

Pamphlet 6
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The following is a statement of the main events which have taken place, and the main points which have been made, at my platform in the Public Forum since 11th February, 1962, the date of my first appearance in the Forum.

Might I suggest that if you wish to dispute any of these matters of fact you do so now, or forever hold your peace?

SUBJECT: Briefly put, my subject is religion generally, christianity particularly, and the significance of christianity in terms of individual and national affairs at the present time. My theme is that theologians have, deliberately or otherwise, misrepresented christianity. The major point I have made is that christianity is totally a question of principle and not of abstract religious beliefs. Jesus was a normal man born in a normal manner. The message of Jesus was that each man must accept individual responsibility for his own actions.

INTENTION: My listeners appear to be adult enough to be capable of making their own decisions. It is not my intention to 'convert' anybody. I represent no church. The substance of what I say should already be known to adult people by their knowledge of themselves – if they possess any maturity or reflective capacity at all.

RESPONSIBILITY: It is not my responsibility to make your decisions for you. You would rightly resent such an attitude. On the other hand, I hope that you will have no objection if I insist that you make your own decisions for yourself. You can even decide not to make a decision if that is the way you want it.

When you've made up your mind and have what you think is a good story, I suggest that you stick to it. I would be failing my responsibility, however, were I not to point out that time – your time – is running out.

SUMMARY: That about sums it up. The world has reached its moment of truth, and mankind along with the world. The axe is even now at the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that brings not forth good fruit is ready for the axe and for casting into the fire. Though ye be gods yet ye shall fall like men and be heard of no more.

ATTENDANCE: I gave addresses in the Public Forum on 50 Sundays out of 52. The addresses averaged out between 1½ hours to 3 hours each. For the 50th appearance I was given a new stand, complete with lectern, by one of my regular listeners. I place my appreciation on record.

PLATFORM POSITION: I have occupied my present position since 25th March, 1962. At that time I held a place between the A.L.P. and the Q.L.P. Because of the nature of Forum crowds, most speakers are now situated in the lower half of the

Park, and for several months my position has been sandwiched between the Q.L.P. and the Christadelphians.

NEWSPAPERS: In Sunday Truth newspaper of 25/3/1962 there was a report headed: "Security spies prowl in Park. Free speech is their target..." Truth referred to the main speakers since the Forum opened as being 'the Australian Labor Party, the Queensland Labor Party, the Communists, Rationalists, and even one man describing himself as an "irrational rationalist." '

So much for the accuracy of newspaper reporters. The subject of my talk on 18/3/1962 had been 'irrational rationalists.' It dealt with the Rationalist Society's attitude to the introduction of religious education into the syllabus of High Schools, and with some Rationalist arguments concerning the historicity of Jesus.

The Courier Mail, in its issue of 16th April, 1962, published several photographs of Forum speakers and, of these, one was of myself.

PHOTOGRAPHERS: On several occasions photographers have been busy. Do the resultant photographs find their way into albums – or dossiers? Amateur Forum photographers might keep abreast of modern trends by reading the informative articles in 'Leica' magazine (1962) concerning legal conflicts overseas on the limits of photographers' rights.

In or about October, 1962, an interjector took an extremely long film of me on his movie camera. Whether the film afforded him as much amusement in the screening as it did in the taking I do not know. He hasn't been back.

INTERJECTORS: There was some desultory small-arms fire in the early months of the year. During October and November, however, the barrage of interjections was heavy and continuous. Adherents of one particular religion were prominent. Other adherents of the same religion have expressed the hope that the religion be not judged by the standard of conduct displayed by these interjectors.

The Palm for the most-polished interjector goes to the gentleman from Sydney who tried to take over my stand with a classic piece of con-manship (2/9/1962). The award of a bottomless beer glass for the "most powerfully-voiced interjections" goes to a University student who earned himself a reputation with Park regulars. A Christadelphian and a Roman Catholic tied for the award for the "most-bitterly-bottled-up interjections." They weren't given much opportunity to get their problems off their chest.

No interjectors have been really persistent. After a brief burst of glory most of them fade away.

OTHER SPEAKERS: (This heading refers to those speakers who use their own soap box, not someone else's).

Political parties have dominated Forum speaking, with the Q.L.P., Communists and Social Credit prominent. The A.L.P. stand, which was withdrawn late in March, returned for a short time in the closing months of 1962, but has not since reappeared.

A regular stand has also been maintained in different positions in the Park since 4/3/1962 by the Christadelphian Ecclesia. One evangelical group also appears now to have become a permanent feature.

There was a poor record of attendance by speakers on other platforms during December, 1962, and early January. One political party was not represented for 5 or 6 weeks.

FORUM INCIDENTS: Despite the heat displayed by a number of interjectors, there were no 'incidents' at my platform during the year under review. I learned from the Press that a brawl occurred in the Park during the afternoon of 5/8/1962 when the Peace Committee held a meeting. A certain amount of heat was aroused at my meeting on the same date largely as the result of the issuing of hundreds of copies of a pamphlet entitled 'The Virgin Birth'. This pamphlet dealt mainly with the mistranslation of a certain Biblical passage. Despite the size and composition of the audience there were no incidents; a close search of the Park on conclusion of the meeting revealed that none of the pamphlets littering the Forum had been issued by me.

PAMPHLETS: The following pamphlets were first issued on the dates shown:

- 18/2/62. A reprint of an article in the Clarion entitled "The Olympics, the Greeks... and a Hebrew Bible." This pamphlet showed the pagan origin of present church doctrines.
- 1. 25/2/62. This was a two-page pamphlet setting out my general propositions. Issues which had been amply covered by this pamphlet were still being raised by interjectors at the end of the year.
- 2. 7/7/62. The 'nature' of Jesus has been determined by church Councils. His 'nature' simply cannot be determined in this way. If the churches seriously suggest that they can determine the nature of Jesus by means of Council Ballots, then they are suffering from delusions of grandeur.
- 3. 5/8/62. The 'virgin' birth. A few facts; straight from the shoulder. See later under 'Subjects discussed.'
- 4. 9/9/62. A catalogue of Interjectors' techniques.
- 5. 18/11/62. This was entitled: "Some Questions for Interjectors." In advance, an appointment was arranged with interjectors for Sunday 18/11/62. On that day they were conspicuous by their absence. (Or, as one of them subsequently preferred to have it, why I don't know, they were 'inconspicuous by their presence.')

ARTICLES: An article written by me entitled "Let's Call him Tom" appeared in the November, 1962, issue of "Aspect" magazine. This article showed the real status of Jesus was that of a normal man who was chosen and Anointed with power by the Supreme Being because of his character. It was intended as a deliberate challenge to the Rationalist position and to the orthodox church position and was brought to the attention of hundreds of people, both in the Forum and elsewhere. The challenge went unaccepted. Two letters in reply appeared in "Aspect." One was favourable,

the other suggested that such articles be not printed as the subject had lost its 'vitality.' Apparently the correspondent has never seen the 'vitality' displayed by some of the Forum interjectors. ("Aspect" is a local magazine. Editor: Telephone 362427).

SUBJECTS: Topics discussed in the Forum have included: History, Prophecy, current affairs (as related to history and prophecy), principles of Bible interpretation, Education for responsibility, church development and church doctrine.

The central issue has been (and is), of course, the personality of Jesus. The analysed evidence of the New Testament shows conclusively that he was a normal man in all respects. The churches are all agreed that he was a special kind of man in certain respects (e.g., virgin birth etc.). Jesus is not a myth. The difference between what I say and what the churches say is quite significant. The churches happen to be wrong.

History: Mainly the period 1916 BC to 1917 AD, that is, from the "call" of Abraham to the retrieving of Palestine from the hands of the Turks. After centuries of foreign oppression this latter event paved the way for the implementation of the Balfour Declaration and the return of the Jews to Palestine. This is a necessary Prelude to Armageddon.

Prophecy: The prophecies and visions of Daniel and Revelation were analysed systematically. The prophecies interlock and explain each other. As a general rule prophecies first give a panoramic view then focus attention in due order on the more important points.

Current Affairs: The stage is being set so that the issues between God and man will be made quite explicit before the final collision comes about. For this purpose the essential issues will be represented in the division of the nations into two main camps – the Anglo-Saxon nations and Palestinian Israel on one side, and on the other the European powers with their allies. Why the division should have this basis is too considerable a subject to discuss here. Britain's real power lies in her spiritual resources, not in her allies.

Two main topics have been Church Unity and the European Common Market. These have been characterised as 'twin-sons' of the one spiritual father. As attempts to preserve the status-quo, both will fail.

Church history, doctrines etc.: There are clear cut divisions historically between the christian, catholic and Roman Catholic churches. These historical divisions have been pointed out. Forumites may perhaps remember being asked to obtain information for themselves concerning Documents 135–140 appended to the proceedings of the African Council of 419–422 AD. One or two illusions about the early church might disappear in the process.

Doctrines of the churches have a pagan gentile basis. Despite the numerous denominational divisions all the churches have unity on the point that Jesus was not a normal man in all respects. Their points of difference are mere dilettante finessing. They have regarded the scriptural record as some sort of academic talking point and have made Jesus, through their beliefs, a synonym for Self.

Principles of Bible Interpretation: It has been shown that the significance of the New Testament rests entirely upon its RELATION to the Old. Certain criteria for the 'christ' were stipulated in the Old Testament; the New shows how (and for what purpose!) these criteria were satisfied in a totally unexpected way, by a man who was crucified and resurrected. Church doctrines cover all cases of proving the wrong point.

Education for responsibility: The present disintegration of society results from a denial of individual responsibility. There is a direct connection – it is THE connection – between Bible teachings about Jesus and acceptance of responsibility for individual actions. The same direct connection cannot be claimed for the teachings of the churches. Formal education appears to provide no assistance – in terms of understanding themselves rather than excusing themselves – to the children of this generation.

Personality of Jesus: Photostats of evidence have been produced to show that the doctrine of Virgin Birth is quite unbiblical. The mistranslation of Isaiah 7:14, belatedly admitted by translators, was known by them for 1800 years at least. There was never any "prophecy" that a "virgin" would conceive and the theologians know it.

Man has become a victim of his own distorted mental processes. He has fallen into the trap which his own self-righteousness set for him. (The christian differs not one scrap from the Jew in this respect). Those who talk the loudest about 'virgin birth' are loudest in condemnation of themselves; gossips have always been interested in how other people come into being and it was only the gossips in Jesus' time who were interested in his manner of birth. With the exception, that is, of such men as Matthew and Luke who simply showed – for quite valid historical reasons unconnected with "virgin" birth – that Jesus was NOT the son of Joseph.

Literature cited: An extensive range of scholastic works has been quoted from, both in regard to the above subjects as well as in reference to such other miscellaneous subjects as "The meaning and limits of exact Science." At one stage bibliographies were supplied to several enquirers but, as the compilation of these takes time, it was impossible to continue this procedure. If you are interested in pursuing any particular point to your own satisfaction it is suggested that you make application to the speaker for the names of any reference works you require.

Other topics: (a) The reappearance of Jesus on the stage of world events
 (b) The identity of (White-) anti-Christ
 (c) The big Mormon boo-boo

PROPOSITIONS: A clear-cut statement of propositions concerning present day society, and of individual responsibility in relation to christianity, is in course of preparation. The statement will be issued at a later date as an appendix to this Report.

EX-COMMUNICATIONS: It was not possible for me to ex-communicate anybody during the year under review. The Brisbane City Council insists that the Public Forum is for use by the Public.

VOTE OF THANKS: Despite the peculiar attitude just referred to, a vote of thanks is due to the present Council administration for providing a Public Forum when it appeared that Governmental use of the Domain had ruled out indefinitely the exercise by democrats of their original democratic rights. In providing facilities for Free Speech the Council could not guarantee facilities for Free Listening. It is up to the audience to determine just when the activities and rights of organised interjectors begin to constitute a threat to their own rights of Free Listening.

In recording a vote of thanks, however, mention should perhaps be made of the fact that the facilities provided are not always what they should be. Perhaps a visit by a Council employee to the toilet block at mid-day on a Sunday would remove the cause of considerable comment. Perhaps – but this is less likely – irresponsible members of the public might develop a greater sense of responsibility in the same connection.

CONCLUSION: I thank many of my interjectors for an interesting year. I also thank the silent ones who come fairly regularly to hear all, see all and say nothing – “And some there are, sit still and say but small; they can do more than they, that say they can do all.”

What you hear and see I suggest you continue to ‘play close to your chest.’

We have moved another year forward towards the final unveiling of man’s monumental ignorance.

Brisbane,
10th February, 1963.

E. P. Wixted.