and features such as groups or individuals singing or giving their testimonies. Also water baptisms always take place at these rallies, and some other incidental activities may occur, among them the "giving of Scriptures" to individuals by pastors, "led by the Spirit".

There is an easy informality about this section of the service. Friends sit together and exchange information before and often during the chorus singing. People clap in time to the music and there is often some joking from the pastor reading the notices. Some attempt is made to maintain an element of spontaneity, by varying the order of occurrence of the various features, and also by occasionally introducing new activities, such as learning a new chorus, or kneeling for prayer instead of the usual standing. The lights are bright, the atmosphere is air-conditioned, there is carpet on the floor, and the bench seats are padded. The place is comfortable and cheerful.

Early in the service newcomers are welcomed and asked to raise a hand to receive a "gift". The "gifts" are delivered by young women members and consist of God's Army literature, a few pamphlets, a copy of *Power* magazine, and a paperback book on some aspect of Christian living. Frequently these newcomers will have been invited by members, and will be sitting with them. When this is not the case, members seated next to them may offer a friendly word. Recently a group of young people¹

¹The core people of this group were already very active and involved in assembly affairs.

were 'challenged' by the problem of newcomers. They realized that a number of strangers came into God's Army and left again without ever having a friendly word spoken to them. These people set about organizing a more efficient ushering system, specifically on the outlook for unknown people, to provide them with the opportunity of speaking to someone, should they wish.

Newcomers are thus put at their ease to the best of God's Army's ability. Members, realizing the dangers, are not overattentive to strangers, but, in my experience, readily offer help or fellowship when it appears welcome. This they do with such actions as sharing their Bible, or whispering explanatory asides, once some contact has been established.

The sermon which prospects hear is designed to challenge both them and members. Christ provides so much for those that "confess Him" that it is sheer foolishness not to put one's life in His hands. Those who already love Him, perhaps suffer from fluctuations of faith. To receive His blessings they must act in obedience to His word, in full faith.

To those already members the sermon and altar call may be a reevocation of their own salvation experience. For members it is a remagnetization of faith, for newcomers their first magnetic alignment. The process is the same, only the degree of faith engendered is different.

In order to illustrate the processes of rationality, and the types of appeal made, I will present the arguments from one of the sermons which I noted in the course of my research. The one which I have chosen illustrates exceedingly well the breadth of the appeal which is general in God's Army sermons. The sermon was delivered by a young pastor who

had ministered in God's Army for a number of years, but at that time was recognised as "coming into a new ministry", that is, his preaching was becoming more effective, more meaningful, and easier to listen to, than it had been earlier. His "exercise of the Gifts" (gifts of the Holy Spirit, such as prophecy, knowledge, healing) was also reaching new heights at the time.

The scriptural basis of the sermon was Acts 12:5-17, a passage which relates the escape of the Apostle Peter from prison, by the divine intervention of "an angel of the Lord". The gist of the message was as follows.

A problem which plagues people's lives is the "uncertainty of tomorrow". The unintended is continually occurring, and we can never be sure that some unwelcome event will not happen again. We cannot even be sure of our own actions. How can we break out of the "prison of thought that it may happen again?"

Peter's experience teaches us three things: (1) that he could do nothing in his own strength, because he was continuously guarded by two soldiers; (2) nevertheless he was not anxious or fearful; (3) peace comes to the God-conscious.

This passage provides the guidelines for escaping from other prisons, of fear, anxiety, personality defect, marital strife, and physical conditions. The precondition of this inner peacefulness is trust in God. Peter had no one to trust but God, but this gave him an unlimited source of peace. The confidence that one can have in God is far greater than that which can be had in man.

It is also necessary to pray, talk to God, telling Him what you need, and how you love Him, and believe in Him. This is the second, active ingredient in achieving peace.

Obedience is the other requirement God gave Peter specific instructions to follow and he obeyed without question. Proverbs 5 says "trust in the Lord with all thy heart". There are no ifs, buts or maybes. Luke 1:27 states "with God nothing shall be impossible". Jesus released many people like Peter. A paralytic was set free from the bondage in his life as he listened to the words of Jesus and acted on them. You probably remember the story of the loaves and the fishes.

God has an answer to your situation. He is waiting for you to obey His word. Only He can take you off the treadmill of uncertainty; you know that God will be in your life forever. People can break free from their prisons of fear and uncertainty. He loves us all equally.

Human beings have limits. "In the natural" we always run into the limits of our knowledge at some stage, e.g. with motor cars. There is no certainty beyond the facts that we know "We don't know what tomorrow holds, but you can know tonight who holds tomorrow".

"By Him all things exist, that is hold together." Nothing is impossible, He is the maker of all things physical and spiritual. God's wisdom is unlimited. His only limit is the choice He gave us. He died that we should not be in a prison; that we should have "forever life".

That is the life that God wants to give us, but we must believe. There is no room for uncertainty in God's plan. There is no worry in tomorrow or today. Our choice is simply whether we want to believe or not, and act on His words.

We miss out in our 'walk' (Christian walk) sometimes because we don't listen. Peter could have rolled over and said to the angel, "come back in two hours" (laughter). We must listen to God's words and act.

Referring again to Acts 12, those praying for Peter's release did not believe it when the servant girl told them that he was at the

gate. They suffered from unconscious unbelief. "If we aim at nothing we will hit it." If we have expectancy for savings and healing, it will happen. You will break free.

But when it happens, it is often not in the way we expect, so we do not accept it. Forget your idea of how God will do it. Accept, or it might hinder God. Relax in the knowledge of God, no fear, no doubts, let God do it His way.

God can help *you*. He is no respecter of persons. If you think that your problem is too hard for God, you must change your attitude towards Him. Desire that He might be right within your life and God will help you in your situation. Take an assessment of your attitude and change it.

Believing in God removes the limitations from you. God wants to prosper and release you. The key is to listen and act on the Word of God. You will come into a forever-life of freedom; that is the message of the Bible. Obey!

Peter realised that he had no strength in the situation. You, like Peter, should cast all your care on God. You can break free right now; all you must do is listen to God, and act according to His word.

And now let us pray, heads bowed and eyes closed...(Here the 'altar call' begins.)

Is there anybody here who is sick of not knowing what is going to happen, who has not understood before, but now you see the answer to your problem? You are sick of being pushed around, and you want direction and certainty in your life. You want to hand your problems over to God and trust in His directions and start living freely. You want to act on His word now! Raise your hand. Yes, I see you.

You want the certainty, want your tomorrows to be in His hands. Just slip your hand up, right up high and I will see you. Yes, I see you, bless you.

Is there a third? Has God spoken to you tonight? He wants to give you His bounteous joy.

I will adjourn the description of proceedings here in order to discuss considerations arising from the foregoing presentation.

Six to seven hundred people attend revival rallies, of which on ordinary occasions about 6-12 are newcomers (to judge from the show of hands which is generally requested). Additionally, there is a two-hour communion service in the afternoon, which is oriented towards the interests of members. All of this provides some indication that members have an interest, such as could not be described as merely altruistic, in the revival rally. I will seek to provide an explanation of this.

According to Wilson (1961, 1967, 1970), the recruitment patterns of conversionist religious groups have in the past, and to a lesser extent now, led to problems in the accomplishment of the transition from new convert to stable member.

Firstly, says Wilson, writing of the early days of Elim in England, the nature of their appeal produced recruits who were in no way 'able to provide their own instruments of community, self-control and self-direction such as might occur in more genuinely grass-roots inspirationalist communities' (1961:63).

Secondly, Wilson suggests that

Revival recruits often enjoy revival meetings more than stable church life and often respond to a revivalist in that role, or as a personality, more than to a regular minister (1967:146).

In order that such individuals become stable church members, they must undergo 'further conversion', says Wilson, with the implication that what is required is an educational program.

As Beckford did later, Wilson notes the usefulness of evangelical activity in occupying the newly converted. Beckford (1973:67), as I have already mentioned, also draws attention to the stabilizing properties of missionary enterprise.

I wish to suggest that in institutionalizing the revival rally as a regular form of service, Pentecostals, and God's Army in particular, have taken account of certain emotional needs of their particular recruits. As a corollary to this, I also maintain that Pentecostalism, because it espouses notions of charismatic Spirit Gifts, and thus fosters religious individualism and the notion of Spiritual palliatives, is particularly apt as the religion of revival recruits who may be seen as responsive to emotional appeals. Wilson hints at a similar idea when he says that George Jeffreys (Elim's founder) did not preach Pentecostalism before care of converts became a dominant concern. These people, converted in emotional conditions, may subsequently find that they encounter difficulties in maintaining their chosen life-style. For such people the opportunity of weekly 'renewal' at a revival rally, and the spiritual supports of Pentecostalism may significantly aid their resolve.

The appeal of God's Army as exemplified by the sermon which I have described, is directed to those who suffer from the uncertainties of life (which over the weeks includes sickness, emotional hurt, apprehension about world and local events). Conversion and a new life-style serve to insulate such people from their "uncertainties" and indeed in some cases to reduce their experience of it. Conversion also provides

a new explanation of uncertainty, a new conceptual tool (Satanic attack) with which to defend oneself, but it does not remove the uncertainties of life. However, the arbitrary march of events does have a new explanation and purpose.

The important point is that "saved" individuals despite ideology to the contrary (and this is a further problem), continue to experience uncertainty, especially with regard to their own behavior. Though "saved by grace" they still experience problems because of their own inability to understand thoroughly and obey God's will. They are aware of deficits in their own "believing" (faith), and of shortcomings in their actions towards others. Each week the revival sermon, while it brings "sinners" into "condemnation", highlights various insufficiencies of the members themselves. Complete faith is held out for inspection, but is always just out of reach. The inability to handle a relationship, the failure to obtain healing, are reflections of a failure of faith, and the neglect of ascertaining God's will and obeying. So members are weekly brought to a realization of their own inadequacies, but they are also weekly provided with the opportunity of renewing their faith and making it whole. Indeed it may be, that as each week they strengthen their resolve, their faith is momentarily a complete and perfect thing, in the way it never can be when put to the test in the real world. Members may dedicate themselves anew, "hand over" their cares to God again, reestablish the distinction between their "new life" and the old ways.

As Weber (Freund 1968) says of salvation religions, they seek to encompass the divine, but experience the ordinary things of life as standing in the way of the deity's approach.

The systematization and rationalization of salvation thus lead to a rigorous separation between ordinary life and extraordinary religious life. The great problem in this case is to resist the pull of the mundane, and find a way of remaining in a permanent state of grace (*ibid.*:178).

Separation from the worldly practices and accompanying tension provides salvationists with their real experience of being a "new man". In other words, I am suggesting that the experienced tension with the world of salvationists is one essential verifier of their religious beliefs, a way in which they experience the change in their lives. In a religious group like God's Army where such separation is less practical than ideological, that is, where behavior and appearance now do little to distinguish members from the rest of the world, but where a marked distinction between members and non-members remains ideologically essential, we might expect to find mechanisms which augment individual experience of the separation. I have already discussed some of these.

Informants report that up until the mid-1960's a high premium was placed by God's Army on the sobriety of dress and demeanour of members. All forms of public entertainment were avoided, and smoking and drinking were denounced as a violation of God's temple (the body). Women did not wear make-up, and intersexual behavior of young people was closely monitored.

Many of these most salient marks of distinction have now all but disappeared, eroded by a general process of questioning and conscious-testing on the part of some (I have discussed some aspects of this in an earlier section). Here we see highlighted another situation which must be common in conversionist religious groups. That is, if they are successful, and experience rapid growth, the ways in which they can exert

control on new recruits is weakened. This can be expected to be coupled with the importation of divergent ideology by some converts. Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses and Christadelphians minimise their experience of such problems by subjecting prospects to a thorough educational program. These groups correspond more to Beckford's (1973) 'recruitment organizations' than to truly conversionist religion. And indeed, Beckford (1975) reports that although Jehovah's Witnesses are experiencing fairly rapid growth, the Watchtower hierarchy retains a strong hold on doctrine and practice.

At the present time there is little about the immediately obvious demeanour of a God's Army member that distinguishes him from 'worldly' people. However, the fact of the distinction remains of primary importance to members' self-perceptions. I propose that there are a number of activities now in vogue in God's Army which supplement individuals' experience of religious separation from worldly matters. Many of these may also be considered to serve the purpose of properly constructing the experiences of new converts.

Primary amongst these activities is the practice of "giving testimonies" or "witnessing", that is, relating one's spiritual experiences or occasionally those of someone else. The form of these, as I have discussed, is such as to throw into sharp relief individual pre- and post-conversion practices and subjective experience. I also suggest that as individual experiences of the past are further removed from their situational context, it becomes easier to view them in absolute terms. This process is aided both by the passage of time, and by the particular form in which it is appropriate to deliver testimonies, which disregards the reality that everyday living constantly compromises human values and

actions. The denial of these aspects of reality as related to earlier life, has the effect of severing members from it, so that some are able to say "it seems like someone else". The past life to which they find themselves connected becomes a symbolic entity in terms of which they may gauge their progress. It represents their encapsulated experience of the world, from which they may distance themselves. Giving "testimonies" then increases separation of the religious and the worldly by identifying worldly with preconversion experience, and then placing that experience far from the individual. In the revival rally the process is a little different. By renewing the resolve and strengthening faith the member is moved farther from the "world". These may be viewed as movements along a continuum of dark to light. In the giving of testimonies the individual's past which represents the "world" is increasingly aligned with the darker end of the continuum. The increase in faith consequent on listening to a powerful sermon removes the member further into the white area where his resolve is not compromised by worldly situations. Here, until the world again impinges, the member has perfect faith.

Over the years in which the visible markers of God's Army membership have declined, there appears to have been an increase in the space devoted to giving of testimonies in the God's Army magazine *Power*. The decline in one form of symbolic designation has been replaced by the rise of another, but this presently favoured form is additionally powerful in that it provides a formula for the structuring of experience.

Since members' presentational styles (dress and grooming) have become less distinctive, the ways in which they actively deny the "world" have become increasingly symbolic. Here the increasing size of the group and its associated assemblies has made the prospect of effective political activity more viable.

The last few years in Adelaide has seen the rise of a branch of the Festival of Light in which God's Army has had a major interest both at the executive and ordinary membership level. The group is invisible for much of the time, but has a large dormant membership which may be activated over specific issues. A number of those activated on these occasions are associated with God's Army. I base this opinion on several facts: (1) a large number of God's Army members belong to Festival of Light, and all express verbal support; (2) at a Festival of Light action against a theatrical production a colleague reported that approximately two-thirds of the demonstrators asked were from God's Army; (3) a number of God's Army members (including pastors) have been or are on the Festival of Light executive; (4) Festival of Light activities are publicised at God's Army services. The most publicised activities of Festival of Light are their demonstrations against certain theatrical productions and movies. They are also very active in their denunciation of the recent legislative reforms in the areas of homosexuality and abortion in this state. The most recent public demonstrations, held to celebrate the visit of their British figurehead, Mary Whitehouse, was against child pornography. However, an ongoing campaign concerning all of these issues and more, is waged by the Festival of Light executive at a non-public level.

The issues which are chosen by Festival of Light for public campaigns focus members' attention on matters which are very distasteful to them, but which they as people are unlikely to encounter in the ordinary course of their lives. That is the major issues concern subjects against which members (of Festival of Light and God's Army) can quite unreservedly mobilize a lot of hostility, without encountering situations

in which people act out the objectionable activity. One recent campaign was against a theatrical production which included various blasphemous references to Christ, another was about the rating system for films, which allowed into the country films which previously would not have been shown here uncut. God's Army members (I cannot speak for Festival of Light here) are very infrequent attenders at theatre and cinema, and could hardly have expected to be affected.

Because God's Army members tend to move in limited social situations the worldly activities highlighted by Festival of Light are presented to them unmediated by association with persons who view such activities less antagonistically. (Also, in the face of strong antagonism most associates with friendly feelings towards members can be expected to refrain from expressing protagonist views.) The limited social sphere in which members move also allows a generalization process, by which the whole of the external world may become tarred by attitudes more properly attributed to a few. Also, in terms of the earlier argument, focusing attention of members on the less desirable aspects of worldly life-styles, is another mechanism whereby individuals' perceptions of their separation are adjusted. Their present large following has allowed God's Army to embark on another inherently world-distancing activity, and that is the founding of a "Christian school" which is run in a large suburban property they own. This school may be considered among other things, to be a symbolic expression of the antagonism God's Army feels towards the values which it considers the state education department promulgates. The hostility of God's Army in this respect is directed towards extracurricular activities (sex education and religious studies), and members are particularly adamant that children should be brought up with "Christian

values". Not all members with children send them to the school, which in its first year of operation has about 40 students.

There are a number of quite legitimate reasons why members might not send their children to the new school, the major of which is unwillingness to disrupt education already in progress. The availability of the school appears to be more important to members than its actual use. It seems clear that the available educational institutions work quite well for a number of members, whose close, loving interest in their children enables them to counteract a number of problems seen to arise from school.

It is much more important to members that they have made a collective and visible stand against what they see as the irresponsible and permissive manner in which the state government handles some areas of education. When speaking of the school it is usual for members to use its full name -- "Sunshine *Christian* School", and to place an accent on the central 'Christian'. To members it is the only Christian school in the state, those of the denominational churches being discounted as purely nominal, and the Roman Catholic church being regarded as under the control of Satan. The resources which the school offers to God's Army parents are perhaps not as important as the resource which it offers members in general, and that is the ability to refer to it in conversation, where it provides an economic way of expressing and reaffirming criticism of both the education system and the denominational churches. Their criticism, being objectivated in the facticity of the school becomes more real, but at the same time makes the target of their disaffection more real.

Here again we have a symbolic disavowal of the "world" which simultaneously serves to further distance members from that "world".

My consideration of the functions that revival rallies perform for members has proliferated into a review of God's Army activities which have associated effects, and which seemed appropriately discussed here.

I will now return to the description of the service which I earlier adjourned.

The pastor, having delivered his salvation call, turned his attention to other problems in the assembly. He invites forward those people who feel that they have strayed and wish to 'rededicate' their lives as described earlier. To ease the passage of those going forward both for salvation and rededication the assembly is asked to stand and sing a chorus. The pastor continues to give the call between verses, and then he prays with the one person who went forward for salvation when invited. Placing his hands on the young man's shoulders, he prays in this vein: "Thank you, Jesus, for bringing this man into your peace and joy. Thank you for sharing your bounteous grace with him."

The young man is ushered into a side room for counselling, and the pastors present pray with the others who have gone forward.

The assembly are allowed to sit and the pastor continues to speak to them, exercising his "Spirit Gift", the "word of knowledge". This "gift" gives the recipient awareness of personal situations and conditions of members. Those with the gift do not usually possess it continuously and they do not usually know exactly who is suffering from the condition of which they become aware. In any event, they do not point to particular people during meetings, rather they just indicate the section of the audience in which the person is to be found, or leave it open.

During this particular meeting, the pastor mentioned a number of problems, and indicated the areas of the auditorium in which the sufferers

were to be found. He mentioned a person with deafness, afraid to admit his problem; a couple with marital strife. "God wants to help you", he said. There is a man here who has to make a major business decision which worries him considerably. A young man present has a sexual problem which is a real bother to him. Don't raise your hand (which is what he usually asks), but see me later.

He went on to mention three young people in the back section who "are skating on very thin ice", and in danger of being drawn away. Please forget your friends and come back to the Lord before it's too late.

At the mention of this the middle-aged woman at my side, who had previously whispered one or two asides to me, turned to me and said that the pastor was right. She said that she had looked, and that there were three girls there who were behaving badly. "I hope they go out", she added.

As he mentioned the various afflictions, the pastor paused for a response, and repeated the call saying something like, "The Lord wants to fix your problem now".

Quite frequently there is no immediate response to these "calls", but one learns in later conversation that so-and-so has gone forward because of a "word of knowledge" and been cured. Successes are also often reported at next week's service. Such 'calls' often occur as part of a general call for people who need healing, generally given out after the salvation and rededication calls. The pastor's mention of the three young people sitting in the back section had caused considerable consternation amongst a line of about 15 young people sitting together towards the back of the hall. There was much looking around at each other and whispering. A little later in the service one young woman went forward from that section, and the woman beside me said that one of the three

girls had gone forward. She hoped that she would talk sense to her friends. The behavior of these girls was a problem of which there was some general awareness amongst members, before it was made public in this way.

Later in the week a member friend told me about that pastor's newly found "authority" (authority in Christ) and his preaching success. She mentioned the case of the three girls, and said that they had been "convicted" by his words and had rededicated their lives.

In encouraging people to go forward the pastor mentioned his thumb, which he had injured in a domestic accident. It had continued to give him pain for some time. Even after he "placed it in the Lord's care: his wife would see him flinch from time to time. He would say, "It's just pain". At the end of their overseas tour, he realised that it was completely cured.

He wished to demonstrate that it is very easy to become accepting of some physical conditions. Satan will trick you into it with notions such as "it's just old age" and "it's quite normal to have after-effects from an injury like that". But Satan should be challenged. Conditions should not be accepted merely because of their longstanding nature. "God wants to heal you tonight."

As the people go forward, they "have prayer" with a pastor or elder, who usually places his hands on them, on head or shoulders, or affected part. The pastor "rebukes" the condition, "takes control over it" and tells it to "Go now in the name of Jesus".

It is sometimes said (and with some hostility) by active members that the "same people go out in the prayer line week after week". It is largely the older (aged) members that they accuse. Part of their problem

is, it is often suggested, that they do not take the advice given them in counselling, they do not accept the responsibility of their own spiritual welfare.

Elderly members with failing health, and any person with a recurrent problem are in a peculiarly ambiguous position in God's Army. On the one hand, they are potentially star members, because they have a condition in which the Lord can intervene, a real means of demonstrating faith. However, should their condition remain unaltered by prayer, its proper management becomes extremely problematic for them, since there is no overtly prescribed model of behavior. (An exception to this appears to be made for those with congenital and birth defects, and those with sufficiently severe mental problems as to be classified simple, i.e. those reckoned not to have sufficient wit fully to understand the Christian "message". These people may be considered either to have failed to read the social message, or to have perceived that for them behavioral change is really not expected.

Healing failures are open to the accusation of inadequate faith, or the suggestion that he or she "hasn't put everything right in his(her) life" or that "something is wrong with her believing". These are assertions that I have heard a number of times in God's Army, though not always in an accusatory manner. Whether intended or not, being the object of such remarks is most upsetting for members. One informant reported that such remarks had been made about someone close to him. They were both distressed by it. "It's just not true, her believing is OK", he said.

At this point I wish to make it clear that I am not commenting on the authenticity of the healing practices of God's Army. People recover from a number of conditions both psychiatric and physical under

the attention of God's Army officiants, who carry out their ministrations in a concerned and carying manner (and do not charge). Some may simulate cure for a variety of reasons, including that it is socially easier to be 'healed' than not. Others remain unhealed. This is, of course, more problematic for long-term members than new recruits, who can either disappear, or attempt explanations and seek help in terms of their novice status.

Longer-term members may find themselves in a position where they could be socially defined into a backsliding status. The inference on the part of some co-members, that failed healing means failed faith, will impair the interaction between the member and those peers. The attenuation of friendship ties may indeed serve to make the member feel increasingly marginal to the Whole of God's Army, and this may occasionally be responsible for the backsliding of a long-term member, however I know of no case myself.

What is more likely is that the unhealed member will take some public steps towards a counter-definition of the situation. How he or she does this may depend on the manner in which the member becomes aware of what is being said.

Overt accusations of lack of faith, however phrased, may be dealt with overtly and directly. Where the member becomes aware indirectly of criticism, or even comes to feel intuitively that certain inferences have been made about his faith, confrontation is impossible, and the member in any case may be experiencing his own doubts about his position. Private consultation with a pastor may well provide the member with more internally supportive advice, but his public image will remain unredeemed.

Going forward for prayer is one of the few public acts of good faith and to a lesser extent of faith available. To the member, as well as being a public demonstration, it is an expression of a need for guidance and understanding, and in this respect it goes further than the normal public worshipful and prayerful behavior. It also short-circuits the accusations of lapsed-faith. However, should this solution be over-used, it becomes increasingly subject to a different interpretation by onlooker members. They are, in fact, provided with the empirical evidence of the overusers' excessive reliance on external buttresses of faith, which in turn vindicates their earlier judgement. Other members who receive public prayer for a condition, and are not healed, may chose to be partially cured, and "believing for a full healing". This category probably has a number of people occupying it quite legitimately since the extent of cure with a number of conditions is a subjectively assessed quantity in any case.

It is quite usual for those who have received prayer to be asked during that service or the next, whether they are healed. Public prayer to a certain extent carries with it the obligation of public cure.

Some of the themes that have emerged here will be taken up in the following chapter on the maintenance of faith.

CHAPTER VII

FAITH

There is another major problem which I must address, and which grows inevitably out of the way in which I view conversion, and that is the problem of faith, or continuing commitment by members. Faith is not a property which members acquire at conversion, and retain unaltered, until their death, it is patently something which requires work at both individual, interpersonal, and organizational levels, and that work is frequently unsuccessful. Backsliding is common.

The view of conversion to which my data have led me, is that it is frequently an action taken in response to some immediate emotional state of the convert, because it presents to that convert at some level (conscious or subliminal), a method of controlling or understanding their life situations, past, present and future. Within God's Army, the fact that the world-view relates the individual immediately to ultimate values and beings, I believe to be the most useful aspect of the ideology in establishing this control and understanding. Here my findings have a parallel with Kelsen's study, quoted by Blaikie (1978:155), which found that "the movement met needs that early socialization and subsequent experiences produced". For God's Army, however, conversion cannot be described as Blaikie does, as a 'matter of continuity', because for many converts it represents a radically new method of handling their lives.

But many commitments to God's Army are made in the absence of any extended knowledge of the ideology, and more importantly, without the full knowledge of members' usage of ideology in legitimations of

mundane activities. Ideologies become unusable even to long-term members who subsequently lapse from fellowship.

Once a prospect has converted, and beforehand if the opportunity arises, the God's Army organizational mechanisms of "witnessing" and "giving testimonies" go into operation, shaping the subjective meaning of the action he (she) has taken, denying the view that tomorrow it will all be forgotten, 'constructing' commitment. To paraphrase Berger and Kellner (1970), objectivations must be created for subjectively meaningful experiences. The view of commitment to God's Army that is constructed by members for converts often contains pragmatic legitimation, i.e. usefulness to their immediate situation. Subsequently, mutual construction of members and converts sustains this theme. The world construction process is never complete (Berger 1973:28).

So the obligation remains with any member to continuously engage in the maintenance of 'plausibility structures' (Berger 1973) with other members. However, the utilitarian elements of the construction are complemented by others of a less immediately pragmatic nature.

Jack Douglas (1971:203) has suggested that symbolic interactionists give insufficient recognition to the inherent asymmetry of this process of meaning construction, and I here wish to recognise that that asymmetry is largely responsible for lapses in membership. That is, I view backsliding as the failure of an individual member satisfactorily to construct a world-view in conjunction with God's Army, because of the unequal participation of the organization in that process. Under these circumstances the member can no longer maintain the relevance of God's Army ideology to his (her) situation. My informant, Carolyn, is a case in point.

Following her conversion, Carolyn made a determined and self-conscious attempt to accommodation with God's Army ideology and praxis. She attended classes and prayer meetings, and sought counselling over her personal problems, which were considerable, because, although she was separated from her husband, he continued to harass her and she was left with almost sole charge of two small children. For several months, on the advice of a God's Army pastor, she was engaged in an attempt to make herself psychologically independent of close human relationships. In her case, God's Army saw dependence as more suitably invested in God. A problem which she encountered, and which remained unheeded by God's Army, in a practical sense at least, was the need for some adult companionship of a deeper variety than available at prayer meetings, plus the necessity of being regularly freed from responsibility for her children.

She reported that one female member to whom she complained of the restrictions of single-handed child rearing, mistook her meaning, and told her that God would understand that a woman with two young children might not always be able to attend church. The pastor who counselled her rejected her suggestion that a female member might board with her, because her husband's continuing harassment made her household unsuitable for a young Christian lady. The mutual 'construction' was beginning to fail.

Carolyn's next move was to allow her male friend to live with her. He too was still married at that stage, and had two children, older than Carolyn's. This she told me she felt constrained to do for her own protection. She made no attempt to conceal her new arrangements from the few members with whom she had friendly relations, and she also informed her counselling pastor. The general reaction as she reported

it to me was that it was an affair "between you and God". The pastor's reaction, she said, was not as adverse as she had expected, but he warned her to be very careful about who she mentioned it to, and implied that if such knowledge became general, it would cause a furore.

Carolyn's friend was also a Christian, but her inability to reveal publicly the nature of the relationship between them made it difficult for him to attend services with her. They began to attend other churches together on Sunday mornings, searching for a "spiritual home". God's Army and Carolyn had failed in a mutual construction of reality, because of God's Army's unwillingness to supply a genuinely utilitarian objectivation of her situation and so facilitate coping.

I do not intend to imply that every member who fails to make an 'adjustment' with God's Army leaves. As occurs in the wider world, members continue on in a state of tension, dissatisfied with particular of their circumstances, but acknowledging the "oversight" of God's Army (that is, the ultimate responsibility of God's Army pastors for their spiritual welfare). Ed was an example. He became a member in the late 1940's, having been "saved" as an alcoholic. The early years of his association with God's Army made him conscious of an enormous personal debt to James. Possibly because of his alcoholic background (of which he was still very conscious thirty years later) his attitude towards his religion I infer from his account to have become increasingly fanatical. The result was that the wife, whom he married soon after his conversion, instead of acknowledging his spiritual authority over her, increasingly resisted his spiritual strivings and eventually left him. This he told me destroyed the possibility that he might become an elder (an ambition dear to him). His account, and that of another

informant, suggest that both Ed and his wife had received support in their mutual battle, from different sections of the assembly. The process of world construction could not be satisfactorily pursued between them, so they both turned outward to the assembly finding support, each aware that the other had found support.

Ed was extremely bitter about the position he found himself in, and when a younger female member sought him out because she felt "led of the Lord" to help him, he accepted though female counselling of males is not recognised in God's Army.

The prayerful relationship of these two became known within the assembly, and both were advised by Oversight members to stop, however they resisted. The basis on which Ed resisted was that because of his circumstances it was a female who was best able to assist him in understanding his marital situation. He did not deny the validity of the general ruling, merely requested its waiving because of special circumstances. His argument was rejected by the Oversight, and his duties were removed from him as a sign of their disfavour.

There was no satisfactory accommodation of legitimations for Ed, but he stayed, because his aim was not to question the God's Army world-view, which was after all what, as he thought, he had been attempting to persuade his wife to accept. Now even further discredited than when his wife left him, Ed stayed because of his need to justify himself among those who had misjudged him. He bowed to the Oversight's removal of his duties, which was for a number of months, and he began to develop an intercessiary ministry, which because of its solitary nature, required no official sanction. Ed's response to the Oversight's eventual lifting of their ban was to apply himself to counselling (of outsiders) with such effort that he neared a state of nervous collapse.

Throughout his trials, Ed maintained the interpretation that he and his female friend had been led into the situation by God, in whose eyes they both remained guiltless. His spiritual integrity remained intact. Though discredited in the eyes of other members, God's Army ideology was sufficiently flexible that while publicly condemning Ed, it allowed him to feel justified in his actions.

Before presenting more data, I would like to systematise my approach to faith engendering reinforcing mechanisms within God's Army.

At the organizational level there are a number of processes promoted by the organization with which I have dealt in the preceding chapters. These are "giving testimonies", "witnessing", and a number of other recruitment-related activities including the rededication effect of the revival rally. This is the level too at which the explanatory doctrine of Satanic attack, also described by Lofland (1966:219), is developed. As I have previously outlined, the availability of this ideology allows members to see otherwise random assaults of humanity as the systematic onslaught of Satan, against which they can readily mobilize their aggression. The above mechanisms weight the 'conversation' (Berger 1973) process by which members develop their world-views asymmetrically in favour of the God's Army 'official' version.

Other faith-supportive mechanisms at lower levels, that is, interpersonal and individual, may allow more recognition of situational factors. Ed's ability to justify his actions despite official condemnation is an example. His rationalization was in terms of his marital situation, and was not deviant in McHugh's (1970) sense of deliberate violation of rules. Ed continued to subscribe to the rule in a general sense, all he asked was 'exemption' (McHugh 1970).

As Jack Douglas (1971:138) wrote, "The moral experience of men — those who are not prophets or philosophers — is always situational". It seems that one of the inherent advantages of God's Army ideology may be its flexibility in the sense that members, because of their personal relationship with Christ, can operate it situationally, while the stated ideology can remain radical in Douglas' (*ibid.*) sense of having a situationless presentation. Members then give strong verbal acknowledgment of the officially stated doctrine even though their own use of it is 'situated'. But it is the fact that member-use is situated, i.e. exemption-seeking in McHugh's (*op. cit.*) sense, which allows them both to operate the ideology in mundane life, and retain it in its absolute form. That is, members very seldom become deviant in McHugh's sense of deliberate rule violation, though they continuously operate personalized legitimization of action.

This *modus operandi* has another advantage, and that is that it leaves the rules intact for use on other members and the outside world. The 'radical' (J. Douglas) expression of ideology in relation to "worldly" activities is an important means of mobilizing action amongst members.

A large number of the faith supporting mechanisms outlined by Lofland (*op. cit.*) may be described as an ideological rhetoric for the religious exegesis of adverse mundane events. In God's Army such events may be seen to require explanation in greater degree than favourable occurrences, which however do feature in exchanges between individuals, as examples of the intervention of the Holy Spirit on behalf of the favoured member. I have heard the Holy Spirit credited with creating parking places for members in busy areas, holding up buses long enough

for them to catch, and providing petrol when the member had run out. It is noticeable that members attribute the receipt of gifts as a matter in which gratitude is due to the Holy Spirit rather than the donor. Testimonies are often given of members' needs being met by gifts from other members and even outsiders, "led by the Spirit".

At one prayer meeting which I attended, one of the foundation members (a pensioner) revealed in prayer her need for money to effect certain repairs to her car. When I met her about a week later, she told me that several people had been "led" to give her money, and she had received more than she required. However, she was aware that God had foreseen "other needs of hers", and that He intended her to keep the money. This was described to me as a miraculous example of the way God "meets people's needs".

Adverse events too may be handled by suitable manipulation of ideology. One member whose post-conversion life experience appears to have been equally as adverse as her pre-conversion situation, is a dramatic example. She was brought up in the Salvation Army, by a mother who beat her so hard and often that her legs were still scarred when she was in her twenties. Jill believed that this manifest hatred was because she had been conceived out of wedlock, and her mother had been forced to marry.

In her late teens Jill realized, as the result of participation in a school religious group, that she had never dedicated her life to Christ. After she had done so, her association with the Salvation Army became increasingly difficult, and many young people were leaving, so she eventually left and began attending God's Army.

Her life was difficult and lonely, because she was living in a flat on her own. After her grandmother, with whom she had had a loving relationship, died she became very depressed. It was while she was in this state that she allowed herself to be seduced by a male in a neighbouring flat, and she became pregnant. It is regarded particularly adversely within God's Army for those already "saved" to succumb to such a sin, and throughout her subsequent membership she was constantly reminded of her crime in one way or another. When I first interviewed her, she had had extensive deliverance ministry, and told me that she had been delivered of about 50 demons, including a demon of lust which she had "picked up in the labour ward". This had happened because she was so concerned to protect her child from the spirits that abound in such places (because of the sort of people there), that she had forgotten to pray for herself.

For the whole time that I studied God's Army, Jill had problems in holding a job, and was unemployed much of the time. She said that a number of people, particularly women, freely criticised her and advised her, usually on such matters as whether she should wear new clothes when she was living on unemployment benefits.

Despite her continuing difficulties, both with her relationships with others in the assembly, and in coping with psychological strains, Jill had constructed a vision for herself, and knew that eventually she would come into a ministry of her own. The Lord had shown her that the tribulations which she was experiencing were part of His preparation of her. This would better enable her to understand the problems of those to whom she would one day minister. Just like God, she had been required to give up her son. They understood each other's experience.

Thus she came to view the petty tribulations of everyday life, and her more major difficulties, as the way in which God was conducting her 'apprenticeship'. She felt her experience and potential to be far beyond that of most of her fellow members, whose lives had always been narrow. Her experience made her faith an infinitely superior variety, because she, unlike many other single female members of her own age, knew what she had renounced for Christ.

The criticism leveled at her, and the misunderstanding she was forced to tolerate from other members, lent a compulsiveness to her expectancy of eventual vindication. Jill was a frequent volunteer of testimonies in the young people's prayer meetings which I observed. She would speak of the 'help' she had received from the Holy Spirit in small matters, but more importantly these times of "sharing" provided her with an opportunity to convey to other members her sense of the Lord "shaping" her life. The fact that many of them, because of her failure to retain employment, continued to regard her with scepticism did not concern her greatly, after the 'Lord's plan' had been revealed to her. She then came to regard the leading figures within the God's Army young set as her most appropriate companions.

This attitude was augmented by her unilateral emotional involvement with a leading male, with whom she had earlier gone out several times. The degree of his attentiveness became in many ways her spiritual barometer, for she would comment to me on how many times he had spoken to her, and how closely to her he positioned himself during various meetings. While she was undergoing a second round of deliverance ministry in 1978, she told me that she thought that he had sensed it spiritually because he was being very solicitous about her. This person,

whom she described as a "real gentleman", was the man she regarded as a fitting marriage partner, with whom she believed the Lord would bring her together at the right time. His expressed interest therefore gave her a gauge of her progress.

Jill's history, while highly atypical in some respects, nevertheless demonstrates several aspects of the faith constructing processes within God's Army. Firstly, it shows how an individual member can, through the autonomy which the Holy Spirit gives members, interpret events in ways which project favourably into the future. That is, current unfavourable events can be neutralized in projections of the future, in a way which is similar to the translations of past and future which occur at conversion. The personal relationship with God which members have provides them with the materials to construct their own 'revelations', or 'new obligations', as the prophet does for them all at a higher level of legitimation. Paradoxically it is those members whose lives do not meet the prescribed God's Army pattern in some way, who more often are faced with the necessity of constructing their personal revelation. I suggest, however, that it is the process of 'revelation' which is one of the most important verifiers of individual faith, so those who are most taxed by their experiences may also be those who are most put in touch with the reality confirming experiences of their faith.

I also suggest that the presence of members such as Jill enables other members better to clarify their own meaning systems. This person who lost control after she became Christian, and whose subsequent problems are still apparent in her unemployment, the allergic rash which covers her face, and her proneness to accident vindicates their own lives and moral methods. Her sin is perpetuated by their need to

define themselves in contradistinction to it. Jill, constantly reminded of her slip by the manner of those around her, seeks therapy through deliverance ministry, with the expressed purpose of improving her relationships within the assembly. Members' moral values are, however, relative, because at the individual operational level they are constantly constructed. Jill has for some become part of that construction process, and so her need of therapy is only seen as a further sign of weakness (that is, in as far as other members know that she is undergoing deliverance ministry).

It is part of Luckmann's (1974) thesis that 'official' versions of religion, formulated and interpreted by experts, are, in times of rapid social change, likely to become divorced from secular life situations, i.e. lose their relevance to members. A pluralistic situation is seen to magnify this effect. The outcomes which he suggests are: (1) the production of a system of meaning more relevant to the changing needs of members; (2) a privatized system of meaning construction.

This latter solution to the problem of the individual's relation to cosmic and ultimate beings and values could never be satisfactory, because as Jack Douglas (1971) has indicated, symbolic systems are only useful to the extent that they are shared in their essential elements by other members of society. A purely private system then has no means of relating the individual into a universe necessarily populated by others, i.e. it cannot incorporate a morality code, because that is irrelevant.

I have demonstrated with my data from God's Army, a system in which individuals are bound into a group by their verbal acceptance of a world-view, which they can employ in its absolute form against the outside world. Within that, however, they operate a situational system

of meaning, which as I have earlier explained does not often seek to question the 'official' ideology. I suggest that such a system inherently incorporates 'doubt', because in operating a situated meaning system, members are nevertheless aware that an alternative absolutist view could be taken of their actions, and often is, quite openly, or in gossip by other members. That is, the recognition of situational factors is an individual process of which only those in close relationships may have any real understanding or tolerance. The presence of the 'other' in the form of the general membership persistently confronts individual members with the possibility that their Christian performance has not met the requisite standard. This is encapsulated in the notion of the "victory walk", meaning successful Christian life, which is usually represented in God's Army as the accomplishment of very few members, or of short duration.

Ideologically it is Satan who creates doubts in Christian minds and sabotages their "walk", and his onslaughts are constant and subtle, his methods inventive. It is he that creates the constant drag towards worldly standards, against which members attempt to immunise themselves in the ways that I have described in the foregoing chapters. His skills of deception confront members as new failings of theirs are exposed. It is the gap between the absolute and the situated meanings of members which allows this doubt to penetrate, and it is towards the narrowing of this gap that the faith 'servicing' mechanisms of "witnessing" and the revival rally are directed. It is member's experienced doubts, not just of suspected inadequacy of performance, but also in a pluralistic society, of the ultimate validity of their own world-view, which impells the individual member to constant attempts to encompass the absolute. This

occurs because doubt is not just an experience of members, it is the subject of ideology which maintains that it is Satanic in origin. In a member who experiences doubt 'properly' then, it becomes an experience which energises his faith.

Returning to Luckmann's previously mentioned thesis, that 'official' versions of religion are likely to lose their relevance to members in times of rapid social change, we observe in God's Army what may be regarded as the deliberate creation of an ideology at best partly divorced from the mundane realities of life situations, which, far from alienating members, may be seen as part of a mechanism by which revivalistic enthusiasm is maintained. Caught in the cleft between the 'official' absolute ideology, and their situated operation of ideology (which is facilitated by belief in the Spirit baptism), members experience doubt both about their attainment of Christian standards, and about the validity of their world-view. Because ideologically the source of this doubt is perceived as Satanic, an ideology which is given little place in mainline churches, experienced doubt can in God's Army, play a significant part in redirecting and energising faith.

CONCLUSION

This thesis examines the re-emergence of revivalism in Adelaide through the particular example of a Pentecostal group which I have called God's Army. I have used both historical and ethnographic perspectives. God's Army was founded in 1945 out of the then incompletely formulated Pentecostal tradition, with the specific and stated purpose of initiating revivalism in southern Australia.

God's Army's original policies were formulated in the immediate context of post-war Australia, in which strikes were common, and in a global context in which the partition of Palestine was hotly disputed. James' early success maybe partially attributed to his eloquent promulgation of an ideology which combined the promise of spiritual salvation with political analysis. That is, it offered a religious rhetoric which simultaneously encompassed the local and global situation and offered both individual and political solutions. Another aspect of James' early popularity may be found in the immediate availability of a group sympathetic with his British Israel message, within which was a small number of people who were devoted to other more spiritual aspects of James' teachings. Thus on his arrival in Adelaide, James could immediately command the action of several faithful lieutenants.

The British-Israel philosophy, and those which subsequently overtook it in prominence within God's Army offered and justified strong antagonism to what was perceived as "worldly", by an ideological process which conceived of God and Satan as locked in a battle, the outworkings of which were evident in political and individual events.

Within this ideological milieu, James developed on the belief of the "Spirit filled" Christian, as a person directly in touch with both the will and power of God, and subject to the covenant of the New

Testament.

As this ideology was developed through James' "revelations" it came increasingly to bear on questions of individual wellbeing, and the faith of the believer, and so moved into a potentially wider and more diverse recruitment base. The progression of ideology, introduced as it was through periods of intense self-denial by James, and being by nature controversial in its content, made for members a facticity of spiritual growth. It also continued to mark strongly the boundary between member and outsider, thus perpetuating the overwhelming importance of the act of commitment called "salvation".

The growth, and developing ideology of God's Army gave rise to an increasingly diverse congregation, among whom different ideologies were seen as paramount, which tendency was accentuated by the autonomy inherent in the Spirit baptism ideology. Sub-groups developed ideologies to a certain extent in contradistinction to one another, and this can be seen as having more reality for members than ideologies developed against a "world" in which their contact with sinful behaviour was minimal. For example the concept of "a mature Christian" has developed out of the conflict between excessive enthusiasm and a more pragmatic approach. The 'enthusiast' sees the 'mature' member as partly 'sold out', and insufficiently devoted to 'Christian' ideals. The 'mature' Christian knows that in God he has freedom, which does not require fanatical demonstrations of faith.

It is important that James allowed the evolution of these parallel views by means of allowing each to think that they represented his feelings on the matter. Each group could then experience the facticity of their spiritual development against the other.

Further processes promoted group coherence, and these I suggest are those to do with recruitment, "witnessing", "giving testimonies"

and the weekly resolve engendered by the revival rally. The definitions of reality promoted by these, push members towards a conception of their ideology in absolute terms, and simultaneously develop a strong distinction between the member and the world. The conversion of members achieves enormous importance because it marks the leap of faith from the reviled "world" to the "newness" of one whose sins are atoned. Ideologically 'conversion' performs another major function of God's Army, maintaining as they do their strong distinction between membership and "world". With an increasing diversity of recruits, 'conversion' has become a common, nodal point in the lives of members, so that their various pre and post conversion experiences may be aligned, as occurs in the process of "giving testimonies". The absolute terms in which pre and post conversion states tend to be viewed, gives members a commonality which situated experience cannot.

The absolutist ideology which is promoted by these methods cannot be attained, but this is not as Luckmann suggests, a disadvantage. It is necessary that members feel bound by verbal adherence to a largely common ideology. Their failure to attain in practice the requisite standards, may be justified by their personal relationship with God, through which they may receive individual "revelations" and challenges. Their simultaneous awareness of the opinion of the 'other' as embodied in the absolute ideology introduces an element of doubt which, because of its perceived source (satanic) drives them towards ideological absolutism.

I now wish to make some general points about the recent revival of enthusiastic Christian religions. Western society provides for an immense diversity of individual experience, and consequently for a large variety of occurrences which an individual may experience as dislocating, i.e. experiences for which his education and training have not prepared

him, and in which he can see no sense or justice. Additionally it is possible that none of his reference group has experienced a similar situation. In this I suggest that modern conditions, unlike those of the eighteenth century Methodist revival, may be subjectively experienced as isolating, by individuals.

There is however, a greater range of possible palliatives offered by Western society. These provide explanation and remedy for people in terms which vary from entirely individual, as in psychoanalysis and naturopathy, to entirely collective, as with totalitarian political systems. The latter, along with enthusiastic religion, represent the 'symbolic universes' of Berger and Luckmann (1975). Individuals problems are analysed and remedied in terms which require a whole cosmology. This is not the case with psychoanalysis, naturopathic medicine or even astrology, which proffer exegesis and treatment in terms which, in that they can be associated with a number of life styles, do not demand the total loyalty of the individual. At a very general level I suggest that people who opt for these latter 'explanations' of adversity are individuals who remain socially integrated in the sense that they retain friends of a sufficiently intimate nature that they continue to engage in the process of 'world construction' with them.

The appeal of 'symbolic universes' is, I believe, to people whose particular experiences have subjectively removed them from meaningful exchange with fellow humans. These people then opt for 'explanations' which by their nature, provide them with a history which is common with that of others. As Berger and Luckmann say of the 'symbolic universe', 'it establishes a "memory" that is shared by all the individuals socialized within the collectivity' (1975:120). It also provides a 'common frame' for future action.

It is apparent that enthusiastic religion provides a symbolic universe which is encompassing of the individual in a way in which mainline religion no longer is. Like psychoanalysis, mainline religions co-exist with a number of other lesser 'legitimations'. Some individuals 'juggle' several of these for their whole lives, and never attempt to adopt an overarching, cosmological account of the universe.

The full ramifications of a religious belief system are never initially apparent, but may be gradually revealed (Lofland) to converts as members see appropriate. The full significance of one's conversion is then revealed only to an insider. Those who lapse from membership either fail to achieve, or to maintain, a conception of the full significance of their conversion. An individual may, in seeking remedy for adversity, adopt a 'symbolic universe' without total comprehension of its inclusivity. He may subsequently find that aspects of the new universe fail to accommodate some of the lesser legitimations which he wishes to continue operating. Should this happen early in the involvement of a convert, the act of commitment may fail to achieve paramount subjective importance.

Conversion acquires its individual significance retrospectively as part of the socialization processes to which converts are subject. It is revealed to the new member that he has adopted a radical (in J. Douglas' sense) perspective, which is then maintained by various 'world distancing' mechanisms.

Conversion becomes the life point from which integrating interpretations flow, both forward and backward, for both individual members, and as a socially and spiritually integrating framework. It is the nodal point by which the experiences of individual members are aligned and made congruent.

I have examined in the foregoing discussion some of the reasons for which a discrete conversion experience has become prominent in revivalistic religion, and to do so have drawn heavily on the perspectives of Berger and Luckmann. Additionally I would like to reintroduce Jack Douglas' criticism of symbolic interactionist perspectives, that they present 'world construction' as overly rationalized. This argument would seem especially applicable to revivalist religion in which proselytism is directed sometimes explicitly towards the promotion of emotional abandonment. Elaborate mechanisms then emerge to structure the convert's experience.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

In order to provide the reader with some background material on the beliefs and demographic characteristics of God's Army members, I have assembled this appendix to substitute for a general ethnographic description which might have appeared in the main text, but seemed inappropriately placed there once the text was written.

Distinctive Beliefs

Of paramount importance to members and officiants in God's Army is that their teachings and their church structure are "Bible based". Control and organization within the church is said to be based on the New Testament formula of the "local church", which is an autonomous body, having only ties of affiliation with other similar groups. Only under these circumstances, according to members belief, can "responsible ministry" be expressed, and the "oversight" of numbers conscientiously undertaken.

The other sense in which God's Army maintains its sacred connection to the Bible is by constant referral to 'chapter and verse' during sermons, and on other occasions. Members carry their own Bibles to all God's Army occasions, and seek out the passages to which they are referred. Here I wish to cite to Mary Douglas (1973:40) who has suggested that where antiritualism has emerged among fundamentalists, they have instead 'become magical in their attitude to the Bible'. This she sees as the reassertion of ritual in a 'new context of social relations' (ibid.).

Another eschatological aspect of this strongly Biblical orientation, is the emphasis which God's Army places on Bible prophecy, which is most apparent in their millenarian expectations. They believe that at Christ's return to Earth, they, and the other faithful, will rise to meet Him in the air, an event referred to as "the Rapture".

As I have previously mentioned, the most distinctive tenet of Pentecostalist is belief in the current possibility of Spirit baptism as originally experienced by the Disciples on the day of Pentecost. This experience, members believe is possible for all true believers in Christ (that is those who believe in the death and resurrection of Christ as an expiation for the sins of The World). The Holy Spirit is said to "fill" the believer, at Spirit baptism, endowing him with new strength and power to carry out God's works, and also providing him with a new "tongue" for praise and worship. Unlike some other Pentecostal churches, God's Army does not recognise that Spirit baptism has occurred unless the person can speak fluently in his "tongue".

Spirit baptism "with speaking in tongues" is just one of several "gifts of the Spirit", and is used in private prayer and worship. More salient but much less common, is the gift of Prophecy, in which the recipient is "led" to speak to the assembly, usually in "tongues". This must then be "interpreted" by an assembly member recognised as

possessing the "gift of interpretation", who in practice I observed usually to be a pastor or elder.

The "gift of tongues" is "exercised" in times of private worship and praise, during services, meetings, and in solitary prayer. Along with some other aspects of God's Army praxis, it may be viewed as part of the revolt against formalism of which Mary Douglas writes. She suggests that the 'abandonment of bodily control in ritual responds to the requirements of a social experience' (1973: 98). Further she claims that 'the inarticulateness of the social organization in itself gains symbolic expression in bodily dissociation'.

The phenomenon of glossolalia possesses aspects of both abandonment of control, and inarticulateness, but I propose that in God's Army the loss of control which the conventionally meaningless sounds of speaking in "tongues" represents, is countermanded at a higher level by the God given ability of special persons to provide a meaning for those sounds. "Tongues" and "prophecy" therefore symbolically represent the abandonment of voluntary control of what is for Christians the most important organ of worship and evangelism, to the superior control of the deity. This is borne out by their claim to a much superior level of articulateness following Spirit baptism. Members often reported that they felt that words has been "put into their mouths during witnessing".

A further distinctive aspect of God's Army doctrine is found in their teaching on healing. Most Pentecostal churches also believe and practice divine healing, and the ability to conduct the healing power of God to those in need, is another of the "Spirit gifts". The power is recognised to come, not from the possessor of the "healing ministry", but through him from God. All God's Army pastors regularly pray for the healing of members after Sunday services, but some are recognised as possessing a "healing ministry", as are a few elders and some members. Any member may pay for his or her own healing at any time, and quite confidently expect to be "answered". Others appear to prefer to "go forward for prayer" after the Sunday service.

God's Army expectations of healing arise out of their belief that God has promised to maintain his faithful in good health until their normal life span has been run; and it is congruent with this that healings are believed often to occur at "salvation". Failure of healing is often explained by "wrong believing", that is the person prayed for has insufficient faith. One of the virtues of "healing prayer" from a person with a recognised ministry is that they are reckoned to have a faith sufficiently strong to overcome the doubts of the sick person. Some members reject the possibility of healing prayer for certain of their illnesses, saying that their faith is insufficient to allow them to overcome a particular affliction. One example of such doubts was Jane, who had suffered from chronic bronchitis for so long that she felt that her faith was not equal to the challenge of healing.

Pastors admit that they cannot understand the fact of healing failure in some members whose faith they recognise as strong; and they say so publically, possibly to control the idle speculation of

some members about particular failures.

God's Army doctrine incorporates an elaborate demonology, which as I have already described, leads out into what is termed "deliverance ministry", both of which set God's Army apart from most mainline churches and some other Pentecostal churches. Satan and his hosts have no power over people, but their ability to deceive. Every Christian may overcome Satan through the "authority of Christ", because the ultimate defeat of Satan when Christ returns to Earth is completely certain.

It is envisaged that Satan and his most powerful princes are largely concerned with the overthrow of nations, while the lesser devils and demons afflict individuals. The natural defences of all people against demon possession may be broken by sin, and particular circumstances, for instance motor accidents and emotional shock.

Possession may be diagnosed amongst members who have a particularly persistent problem, with which they have unsuccessfully struggled for some time. Spirits of nicotine, greed, uncleanness, deception, anger, and numerous others, are believed to interfere with a members spiritual development, and success in controlling the course of his life. Demons may also manifest themselves, usually vocally when the possessed person is having prayer for some other reason.

Deliverance is accomplished by the private prayer of several people, one of whom is recognised as having a "deliverance ministry". Through the possessed person, the demons put up considerable resistance, and additionally, there may be a multiple possession. Several lengthy sessions are often required. Deliverance ministry is considered dangerous and difficult. Those attending in a supportive role will often fast for some time before-hand to "strengthen their faith". There always exists the possibility that a vanquished devil will attack one of those present, and when this happens it is possible for the victim's faith to flag momentarily, just enough to allow him to be hurt. It is essential that the person attacked stand firm and "rebuke the devil in the name of Christ" in which case it can do no harm.

God's Army has a very strong ideology of the family, and recognises that a man only can be the spiritual head of a household. Man is the spiritual superior of woman, in the same way that Christ is the spiritual head of the church, and household headship is viewed as a spiritual necessity. A man is responsible for the spiritual well being of his family in the same way that a pastor is spiritually responsible for those who recognise his pastorship. So the authority of the church is carried into the home, and will if necessary be backed by pastoral arbitration.

Females are considered unsuitable ever to be in spiritual charge of males, and therefore are precluded from pastorship, and from counselling males. Very occasionally, however, the ministry of a woman in some area such as healing, is given recognition, though women members are never given the platform in God's Army, their activities are confined to the smaller meetings.

The family ideology dictates, or reinforces lifestyles amongst members. Women who wish in some way to step outside, have the single alternative of remaining unmarried. Family ideology also legitimates much of the political activity in which God's Army and its members become involved. Symbolic appeals to family unity are thrown against the liberal tendencies of The State government which "legalized" homosexuality and abortion. The level of members' knowledge of more esoteric doctrinal issues varies considerably, partly because knowledge in the general sense is devalued, and because even religious knowledge is not essential, since salvation is "by faith".

A number of members undertake short term courses within God's Army. These are designed rather to help members establish "right living", than to load them with knowledge. In addition there is available an 18 month course of instruction called "Bible College" in which the issues addressed are more emphatically doctrinal. It has recently become necessary for members to complete this course before obtaining their ministers "credential".

To God's Army members however, the certainty always remains that true wisdom and knowledge can be conferred directly on individuals by the Holy Spirit, so striving after knowledge for its own sake is quite unwarranted.

It will readily be perceived that this ideology of the Holy Spirit, combined with a strictly local focus of control, and some readiness to recognise "ministry" as conferred, not earned by effort, opens the group to the emergence of schismatic currents. However it is my observation that doctrinal matters are very seldom the basis of dissention, more usually it is over such matters as the appropriate modes of spiritual expressivity, or matters of dress and presentation.

Doctrinal matters therefore are not a concern of members whose 'magical' attitude to the Bible, coupled with their communication to the Holy Spirit, provide them with ready access to all the 'knowledge' they require.

Services

God's Army services have an air of informality. During the initial phases, there is the constant bustle of people arriving, greeting friends, and finding a seat in the brightly lighted hall. This continues after the singing of choruses has begun. The music is loud and vigorous, usually in a major key, and is frequently taken from popular secular music. The words are usually simple.

The Sunday evening service is always an "evangelistic rally" while the afternoon service is a communion, and more concerned with internal matters. Sermons occur toward the end of the service, and are lengthy - up to forty minutes. The whole service generally takes about two hours.

The singing of hymns and choruses is interspersed between times of prayer, solo items, sometimes individual's testimonies, assembly

notices, prayer requests (a time of prayer for those who indicate in writing, a special need). The order in which these various items occur is not always the same from week to week, and the forms of some items are changed to introduce a note of spontaneity.

The exhortation to prayer usually results in a babble of noise, as each member gives voice to praise, often in his "tongue". Frequently hands are raised, and faces upturned, blissful expressions assumed, as members communicate with God. Out of such prayerfulness may arise the voice of a member in "prophecy" and then another "interpreting". These die back into the general clatter of voices raised in praise, over which may usually be heard the voice of James their prophet, setting a slow and powerful tempo, saying "Praise Him", "Wonderful Lord", "We worship You", "Wonderful Jesus". With the advantage both of his most resonant voice, and the amplification system James can control the mood and duration of prayer. Those prophesying may have their flow of words rounded off by the superimposition of James' voice saying "Thank You Father", or some similar phrase.

At the revival rally, the sermon flows into the "altar call", for those who wish to "give their lives to Christ", and then more generally, a call for those "in need of prayer" to come forward. The response to the salvation appeal is usually not large, (less than half a dozen), but many members and some others go forward for prayer. All the pastors present at the service become involved in this, and pray for each person individually. Much of the congregation remains for this, praying and singing choruses, as the pastors carry out their work.

APPENDIX B

This appendix contains copies of conversion accounts originally published in 'Power', the God's Army magazine. In an attempt to retain anonymity, I do not comply with their request to publish the full name and address of the magazine.

BORN TERRIFIED

I was born in Geelong, Victoria, on April 23rd, 1923. And I was born terrified. My father was a chronic alcoholic, a con man, a thief and a gambler.

When he met my mother he had been the typical beau — tall, dark and handsome. He worked as a comedian in the Tivoli theatre. But alcohol destroyed him.

Soon he stopped working and seldom worked again. "He lived on his wits," my mother said. What she meant was that he gambled, drank and stole his life away. He never gave mother any money, so we had to live on handouts. Most of the time we were in old boarding houses or decrepit hotels, complete with fleas and bugs. At one time, in Western Australia a tent was our only home.

Sometimes my father would book us into a hotel for a week. Then, on the last night, he would wake us at three in the morning, bundle us into a horse and buggy and leave without paying.

Usually, he stole the clothes from the clothesline on the way out as well! On other occasions, when people left their shoes outside of their doors for cleaning, he would take any that were his size. At other times, he would steal fowls from people's backyards.

He was often put in jail for drunkenness or stealing, or disturbing the peace. Finally, at the age of 42, he died.

Mum was forced to put my two brothers in a boys' home. She kept me with her. These were Depression days, and like most people, we were on the dole. We used to wait for hours on wooden forms to get just a few groceries, which never seemed to last long.

Alone. Then Mum met a man in Sydney who owned a sheep station and a carrying business. He was married, with eight children. He was a big man, with a vile temper. When he met my mother, he abandoned his wife and children, and brought us to South Australia. He and Mum were married — which was, of course, a bigamous relationship — and set up home in an old galvanised iron house with a dirt floor and a wood stove at Kuitpo, some 30 miles south of Adelaide.

It was not a happy home.

My step-father frequently beat my brothers and me. I always seemed to be alone and crying.

Then he suffered a stroke. His death was a merciful release for us.

Eventually, the two boys packed their bags and left home. When I turned 14, I also ventured out into the world. We all desperately lacked love. No wonder that all three of us finished up alcoholics.

I took my first job as a housemaid on a sheep station at Clare, north of Adelaide.

First Drink. Then, one night at a country dance, I took my first drink and my first cigarette. It resulted in my blacking out. Only 12 months later, I suffered a nervous breakdown and had to leave the farm. I spent a month in a mental hospital. It was to be the first of eight visits. I know what it is like — I have been in padded cells. I have worn straight jackets. I have been tied down. I know what it is like to scream at the top of my voice, to see demons, to feel at the point of death.

In spite of my heavy drinking, I was able to hold down a job. I was a qualified telephonist in both Melbourne and Adelaide. I was a cosmetic demonstrator in a Sydney department store. I even worked as a model for a time — indeed, I was considered to be a beautiful, refined woman then.

But it was continued social drinking during this period that steadily led me on the path to alcoholism. It is so easy. After three or four drinks, you feel on top of the world. You have a feeling of good will towards everyone. You love them, although falsely. I thought I was very smart with a glass in one hand and a cigarette in the other. I was often the life of the party. But after a few drinks I would not know what I was doing or saying, and I would finish up making a fool of myself, stupefied with drink.

Then, next morning I would hate myself for what I had done. I would look in the mirror. What a mess! Bloodshot eyes. Discoloured tongue. Splitting headache. So I would say to myself, "I will never drink again. That's the finish." But the next day I would be back on the merry-go-round worse than before.

People say it will never happen to them. I have mixed with people with university degrees or who come from wealthy homes with the best of everything, and I have seen them wind up as alcoholics and addicts. No one ever hears about them. No one seems to care.

Now I know that there is a definite and positive cure from the terrible, tormenting effects of both alcohol and drugs.

In the past, I always used to carry a flask of navy rum or scotch whisky in my handbag. Now I carry a Bible. Instead of "soaking" myself with liquor, I saturate my mind with the Word of God.

Jesus said, "I am the way and the truth and the life" (John 14:6). And I have found life in him.

Alcohol and drugs. By the time I was only 22, I sometimes felt more like 90! But I always tried to work for my living. Sometimes I stole. And people told me to go on the streets. But I could never bring myself to do that.

I began to take very bad epileptic fits. Then, during the last war, things became even worse. "Eat, drink and be merry," was the philosophy. "Tomorrow we may all be dead, anyway." I seemed to be at parties every night. I smoked marijuana at this time. Then I became addicted to tranquillisers. I was in and out of doctors' and psychiatrists' rooms.

With both alcohol and drugs, I was in a bad way. I have been in "the horrors" countless times. Pink elephants, black apes — you name them, I've seen. And they were very, very real at the time!

I was diagnosed as a "schizophrenic, psychopathic paranoid" — what a mouthful!

At times, suicide seemed the only answer. Once, I took a large dose of rat poison. On another occasion, I swallowed 60 tablets. Once, I walked fully-clothed into the sea! (I was up to my chin in water when a policeman reached me, and carried me out again.)

A sad tale. From now on, it was a sad tale of regular arrests for drunkenness and disorderliness. I ate little, living almost totally on drink. A diamond ring, the one valuable thing I possessed, was in and out of pawn shops. Often the police would find me in Rundle Street, Adelaide, with one shoe missing, my long black hair, knotted and tangled, swearing and abusing them or muttering to myself.

Only once did I reach the stage of opening a bottle of methylated spirits, but a phone call interrupted me, and I never did drink that.

To see a drunk man is bad enough. But to see a drunken woman is far worse. But I felt so lonely, so unwanted, so rejected, so guilty and unloved. Deep down I wanted to be good. But even when I woke up in a park dirty and smelly with my clothes all stained, flies buzzing around my head, and too weak to get up, I didn't know any answer. My whole life was surrounded by alcohol and drugs. I could not imagine life without them.

Strangely enough, in my sober times, I was still very proud and arrogant. Perhaps it was because I was good looking and still liked to wear flash clothes. In fact, I was something of a perfectionist. I also blamed other people for my drink problem. But no one ever opened my mouth or bent my elbow. No one ever made me drink. I had a free will of my own and could take it or leave it. I could choose good or evil, darkness or light.

For the first 35 years of my life, I was a Roman Catholic. I used to go regularly to a priest to confess my many sins. But then I would go out and commit worse sins. Whatever the priest said was like water to a duck's back.

I used to go to Mass occasionally. But I did not understand the Latin service, and I went home empty and disappointed. Usually, I got drunk.

What a hypocrite I was! Or was it just that I did not receive what I was searching for? I lit candles for my dead father. I prayed on my knees to images. I studied a small catechism, but could not understand it. No one ever told me to read the Bible!

I tried Alcoholics Anonymous. There I found some companionship but there was still the bad language and the chain smoking that I also wanted to be free from. I wanted release from all that was wrong in my life — especially the drink and drugs which were destroying my health, and leaving me insecure, unwanted, rejected and lonely. I was a nervous wreck, a woman of sorrows.

There were other things that happened, too dreadful to tell. The prayer I prayed most fervently at times was, "Please God, put me out of my misery!" But his ways are not our ways, and he is merciful.

Lord, save me! Then, came that life-changing day in 1960, 16 years ago. In my wardrobe I had three bottles of scotch whisky. One by one I drank the contents of the lot, all on my own. That is a lot of alcohol for a little woman of five feet three. It proved to be the end of my drinking career — it was almost the end of me!

The next morning, I found myself curled up in a heap on the floor, dying alone. I could actually feel the strength leaving my body. It seemed that my limbs were going limp second by second.

I raised my almost lifeless arm feebly and whispered three faint words, "Lord, save me!" Suddenly, I felt a tickling, warm sensation rush through my whole body. Instantly, I was able to stand to my feet. I felt as strong as an ox. The very miracle-working power of God had come into my body and saved my life. He had heard that small breath of prayer. He had come down to my level. He had shown mercy and compassion on a poor sinner. My chains feel off and he set me free!

I have never touched a drop of liquor since that moment. Not one drop. That was the end of my drinking career. I was completely delivered, from both drinking and drugs.

Smoking was more difficult. I tried very hard to give it up, but after being a chain smoker for 30 years, I failed every time. (I had even picked up cigarette butts from the gutter!)

Half-heartedly, I handed the whole matter over to God. But the very next day, I went out and bought another packet. I took one puff and felt guilty. Then I felt giddy, vomited and almost fainted. At that point I handed the habit completely over to God. And I have been free from the habit ever since.

Today, I dare not pick up one drink or take one cigarette. But this is no problem, for I have absolutely no desire to do so anyway! Whom the Son sets free is free indeed.

Baptised. Later that year, I was in a Pentecostal church in Central Queensland. The Spirit of the Lord seemed to come upon me. It was just as though a voice from heaven called me. I walked down the aisle of the church, with tears running down my face, and for the first time in my life, publicly announced that I wanted to follow Jesus Christ. The Pastor placed his hands on my shoulders and prayed for me. In that moment I knew that I had been reborn. Moreover, I was also wonderfully filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke in new tongues the praises of God.

Soon after that, I was baptised in water by immersion. The service was conducted at the property owned by one of the church elders. While people sang to the accompaniment of piano accordions, and the cattle grazed nearby, I was baptised in a country dam. I felt when I came out of the water that all the terrible suffering and sin of my past life had faded out. They were gone in the sea of forgetfulness, removed as far as the east is from the west. Old things have passed away and all things have become new.

Since that time, my whole life had been different. I have two lovely daughters. The eldest suffered much through my drinking, but is now happily married, with a fine husband and two lovely children. My mother was able to receive Christ when she was 75 years of age. "I am

too wicked," she had said. But I told her that if God could forgive me, he could forgive anyone! She used to read the horoscopes and search out fortune tellers. Now she was trusting the Lord. It is true that Jesus saves!

I do know what it is like to suffer. Perhaps that is why I can now feel deeply for others who are in need. But Christ suffered more than any of us can tell. He died on a cruel cross for our sins. He loves us with an everlasting love.

Since I have been a Christian, I have suffered persecution. But I count it all joy. The devil has tried hard to destroy my faith. But the Lord Jesus Christ is the strength of my life. The words of Psalm 40 are my testimony:

He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.

And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it and fear, and shall trust in the Lord.

I pray that it shall be so!

I WAS THE DEVIL'S FOOTBALL!

I was born in a little fishing town in Germany 43 years ago. My people were Lutherans, and my sister and I went to Sunday School. We prayed every night and kept this up throughout the years. After the war I immigrated with my husband to Western Australia, where my first child was born.

In the years to come we had a lot of hardship and bad luck, following a depression. My husband sent me and the baby to Germany, after selling nearly all our possessions. Then he went to South Australia to find work. After a year in Germany I returned to join my husband in Adelaide, South Australia.

A nightmare. From then on my life became a nightmare. I left my husband to live with another man. I was finally granted a divorce and given custody over our daughter Eva Maria. I travelled the road of sin for five years and paid a bitter price for it. I also went several times back to Germany only to find that I could not settle down there.

My life became a never-ending struggle for peace. I was always running away from reality, trying desperately to find a way out of the mess that I had brought on myself and my child. I had no friends and nobody to turn to in my unhappiness. Life became a living hell to me.

I had to work hard and do all sorts of jobs that I hated, such as working in nightclubs, nursing homes, restaurants and so on, while my little girl had to go to kindergarten all day. Being a former ballet dancer, spending most of my early years on the stage and travelling with my parents, who were also actors, I found the change almost unbearable. I was always tired, and became more and more depressed, feeling I did not belong anywhere. I was homesick and lonely. I still prayed every night, seeing God in my imagination sitting on a cloud in heaven with a white beard and a kind face. Many times I was angry with God and did not pray at all. I never went to church and did not have a Bible.

Point of no return. As I could not find a way out, I tried to solve the problems of my life with alcohol, cigarettes and drugs, until I became an alcoholic. By that time I had married my second husband. I had a little son, but we had nothing else in common. Fourteen years had gone by and I was at the point of no return. The drink became my god; the drugs my peace. My family life fell to pieces, my children suffered. I lived in constant fear that something tragic would happen to my little son when I was drunk as I had less and less control over myself in this state.

I tried to kill myself several times when drunk. The hangovers I had drove me nearly mad. I had the D.T.'s also, and spent all my money regardless. I cried out to God for help to take me away from it all, as I could endure no more. I was in the very depths of despair and had no will power left in me. I really was the devil's football.

Only God can help me. Through a friend I came into contact with the G.A. in Christies Beach. He told me about the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues. I did not know what to make of this and thought

they must all be mad. Little did I know that God has his own way of dealing with people. My friend sent Pastor F. to pray for me. I remember saying to him, "Only God can help me." He prayed for me and left.

Then a miracle happened. I lost all desire for alcohol. Something stronger than me gave me a desire to read the Bible, to go to church, and be baptised in water. I accepted Jesus as my personal Saviour and repented of my sin. I had finally found what I had been searching for all my life.

About two weeks later I visited some Christian friends. We prayed and I asked God to fill me with the Holy Spirit. This he did. Words poured out of my mouth like running water, and I spoke in other tongues. The feeling I had was something I have never experienced in all my life. I can't remember ever being so happy. I was healed from smoking also. "Thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 15:57).

Like a bad dream. I am a new person. The past seems like a bad dream and I praise God for his mercy, compassion and love. He lifted me up when I needed him most. I only hope that my testimony can be a help to somebody else, who can't find a way out.

INSTANT RECOVERY FROM INCURABLE COMPLAINT

When I tell you that for seven months of 1971 I was laid up with the most painful and depressing illness of my life you might find it hard to believe. I find it hard to believe myself, as since the day the Lord Jesus Christ instantly healed me I have been filled with an abundance of health and life that I've never known before.

From the age of 11, when I had meningitis, my faith in God had helped me to weather many illnesses and operations — but I was never really well. Early last year I became ill with what was diagnosed as acute infective arthritis, and I was told not to expect to be better for at least 12 months. Blood tests confirmed this.

Suddenly the virus attacked the blood, causing a calcium and protein deficiency and upsetting the blood values. This gave me excruciating pain from head to foot called tetany of the muscles. I don't even want to remember what it was like and I wished I could die.

The doctor and pathologist were very good and put in a lot of work, but months later although the pain was bearable and I could walk a little, even an empty cup was heavy for me. The blood was still causing concern and the doctor seemed helpless. The entire glandular system was suspect and I just felt so old and tired and achy and I was quite useless to my family and husband.

A challenge. I had an appointment coming up with an endocrinologist. When you are a Christian, you never give up hope and we were pinning a lot of hope on that endocrinologist, feeling that perhaps God would use him to find a cure for me. Furthermore, we knew that many people were praying for me.

Suddenly we received promptings from every direction to seek *divine* healing in the old-fashioned Bible way. A dear old friend of ours had once told us of the time when he was divinely healed of a bad heart — and we decided to ask him to pray for me — but he died suddenly and so that seemed to be that.

Then one day my husband came home from work and told me that his young unbelieving friend had said, "You've got faith, Doug — you believe. So why don't you ask God to heal your wife? Why don't you take her for divine healing? If evelyn was healed like that, then both my wife and myself would believe. We couldn't help but believe."

Well, I was pretty dopey, ill and depressed, but I recognised God speaking through this most unlikeliest person, and believe me I was ashamed. Then I became afraid. What if I asked for a miracle and it wasn't God's will for me? Then perhaps Doug's friend would never believe and would be eternally lost.

In Jesus' name. Our old friend who had spoken of his healing had mentioned Pastor James, and my husband rang him up. Pastor James graciously gave up that very evening to counsel us on the scriptural basis for healing and to pray for us. Finally in Jesus' name he commanded the sickness to leave my body. In my heart I kept repeating, "Oh, Lord Jesus, I do believe; help my unbelief."

At a quarter to ten the next morning the pain left me completely! Suddenly I was able to move freely and I felt light and free and filled with energy. With a hop, skip and jump I began by cleaning up the house. I did a huge family wash and cooked the dinner! My muscles were instantly firm and strong.

From that day till this our whole family had not ceased praising God for his kindness. I feel better now than I used to when I thought I was well!

No answer. The endocrinologist found nothing wrong with me and has since said that he would not have known how to treat the disease any more than my own doctor. Extensive tests have proved that my blood is now perfect and I have obtained permission to become a blood donor if I wish.

My doctor said, "Prayer cannot possibly have altered the condition of your blood".

I replied, "O.K. the, doctor, what did?" There was no answer. So, I'll thank Jesus.

MY THEME SONG WAS" "NOBODY LOVES ME"

"Nobody loves me, nobody cares" was the theme song of my childhood. It overwhelmed, over-rided and surpassed any other memory clearly.

My parents separated some time during my first year. My mother was a business woman, my father I never knew. When I was three, war broke out, and I was to be evacuated from England to America, but instead went to my first boarding school. I still have a picture in my mind of that first dormitory: cots, cots, cots everywhere.

In the succeeding schools I attended, nothing seems to stand out, except "Nobody loves me". At one school, a convent, I felt victimized as I was a protestant. The delight of all children was school holidays, but they were no delight to me as some were spent at school, some with my grandmother, and some, very rarely, in London with my mother, where most of the time seemed to be spent in the air raid shelter. I was expelled from one school for stealing some lollies from a child, sent to her from some doting mother!

Some time during this period I remember that my birthday presents from Mum and Dad were labelled in the same handwriting. There was no father. This deception hurt deep.

One school had the School Hymn, "There is a green hill far away", the import of which I found find out many years later.

Fear. Fear was a very real thing. There were so many things to fear. I was fearful that my mother would die and go to heaven and I would go to the other place. She was not a Christian, but this was my concept of heaven.

Fear of not being liked dominated my life, fear of not being accepted.

I was bound by unnecessary fears.

A puppet on a string. In the following events I was very much like a puppet, with God in charge of the strings.

I was 13 when my mother married again. Once again that old theme "Nobody loves me" overwhelmed me. The evening she married they both got drunk, and I cried my way through that horrible night. But I was not alone as I thought, for this was one step towards a future where Jesus was waiting.

To start a new life and to run away from pressing problems, my mother and step-father sailed for Australia. We settled in Victoria for a time.

God uses many instruments in the process of calling someone, and during the next few years he used my step-father to keep me from real harm. He was a spiritualist medium, and he was hard and almost cruel, with a violent temper, but I was frightened to cross him, and I am sure this kept me from much mischief.

I was out-numbered. My mother felt that the word "christian" had some magic. In the light of this, when I was 18 she let me live in the Y.W.C.A. hostel in Melbourne, Victoria.

Up to this time I knew little or nothing of the facts of life. Consequently in the events that followed, my education in this field accelerated at tremendous speed! That puppet tried very hard to get all the strings knotted and messed up, inevitable, but for God!

I felt deeply that God had a different plan than this, he did not want me in the gutter, though this was the direction I was heading flat out.

In all the hostel there was one really keen Christian. A very worldly girl, she had been converted overnight, instantaneously. One night a hopeless sinner, the next night she was born again, filled with the Holy Spirit. And where was her room? Right opposite mine.

I was out-numbered, God against the Devil. If I had known what was in the Bible I would surely have given up the fight sooner (Luke 10: 18-19).

I was invited to church. Church had no appeal for me during the years of church boarding schools. I had daydreamed my way through all services and through confirmation. Church was a place where you went for an hour, during which you completely turned off, and came away with your conscience appeased for a while!

I had no hunger at all for God. I was not searching for anything except a good time, and as many boy friends as I could accumulate. My entire motives to everything were selfish.

Somehow this Christian lass was able, with the resources of heaven, to break through this and get me to a meeting of the Christian Revival Crusade. I still don't know how it happened. The only message that got through to me was the love and genuine friendship I found there (my! how those Christians love one another). People at dances and parties turned their friendship on and off: it was empty. I had wanted real friendship all my life, but I did not at this stage want to tap the source of it. Nevertheless, I have an entry in my diary from this time. It reads: "Would like to receive blessing. From this day onwards I'm going to try to be better"!

The young people persisted with me. They called for me, took me home, "bottle fed" me, and literally nursed me into the Kingdom of God. But somehow I did not grow. It took a long while for me to get a lasting hunger for the things of God. I eventually gave in and was baptised, for by this stage I wanted to change and to be like these folk, but a personal experience with the Lord Jesus was not mine.

About this time my Christian friend was anxious to come to Adelaide, South Australia, as the start of a working holiday around Australia. She was my prop so I just had to go with her. I asked my step-father, and to this day he does not know why he said yes! But praise God I do now. It was just part of God's plan for my life.

New life. So "Adelaide here we come".

Now here I was, completely cut off from the past. I left the best job I was ever to have. Life cost me something at last, and things began to change.

For the next six months I enjoyed ministry in the Adelaide assembly, hearing clear instruction on being born again, coming to know Christ as my very own personal Saviour. At last I had arrived home. This was my very first real home with real brothers and sisters, and plenty of mothers and fathers.

One year later I tapped the source of power that those young people in Melbourne had. Praise the Lord, at last I was filled with the Holy Spirit to overflowing, and now I experienced the real joy that I had missed through my slow understanding of the Things of God. Now at last I could serve him (Acts 1:8). This was my desire deep down. I wanted to work with young people. This is what actually motivated me to make many mistakes. I had no understanding of church government, or committees. I just wanted to help young people and I blundered in. I blush when I remember some of the things I did.

Christian courtship. After being in Adelaide about nine months I met the young man I had come halfway round the world to meet, God's choice for me. Not a knight in armour riding on a white horse, but a freckle-faced youth on a two-stroke motor-bike! However, he was a quiet, dedicated, deep Christian. And oh! the joy of a truly Christian courtship with prayer for "saying goodnight", and meetings for outings. If I praised God for all eternity I could not thank him enough for his timing, leading and choice.

We were different in background, personality and outlook, a blending of which is to be lifetime work. But oh! How I regretted that loose living, that loose petting now. I felt so unclean, and unfit, and unworthy. But I had been washed in the crimson flood, and I was whiter than snow. Praise God!

The wedding. Marriage was a marvellous experience, but nevertheless entered into lightly. Something like a child not understanding the facts of life and death. I did not fully understand the seriousness of those precious vows. No, in my reading of "love" comics in my teens, I gained nothing to help prepare me for this love that I had desired for so long. The pattern of the husband being the head of the house — why, I had always got my own way before! Why not try the same in marriage? But the husband loving the wife as Christ loved the church, I knew that one! I wish I had spent a lot more time in the Word and coming to grips with the necessary things in the Word of God for happiness in depth.

Once again I blush when I remember my attitude and behaviour at the time of my wedding. I had found the greatest family, but I took so much for granted. I received so much, but gave so little. The same old pattern of the world crept in, taking, taking, but not giving. The brothers and sisters I had longed for so long must have been hurt by my selfish behaviour. And I see the same thing in young couples today, and I grieve.

Christian marriage. We have been married 11 years now, and I can truly say I love my husband more and more each year. How can this be, when the world loves less and less? In Christian marriages when you are serving the Lord, more of God's love comes into your life enabling you to love more. How Christian young people can get so anxious that they go to the world for a partner I will never know.

In the Bible, marriage is compared to Christ's love for the church. And just as the Holy Spirit within a person is a well, deep and overflowing, so love can be in a marriage if you can walk with him. I know because this is the wonder of what he has done for me. As you share your home with those in need, and your husband with those who need counselling, and your time with others in need, your own love and capacity for love will be greater. Give and it shall be given unto you, pressed down and running over. I know!

And now, praise God, we live in a lovely manse provided by the Rosewater assembly. After seven moves in ten years, we are at home.

Our children love the Lord and are filled with the Holy Spirit, and share in the fellowship of the Lord within our little family. God has indeed been good to me.

THE GATES OF HELL

I was sitting next to a young man at a convention recently. I noticed that he bore a tattoo on one arm. I have always wondered why young people allow themselves to be tattooed. So I decided to ask him. "I wish I could remove it now," he said. "It only cost a few dollars to put it there. It will cost over \$1,000 to remove it. But it was originally a sign that I was a member of a bikie 'gang'."

"Tell me about it," I said.

And he did. What follows is the story he told. It is a true story, and it happened, now in New York, or Chicago, but in conservative Adelaide, South Australia. For the protection of all concerned, some names are withheld. I'll be surprised if you don't find that, once you've started, you can't put it down.

A Pastor

To be accepted as a member of the Tavistock Boys, you had to ride a motor cycle down King William Street — Adelaide's main street — at 100 m.p.h. I was a member of the gang.

In fact, one of our favourite pastimes was to speed through city streets at high speed. The thrill lay in the fact that you had to judge the traffic lights properly, or you were a dead man.

To be accepted, you were also expected to participate in pack rape. I managed to get away without doing this. I often saw girls being dragged away, but I never hung around to see what happened. Usually, the girls were tricked into thinking they were going with just one guy. Then the others would join in. The standard approach was, "If you ride, hop on."

On one occasion, I nearly became involved. There were three of us at the beach one afternoon. The leader had a new bike, and invited a bikini-clad girl for a ride. We cruised round the beach area, and then headed for a track through the sand-hills. There we stopped. The leader told the girl that he had to cool the motor!

Then he and the other guy grabbed the girl and dragged her off the track. She broke free and ran to a passing car, calling to the motorist for help.

The car stopped, but the gang leader grabbed the driver through the window, round the throat, and muttered: "You take this girl and you'll die!" The man drove off!

However, he must have notified the police, for within minutes, three patrol cars arrived.

I told them the truth and they let me off. The leader was later, ^{sentenced} for six years on another count for rape.

There were about 50 in the Tavistock Boys gang. It was named after Tavistock Street, Adelaide, where we used to hang out. (The

building is now used by the Hare Krishna group!) We were there seven nights a week.

Gang wars. It was the year 1965 and I was 16 years of age. My parents had separated when I was seven, and I had been brought up by my mother. We had lived in the country until then. When we came to Adelaide, I bought a Triumph 650 twin motor bike, and joined the gang.

There were frequent fights and gang wars. We often clashed with aborigines who lived in the area — and we fought with knives, chains, fists, knuckle dusters, anything.

I never had any fear of fighting. I had done three years of boxing and that helped. I would have a go at anyone on the spot. A couple of times my mates and I were attacked by other groups of larrikins. We would simply charge the biggest guys in the gang and the whole lot usually backed down. A lot of lads hide behind their leaders.

But the leaders themselves were usually tough. They didn't rely on numbers. The leader of our gang actually lived a double life. He was married and had a couple of kids. He held a good job as a departmental manager in a city store. Each night he would drive home from work in his car, eat his evening meal, then change his clothes and join the boys on his bike!

In the end the police formed an anti-larrikin squad. These were hand-picked men, big guys! They really broke up the gangs. They used to come in and knock us around. One night they found me just leaning against a wall and drinking a Coke. They grabbed me roughly and told me to "Go home, little boy." I went!

Chased by police. Members of our gang were often pursued by police in high speed chases. I was involved in at least three. On one occasion I raced through a police barricade at well over 100 m.p.h. Another time, I out-raced a police bike going down the Port road. I weaved in and out of traffic, hitting speeds in excess of 90 m.p.h., roaring through a red traffic light in the process. I eventually lost him in thick traffic and again I escaped from the clutches of the law.

Another time, with my brother on the back of my bike, we were chased through the back streets of Adelaide, and managed to get away.

Somehow, although my brother and I were once jailed for stealing, we never got caught for our gang activities.

We shifted to the country for a while again, and later returned to Adelaide. We weren't in a large gang any more. Five or six of us used to get round together. We became involved in drunken orgies. (I remember once lying in a gutter all night in winter, with no coat, just a T-shirt. I was sick for three days and took a week to get right. We used to call that fun!)

Then we were involved in a brawl. My brother seriously hurt a guy. There were fears for his life. The police hunted us for six months. Finally, the guy recovered and the heat was off.

We used to like bashing homosexuals — or poofters, as we called them. Sometimes they would try to molest young fellows in the parklands.

A sailor once tried to molest me. So we used to set them up. One of us would stand around alone and the others would hide. Then when the first lad was approached, the rest of us would emerge and attack. We used buckets of water on them. Even a sword on one occasion!

Many of the fellows who were in those gangs with me have finished up badly. Some went to jail for attempted murder, rape or violence. Some of the others were killed in bike smashes. I myself once hit a car at 70 m.p.h. Another time I ran into a stobie pole. I was hurt, but not badly. Did God have his hand on my life even then?

But now, it seemed that the police were at our door every other day. Poor Mum used to have to face them. My brother and I decided it was time to cool things.

So from then on we kept out of pubs and such places. There was an occasional brawl, but nothing to what we used to have!

Suicide? It was now that I began to realise how bound with hang-ups I really was. I married when I was 19. She was 16. Her parents had told us we were too young, and they were right. So I got her pregnant so that we would have to marry. We had two children. But we were only together about 18 months, as she left me three times. Finally, we were both unfaithful, and we divorced. I'm glad to say that she's now re-married and happy.

After my divorce I had defacto relationships with two other women, as well as sleeping with a number of other girls. On different occasions all these relationships broke up.

Somehow, after all I had done, life seemed to be pointless and without hope. I often asked myself, "What is the good of living?" I actually contemplated suicide a number of times.

I ended up in a mental hospital in Melbourne for a few months. I put myself there for my own safety — it was a cry for help. But no help came.

The psychiatrists tried everything — even hypnosis. They finally told me that I had to find some way of facing life, or I would probably commit suicide. It was sad, but there was nothing more they could do.

When I came out, I was still drinking heavily. I was taking pills to quieten my nerves. If I was really bad, I was supposed to take two, but sometimes I took a dozen, with a bottle of beer. I lay in a daze for days at a time when I did this.

At the time, I was working as a bus driver. The passengers would have been horrified if they had known!

My mother, strangely enough, had always been a church-goer. She often told me about Jesus Christ. When I was in trouble she tried to get me to see a minister. "I've had a guts-full of churches," I used to answer rudely. "They can't do anything for me."

Seances. But I did have a weird fascination for the unknown, for the occult. I could ever find stories or films on this subject, I would lap them up. Then one day, some friends introduced me to a seance.

It was held in a private house. Just the family and a few friends. We all sat round the table in a circle. There was a glass on the table, and cards were laid out with letters on them. Everyone was to put his fingers on the glass and ask it questions. One person would act as a medium and ask, "Is there any one there?" The glass would move around to each of the letters in turn and thus spell out answers to the questions we asked. Some thought the glass was being pushed, but you could really feel the force.

Sometimes, the glass would tear madly round the table and throw itself on to the floor. Some of those present saw it as fun, but I took it seriously, and decided that I would be a medium. I spent hours on different evenings trying to call up spirits. Then one night it worked for me. And from then on I could conjure up spirits at will.

I used to pride myself on the fact that I could get the ouija board to work for me alone, without anyone else there.

Then, when the film "The Exorcist" came out, I went to see it, with other members of the family. After that I got the ouija board out more than ever to show how brave I was.

Then weird things started to happen in our house.

There were strange noises at night — and then even during the day. I never saw it, but my mother and sister claim that books fell off the shelves and that bread flew out of the bread container onto the floor!

About this time, I had a dream. It was a dream that I had experienced twice before, once as a boy and once as a young teenager. I saw a blinding light and Jesus Christ in the midst of countless white beings. It was the Second Coming. And I knew that I was lost and doomed. I woke up in a cold sweat.

Exorcism. Then one day, I picked up the paper and saw an advertisement for the Christian Revival Crusade. Pastor S. was to preach on exorcism in the Warner Theatre. My sisters had already been to a couple of G.A. meetings and urged me to go. I didn't really want to, but with my interest in the occult, I thought I might learn something. So I decided to go to hear what they had to say, even for a bit of a laugh.

I got more than I bargained for that night.

I began to feel the Lord speaking to me. At the end of the meeting, Pastor S. asked for those who would like to invite Jesus Christ to become Lord of their lives to raise their hands. I sat frozen in my seat. But I kept on thinking of my dreams and I knew that I was lost. So I put my hand up.

That night my youngest sister went to the front of the meeting for laying on of hands. She was obsessed with the idea of demons. She sometimes used to say to me, "I've got 'em." She was talking to Pastor S. about my activities with the ouija board, when suddenly, she fell as if in a fit to the floor. Her eyes rolled, she spat and hissed and used vile language!

Pastor S. and Pastor E. bound the demons and she quietened down.

All the while this was happening, I felt something tugging at me. Later, I realised, there were demons in me too.

After I accepted Jesus Christ into my life, something said to me, "You're in for it now!" But I continued going to the meetings on Sunday nights. But the more I took in, the more trouble I felt.

One night I was standing next to Pastor James in the foyer. My heart felt as though it would leap out. "You'd better take me somewhere and do something!", I pleaded. He told me to stay there, and keep a grip on myself. He brought Pastor E., who took me to the back, and began to pray for me. All hell broke loose! My arms and legs started to flail, I shouted, I lost control of myself. He calmed me, and made an appointment for further ministry.

I went home a troubled boy!

The next Tuesday at 2.30 a.m. I woke up feeling very strange. There was evil all round me. I turned on the light and lay there quietly for a time. I could feel something like electrical currents running through my body. Something was tugging at my very spirit and soul, trying to get it out of my body.

My young brother was awake by now, wondering why I had the light on; he was only 11. He looked at me and saw an evil presence looking at him through me. He felt terror, horror. Then I roared at him like a lion. He ran out of the room screaming. In fact, he still hasn't got over it!

The whole family saw what I looked like then.

It turned out all right in the end, for this event made us all come back to the Lord.

My mother started to pray for me at the side of the bed. I, too, started to pray. In fact, the only way to keep my mind in control was to pray continuously. Then my sister rang Pastor S. who came immediately. He found me in a half-wrecked bed. I felt as if I was thrown half way up the wall.

Pastor S. bound the spirits in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and calmed me down. But there was no more sleep that night.

The next evening, we went for our scheduled appointment with Pastor E. I understand that there were about 24 demons cast out of me! And we were all filled with the Holy Spirit — the whole family. The power of God was now at work more than the power of evil.

Authority. We had three or four more sessions with Pastor E. But for the next year, it seemed at times to be a life and death struggle.

Once, when I was driving the bus in broad daylight, I felt a demonic attack trying to overtake my body. It took all my strength to keep myself sane.

Then I drove the bus to our home — which happened to be on the bus route — left it parked outside, and went in to get the family to pray for me! I returned still struggling, but then the oppression ceased. They were all obviously still praying. I was now learning that even when I was not able to seek pastoral help, Jesus was the answer.

Even now, I still get attacks sometimes. But half the time I don't even bother rebuking them. The Lord is looking after me. So I just shrug, and say, "You can't hurt me." And they go away. The only thing they can be is work on me mentally. They can't actually hurt me. I'm thrilled to know this.

While I was still battling, I married again. My poor wife suffered at first. I beat her one night. So she looked me in the eye, put her hands on my head, and rebuked the spirit in the name of Jesus. She stopped me dead in my tracks! This really shows the power of the believer in Jesus Christ if he will use his authority.

Since then I have dedicated myself to God both publicly and alone. I am now studying the Bible systematically. I have felt a real calling of God to do this. It meant changing my job. It has meant less money. But one of these days I want to be able to help people who are in the same situation as I was. I feel that I can understand their needs, because I have been through it myself.

And I know one thing - there is nothing in this world that can bring the satisfaction, peace and hope that is found through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

He is the answer to life's questions and the fulfilment of life's needs. I know.

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