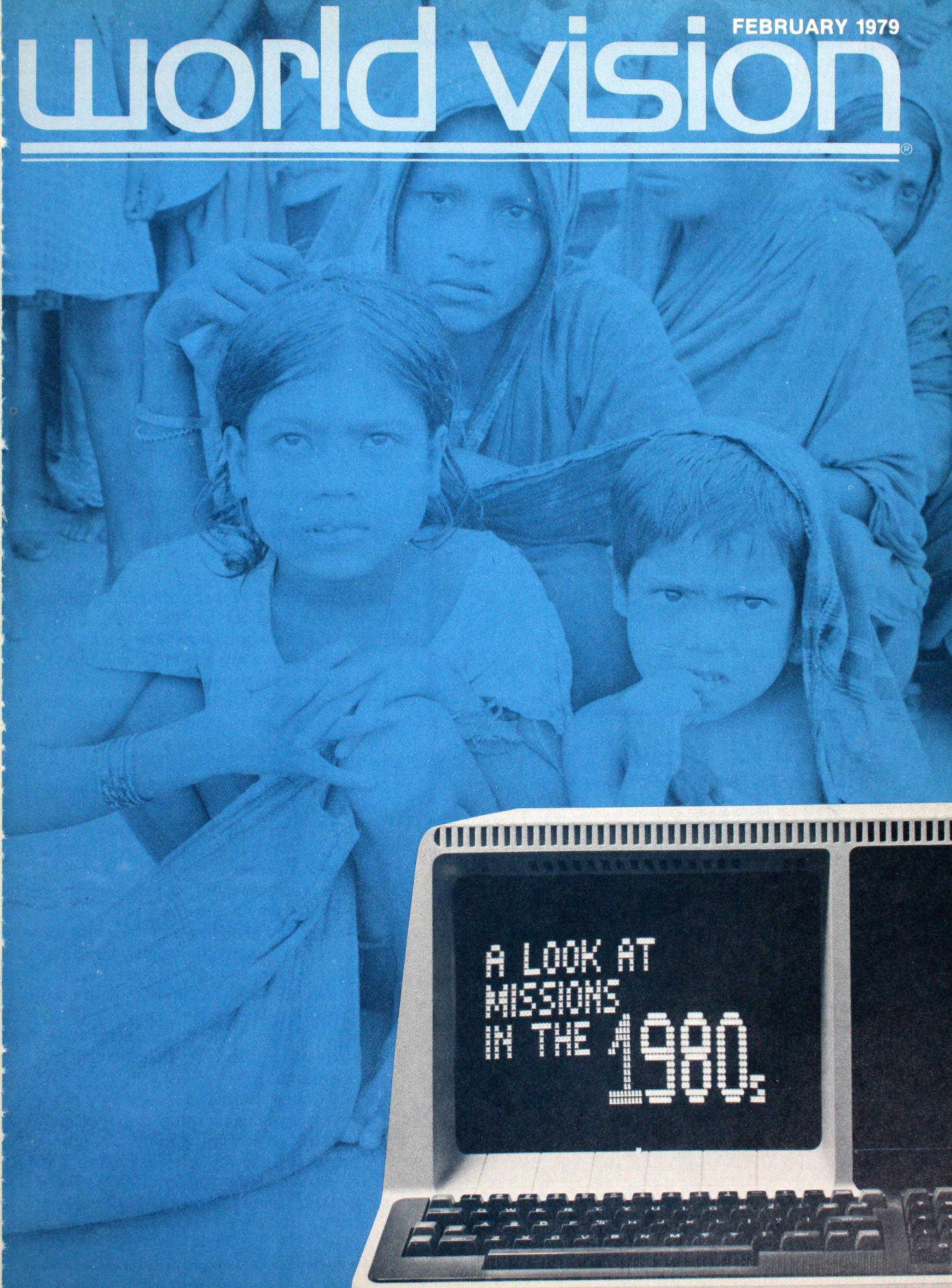


FEBRUARY 1979

# world vision



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MISSIONS  
IN THE 1980s

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## world vision®

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**W. Stanley Mooneyham**, president  
**Ted W. Engstrom**, publisher  
**Richard L. Watson**, director, communications division  
**David Olson**, editor  
**Ray Seldomridge**, associate editor  
**Paul S. Rees**, editor at large  
**Don Aylard**, art director  
**Richard J. Watson**, assistant art director  
**Carl F. H. Henry**, special correspondent  
**Kenneth L. Wilson**, consulting editor

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## Coping

Laughter was convulsing both the young bank teller and her elderly, handlebar-mustached customer. I entered too late to hear the joke that had produced such hearty guffaws, but not too late to hear the graying patron sigh, "Oooh, it's a relief to laugh. The world is so full of troubles that if you have no sense of humor you might as well go dig a hole, drop into it, and stay."

I knew the man was right about the value of laughter. Wit and humor, thank God, can help anybody cope with stress.

In conversation with the marketplace philosopher, I learned that he had just retired from a lifelong career as a newspaper reporter. In his global travels he'd done eyewitness coverage of wars, famines and refugee conditions in a score of the world's most troubled countries. "Having seen so much turmoil," he said, "I worry about the world's next few years. And I just have to relieve my anxieties with humor."

That conversation took place the day I checked out to move from Illinois to California as this magazine's new editor. And it was just about then that the writers of this issue's "Decade Ahead" forecasts were putting on paper their thoughts about the outlook for worldwide Christianity in the 1980s.

Reflecting, later, on the retired newsman's comments in relation to the essays, I asked myself:

1. Besides a sense of humor, what are the Christian's greatest resources for maintaining his own sanity in today's tortured world?

2. Are we Christians too often content to do little more than cope with our own tensions?

3. How much more than coping—how much *world changing*—will God enable us to do if we cooperate with Him?

4. What attitudes toward Christ and His Body are essential safeguards against the pitfalls into which Satan tries to lead us?

Clues to these questions lie not only in the predictive essays but on other pages of this magazine. If your reading and pondering produces an urge to reply, please express your idea in a concise letter for possible inclusion on one of our future "Readers' Right" pages.

David Olson

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**H**ow will the 1980s differ from the 1970s in relation to worldwide Christian outreach?

What new opportunities should we anticipate?

What new obstacles?

What new relationships?

And how will the churches of both hemispheres handle the mix of opportunity, adversity and changing relationships they will experience in the decade ahead?

Christians in every variety of cross-cultural ministry are asking such questions as they gird for the work of the approaching decade. To give you a sampling of insightful Christians' expectations, World Vision magazine asked sixteen respected leaders to make personal predictions about world missions in the 1980s. Eight responded. Each views things a bit differently from the others. Their replies appear on the next six pages.

## **Predictions of Eight Christian Leaders:**

**Carl F. H. Henry**

**Vernon Grounds**

**Donald McGavran**

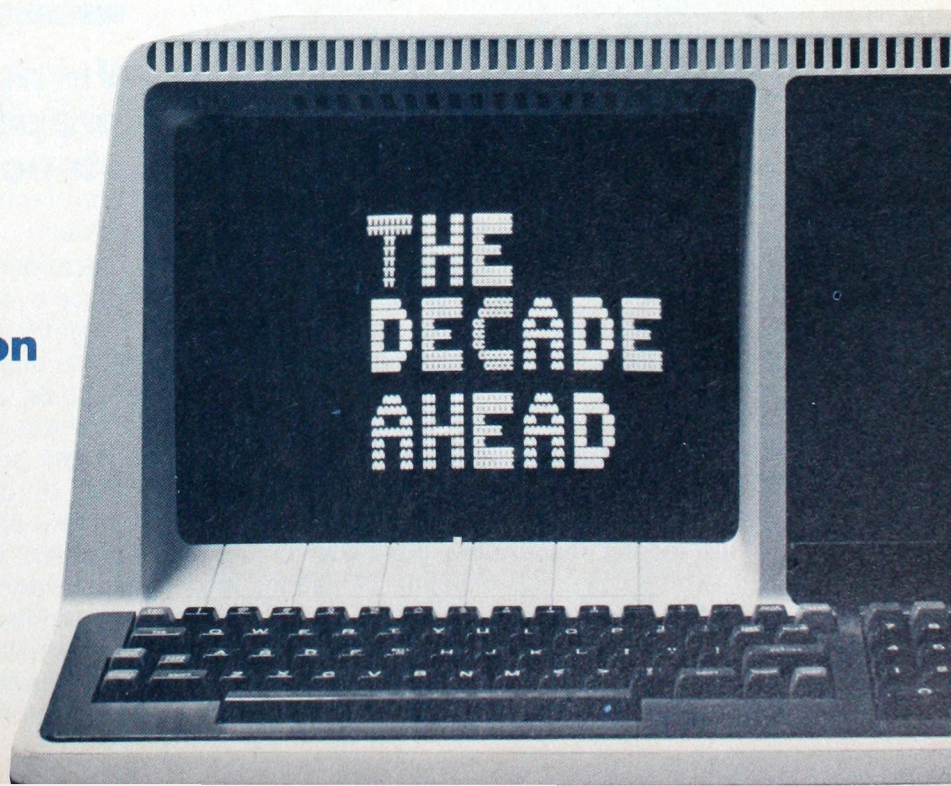
**Waldron Scott**

**Michael Cassidy**

**Tom Houston**

**C. Peter Wagner**

**Samuel Kamalason**



## Carl Henry: It may be that our future lies neither with the free world nor with the communist world.

**Essential change**—that's the prospect for Third World mission.

Not that the foreign missionary era is ended. Many lands need, want and welcome missionaries as much as ever. But nationals must and will provide top leadership abroad, and we serve them best as co-workers and aides, pressing them for vision to identify priorities.

Western education of nationals has too long drained distant lands of potential leaders as students have become Americanized and remained here. At least nine out of ten Koreans, and perhaps eight out of ten Indians, do not return to serve in their homeland. The time has come to undergird evangelical theological education on distant fields.

Airlifting visiting professors from the West is more economical and more effective than uprooting foreign students from their cultures and their families. The Third World especially calls for on-the-scene education of a type that blends intellectual development, personal growth and evangelistic concern.

Inflation and energy problems will settle heavily on both American and overseas churches. We will need to debate bricks-and-mortar budgeting in the context of the missionary imperative. What passes in the States for a simplified lifestyle would for many nationals be gratifying affluence.

Nobody can face the Third World without sensing how important it is to present the gospel as a message for the whole man, a message of the Christian community being the new society. Leaders in the world of impoverishment look to revolution and political miracle to turn their stones into bread. Western Christians need to work out patterns of cooperation with national leaders, patterns that will maintain a testimony to the gospel in all its sensitivities to human need.

This means responding biblically to neglect and exploitation, and enabling Christians to do work that uses their best talent in God's service and for the welfare of their countrymen. A Christian community that can support itself can also send missionaries who attest the virility of the

church's response to the Great Commission.

Finally, it may be that a new Dark Ages is already descending upon the West and that our future lies neither with the free world nor with the communist world. Perhaps, as in Roman times when an African convert named Augustine spoke with spiritual and intellectual power to his generation, some modern Augustine or Luther or Calvin or Wesley will rise from lands that haughty and worldly-wise powers have called "underdeveloped" to proclaim the best news of all. Or could the night be drawing near—the End of all ends—when no man can work, when the Sower returns to judge the harvest?



**Carl Henry**, lecturer at large for World Vision International, has taught or lectured on all continents

*and was the first lecturer at Asian Center for Theological Studies and Mission in Seoul, Korea. Dr. Henry has served on the faculties of Northern Baptist Theological Seminary and Fuller Theological Seminary, was founding editor of Christianity Today and has written over 20 books, including God, Revelation and Authority, which is currently being translated into German, Mandarin and Korean.*

## Vernon Grounds: Are we prepared to abandon our stance of superiority?

**Hesitant to offer guesses** about what will take place overseas in the next decade as we seek to implement the Great Commission, I prefer to ask some questions of ourselves as American evangelicals.

1. Are we burdened by the fact that nearly three billion persons have never heard the gospel? Two-thirds of the earth's population have no natural contact with any Christians.

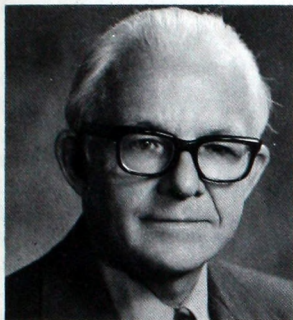
2. Are we prepared to abandon our stance of superiority as senior partners in the missionary enterprise, accepting non-whites and non-Westerners as our equals?

3. Have we come to grips with liberation theology, accepting its insights without abandoning

our own theological convictions? Have we likewise come to grips with the whole issue of contextualization?

4. Is our understanding of Christian commitment in line with the New Testament? Or is our discipleship thin and undemanding, a discipleship of cheap rather than costly grace, a disciple-

**Vernon Grounds** is president of Conservative Baptist Theological Seminary in Denver, Colorado. Before coming to the semi-



nary in 1951, he was dean and professor of theology at Baptist Bible Seminary in Johnson City, New York. He has a Ph.D. from Drew University and was awarded the Doctor of Divinity degree by Wheaton College in 1956. Dr. Grounds has lectured at colleges and seminaries throughout the United States, in Europe and in Latin America. He is the author of several books, including *Evangelicalism and Social Responsibility*.

ship that refuses to take seriously the lordship of our Savior?

5. Are we captives of our culture? Are we caught up in a carnal success syndrome, overly concerned with the numerical growth of our churches and devoted to personal goals that are almost indistinguishable from humanistic self-realization?

6. Are we developing an apologetic and a strategy to crack open Islam and the Eastern religions?

7. Are we generating enthusiasm for missionary outreach? If Willis Harman is correct (and I think he is), then "man thrives not on mindless pleasures, but on challenge." Are we challenging Christians in this country?

8. Are we producing leaders? Lester Brown, president of Worldwatch Institute, said, "At a time of rapid change and increasing complexity, the need for leadership is greater than ever before. But we now find ourselves 'up to our knees in pygmies.'"

9. Are we prayerfully developing the will for worldwide witness? Futurologist Herman Kahn contends that there is no insurmountable barrier to a decent future. As Harman puts Kahn's position, our problem is "just a crisis of will." Is that, at bottom, the problem we face today and are going to face in the next decade—a crisis of will?

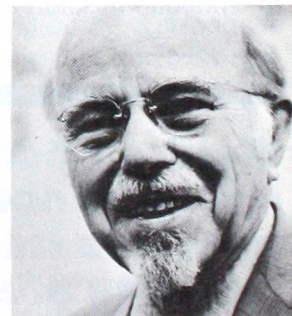
## Donald McGavran: The idea that world evangelization will be carried forward chiefly by the wonderful Christians of Asia, Africa and Latin America will be seen as fantasy.

**Prophets of doom**, viewing the increasing grip that pagans and secularists are gaining, will continue to announce the collapse of Western civilization; but that will not happen till military disaster befalls the West. Rome did not fall until repeatedly sacked by the barbarians.

In the eighties, the committed will pour out increasing resources in men and money for Third World missions. Sizeable movements to Christ will continue in many parts of the Third World, including Korea, Indonesia, northeast India, Andhra State, Africa (south of the Sahara) and South America.

In some denominations, the tide away from biblical mission and toward humanization as *sufficient* mission will grow. It will affect a few evangelicals. Most, however, will insist that the controlling purpose of Christian missions is to proclaim Jesus Christ as God and only Savior, and to persuade men to become His disciples and responsible members of His church. Evangelicals

**Donald McGavran** is senior professor of missions at the School of World Mission and Institute of Church Growth, Fuller Theological Seminary. He was founding dean of that school in 1965, prior to which he served for 32 years as a missionary to India. He holds doctorates from Columbia University, Phillips University, Butler University and Fuller Seminary. Dr. McGavran is architect of the church growth school of thought, having written ten books



and numerous articles on the subject, edited the Church Growth Bulletin since 1964, and lectured throughout the world.

will place more emphasis on church growth and on the practice of justice and brotherhood.

Younger churches from which most or all missionaries are withdrawn may achieve self-support, but at the cost of tragic reductions in pastoral care, evangelistic outreach and service. Churches whose missionary comrades remain available in moderation will grow and serve more.

A cheap popular idea of the 1970s, that world evangelization will be vigorously carried forward chiefly by the wonderful Christians of Asia, Africa and Latin America, will in the 1980s be seen as fantasy. Missionaries sent by Third World Christians to segments of the unreached three billion will increase; but so will missionaries from Europe and America. In both East and West, the more that Christians believe in the Bible as the infallible revelation of God, the more missionaries they will send.

Training that aims to make missionaries effective in propagating the gospel and multiplying churches of authentic Christians will greatly increase. As the church growth movement gains strength among denominations in North America, church leaders will insist more and more that their overseas missions stress effective evangelization of the lost billions as their chief, but not sole, purpose. Great Commission missions will regain some lost ground.

The 1970s euphoria over the rise of the small, younger churches will be replaced by a level-headed estimate that the major task remains to be done—three billion have yet to believe on Jesus Christ. Both younger churches and older churches will increasingly evangelize the hundreds of millions of Muslims, Hindus, Chinese and Marxist secularists. The most rewarding day of Christian mission lies ahead.

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## **Waldron Scott: Many are convinced that missions from North America are doing as much damage as good.**

**Is the missionary mandate** still valid? In the manner of Pavlov's dog, most North American Christians have been conditioned to respond to this question with a hearty "Of course!"

After all, they say, the Great Commission has not been rescinded. Millions of people are still unreached. Third World populations seem responsive to the gospel. American evangelicals have greater resources than ever. Student missionary conferences attract thousands. Mission societies report ample recruits.

On the other hand: 1. North American missions have become so expensive they are pricing themselves out of business. 2. Chinese, Hindus and Muslims constitute approximately 85 percent of the world's unreached, yet they are precisely the groups Americans are least able to penetrate. 3. Many evangelical leaders in Africa, Asia and

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**Waldron Scott** is general secretary of the World Evangelical Fellowship. Before assuming the



leadership of WEF, he was international field director of The Navigators, directing their ministry in the Middle East and Asia. Mr. Scott has studied at the American University of Beirut, the American Graduate School of International Management and Fuller School of World Mission. He is the author of Karl Barth's Theology of Mission and writes frequently for evangelical and internationally oriented publications.

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Latin America are convinced that missions from North America are doing as much damage as good at this moment in history.

That last criticism has merit. As an evangelical leader in Ecuador recently insisted, "Something must be done to halt this indiscriminate influx of foreign missionaries into our country. They are forced upon us with little or no consultation. Decisions affecting the whole life of our churches are being made unilaterally from North America."

Unless North Americans are willing to adopt a lower profile, abandon their "he who pays the piper calls the tune" tactics, redirect their efforts from the already evangelized to the still unreached, develop serious forms of cooperation with indigenous missionary endeavors, and rethink the gospel in terms of the biblical promise of justice, the missionary movement as we know it today (from this continent, at least) will be at best irrelevant and at worst counterproductive.

Fortunately a younger generation of American evangelicals appears prepared to come to grips with these issues.

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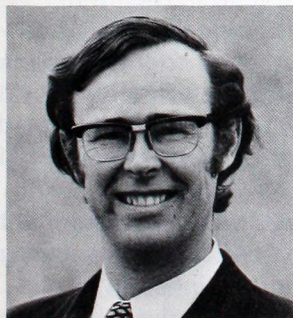
## Michael Cassidy: We will have to forsake our "lone ranger" approaches in order to face together the massive assaults.

The 1980s, I suspect, are going to be marked by the escalation of a number of contemporary phenomena that will produce a radical effect on Christian mission. The escalating phenomena are: secularism, Marxism, revival of world religions, Third World self-consciousness, anti-Christian sentiment, absence of Christian presuppositions, hostility to Christian proselytism, and political opposition to the same.

The escalation of these phenomena will create for Christian mission an increasingly complex, difficult and costly task. We will have to face up to the challenge of ministering not as top dogs, but as underdogs; not as powerful or successful people, but as weak and failing people. It seems to me that the 1980s will see the church in many places in a pre-Constantinian posture where we stand not only stripped of the support of political and social establishments but in increasing collision and confrontation with them.

These and other factors mean that the mission enterprise may well change in the following ways.

1. The distinction between First and Third Worlds will be resisted, anathematized and then banished so that mission will be not only from the First to the Third World but also vice versa. It will be mission on six continents. Thus, the sending



Michael Cassidy is team leader and president of Africa Enterprise, an evangelistic team that operates as a service

agency to churches in Africa. He initiated the Pan African Christian Leadership Assembly in 1976, is program director of the South African Christian Leadership Assembly to be held this coming July in Pretoria, is a member of Lausanne Continuation Committee, and has contributed to the symposium volume *The New Face of Evangelicalism*. Mr. Cassidy holds degrees from Cambridge University and Fuller Theological Seminary.

and receiving distinction will go. Instead there will be an adult partnership, interplay, interdependence and exchange of gifts and ministries between Christians worldwide.

2. On the other hand, where the younger churches are strong and evangelistic, the moratorium principle will apply, and more care will accordingly be taken to send and deploy missionaries where most needed.

3. The professional, long-term and highly trained missionary will give way in many places to the short-term missionary, and in other places to the evangelistically motivated professional (e.g. lawyer, architect, teacher or doctor) who enters a needy area in a non-missionary and servant role.

4. In many parts of the world, public proclamation will be impossible, and the church will be witnessing from the underground via suffering, practical care and dialogue.

5. More and more of our mission efforts will have to be done in cooperation with one another. We will have to forsake our exclusive "lone ranger" approaches in order to face together the massive assaults of secularism, Marxism and neo-paganism.

6. In spite of difficulties, we will avoid the siege mentality and rejoice in a God of Victory! Praise the Lord.

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## Tom Houston: East and West will live alongside each other in both parts of the world.

Missions in the 1980s will possess strong elements of continuity with missions since the early 1800s, but four factors will require them to make serious adjustments.

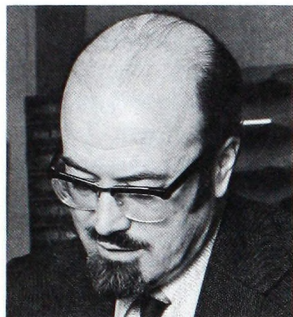
1. Among Christians the distinction between the Third World and the rest of the world will erode. Because of their increasing size, vitality and maturity, non-Western churches will have greater self-confidence than many of their counterparts in the West. They will begin to help evangelize the former "sending" countries.

2. A vast increase in the number of migrants from the Third World to the West and in both tourists and short-term business people from the West to the Third World will produce pluralist societies as have never been known before. East

and West will live alongside each other in both parts of the world.

3. The number of unemployed people will increase greatly, producing pressures that en-

**Tom Houston** is executive director of the British and Foreign Bible Society in London. Before joining



that organization as communication director in 1971, he was pastor of a multiracial church in Nairobi, Kenya, for 12 years. Mr. Houston spoke at the Congress on Multiracial Mission and Evangelism (South Africa, 1973) and at the International Congress on World Evangelization (Lausanne, 1974). He is a member of the Lausanne Strategy Working Group and a writer for several Christian magazines.

gender violence. This may lead to more totalitarianism in some countries and more civil disturbance in democratic nations.

4. The 1980s will probably see the partial raising of the iron and bamboo curtains and the emergence of the church that has been tried and refined in the fires of long persecution. A Christianity that has wrestled with communism and survived will not be a comfortable thing to be confronted by.

Christians in the West who have a concern to make Jesus known will be humbler people as they address the challenge of their day. They will listen more before they talk, to make sure they are heard. They will think more before they give, to make sure their gifts build up rather than destroy. They will be tried and tested before they go overseas, to make sure they can communicate across cultures the grace that has meant so much to them.

## C. Peter Wagner: More people will be won to Christ than in any comparable decade.

I see the approaching decade as the most significant period of ingathering in Christian church history. Unless I am mistaken, more people will be won to Christ and more Christian churches

will be planted than in any comparable decade. Here are seven probable developments that lead me to make such a bold statement:

1. The number of missionaries recruited and sent out by Third World churches will increase substantially while those sent out by the Western nations will hold their own.

2. Not only will there be more missionaries, but also they will be more effective than their predecessors in "making disciples of all nations." The current explosion of missiological knowledge and training will raise the level of skill and efficiency in carrying out the task. While there is no reason to believe that this new breed of missionaries will be more dedicated than those in the past, there is reason to believe they will be smarter.

3. Part of this new knowledge is the widening recognition of the inadequacy of traditional Western theology for the evangelization and nurture of non-Western peoples. A great variety of contextualized theologies will emerge during the eighties, facilitating the spread of the gospel.

4. More missionary effort will be focused on



**C. Peter Wagner** is associate professor of church growth and Latin American studies at the

School of World Mission, Fuller Theological Seminary. He holds a Ph.D. from the University of Southern California, worked for 15 years as a missionary in Bolivia, was one of the early exponents of theological education by extension, and is a member of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization. Dr. Wagner is the author of 15 books on missions and church growth.

the approximately 16,750 people groups yet unreached by the gospel. Research done by such agencies as the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, the MARC Division of World Vision and the U.S. Center for World Mission will stimulate this very important thrust.

5. The eighties, I expect, will see significant breakthroughs in the spread of Christianity among both Muslims and mainland Chinese.

6. A more holistic concept of mission will be developed which stresses the importance and interrelationship of both the evangelistic and cultural mandates without confusing the two.

7. The eighties will see tensions reducing between the streams of Christianity symbolized by



Geneva, Lausanne and the Vatican. Evangelicals will play a more influential role in leadership than previously, and a stronger consensus as to the essentials of the gospel message and the nature of the missionary task will emerge. Great Commission missions will be more widely recognized as the primary responsibility of the church.

## Samuel Kamaleson: Missionary societies will have to choose between creative and destructive instability.

**Missionary vision** among the non-Western churches has grown into a vast reality during the past eighty years. These younger churches have learned to research, plan and act creatively. Their missionary organizations are here to stay. During the 1980s, missionary agencies from the Western churches must learn, along with the missionary agencies of the younger non-Western churches, to affirm mutuality in several dimensions.

1. *Cooperation rather than control.* Cooperation can result in mutual enhancement, so that the common task can be better fulfilled. The younger agencies, which have sometimes made claims greater than their performance record, can learn much from the organizational expertise and experience of the older agencies.

With extreme sacrifice, the younger churches have worked to create their own financial base for missionary support to insure good continuity even in the event of unexpected political changes.

The younger churches will provide insight regarding:

- the use of appropriate idioms that stimulate the imagination of the hearer.
- the peculiar process of arriving at decisions through community oneness.
- the use of non-theological cultural values as vehicles for conveying the concepts of the Christian gospel.
- the kind of strong spirituality that is able to courageously suffer personal pain and to assume the posture of patient waiting.

2. *Complementing rather than contesting.* When Jesus miraculously enabled Simon and the other fishermen to catch a great shoal of fish,

the two fishing boats did not compete for the catch. Through cooperation, the fishermen filled both boats (Luke 5:6-7).

3. *Contextualization rather than conquest.* The subduing of a culture or a people's express sentiment will be an irrelevant, archaic practice in the 1980s. In affirming our risen Lord's conquest over the demonic, both Western and non-Western churches will together affirm the victory they now have over "sin, the devil and death."

In affirming mutuality, the two churches will

**Samuel Kamaleson** is vice-president-at-large of World Vision International and director of its



worldwide Pastors' Conference ministry. He was formerly pastor of Emmanuel Methodist Church in Madras, India, and evangelist-at-large for the Methodist Church of Southern Asia. He earned his doctorate from Emory University, is co-founder and director of Bethel Agricultural Fellowship in India, and spoke at Lausanne in 1974 and Urbana in 1976. Dr. Kamaleson has published three books in India.

live as a visible, tangible community, where no room is given to an attitude of arrogance.

4. *Content rather than corporation.* In the 1980s, the value of the global missions community will be stressed over its temporary forms. A structure's usefulness will be judged by the community's declared purposes and goals, and thus it will remain dynamic and mobile.

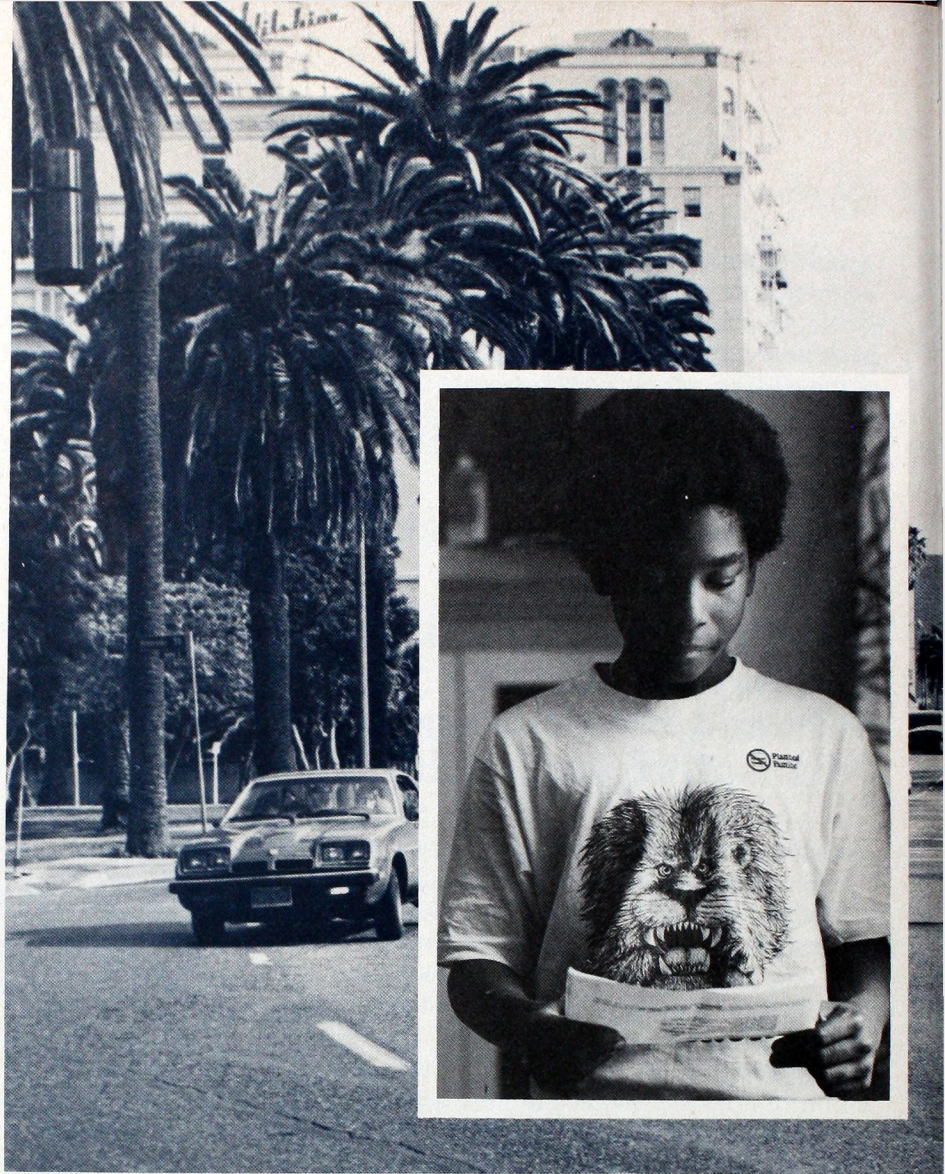
The rate of change will accelerate in the 1980s. Missionary societies will have to choose not between stability and instability, but between creative and destructive instability. Creative instability is that which moves mankind toward Jesus Christ and His indestructible kingdom through a declared purpose and clear goals.

In the 1980s the main preoccupation of the church around the world will be mission. Subject to this very same drawing power, the structures that determine the older churches' missionary effort, together with those that determine the younger churches' missionary effort, will become more pliable and will express great genius in their permeable qualities.

The driving purpose of the church will be to go into all the world to reach every creature for Christ. Hallelujah!



“Enjoy  
the Colgate.  
It’s the  
best thing  
you’re  
gonna taste  
all day.”



# FAMINE ON WILSHIRE BLVD.

by **Nancy Kelly**  
Coordinator, Volunteer Programs  
World Vision International



**M**y plate is full. Cherry tomatoes, three kinds of lettuce, sliced mushrooms, red cabbage, alfalfa sprouts and a spoonful of shrimp fill my plate. I have taken my choice of twenty-five ingredients from this restaurant salad bar and topped them off with a tangy Italian dressing.

I like being able to choose what to eat. This salad bar is symbolic of my life of options.

The crisp greens, vegetables and shrimp make a good combination, but my mind is not really on food. I am thinking about hunger. That's because I am choosing not to eat for the next thirty hours.

Instead, I will join thirty Los Angeles teenagers for a "Planned Famine." I am expecting to learn more about

world hunger as I discover what it's like to go without food. The program will also give me a chance to help raise funds for people whose famines aren't planned.

#### Friday, 6 P.M.

I'm now at Immanuel Presbyterian Church, once the largest Presbyterian church in the United States. The structure stands in gothic elegance among modern office buildings and fashionable department stores on Wilshire Boulevard.

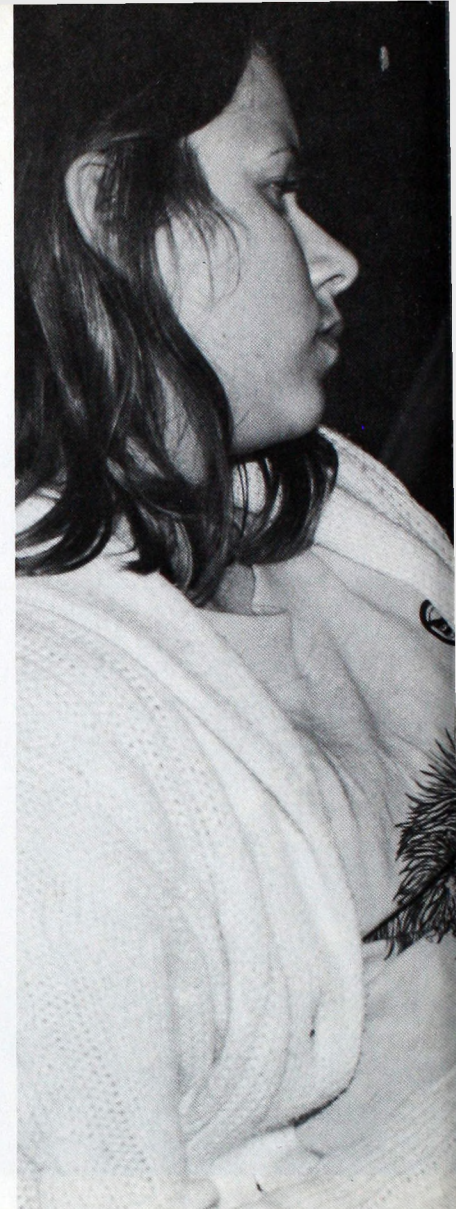
It used to house a wealthy, white congregation. I can tell that it's changing by the people I meet who are already gathered in the youth wing of the church.

There's Eugene, a tall and slender Korean youth wearing

a faded blue sweat shirt. And Lance, a stocky black seventh grader with lots of energy. And Ann, a lovely Korean girl wearing a Planned Famine T-shirt. I'm wearing my T-shirt too. It's bright yellow with a friendly lion growling over my stomach.

Eugene, Lance, Ann and their friends are not experts on world hunger. But they're not ignorant either. At a kick-off dinner ten days ago, the group shared a meal that showed them the unequal distribution of world resources. Later they watched a World Vision film about the causes and effects of hunger. Now they're here to learn even more—and so am I.

I put my sleeping bag in the corner and join a small group in a game. I learn that



*"You know what? I'm sure feeling sleepy."*

many of the kids live in the apartments and duplexes that line the streets on either side of Wilshire Boulevard. The glamour of the busy boulevard masks the gradual decline of some of the surrounding streets.

A few of the kids live up in the Hollywood Hills and go to private schools, but most live close to the church. Some are bussed out of the area in a school integration effort. Many are immigrants from Korea.

Conversation turns from our game to our expectations for the weekend. "The hardest part is going to be when we wake up tomorrow morning," Ann predicts.

That's been bothering me, too. I am very attached to my breakfast routine. A hot bath, melted cheese on an English muffin, orange juice, my multiple vitamin. I eat about 350 breakfasts each year, carefully choosing a balance of whole grains, protein and fruit. From the time I started kindergarten I've been told that a good day starts with a good breakfast.

### Later Friday evening

Immanuel is an old building with hundreds of odd rooms

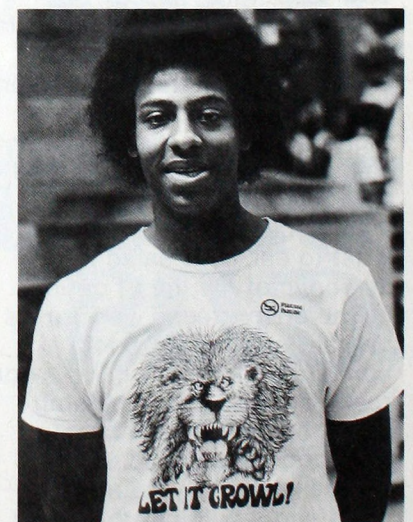
pieced together. Like the building, the youth group has a variety of parts—tangible evidence of the whole Body of Christ in this place. I doubt that such a varied group would choose to come together in any other context than the church.

With the group I walk to a lower floor. We go down several flights of stairs and around many corners before arriving at the dining room to see a film called "The Pleasure Seekers." The film and other parts of the program were selected by some of the kids and the leaders, using material from World Vision.

The film is about two teenage guys on a world journey in a serious quest for better surfing. Wherever they go, they see grim scenes of hunger and poverty.

But they're not interested in reality. Every time they confront starvation and squalor, they say, "Who cares? Let's look for the surf."

The film discussion is the first heavy part of the program. Two Fuller Seminary students, Charmi Goudey and Larry Emery, are the youth leaders. I can tell that they really love these kids. They exchange





*"I guess a good education  
wouldn't matter much if  
my stomach were empty."*



*The author (wearing bandanna)  
joins in an action song.*

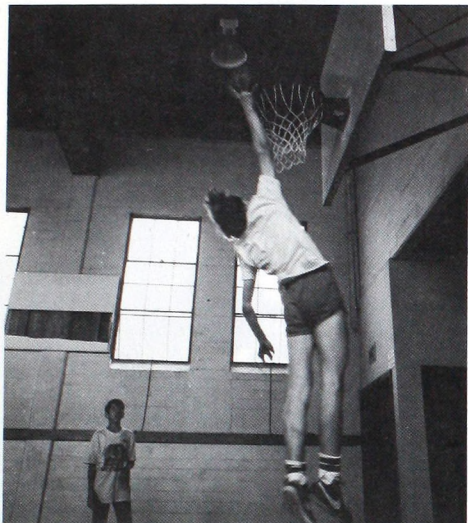
a lively half hour of dialogue with the kids about the film, taking a few breaks for discipline.

"Do you think the surfers are typical Americans?"

"What can one person do about hunger?"

"How do you spend your allowance?"

We spend a few minutes



*Time goes faster when you're shooting baskets.*

talking about what we could cut out of our personal spending so that we would have more money to send to the hungry.

"Money?" Ann asks. "Is that what they *really* need—money?"

"Exactly what *do* they need?" someone asks.

The kids are well informed and quick to answer. Most obviously, they need food. But they also need houses, medical care, education, love.

"But we can't all go over there and give them these things," someone says. Charmi points out that through groups like World Vision, we can give money to help Christian workers overseas provide what is needed.

### After midnight

I am sipping a five-ounce cup of Gatorade. It's green,

sugary and artificial. What if someone gave me Gatorade when I needed protein and vitamins?

We are playing a game called Risk. We have two teams, each trying to conquer the world. The game is lively with lots of giggles, cheering and competition. Everyone else is still going strong but I'm ready for bed.

Alone in the dark in my sleeping bag, I am comfortable and warm. I'm not really hungry, just exhausted. Silently I pray, "Thank you, Lord, that I am where I am. Thank you for giving me more than I need so that I can share. Help me to make the choices that will glorify you and help those in need."

Giggles and chatter surround me but I fall easily to sleep.

### Saturday morning

I was wrong. Morning isn't going to be so bad after all. In fact, I feel buoyant. I smile as I hear a stomach growling in the sleeping bag next to mine, but I'm not hungry at all.

I pray, "Good morning, Lord! Thank you for the sunshine coming in through the windows and the happy way I feel. Thank you for giving me your freedom. Help me, Lord, to spread your freedom to those who are not yet free."

The girls didn't go to bed until after 3 A.M. but already they're giggling and taking turns combing each other's hair. Guess I better get myself together, too.

My mouth tastes awful—dry and stale. I can't wait to brush my teeth. In the girls' rest room someone says, "Enjoy the Colgate. It's the best thing you're gonna taste all day."

I wonder if my sponsors are skipping breakfast, too. As a part of this program, I asked some of my friends to match my \$5 donation and go without food for one meal.

We're all dressed and ready for breakfast. But there is

no breakfast. Instead we play some more games to pass the time. I guess games wouldn't make much difference to me if I were really feeling hungry. Just when I'm winning at backgammon, the morning program begins.

### Saturday, mid-morning

As an appetizer, we play a game with the names of foods. Peas on earth. Turnip your nose. The Apple-achin mountains. Now we're warmed up and ready for the main dish—some values clarification.

In small groups we rank a list of priorities. It's easy to decide that good health is more important than money. But some of the other choices aren't as easy to make. Which is more important: a good education or a good relationship with your parents? A clean water supply or a house? What's important to me isn't necessarily important to Karen or Kathy. Except for food. Food is important to all of us.

I'm yawning. It's probably lunch time. It's funny how I pace my day by the meals I eat. It's hard for me not to think in terms of breakfast time, lunch time and dinner time.

Without meals, time goes slowly. We're getting restless with all this talk, so we sing some action songs.

Then I have a conversation with some of the older kids. Daniel, a high school senior, tells me about his relationship with the Lord. He is eager to share, and he's obviously growing.

"We're not fasting because we *have* to," he says to me. "We're fasting because we *want* to." There's the matter of choice again. We all recognize that fasting is our choice.

### Saturday afternoon

I'm relaxed and mellow, watching a fun skateboarding film called "The Magic Running Board." Today I couldn't

move as fast as the kids in the movie even if someone were chasing me.

The group is slowing down, too. I feel like I'm moving in slow motion.

After the film, some of us play racquetball. I don't feel like competing, but it feels good to be up on the roof in the sunshine, batting the ball. Soon I get very thirsty and a little shaky. The Gatorade tastes awful to me so I switch to a cup of cold water instead.

Am I hungry? I keep asking myself that question and the answer is always no. I expected to feel hungry by now. At this point, food just doesn't matter that much. I've gone for twenty-four hours without a bite to eat. I think I'll take a nap.

My nap is restless. The noise around me never seems to let up. I keep hearing bouncing balls, giggles and piano music. The noise is beginning to irritate me.

It's time for a simulation game. This one is also a part of the free "30 hour learning package" the group received from World Vision.

Charmi divides us into groups of rich and poor nations. Each group gets some dried beans to represent their food supply and some money to represent their wealth. In the next hour the group lives through several months of buying, selling, giving and stealing. We see what a fragile balance there is between life and starvation.

I'm in the United States group. Our bowl is filled with twice as many beans as we need. Many of the other countries come to us for food, but we don't have to give any away if we don't want to.

In a sudden act of aggression, China steals most of our beans and for a few minutes we panic. The fragile balance is tipped. But soon we reap another harvest and have plenty. It seems we can't lose.

I am uncomfortable as we sit back and listen to the world bargain with us. Already some of our neighbors have starved and are out of the game while we just keep getting richer and richer. For us the biggest concern is "How much shall we charge for our beans?"

The twenty-ninth hour of our fast is here. Larry asks us how we feel.

"I'm hungry and I want a pizza."

"I'm too tired to feel hungry."

"I'm tired and I have no energy."

"It's all psychological that we're tired and hungry."

"We're not hungry. Just obsessed with food."

Most of us agree that our fast has only scratched the surface of real hunger. It's been a symbolic experience that's opened our eyes to how much we take for granted.

After this thirty hours without food, I am face-to-face with my own blessings. As a response, I have lots of questions to ask myself about how I will use the resources the Lord has given me.

### Saturday, supper time

Our own donations and the

gifts of our sponsors add up to almost \$300. By agreement with World Vision, we will send 60 percent of this money to our denominational hunger program. The remaining 40 percent will go to World Vision's ministries to help hungry people. In our prayer time, we commit this money to the Lord for His use.

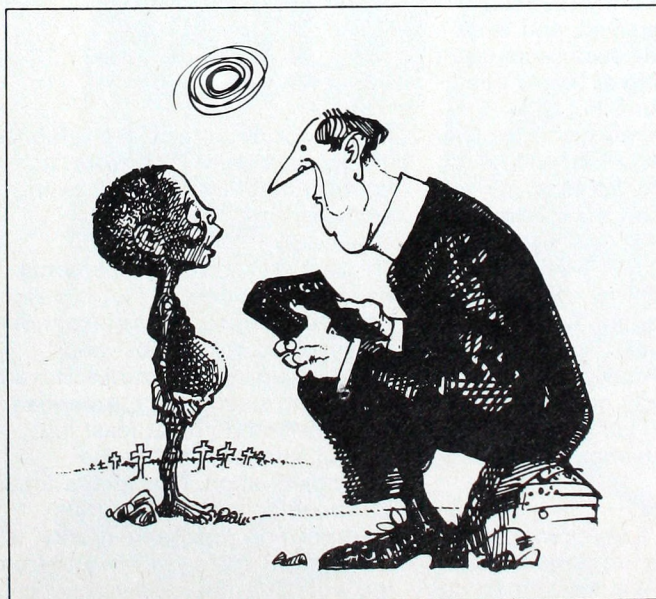
We tie things together with a study of Matthew 9 and 10. Then it's time to eat.

The supper smells great! Everyone wants to help cook so we can eat sooner. Most of us are ready to go home.

Although the food tastes good, I'm still not as hungry as I expected to be. As we say grace, I could go on and on telling the Lord how thankful I am for all I've been given.

For a start, I'm thankful for the options He gives me. One of those options is to become more involved in the lives of His faraway hungry children whose famines are not planned.

Like most of the thousands of American teenagers who have gone through a Planned Famine, this is the beginning for me of further awareness and involvement.



"Will there be lots to eat in heaven?"

# monthly memo



For many years we have published an annual report which details much of World Vision's operations, including the annual audit prepared by our auditors, Ernst & Ernst. The new report for our last fiscal year is now available and we would be happy to send it to any of our readers who are interested in receiving and reviewing it.

We believe that our donors and the public have a right to know how funds entrusted to World Vision have been spent. Good stewardship demands such accountability. Financial knowledge helps the mature and caring individual make a compassionate and intelligent response.

The year 1978 confirmed

again the concern of thousands of caring people for the condition of their fellowman around the globe. As our friends received more information about worldwide needs, support increased substantially. Income grew 4.6 million dollars, over 13 percent. Thirty-one thousand new childcare sponsors were added.

A legitimate question being asked of charities, both religious and secular, is "How much of my donated dollar really goes into the work for which it is intended? And what does it cost to operate the organization?"

We are pleased that this growth was achieved, in spite of inflation, with a reduction in management and fund raising

costs from 20.4 percent to 19.3 percent of income.

Some totals might be of interest to you, our much appreciated partners in the worldwide ministry for Christ: our total U.S. income was \$39,319,000. Of this, \$30,694,000 went directly into ministries (80.7 percent), \$4,413,000 for fund raising (11.2 percent) and \$3,176,000 for management (8.1 percent).

Throughout these past twenty-eight years of service to mankind in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, World Vision has sought to reflect a concern for the whole person—body, mind and spirit—in its ministry. It is a commitment to which we remain dedicated as we have now entered this new year with optimism and anticipation of the new things that God will do.

Ted W. Engstrom  
Executive Vice-President

## Bearing versus Wearing

Thank you for the article entitled "Do You Bear the Cross or Wear It?" [December issue], by Michael Saward. It shifted my mood.

Our church is small, and while we seem to break even each year, it gets discouraging at times. The people try so hard, but the outcomes seem always to fail to meet their expectations. So overwhelming, I had given serious thought to leaving the ministry—oddly enough, for the very reasons Mr. Saward cited.

At a time when my own world seemed a bit painful, I was so lifted by his article, I guess because he set me to look again at what God actually called me to do.

*Thomas H. Maddan  
Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio*

## American Blame

I am sending a telegram [to President Carter] regarding the tragedy in S.E. Asia. For some time I have been a sponsor and occasional financial supporter of World Vision. Our community as a whole

# readers' right

recently contributed to the refugees in Zaire. I admire your work. It is truly Christ-like to feed, clothe and take care of the outcast little ones.

I want just to share a personal nagging doubt about World Vision. I realize that you feel you cannot get involved in "politics" and be accepted in all countries. But are you not misleading the American people? Could you at least hint in your publication that the American nation, through its focus on spending all or most of its resources on deadly weaponry, is taking food away from us and from the world? Or that the multi-corporations of this nation affect nutrition of little children and babies by selling bottles and

canned products instead of letting mothers breast-feed their children? Could you at least mention the blood on our hands? Surely you have a prophetic responsibility. In the meantime, God bless your work.

*Doris Bradley  
Albany, California*

## Helping from Prison

I am an inmate at the Arizona State Prison, and although I cannot attend church, I am within the house of the Lord just being in this cell. I watched your television program, and the Lord reminded me that I had children of my own, and to think of those who need help! "Look around," He told me. "You have health, both medical and mental."

I've not got a lot, being here in prison, but I've gotten some money from my father. At this time I am sending it to you, in hopes it will help some child or family.

May the Lord be with all you good people in helping His people.

*(Name Withheld)  
Florence, Arizona*



**I**t was 1959. Six-year-old Elias Zakhia arrived at the Johann Ludwig Schneller School in the mountains of east Lebanon. His mother was dead. His father was miserably poor and had several sons and daughters to care for. Nevertheless, Elias was going to get an education—through World Vision sponsorship at the Schneller School.

The school offered Elias a secure home environment. He entered into a stimulating daily routine of lessons, sports, hobbies, dorm life including daily chores of gardening and cleaning, good meals at the school's kitchen and—most important—devotions at the beginning of each day and chapel on Sundays.

Eight years passed. In 1967, Elias completed the second intermediate class. He was ready to learn a vocational skill. Accounting was his choice, and after two years of training he passed the final exams for a diploma in Commerce and Accountancy.

Just before Elias left school to begin working as an accountant, his aging father applied to have his youngest son, Joseph, also go to the Schneller School. Joseph was admitted and spent six years there before leaving to take a temporary job. The boys' father died at that time, so their older married sisters took care of Joseph.

Elias went to work for several different commercial and trading institutions in the city of Zahle. Later on, armed with experience, he and some partners opened their own accounting office in Zahle.

Then, in May 1975, civil war came to the streets of Lebanon. Elias closed the office and left for Saudi Arabia. There he was eventually appointed chief accountant of the Consulting Engineering Office in the city of Alkhobar.

But Joseph was not so fortunate. When Elias returned to Lebanon after the war, he learned that his younger brother had

been killed by a stray bullet during the fighting. Enduring this painful loss only by faith in God, Elias then decided to help the school that had meant so much to him and Joseph. He paid the school fees of another orphan student, and he has vowed to do this again during his next visit home.

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*Since World Vision's child sponsorship program began in 1953, thousands of orphans and children of poor parents have been given the care they needed to grow into healthy, responsible adults who are living to bring honor to Jesus Christ.*

*The examples of sponsorship "alumni" like Elias Zakhia give us all the more desire to extend*

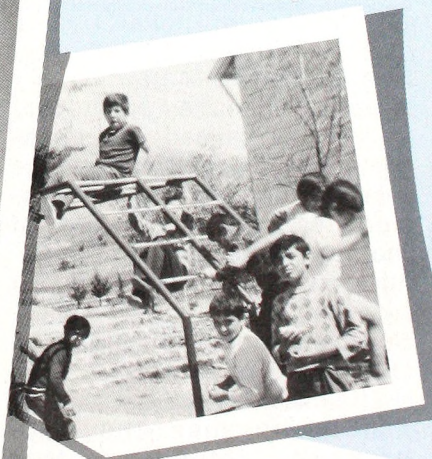
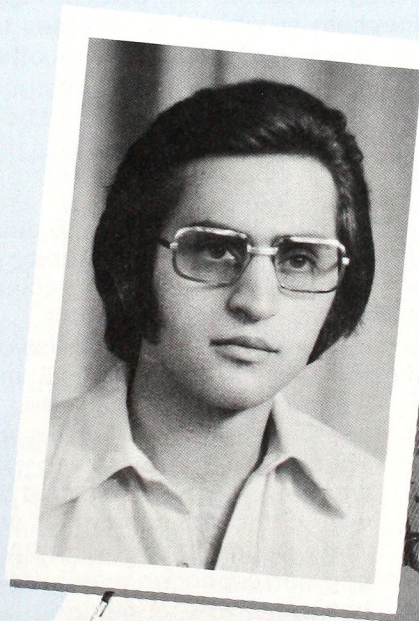
*care to other children who today are in need as he once was.*

*You can help such a child by becoming a sponsor. Fifteen dollars a month will provide a warm bed, clothing, shelter, food, books, medical care and schooling for your sponsored child.*

*Sponsorship funds are pooled together so that all the children in a project are helped. Yet sponsors enjoy a personal relationship with one specific child. Each sponsor receives a case history and a photograph of his designated child. Correspondence between sponsor and child is encouraged.*

*If you would like to become a sponsor, please see the instructions on the reply envelope between pages 12 and 13.* 

## A Sponsored Child— Twenty Years Later



ELIAS G. ZAKHIA  
CHIEF ACCOUNTANT

ENGINEERING OFFICE  
AL-KHOBAR SAUDI ARABIA  
P.O. BOX 1000

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# globe at a glance

NEWS BRIEFS FROM THE INTERNATIONAL  
CHRISTIAN SCENE FOR YOUR  
INFORMATION AND INTERCESSION

## Christians Look at China

Anticipation of future Christian witness in China began some years before the December 15 announcement of normalized relations between the United States and the People's Republic. Optimism is spurred by evidence of a somewhat increased Chinese receptivity to people and ideas outside of the "Middle Kingdom."

Missionaries in Hong Kong, whose eyes have long been glancing through the bamboo curtain, have reported evidence of many Christians in China. (In 1949, the Christian population was estimated at 1.8 million, with 6200 active missionaries in China.) They also report apparent freedom to talk about their Christianity during visits there.

The Chinese Church Research Center in Hong Kong is actively studying political, social and economic trends in China, to determine their implications for the Christian church. Far Eastern Broadcasting Company, working with the United Bible Societies, beams Bible readings and other Christian programs into China from Hong Kong and Manila, maintaining a Christian witness through the airwaves.

Some China-watchers suggest that a second-generation weariness with the present society is leading the Chinese to accept numerous changes. Hong Kong-based missionary Cliff Westergren says, "Although political, physical and psychological barriers have been raised by communism, the more difficult barriers of tradition, ancestor worship, Confucianism, superstition, illiteracy and language diversity to a large degree have been broken down. In a real sense, Maoism has conditioned China for Christianity."

The March issue of World Vision magazine will carry a major article by President Stan Mooneyham in which he assesses the degree of China's openness to the gospel. Mooneyham offers caution as well as encouragement.

people waiting to leave on airlines. Send the Light has curtailed all operations in Iran, which consisted mainly of house-to-house evangelistic work. Director Paul Troper said conditions change so fast that it is hard to say whether or not the missionaries will continue evacuation efforts.

A United Presbyterian Program Agency spokesman said five of their workers have stayed in Iran "to try and carry on as usual." Two other workers have been evacuated, while six have extended their furloughs in the United States until political tensions lessen.

The Assembly of God foreign missions division has experienced difficulty in establishing contact with their two expatriate missionaries and the large evangelistic center run by the Assembly of God church in Tehran. AG's Eurasian director, Charles Greenaway, said the agency feels word would get out if there is trouble seriously affecting their ministries.

## Agencies Cooperate

Representatives of ten evangelical relief and development agencies have announced the formation of the Association of Evangelical Relief and Development Organizations (AERDO).

The organization, an outgrowth of two years of informal meetings, will help its member agencies deal with common concerns and needs, according to AERDO's first president, Arthur Beals of World Concern.

Organizations involved in forming AERDO were Compassion International, Compassion/Canada, Development Assistance Services, Food for the Hungry, Food for the Hungry/Canada, Institute for International Development, Inc., MAP International, World Concern, the World Relief Commission of the National Association of

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## Disruption in Iran

Upheaval in this Persian Gulf nation has caused major disruption in the activities of the relatively few Christian missionaries working here. Many of the approximately 105 missionaries in Iran have been evacuated by their sponsoring organizations, following directives by the U.S. State Department.

The missionaries had to leave mainly because they are Americans, not because they are Christians. Some organizations report difficulty in contacting personnel in Iran due to the breakdown in the nation's communication systems. The 35 million people of Iran are 98 percent Muslim, one percent Christian and one percent

Bahais, Zoroastrians and Jews. The Christian community is comprised chiefly of Armenians, Assyrians and expatriates.

The International Missions Inc., which supported 25 missionaries in Iran, evacuated all personnel who had families with young children, leaving five workers. A spokesman said this was done in accordance with State Department advice. Radio and correspondence ministries, however, are continuing unimpeded.

Twenty missionaries of Send the Light Inc. (Operation Mobilization) have reportedly been attempting to leave Iran. They have been stalled by the scarcity of gas (preventing overland departure) and long lists of

Evangelicals, and World Vision.

AERDO is holding charter membership open for one year and is soliciting the membership of sister organizations overseas.

### Mother George's Own Centennial

Eliza Davis George of Austin, Texas, celebrated her 100th birthday on January 20, 1979. "Mother George," as her friends call her, worked 55 years as a missionary in the most primitive part of Liberia, West Africa.

When a visitor from Christian Nationals' Evangelism Commission visited her recently, he found her alert and praising God.

During her 55 years in Africa, this daughter of black American slaves established schools that have given thousands of Liberian children an education. Many of the children have received Christ as Savior. Mother George personally cared for hundreds of orphaned and destitute children, and she brought seven of them to the United States for further training.

Retiring from regular service with the National Baptist Convention at age 66, Mother George refused to quit. She returned to the United States, raised support among black churches, and went back to Liberia. The denomination's late president, William V. S. Tubman, granted her 500 acres of land for a new mission and later decorated her as "Grand Commander for the Redemption of Africa."

### Rhodesia: Blacks in Majority at Christian Conference

The heavy predominance of blacks in a recent Christian leadership conference was a sign of the times, reported Miles Barber, executive secretary of



Mother George and her "spiritual son," Augustus Marwieh, who took over her work when she was 86.

the organization. Organizers at the National Christian Leadership Assembly were surprised by the tremendous majority of blacks at the conference.

"But keeping in mind that Rhodesia is soon to become Zimbabwe, with a black to white population of 23 to 1, we have a good balance at the conference, with a ratio something like this," said Miles.

NACLA drew delegates together from 53 "denominations"—Catholic and Protestant—from throughout the country. Most were pastors. The purpose of the 10-day gathering was "to instruct, equip and motivate Christian leaders of all races and denominations for effective service." The theme text was "Do you love me? Feed my sheep" (John 21:17).

Nearly 600 church leaders heard 60 speakers from Rhodesia, the rest of Africa, and some overseas countries speak on every aspect of church life. Besides the teaching, NACLA was the basis for reconciliation and unity.

Gary Strong, World Vision's new field director for Rhodesia, called it "something miraculous"

that in the middle of a "terrible warlike situation" in this country such a "tremendous sense of togetherness and loving fellowship" by all present was possible.

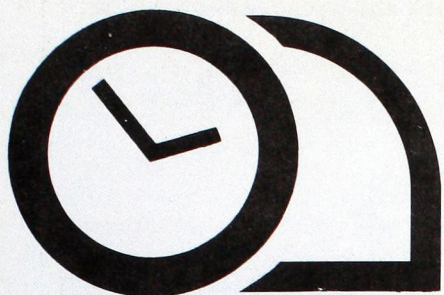
### The Boat People: A Press-time Update

International attempts to resettle Southeast Asian refugees are falling short, according to United Nations refugee officials and the International Rescue Committee (IRC). More than 200,000 Indochinese of various nationalities remain in refugee camps in Thailand, Malaysia and the Philippines, with the refugee influx currently double those being resettled.

Since the spring 1975 airlift from Vietnam and Cambodia, the United States has resettled 52,000 Asian refugees, France 50,000, Australia 14,000, Canada 8000 and all others about 9000.

Resettlement in the United States is being handled totally by private agencies, of which the IRC is the largest. Based in New York City, the IRC encourages clubs, churches and other groups to undertake sponsorship for the incoming refugees.





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**Vietnam Update**

The December 1978 issue of this magazine reported the purchase and shipment of 175 metric tons of rice for flood relief in Vietnam and stated that the rice was sent on the condition that an observer be present. It was later learned that the rice was received and distributed by AID RECEP, a Vietnamese private voluntary agency, without an observer.

World Vision undertook the project as a non-political expression of care in light of the emergency situation. It was an exception to WV policy that was approved by the board of directors. "Although an observer did not accompany the rice, we are still hopeful that a team soon will be permitted into the country," said Stan Mooneyham, president. "It would follow up on the rice distribution and, if possible, also reestablish contact with the churches who were our partners in the past."

**Development in Burundi Villages**

The Kwisumo area of southwest Burundi is experiencing a sizeable influx of people from other highly-populated areas. Simultaneously, a spiritual awakening is occurring in the villages of Kwisumo.

World Vision has begun a community development program through the Evangelical Friends church in the area. Medical needs are being met through a village dispensary, through an "under-fives" clinic and through general health training. Vocational training on the village level is beginning, and instruction is being given in agricultural improvement and animal husbandry.

**New Director for U.S. Pacific/South Area**

Mr. Evon Hedley has been appointed director of World Vision's Pacific/South area office. Hedley has worked with the Russ Reid Agency, Christian Business Men's Committee, and Youth for Christ International. As Pacific/South area director he is re-



sponsible for the largest of five U.S. regional districts in which World Vision has support functions.

**Timely New Books by World Vision Leaders**

Significant new volumes on the current situation for world missions include World Vision President Stan Mooneyham's *China: A New Day* (Logos), off the press just this month. Dr. Mooneyham has written this since the U.S. recognition of the People's Republic.

Another timely volume is Ted Engstrom's *What in the World Is God Doing?* (Word), a fresh survey of the amazing penetration and opportunities for the church around the globe today.

Both books are available through local Christian bookstores.

**A Conference for Church Missions Committee Leaders**

The Association of Church Missions Committees will conduct its fifth national confer-

ence July 19-22, 1979, on the Gordon College campus in Wenham, Massachusetts. The conference will focus on the unfinished task of world evangelization and what the local church can do to meet the need.

Conference plenary sessions will include an overview of the missions sending process by Dr. Ralph D. Winter of the U.S. Center for World Mission. Dr. David M. Howard, director of the 1980 Consultation on World Evangelization, will help participants interpret today's student missions movement. Mr. Edward R. Dayton, director of research and evangelism for World Vision, will highlight the changing needs in missionary preparation. The conference will also consider alternative sending processes, such as the "self-supporting witness."

Third World perspectives on world evangelization will be presented in a panel of Third World leaders along with Mr. Waldron Scott of the World Evangelical Fellowship, Mr. Allen Finley of the Christian Nationals' Evangelism Commission and Mr. Hal Guffy of International Students, Inc.

Throughout the conference, key laymen, pastors and missions leaders will share burdens and concerns with particular emphasis on raising, nurturing, training and sending the next generation of missionaries.

The ACMC is headed by executive director Donald A. Hamilton at its Pasadena, California, headquarters. Conference registration information is available from Kenneth W. Campbell, ACMC National Conference Director, Box 415, Wenham, MA 01984.

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

**Systems Programmer:** Experienced software support person to provide technical assistance and support for a dual DEC-SYSTEM-2050 installation. You should have an aptitude for solving problems within a complex operating environment. Experience on a DEC-10/20 is desired, but similar experience on other systems will be considered. Good opportunity for career growth. Send resume and salary history to Fin Danley, Director of Data Processing.

**Senior Analyst Programmer:** Experienced D.P. professional to participate in development of applications in an on-line Data Base environment. You will be working with the latest hardware and software from DEC, includ-

ing dual DECSYSTEM 2050s, over 50 CRTs for applications and interactive development, and the nation's largest DEC-20 Data Base. COBOL experience is required, and on-line experience is helpful. With our expanding growth through television ministries, this is an excellent career opportunity. Send resume and salary history to Don Schager, Manager of Systems Development.

**Employment Specialist:** Coordinate all phases of employment for headquarters staffing. Prefer college graduate with a minimum of two years experience in Personnel Administration. Send resume and salary history to Carol Ricchio, Personnel Administrator.

World Vision International  
919 W. Huntington Drive  
Monrovia, California 91016

## Prayer Requests

### Please pray for:

■ new opportunities to share the gospel in **China** as the United States establishes ties with that nation of nearly one billion people.

■ the **people of Cambodia** who have suffered greatly amid war and political upheaval.

■ the continuing needs of **Vietnamese boat refugees** who await other nations' decisions regarding their future. Horrible conditions exist for refugees in Malaysian camps, but World Vision has not yet received permission from that

government to go in with food and other vital supplies. Pray that government leaders in all nations will allow human compassion to rule over economic concerns and racial prejudice.

■ **children** who are inevitably suffering from conflicts in Nicaragua, Iran, Rhodesia and other troubled nations. During this second month of the International Year of the Child, pray for children who have lost their parents or have been driven from their homes by war or natural disaster.

# An African's Poem

## Jesus Loves Us

by Noah Kimbwala

"Your young men will  
see visions  
and your old men  
dream dreams."

Are they dreams?  
They are God's dreams!

"Go ye into all the world!" . . . "The harvest is ripe!" . . .  
"Who will go?" . . . "And whom shall I send?" . . .  
We young people, let us teach the nations. Let us cooperate  
with our elders and form a team. A team of the Lord's!

Servants, you and me,  
Start cutting trees;  
Removing trunks from  
the Stream.

We take children  
and old people  
To be baptized there,  
Blessed by God,  
Filled by His Spirit,  
Protected by Christ.

We must go and talk  
about Jesus.  
We must abide  
in Emmanuel.  
We must trust  
Him who loves us.

Let us go to the mountains  
to preach the Gospel.  
Let us sit on the Rock  
and read the Holy Word.  
Let us go to the Valley  
to feed the fold.  
Let us walk on the water  
and be like Jesus.

We won't sink;  
We'd better think:  
Jesus loves us!

Noah Kimbwala, a refugee from Zaire, who is now studying at Fuller Theological Seminary, wrote this poem "after a serious reading of Dr. Donald McGavran's book, *Understanding Church Growth*." Noah, who speaks and writes several African and other languages, has done translation and interpretation work for United Bible Societies, and has read numerous original poems in his own languages on Zairean television. He now works part time at World Vision U.S. headquarters in Monrovia, California.



## Emotional Cloning is Never Christian

**M**uch has been written about the tragedy of Guyana, but I think there is something more to be said—something that addresses not Jonestown but Ourtown. Something that speaks to the nature and quality of our commitments. To say that Jim Jones, the man who led his people to their death, had “changed” or become paranoid or was mentally and spiritually sick does not deal with the other 916 who died by their own hand or at the hands of others.

They, too, were sick—infected with the virus of misdirection, of surrender of the will in the wrong way to the wrong lord. It is a sickness which did not disappear with the collapse of the Jonestown utopian dream.

Christian discipleship is founded on the bedrock of commitment, but it goes wrong if and when privatism takes over and the checks and balances of the group—the Body—are not, or cannot be, brought to bear upon what may be for some a personal revelation and for others personal ambition. It is too easy for one person alone, without counselors, to sanctify almost any means to achieve what he is convinced is a good and noble end.

God does use individuals, and sometimes it seems that He works best through those who persist in the face of strong opposition. But there comes a time when every Christian, the most powerless as well as the most powerful, must be measured by the Holy Spirit as He works through other Christians. And more than that, by the measuring rod of Scripture, rightly divided. There comes a time when private revelation must stand the test of public examination.

To have charisma enough to attract a following is not enough. Perhaps, indeed, we have let our notions of charisma get out of hand. A charisma is a gift from God, conferred not as a merit badge but as an empowerment for us to do what God wants us to do. The charisma is God's, for God's purposes, and if otherwise used, it is misused. How often we wait for a charismatic Godot to stir us while disregarding less dramatic, but faithful, leadership made available by God! Faithfulness is also a charisma.

The Bible admonishes us to temper our commitment by testing the spirits. One test, it seems to me, is that an authentic call to commitment is never

a call to the diminishing of personality, but is always a call to the enhancing of it. We are not called to blind, irrational obedience, but to open-eyed, cause-and-effect obedience. Commitment and surrender, in the context of Christian faith, result neither in a destroyed will nor in a reduced intellect. And the power and privilege of responsible choice still remains. But with all that, there is still the mystique of faith, still the incredible power of love, that leads us above and beyond our human rationalities and makes of us, as they did of Abraham, more than we have been, not less.

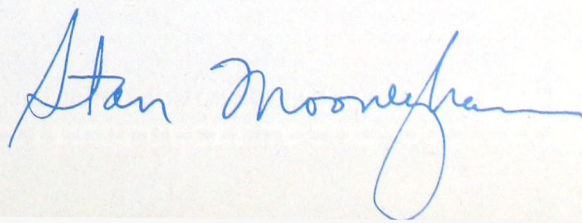
Emotional cloning is never Christian. The desired goal is not to reduce everyone to a common denominator personality, but to elevate everyone to a fully alive, fully contributing personality. The need is not to subdue personality but to Christianize it. Jesus didn't try to make twelve carbon copies out of the men He chose. The leader who diminishes his followers does not pass the test.

**T**he practice of privatism among evangelicals has long bothered me. Why is it that zeal and ambition cause so many gifted leaders to disregard the counsel and opinions of other members of the Body, who, far from being competitive or threatening, are essential to the health of the very ones who scorn them? Any part of the Body, if separated from every other part, soon becomes a gross distortion with inevitable nightmarish results because the balance of relationship is lost.

Yet it is that kind of privatism in which some seem to glory—bits and pieces trying to live independently and in the end dying ignominiously.

We must be willing to listen to each other, be counseled by each other, supplement and complement each other—not because it is courteous to do so, which it is, but because it is Christian.

Only in the Body are we safe. Fulfilled. And fulfilling. It may seem heroic and exhilarating to march to the beat of a different drummer, but it is safe only if the rhythm is not out of step with the rest of the Body in which we are all mutually related.



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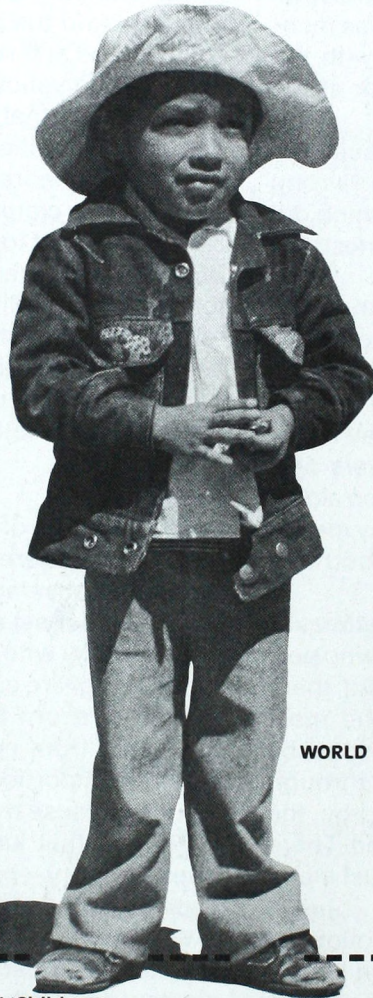
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