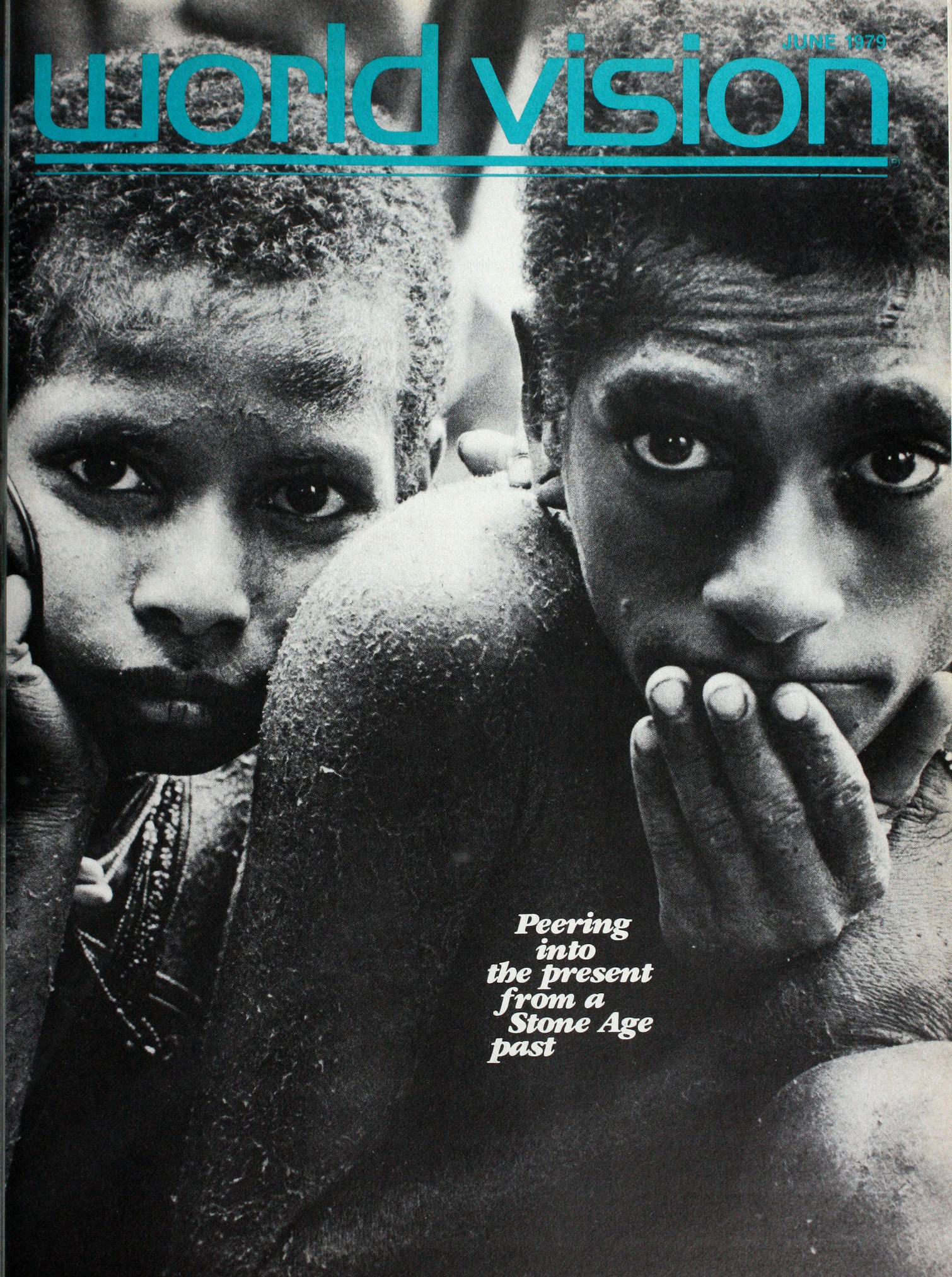


JUNE 1979

world vision



*Peering
into
the present
from a
Stone Age
past*



Peering into the present from a Stone Age past

The Niksek people of Papua New Guinea are anxious to leave behind their past fears and superstitions. Stan Mooneyham tells how the gospel of Christ is replacing the "law of payback." Page 3.

Relief convoy enters Uganda

Emergency supplies began flowing over the border just hours after fighting ceased. Page 11.

Ceremony of the pigs

The success of a piggery project in Upper Volta calls for some drum beating, ritual dancing and a 53-gun salute. Kenny Waters. Page 13.

For lease: Apartment. One-room crate. Option available.

Father Colin McLean went to a Manila slum every day to sympathize with his parishioners. They told him there's only one way to find out what poverty is like. Page 21.

Caring comes full circle

Early in life Ni Luh Suwinti was loved when she most needed it. Now she's helping others in return. Page 22.

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Inside our world

Had you looked in, as wife Dorothy and I did, on a certain gathering of Africans and Americans in Pasadena one Saturday in May, you'd have felt the same surge of excitement we felt as we watched, listened and joined in jubilant singing.

Through hymns, African dances, speeches, testimonies and an African/American feast, blacks and whites young and old were celebrating the end of a tyrant's rule over Uganda and the beginning of a new regime whose stated aim is to reconstruct that broken nation and rehabilitate its suffering people.

In that gathering (sponsored by African students at Fuller Seminary) the principal speaker, Dr. Inya Ude, attributed Tanzania's amazing "conquering of Uganda for the Ugandans" to the direct intervention of God. I'm convinced that the attribution is a correct one.

A few days later, had you looked in on a certain other song-studded gathering—this one consisting of World Vision execs and their spouses, you'd have felt another surge of excitement as the participants reviewed what God has done recently throughout the world, discussed fresh opportunities for ministry in various regions, and, like the Africans, acknowledged the unmistakable hand of God in Uganda.

True, "President-for-Life" Idi Amin Dada was still somewhere sending his soldiers on destructive missions. But at about that very time Kampala, the capital city, was welcoming President Lule, Bishop Festo Kivengere and other compassionate, God-fearing Ugandan leaders who had long prayed and prepared for this day in the name of Jesus Christ.

In the words sung movingly by Elaine Nelson at that second gathering, "Kings and kingdoms will all pass away, but there's something about that Name."

DAVID OLSON

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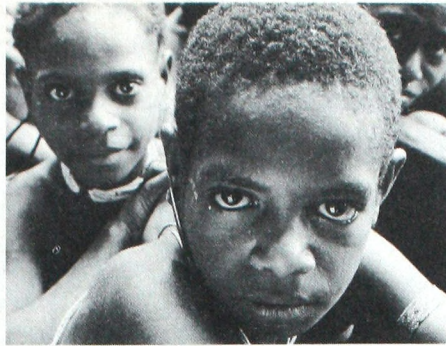
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Peering into the present from a Stone Age past



The village of **Niksek** at the headwaters of the Sepik River in Papua New Guinea may not yet be the settlement nearest to heaven, but I can tell you this: it is a very long way from the hell its people lived in a few months ago.

I know. I've just been there.

In case you should want to check out my statement for yourself, I'll give you directions.

First, fly to Port Moresby, the capital of the newly-independent Pacific nation. You can go via either Sydney or Manila, since it's roughly the same distance from each.

Actually, the country of Papua New Guinea is one half of the world's second-largest island (after Greenland). The western half, called Irian Jaya, belongs to Indonesia.

From Port Moresby, charter a small plane and head northwest. You'll fly over the Western Highlands and a central mountain range, with some of the highest peaks in the

by **W. Stanley Mooneyham**

President, World Vision International





A primitive people who hunted the wild boars and lived by the law of tambaran and payback.

Pacific—nearly 15,000 feet. After about three hours you'll drop down into the government outpost of Ambunti, which sits on a slight elevation in the middle of limitless swamp forests.

You might take a boat from Ambunti if you can find someone willing to make the trip. (Unlikely, and not recommended anyhow, because the trip would take the better part of two days, and the river is treacherous.)

Since it is impossible to walk from Ambunti to Niksek (the jungle is literally trackless), your only other option is to see if you can get the small two-passenger helicopter operated by Summer Institute of Linguistics (popularly known as Wycliffe Bible Translators) to come from the mission's base and ferry you in.

Out of practical necessity that's how we did it, but I must confess my deep feelings of ambivalence at being set down in the midst of a Stone Age environment by a twentieth-century machine. It seemed, at the very least, that we should have trekked or rowed the last few miles to soften the culture shock.

I've heard of places time forgot. This spot on the April River (one of the tributaries of the mighty Sepik)

goes them one better. I had the feeling that time never found it.

It wasn't "found," in fact, until 1973 when a government patrol pushed its way past the known frontiers in a census-taking effort which preceded independence. That was the first time any outsider had laid eyes on the wild and rugged land except from the air. Even the mighty battles of World War II which raged over New Guinea had never touched this untamed jungle. It had been left to the wild boars, crocodiles, the magnificent birds of paradise—and a primitive people who wore grass miniskirts and seashells on a G-string, grew taro, hunted the wild boars, and lived by the law of *tambaran* and *payback*.

These were the Niksek and their tribal cousins. Although untouched by the outside world, they had, through occasional contacts with other tribes, learned about missionaries and seen evidence of the change that comes to a society touched by these dedicated servants of Jesus Christ. They sent word out by the government patrol that they would welcome such a person to come and live among them.

That word eventually got to Fritz Urschitz, a missionary with the



Liebenzell Mission from Germany, who had already pioneered in two other areas. His mission agreed to lend him to the South Sea Evangelical Mission so that he could respond to the new challenge.

Fritz established a base at Ambunti and started building a house for his family. He was also busy planning his strategy, praying all the time for God to give him an opening to this new group of people. The answer came dramatically when he met a man from the April River district who was in Ambunti as a witness in a court case. Nasam could speak Neo-Melanesian, or Pidgin English, the trade language of the country. When he discovered that Fritz was a missionary, he urged the 14-year-veteran to open a work in his area.

So here was the breakthrough! But there was also the house to be built. Nasam agreed to stay and help with the construction if Fritz would agree to accompany him when the house was finished.

Deal!

The two men, accompanied by two native evangelists from another area, made the first boat trip in 1976. The patrol's message had been right. Weary of the superstitions and fears which bound them to the past, the Niksek people wanted to change. The night of their arrival, the three outsiders spoke at length, through interpreters, about God, His creation and Jesus Christ. The people were so hungry for more spiritual knowledge that they kept the tired travelers up until 2 A.M., plying them with questions.

Says Fritz: "I trembled with

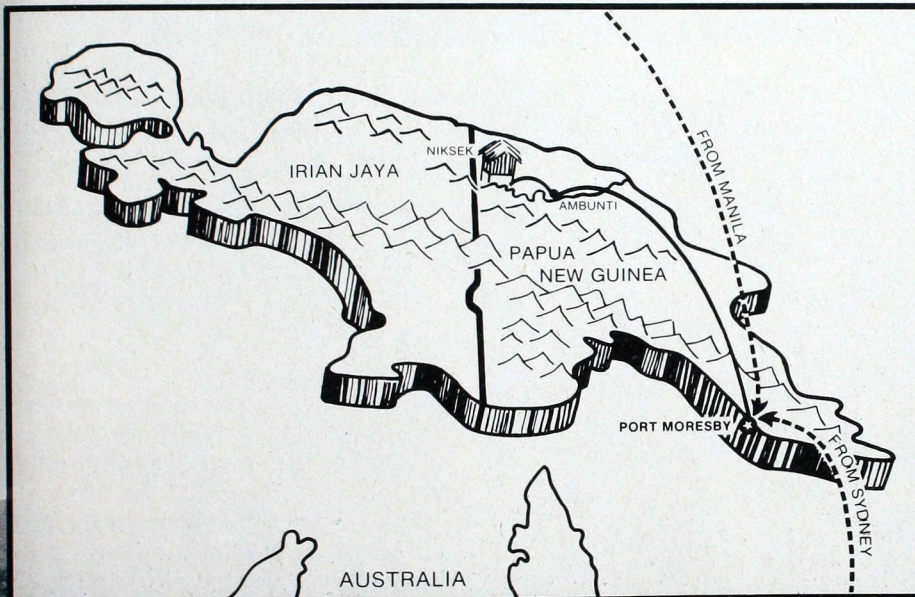
excitement and could scarcely sleep the rest of the night."

Eager for more teaching, the people wanted their own resident missionary. And they wanted contact with the rest of the world. They desired both so badly, in fact, that they started carving an airstrip out of virgin jungle with nothing more than hand tools—bush knives and axes.

That was in 1977, and it is still only about half-finished. Fritz has added a few spades and some files to their meager inventory of hand tools, as well as a small tractor, contributed by a church in Europe and brought up the rain-swollen stream through great hazards on a government barge.

But the huge trees—up to a hundred feet tall and four to five feet in diameter—must still be felled by hand. And the massive stumps must be grubbed out and moved the same way.

Watching about two dozen men perform these nearly superhuman feats in the steaming heat of a tropical sun, I marveled at the motivation which had kept them



going for over a year to clear that one-mile strip of jungle.

We talked about it that night after a pig feast and *sing-sing* (dancing by the warriors). The pig was a wild boar killed that morning and cooked on hot stones. Fritz had brought rice to mix with the native taro roots, which made it a banquet indeed for the Niksek whose usual diet consists almost solely of the starchy tuber grown in small clearings in the jungle.

Although I had eagerly anticipated sampling the wild boar, I yielded to the wiser judgment of Dr. Gil McArthur, World Vision's director in the South Pacific, who was a missionary in New Guinea for nearly 20 years. He suggested that we stick to the canned salmon which Fritz had thoughtfully brought along, he told me, to spare both our molars and our digestive systems.

Reluctantly, I passed up the wild boar.



After the *sing-sing*, at my request the group sent about ten men over for *tok-tok* (discussion). We couldn't all fit into the little shack where we were spending the night, so they spilled out the doorway into the darkness.

The next two hours was for me a window into their world. We talked of many things, including the airstrip, but primarily of their past and future.

The past could be summed up in one Pidgin phrase: "Me friat tumas." Rough translation: "We were always filled with great fear." They spoke of the things which dominated and troubled them in the past—primarily the *sanguma*, the *tambaran*, poison and the rainworm.

The rainworm?

This small worm which lives in the ground was a god to them. If one was killed accidentally or harmed in any way, someone in the family would die. They know now this was a great superstition, and they've been liberated from this fear; but can you imagine the terror you would feel each time you went to dig taro out of the jungle, fearing you might harm a god and thus lose a loved one?

The *sanguma* was the sorcerer. Because he controlled the powers of darkness and light, he exercised



Fritz Urschitz (left) talks with the author.

enormous power over the lives of the people.

The *tambaran* was the power of the enemy gods—and everyone outside the immediate clan was an enemy. The old society is one of fractured relationships. That is why you will find few large villages in areas where the gospel has not liberated the people from the fear of each other. Families—perhaps 30 or 40 people—will huddle together in a huge "tall house" built 30 feet off the ground to protect themselves against the enemy who lives over the hill or across the river.

Because everyone outside the immediate family was considered an

Families huddle together in a huge "tall house" to protect themselves against the enemy.

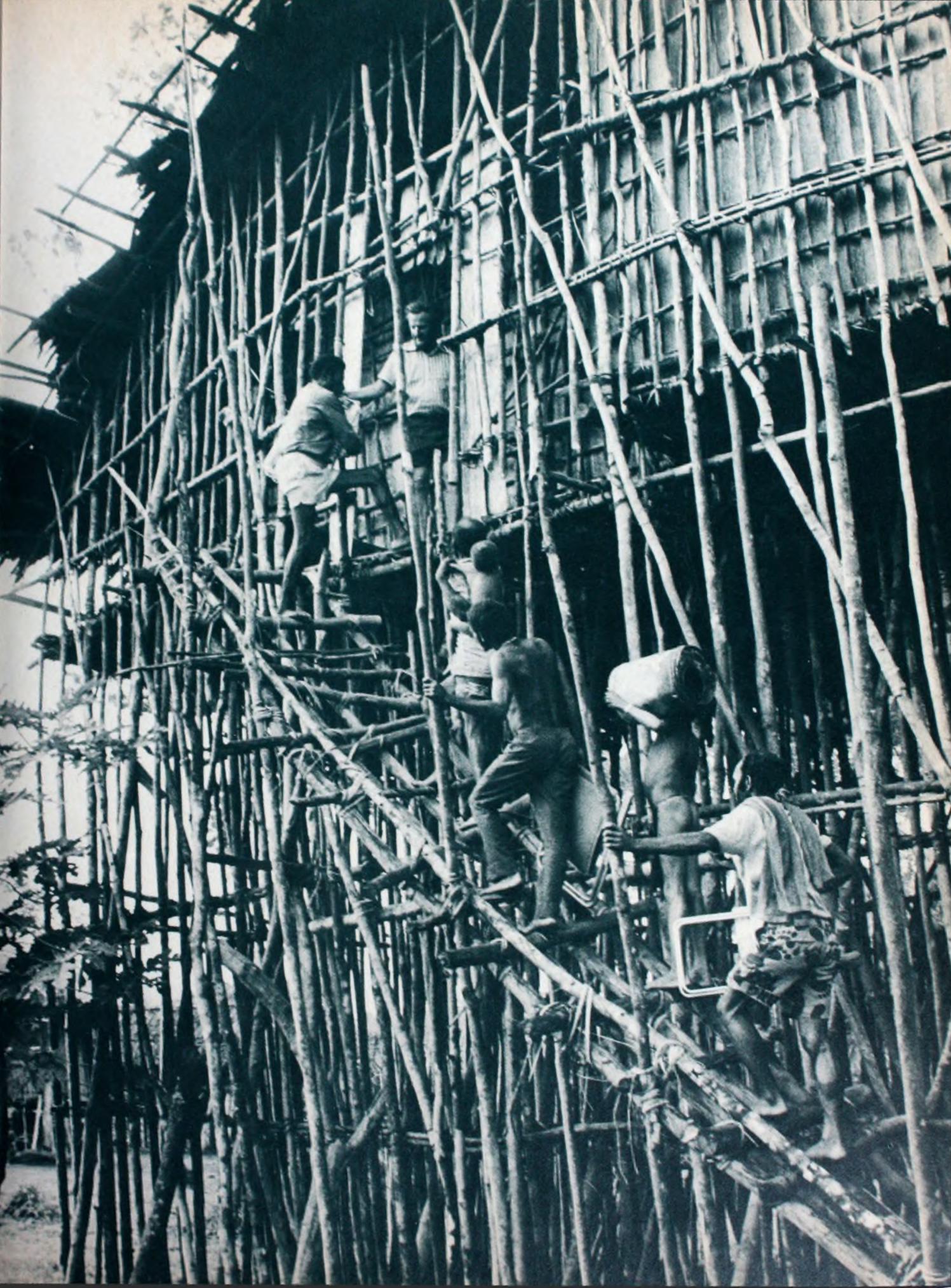
enemy, they felt that poison was a constant threat—either from the enemy or from some outside spiritual force.

The entire culture was permeated with these primal fears which affected everything—from the way they built houses to the way they hunted wild boars. An entire system of taboos (some food was forbidden to women, for example) and superstitions (a man who stayed in the same house with a menstruating woman would get asthma) was built up around these fears.

A man called John spoke first: "So many of the things we did were wrong and have not been helpful to us."

Jacob said he wanted to thank the missionary who brought this change to them. "Before, we didn't sit down well," he commented in the local idiom, "but now we sit down happy."

One of the men who speaks Pidgin used the word "belesi." The language



is highly phonetic and picturesque. Pronounced "bell-easy," the word could literally be translated, "a calm feeling in the stomach," since the stomach is the seat of the emotions in this culture. The English equivalent would be "Our heart is at peace."

When I asked what are the advantages here in the village over life in the jungle, Nathan answered for them all: "Because God is here."

I was touched by these simple but eloquent descriptions of life on the banks of the April River. As I said, it may not be heaven, but it's a long way from the hell of their former existence.

To get an even deeper feeling of what the former life was like, I spent much of the next morning with a man named Abraham and his wife, Makana. The men's Bible names, I discovered, were not the work of the missionary. The people themselves had heard from other tribes of the practice of adopting a biblical name

at the time of conversion and baptism, since the giving of their infant names was often associated with animistic ceremonies. The village is now a veritable lexicon of Bible names!

Abraham, whose pre-Christian name was Sinae, told me about growing up. At the age of seven he began the five stages of initiation into manhood, which were not completed until he was nineteen. The initiation procedures were meant not only to prove his manhood to the tribe, but also to teach him to endure pain and to develop the qualities of a warrior. During these years he was also introduced to the gods and deities who would control his life.

The first stage for young Sinae was getting to know the *tumbunu*, the ways of his forefathers. Since the people have no recorded history, it must be handed down orally from generation to generation. For Sinae, this meant listening to the older men

tell of great battles and brave warriors, of wild boar hunts and feuds with enemies.

The second stage was a continuation of the first until he was saturated with tribal lore.

When he was 14, Sinae was made to spend the night alone in the *haus tambaran*, or "spirit house." In it were spirit fetishes, mementos of some of the battles he had heard about, the skulls as well as weapons of some of the great warriors, and the jawbones of scores of slain wild boars. The next morning he was taken out and made to run the "gauntlet of pain," in which he was slapped and lashed by the older men who, when he was a child, had been gentle with him. This taught him his new relationships in the adult world.

After this third stage, he was no longer a boy, but he was also not yet a man.

The fourth step came when he was

Griseofulvin versus grilli

Next to malnutrition, ringworm is the most serious and immediate health challenge we face at Niksek. At least 75 percent of the people are heavily infected by this condition, for which the local word is *grilli*.

In many instances, the entire body is covered by the parasite, which burrows under the skin and then travels to all extremities, tracing what look like tattoo patterns beneath the skin, then gradually peeling away the outer skin from the whole body. The itch is almost unbearable, especially when the victim perspires.

However, it is more than just a nuisance parasite. It can and does cause other serious problems.

Together with the local missionary, Fritz Urschitz, we have set the eradication of the Niksek's ringworm as our number one, immediate health goal. It can be

done, we estimate, for about \$8 per person for a month's treatment of the kind described below.

In order to learn more about ringworm, on my return home I called a longtime friend, Dr. Harland Hastings of Halifax, Nova Scotia. Born in Angola, and in medical practice for years in Jamaica before moving to Canada, Dr. Hastings was a source of helpful information. Here is part of our conversation.

How does ringworm actually affect the body?

Ringworm doesn't stop with just the outer layers of skin. It can go deeper and cause serious inflammation. And the acute skin condition can result in severe abscesses, particularly on tender areas of the body and where skin touches skin. The face and genital areas are especially susceptible.

Often the victim's compulsive scratching breaks the skin, causing bleeding and bringing on these abscesses. Where it gets onto the scalp, hair will fall out.

How is the parasite spread?

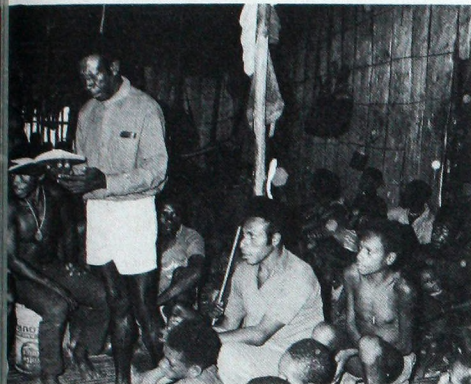
It can come from the earth, from animals or from other human beings. Most frequently, we find that



19. He was taken back to the *haus tambaran*, this time to sit for two weeks with no food except sugarcane. The medicine men came and taught him tribal custom and law, especially the "law of payback," from which he has not yet been totally liberated. It basically is the law of revenge—an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. Only by payback can a man retain his manhood.

During these two weeks he wove into his own hair some of the hair of his dead ancestors so that he might

Daniel, a native evangelist, reads Scripture at morning worship in the "tall house."



receive something of their *mana*, or life force.

At the end of this religious fasting period, Sinae had to go out and demonstrate that the tribal gods were with him by killing one of the enemy—remembering that an "enemy" was anyone not of his immediate clan. He brought back a limb of the victim and took it into the spirit house where he ate the flesh and blood, thus taking into himself the warrior qualities of his victim.

Had he failed at any of these crucial test points during his initiation, the women would have taunted and ridiculed him, a fate so devastating to his pride that he would have been driven to suicide or to some spectacular feat to prove his manhood.

Stage five was the graduation ceremony, the public recognition of his rights as a man—the right to have land, own pigs, get a woman and have children. The climax was a giant

sing-sing when his acceptance by the tribe as a man was affirmed.

That took place probably 30 years ago (we could only guess at his age), but it has shaped Sinae's life ever since. I asked him what his adult life had been like in the jungle.

"The old days were not good days," he began. "We walked in fear—fear of both man and the spirits who meant to do us harm. Even knowing the *tumbunu* did not bring us peace. We would have a war, some would get killed, then we would make friends. But even after the friendship feast, we knew the enemy would be coming back to get us. And we looked for ways to get them. We did not know how to live together in the same forest."

In early 1978, Sinae heard about the new village on the April River, where people were settling down *belesi*. When Fritz Urschitz put up his simple building in 1977, it was the

in primitive regions it is spread by dogs that live and sleep with the people. However, it can be caught only by direct contact.

Does a diet deficiency have anything to do with it?

Although the ringworm is not directly related to diet, people who are malnourished—and especially those deficient in protein—are more apt to get abscesses and skin lesions.

How would you go about treating ringworm and eradicating it from a given area?

You must locate the source and break the contact. Then you can use an ointment topically. This will cure superficial cases and relieve some of the symptoms. The most effective treatment for eradication, however, is a drug called *griseofulvin*, an antibiotic, which must be taken by mouth. It would be ideal to use both the ointment and the antibiotic.

Clothing and blankets should be washed in boiling water periodically until all the symptoms are gone. If the people will do these things, it is entirely possible to completely eradicate ringworm from the area. □



Abraham, Makana and their youngest daughter: "What God says is now the number one something in our lives."

My heart was greatly burdened for the children. Infant mortality is a staggering 40 percent.

first hut around. Gradually, the people began to come. Today there are 21 huts and a population of about 180, including 30 members of one family living in a traditional "tall house," their one concession to the ancient lifestyle. New families come at the rate of about one a week. The chiefs have turned no one away.

The fame of the village spread as it grew, and Sinae's heart hungered for what he heard was happening on the April River. So he started out for Niksek. Just on the other side of the river from Niksek, he was attacked by a wild boar and nearly killed. Bleeding heavily, he managed to climb a vine which was hanging from a branch, and to stay in the tree until the animal left.

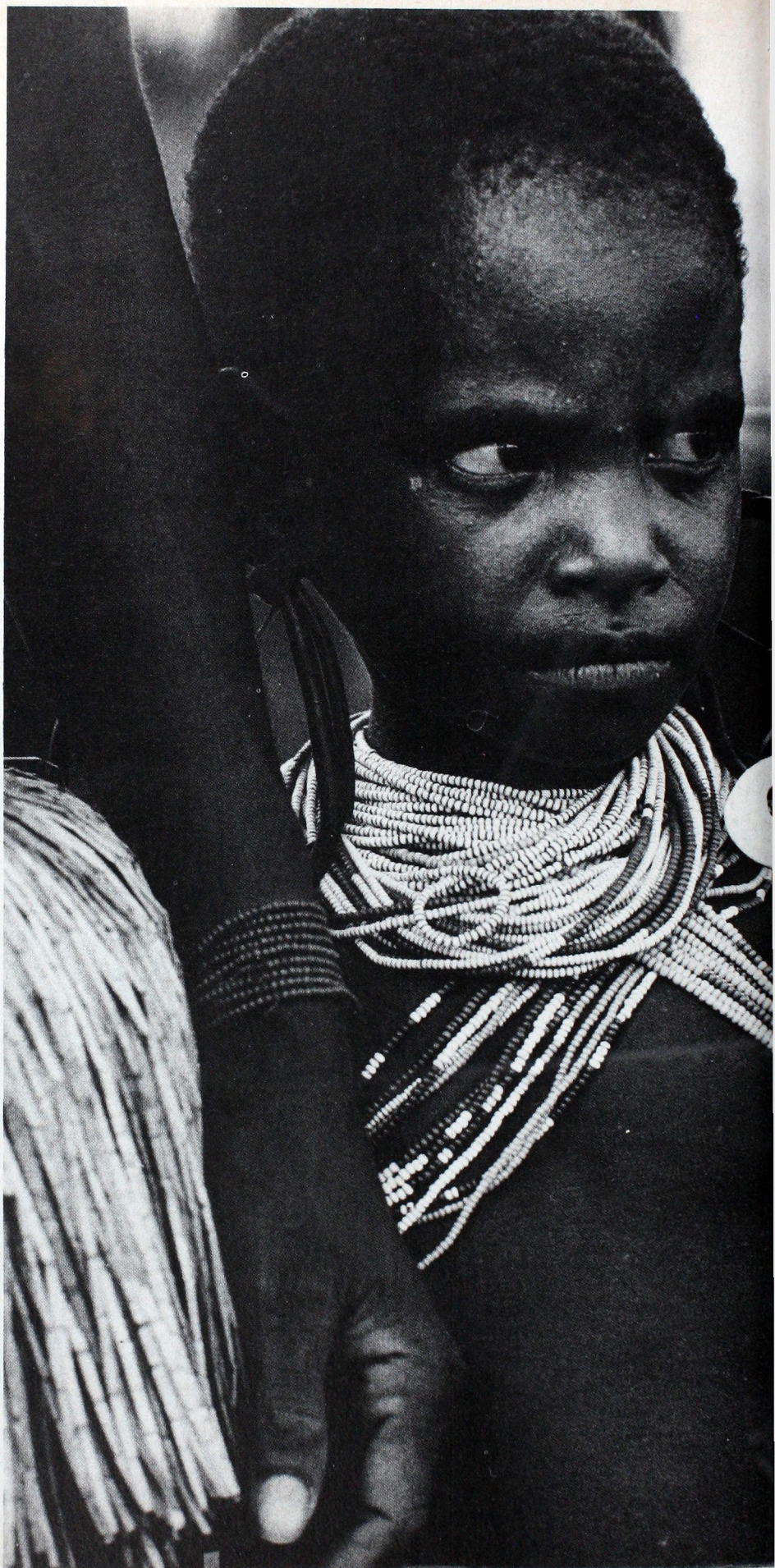
A young boy heard his cries and he was taken across to Niksek by canoe. Thinking he would die, the people started their traditional wailing. Daniel, the evangelist who had returned to live in Niksek after his first trip with Fritz, quieted them and led them in prayer for the man. The only thing he could do was wash the gaping wounds with hot water.

Somehow the injured man stayed alive until Fritz came a week later with penicillin. Sinae fully recovered. He and the people know it was God who heard their prayers.

Last Christmas, he and Makana were baptized in the April River along with 64 others, two of whom were Fritz's oldest sons.

Sinae became Abraham—and his old name wasn't all he left behind in exchange for the new life. His testimony had already made that clear. He has been joined by many more, and there are now 127 baptized Christians in the village, all of the conversions occurring within three months.

I asked Abraham what were his



Relief convoy enters Uganda

Nairobi, May 2—Cheering Tanzanian soldiers and Ugandan civilians in the town of Tororo, Uganda, greeted the first relief convoy to enter the devastated nation. A seven-ton truck and

three other transports driven by World Vision and African Enterprise personnel carried medicines, baby cereal and fuel to Kampala in the first phase of a massive relief operation.

When the convoy set out from Nairobi, Kenya, troops loyal to Amin were still in control of the Kenya/Uganda border crossing. Just hours before the convoy reached the border, Tanzanian troops won out. John Wilson of African Enterprise and Dan Brewster, Roger DeLemos, Dean Hirsch and Titus Mubiru of World Vision were among the first to drive vehicles into Uganda.

Mr. Mubiru, himself a Ugandan national, remained in Kampala to help John Wilson set up a relief distribution system. Wilson is part of a 20-member committee appointed by the Church of Uganda to coordinate relief efforts nationwide.

Stan Mooneyham, president of World Vision, was in Uganda last month to consult with others regarding plans for reconstruction. The July issue of this magazine will carry his personal report. □



hopes for his children. He told me his two daughters will likely follow the traditional ways and marry as soon as they find the right men. As for his two sons, he said, "I do not want them to follow in the ways of their forefathers. Those ways have proved to be wrong. I want them to have this new life. When I hear the 'book Bible' read, I know this is God talking. What God says is now the number one something in our lives."

Earlier that morning I had joined with other Christians in the village to hear God talk to us from the "book Bible." They come together for hymn singing and Bible study every morning at eight o'clock. If the weather is clear, they meet outside. If rain threatens—as it did that morning—they climb the 30-foot

ladder to the "tall house." Its dimensions are about 20 feet by 40 feet, and I looked with some apprehension at the thin stilts which support it, wondering if they might collapse under the weight of nearly 100 people.

They don't. What the house may lack in architectural style it makes up in sturdiness, although I am told it rocks and sways precariously when *sing-sings* are held in it.

That morning Fritz spoke from Mark's Gospel on the two great commandments: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength . . . and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

He emphasized the difference between their old life, when they feared the bad spirits, and their new

life centered around a God who is love. And he told them God commands them not to hate or fear others, but to love them. He spoke of the centuries-old law of payback and told them this is contrary to God's greater law. The words were especially appropriate, for there have been some recent experiences of injustices and wrongs done by those outside the village, and the new Christians have been debating whether or not they should retaliate.

Fritz sees the new attitudes gradually taking over and prays that none of the weaker believers will be tempted back into the old ways. When I discussed this with the men during our *tok-tok*, they told me, "We

do not want to do payback killings. If other families do us wrong, we would rather be paid in shells or pigs. We are trying to learn the new way."

One of the songs we sang that morning was "Lord, I'm Coming Home."

I thought it an unusually appropriate theme for these semi-nomadic people who have wandered the remote regions of New Guinea for centuries in search of a place to belong. Suspicions drove them farther from each other and fear sent them deeper into the jungles. No place was home for more than two years.

Now there on the banks of the April River, isolated by swamp forests and the jungle vastness, a community of faith is being formed by the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit. A people who were not a people are finding new life together. That's something which their forefathers for countless generations were never able to experience.

Even though it still isn't heaven, it occurred to me that the Niksek people are at least beginning to find their way home where they are able to "sit down happy" and live *belesi*.

With them as they move forward

Never in all my travels have I seen a people so highly motivated to participate in their own spiritual and material development. They have nothing except their faith; yet they are undaunted. World Vision has promised the Niksek people and Fritz Urschitz that we will go with them as they move forward. Our goal is to make life more bearable for them while, at the same time, allowing the many positive aspects of their own culture to flourish and grow. We want this village to be a model for others in the area.

The first priority is to finish the airstrip. Without help, it would take the people another 18 months. For \$8600 we can shorten the time to four months.

A building that can be used as a school, church and training center will cost another \$4500.

We are planning an agricultural survey to see what crops can be grown other than taro, which provides little nutrition. The leaders told me they would like a small store where they could get things like tools, matches, soap and simple clothing. Now they must walk nine

days to the nearest store at Telefomin, allowing at least three weeks for the round trip! A small store at Niksek will identify them as a people, for then others will come to them for supplies—and, not incidentally, will see what the gospel can do for a people.

A small building stocked with a few essentials is another \$2000.

Then we must do something for the people personally. Ringworm eradication is our first priority. (See story on page 8.) A 30-day treatment will cost \$8 per person. A "family kit" consisting of straw mat, blanket, mosquito net and simple dishes is \$15.

My heart was greatly burdened for the children. There is much malnutrition. Infant mortality is a staggering 40 percent! We will start a supplemental feeding program for the small children, with milk and high-protein biscuits. You can feed one child for a month for only \$10. Providing educational materials for those eager young minds will cost only \$5 a year.

Will you share something with these people and others like them today? They have already started on the long journey from the Stone Age to new life, but they won't be able to finish it without our help. □

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Ceremony of the pigs

Poroge Sambo, minister of the small Assembly of God church in Tougou, Upper Volta, put on his best, light-blue cotton shirt and pants outfit, and inhaled deeply the cool morning air. Outside the adobe walls of his house he could hear the sounds of his fellow Mossi tribesmen who were already arriving as dawn cast its reddish hue over the scorched African savanna. By afternoon the normal village population of 500 would swell to nearly 2000.

As he walked from his parsonage compound into the dusty street, a villager, a Muslim, greeted him.

"Good morning," Poroge answered cheerfully.

"It's a big day!" his friend said, pausing to show the pastor his flint-

lock musket, meticulously polished in anticipation of the celebration.

Behind him, carefully balancing a 20-pound pot of water she had drawn from the well, walked a member of Poroge's congregation.

"Good morning, pastor," she smiled.

"Are you ready?" he asked her. "Are you singing today?"

"Yes, and my husband is in the hunting dance. You know, if it weren't for the pigs, we would have had to leave Tougou and go elsewhere to find food."

She passed by, expectation glowing in her face.

Pastor Sambo returned within the walls of the church compound. His wife emerged from the thatch-roofed



reception patio and set aside the broom she had been using to sweep dust off the cement floor.

"When are the Strangers coming?" she asked, shifting their youngest

daughter from her right to her left shoulder.

"Sometime this afternoon," he answered.

At noon, Pastor Sambo made the rounds of the village, greeting the children, parents and old folks who lounged beneath the sparse shade of the silk-cotton and baobab trees that encircled the village center.

It warmed his heart to see all these friends, some of whom had walked many miles for the celebration. Though many were Christians, a good number of Muslims and animists had come as well. They, too, would be helped by the new income from the pig cooperative, though the Muslims did not eat pork. They knew money to build the piggeries had been supplied by the Federation of Evangelical Churches and Missions in Upper Volta and an agency called World Vision International.

That Christian people would give of their time and money—and love—had greatly impressed the non-believers. That is why they were present.

Pastor Sambo had gained a powerful foothold with these people because of the pigs. The pigs, he thought. One hundred fifty-two pigs, the first of thousands that would be part of the cooperative in coming years. Not only would they increase the available protein in the village by 40 percent, but the income from their sale in the cities would help provide cash so that more than 300 of the

cooperative's members could afford to purchase vegetables and other needed supplies.

Retracing his steps, he felt the afternoon *harmattan*, a hot, scorching wind that whipped through this region called the Sahel, meaning "shores of the Sahara." The *harmattan* was already bending the grass and spiny shrub trees, causing billows of dust to turn the sun's yellow rays into an eerie brown. He hoped the Strangers' airplane would be able to land.

Pastor Sambo returned home and ate a bowl of couscous, a mush of ground millet and water that he topped with a peanut sauce. He was thankful for this meal. Many in Upper Volta were hungry; some had starved to death right in his own village. As he said grace, he thanked the Lord again for his meager meal.

After eating he took a nap, a custom mandated by the hot African sun.

In midafternoon he awakened to the sounds of the villagers beating on their gourd drums, and muskets being fired outside his door. A Land-cruiser bearing one of the Strangers and an African from the church federation drove into the village square.

Poroge politely pushed his way through the crowd of curious children to greet the Stranger and his friend.

"Welcome," he said in Moré, the Mossi language.

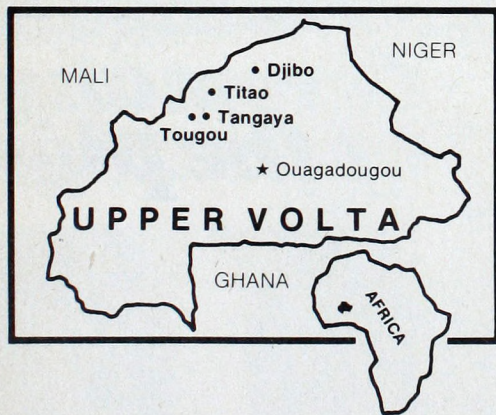
"Bonjour," the Stranger replied in French, the official language of the country. The African fellow explained in French, a language Poroge wished he knew better, that the others would be coming later. The first group had come from Ouagadougou, the capital, by car. The others would be coming soon, weather permitting.

Pastor Sambo escorted his visitors to the patio hut and offered them a drink of water from the ceremonial porcelain basin he kept for special occasions. The federation fellow took a long draught. The Stranger did not. While the drums continued to pound outside, the Stranger talked quietly in English, his brow wrinkled, his arms motioning outdoors, sweeping like the wind. The African nodded. He, too, seemed worried, probably about whether the wind would delay the airplane carrying the others.

Poroge left them to see how preparations were progressing for the celebration. The native dancers and singers said they were ready; his church choir said they would begin singing as soon as the Strangers arrived.

A firecracker exploded loudly on the street. Drums increased their beat. A cloud of dust rose in the distance, signaling the arrival of the others.

Their van skidded to a halt in front of the church and Poroge once again



Piggeries

Even after the rains returned and crops were again harvested, adequate food resources remained a problem. It was then that the villagers contacted the Federation of Evangelical Churches and Missions of Upper Volta, and World Vision. World Vision supplied funds for construction of the piggeries and for the purchase of a truck to transport the pigs to market.

"Per capita income in this area is expected to rise from around \$60 to more than \$120 a year," said Dr. Manfred Kohl, World Vision field director in West Africa. "It's a substantial increase, but this area is still among the poorest in Africa."

Newly established piggeries in four parts of Upper Volta are a response to conditions brought about by the severe West African Sahel drought of 1973. In that year, the parched "shores of the Sahara" soil did not get enough rainfall to support the subsistence crops of

millet, sorghum and peanuts. Thousands of people went hungry, and agencies like World Vision rushed food to Upper Volta. Compounding the human suffering was the death of thousands of head of livestock—a valuable source of food lost.

wound his way through the crowd to meet the group. He saw his old friends, Don Tucker, a missionary from the United States, and Samuel Yameogo, president of the evangelical federation. He also met Manfred Kohl and Dick Anderson from World Vision's office in West Africa. Bryant Myers had come from the Nairobi office, along with Bob Ainsworth, director of all relief and development for World Vision, headquartered in California.

"We're sorry to be late," Manfred said, speaking through Pastor Yameogo. "The winds held us up. We'll have to leave soon."

"I understand," Pastor Sambo said, disappointed nonetheless at the constant rushing that seemed to characterize his European and American friends. "Before we see the pigs, the villagers want to show their appreciation for your help."

He led the group first to a circle of village women who pounded out an undulating beat on their drums, chanting "Welcome to the Strangers." A few feet away, the young girls began their song. They surrounded the visitors, singing loudly, "Peace be with you, Strangers."

The Strangers moved on to watch a hunting dance by the village men. One man wore the tribal hunting mask, partially carved and partially constructed from cotton and yarn. He moved deftly through the chanting men, nodding back and forth, left to right, ready to stalk his prey. Another man had put on a hat with horns. He moved through the group, dodging the feigned advances of the hunter. As they darted to and fro, the chant reached a climax . . . then silence . . . the hunter let out a yell . . . his spear lurched forward . . . the hunted fell dead. The Strangers applauded the ritual performance. One yelled "Bravo." Then they moved on.

Pastor Sambo led them next to a

circle of village militiamen. The Muslim he had greeted earlier stood proudly at attention. The Strangers put their hands over their ears and the militia fired off their muskets. Several muskets backfired, white smoke singeing the militiamen's faces. The villagers laughed and made joking comments. With the 53-gun salute completed, the Strangers piled into a van to go see the pigs.

On the way to the piggery they crossed the earthen dam that held back the village's small lake. Pastor Sambo thanked the Lord each time he crossed the dam. Water is the scarcest resource in Upper Volta, and his village had been blessed with an adequate supply.

The van drove through the gates of the piggery and into the courtyard, parking near the well. The pig pen, made from adobe bricks and cement, is 100 yards long, completely enclosed by a six-foot-high wall that protects the pigs. Their little stalls are roofed to shade them from the merciless summer sun.

The group gathered for a ceremony in front of the well, as the pigs slurped and grunted contentedly a few feet away.

"You have brought us great joy,"

Pastor Sambo told the Strangers. "We have a source of food and protein for our people and thousands of others who live near here. Soon we will be growing food for the pigs and then we can take care of ourselves."

The Strangers nodded and smiled.

"We are grateful for your reception and celebration," Bob Ainsworth told the pastor. "At World Vision we like to be partners with those we help. It is our goal to help our partners achieve self-sufficiency so we can move on and help others."

It was Pastor Sambo's turn to nod and smile.

"There is a saying in Moré that if you use your legs to visit someone, it shows that your heart goes with your legs," he responded. "You have traveled far to be with us. Your hearts are filled with love. I pray God will bless you as He has blessed us."

"Thank you, my friend," Ainsworth said.

Everyone nodded, smiled, and embraced.

"You have come as Strangers," Pastor Sambo said, "but you leave as friends." □

The worried Stranger and writer of this story is World Vision correspondent Kenny Waters, who traveled to West Africa in late January.



Poroge Sambo (left in above photo) and Samuel Yameogo (right) presented a ceremonial gift to Bob Ainsworth (right in left photo).

monthly memo



As you may know from reading this magazine, World Vision is involved in many varied ministries in over 50 developing and under-developed nations. This includes sizable childcare programs, hundreds of relief and community development projects, Christian leadership training, evangelism efforts with the national church and many other areas of supporting service to the ministries of the gospel.

In the area of community development, we are often asked what practical and spiritual results are obtained: "How are people being meaningfully assisted?"

Perhaps a brief sampling of World Vision's work will help answer these questions. Please remember that each fact and figure relates to a human being who has a critical need which is being alleviated, always

in the name of, and for the sake of, our Lord Jesus Christ.

In the Shaba relief effort in Zaire, 12,000 hoes, 5000 machetes, 775 kilos of seed, 5 tons of maize and 24 tons of clothing, blankets and food have been distributed to refugees. You may recall our urgent appeal for assistance in helping these people last fall. The tremendous response of caring people made this possible.

In Indonesia, a project has been started to provide education, vocational and spiritual training, good nutrition and health care to 2500 people in five very poor villages.

And in one of our newest ministry areas, the Solomon Islands in the South Pacific, 24 men and women were given equipment and basic training to teach preventive health care, provide basic community

health services and assist in spiritual ministries on over 20 islands.

In Haiti, 280 literacy classes were held in the southern region, enabling Christian teaching to be enhanced. In addition, a nationwide crusade against tuberculosis has been conducted through various vaccination centers. TB has been identified as one of Haiti's most serious health problems, especially among the children.

A brief whirlwind sampling of projects, you might say. But tremendously exciting! May we praise God together that many thousands of these people who have been helped physically have found new life through Jesus Christ because of the influence of deeds done in His name. This could not have been accomplished apart from your loving concern and support. Thank you—and God bless you.

Ted W. Engstrom
Executive Vice-President

Burst of light

For years I have been trying to sort out the dynamics of Christian discipleship and human personality. Your brief article, "Emotional Cloning Is Never Christian," (February 1979) struck me like a photo flashbulb. It was a sudden burst of light in the midst of a lot of conflicting shadows.

Gayle Wilson
Falmouth, Michigan

Beautifully ablaze

Your article, "China: God Never Left," was particularly helpful to me. . . . God, in purging our Chinese brethren with red fire, has produced a church beautifully ablaze with power from on high.

Emmett A. Cooper
Dallas, Texas

Always caring

I am a Vietnamese student living in Kansas. I read your article "Jesus Slept On a Beach Last Night" (January issue) and liked it. It made me cry.

I came here as a refugee four years ago. My family received much help from

readers' right

our American friends. The American people have always been caring.

Trang Nguyen
Westwood Hills, Kansas

Usefulness

Today I read in your publication, WORLD VISION, that you challenge Christians to partake in missions. My prayer for usefulness I think has been answered.

Warner Karl Clegg
New Rochelle, New York

Politics

I read with interest the letter in your February issue about World Vision taking a stand in "politics." I am proud of

the fact that you do not become "involved in politics." If it were not for the "deadly weapons" that stand as a deterrent to some nations, there is no telling where we would be, or what we as individuals could do to help less fortunate people of the world. As for the multinational corporations, their resources, know-how and people have helped make work available throughout the world.

Dick Strachan
Columbia, South Carolina

The price of a roast

Since our children live too far away for us to entertain them, we take the price of a roast or a turkey each week and put it into our Love Loaf, to feed the hungry instead of our children who, thank God, are never hungry.

My nephew and his bride asked for donations to be made to world hunger instead of wedding gifts for them. If that idea would catch on, we could feed vast numbers of people.

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas I. Greer
Peoria, Illinois

globe at a glance

NEWS BRIEFS FOR YOUR
INFORMATION AND INTERCESSION

Two churches will reopen in Shanghai soon, according to a United Methodist bishop who recently visited there. Bishop Frances Smith said there are strong indications that both a Roman Catholic and a nondenominational Protestant church will be opened in this, the world's largest city.

A new printing of the Koran will be funded by the Chinese government and a Koranic school established in Kunming, Radio Peking announced. An estimated 25 million Muslims live in China, concentrated in the northwestern provinces along the Soviet border.

The global arms race is "insanity" and "madness," said Billy Graham in a recent CBS news interview. Graham said he believes he typifies "a vast change" of thinking now taking place among his fellow evangelical Christians in this country regarding the arms buildup. "I don't think that evangelicals were aware of the potential horror of what a nuclear war with present weapons could do to the human race," he said.

The Vatican is expanding its broadcasts to mainland China after receiving fresh evidence that its daily short-wave transmission is heard widely in that nation. The program is a mixture of Bible reading, church and world news, social doctrine of the church, papal speeches and religious music.

Trade between Uganda and the United States will resume if a bill now in the House of Representatives, having already gained Senate approval, becomes law. The present trade embargo, which was sponsored by Senator Mark Hatfield, helped to cripple Idi Amin's regime by eliminating coffee profits from the U.S.

Emergency wheat reserve legislation now before the House of Representatives has received backing from the Interreligious Task Force on U.S. Food Policy. The group also recommended legislation that would raise the basic cash income of farm families while reducing program incentives for continued growth in farm size.

As an outgrowth of the Conference on Muslim Evangelization held in Colorado Springs last October, the Samuel Zwemer Institute has been established in Altadena, California, to promote Christian missionary work among Muslims. It is directed by the Rev. Don M. McCurry, a United Presbyterian missionary who served in Pakistan for 18 years.

Christian films entered China for the first time since 1945 when the Moody Institute of Science recently sold two of its films to Chinese educators. The showing of

Water: The Common Necessity and Window to the Universe in Chinese schools is part of China's Four Modernizations program.

Handel's Messiah was presented in Moscow's Conservatory hall with program notes that underplayed the oratorio's religious significance. "The *Messiah*," said the text, "is a hymn to the people, not to the Lord. In fact, the people themselves become their own messiah."

The proselyting of non-Jews married to Jews has become the goal of many American Jewish congregations in recent months. According to one national Jewish leader, they are "not out to 'save souls' or persuade anyone to turn away from a previously satisfactory religious affiliation." Jewish congregations have been more ambivalent about outreach among the general public.

Taxpayers conscientiously opposed to war would have the option of channeling their taxes to non-military purposes under a bill introduced in the Senate. Although supporters give the bill little chance of passage in this session of Congress, denominational church support for the bill is wide and growing, according to Senator Mark Hatfield (R-Oregon), who cosponsored the bill with Senator Mike Gravel (D-Alaska).

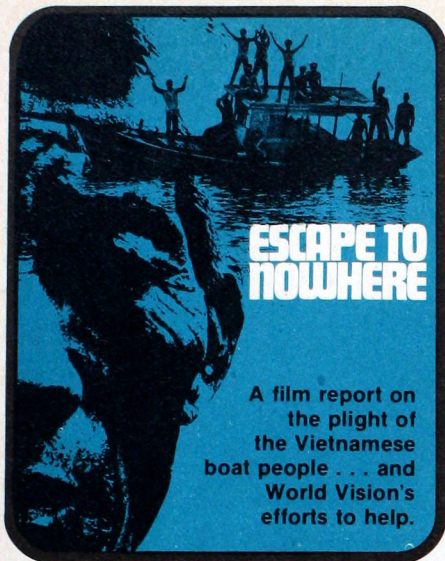
Inhaling the future. Gaborone, the capital city of Botswana, has only two large billboards. Both advertise cigarettes. Why is tobacco promoted in this African country which only recently rose above the UN's list of 25 least-developed countries? The answer is partly found in North America.

Cigarette sales in North America are leveling off. In the U.S. half of the college graduates who ever smoked have quit. Finding its domestic market limited, the cigarette industry wants new markets and is opening them in developing countries such as Botswana.

Since these countries generally require no health warnings on packages, many buyers have no idea of harmful effects. But smoking-related diseases are on the increase in the Third World. A World Health Organization study found the lung-cancer death rate in developing countries increasing about 10 percent over five years.

Protestant ministers have the longest life expectancy in West Germany—77 years—according to a recent report by the Federation of Life Insurance Companies, while pubkeepers, at the bottom of the list, have an expectancy of 58 years.





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45 Godwin Avenue
Midland Park, NJ 07432

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525 Cordova Street, Second Floor
Pasadena, CA 91101

Seasweep update

The *Seasweep*, World Vision's relief ship, has now been renovated, equipped and staffed for its mission in search of Vietnamese refugees who are in trouble on the South China Sea. At press time, the ship had not yet sailed on account of unexpected difficulty in obtaining government registration papers. But registration is said to be at hand.

John Calder, director of World Vision's *Seasweep* operation, estimates that refugee craft now at sea number in the thousands.

Relief for Uganda

At the initiative of African Enterprise (AE), representatives from a broad spectrum of international Christian organizations have formed an emergency relief and rehabilitation committee to extend assistance for the reconstruction of Uganda.

American representatives from World Vision International, World Relief Corporation, MAP International, Africa Inland Mission, Mennonite Central Committee and others have agreed with European and African church leaders to distribute food, clothing, medicine, agricultural and building supplies through the Church of Uganda (Anglican), which

will work in cooperation with the new Lule government.

Daniel Serwanga of AE's Nairobi office has emphasized the urgent need of such communities as Mutukula, Masaka, Kampala and Entebbe, which sustained extensive destruction of homes, schools, hospitals and churches during the recent liberation war. An AE report says that casualties within the Buganda tribal area alone have left a possible one million children as orphans.

"Throughout Amin's regime, the church has been the sole institution which has refused to succumb to the tactics of repression," noted one committee member. With its reputation intact and some 70 percent of the Ugandan population professing to be Christian, the church is in a pivotal position to lead in rebuilding the country, and the international community is being urged to assist in the process.

World evangelization in sight

The cross-cultural mission task of the church is to reach, not the three billion people in the world who do not know Christ, but 600 million people or 20 percent of each unevangelized "people group." So concluded the



Unfair! While a few students at Trevecca Nazarene College in Nashville, Tennessee, enjoyed an elegant steak dinner, others in the room got only bread and water.

The event was a kickoff dinner for a Planned Famine, World Vision's program for groups wanting to raise money to help the world's needy while learning about the hunger problem. The dinner demonstrated inequities in the world's distribution of wealth.

Later, students fasted for 30 hours. Through sponsorship by friends and family, they raised \$1200 for hunger programs abroad.



Chat between sessions of the Strategy Group meeting in Monrovia. From left to right: W. Douglas Smith, Jr., from the Bolivian Center for Mission; Gottfried Osei-Mensah, of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, and Tom Houston, of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

Lausanne Committee Strategy Working Group when it met at World Vision headquarters in late April.

Converts within each of approximately 15,000 people groups—groups unified by such factors as language, religion, tribe, caste or occupation—would then be able to reach their own.

The Strategy Working Group was meeting to prepare for the 1980 Consultation on World Evangelization to be held in Pattaya, Thailand. The Consultation will consider ways of reaching specific peoples.

New television show to air

"Come Love the Children" is the theme of a new World Vision telethon that is scheduled to air nationwide beginning in the latter part of June. Carol Lawrence and Art Linkletter will co-host the five-hour show. Local newspapers will indicate dates of showing in your area.

The China situation

Meeting at Liberty Corner, New Jersey, after holding consultations on both the West Coast (attended by World Vision's Milt Coke and Eric Brockhoff) and the East Coast of the United States, the Evangelical China Committee (of EFMA/IFMA) called upon Christians in North America to be alert to the changing situation in China and to pray for their fellow believers there.

"With increasing contact between the people of North America and the people of China, Christians will be able to extend friendship and help to those coming from China," the committee members pointed out. "North Americans, both Chinese and non-Chinese," they said, "should seek appropriate opportunities to introduce visitors from China to life and culture here. And persons planning such contact should familiarize themselves with China's history, culture and politics in order to be effective communicators."

An important step in this preparation may be closer contact and fellowship among Chinese and non-Chinese believers in North America. "Compassionate prayer," the committee said, "must undergird all such efforts. Seminars in Chinese and non-Chinese churches could provide information and training for effective prayer and action."

They believe that orientation is needed for business people and professionals who will travel to China for either short-term or long-term employment. For the sake of such orientation, they say, there must be

(continued on next page)

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For further information write:

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World Vision International
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Please pray for:

■ **the nation of Uganda;** for thousands who are without food or shelter, and for all who are spiritually oppressed by the loss of moral values evident throughout Uganda. Pray for John Wilson and others responsible for coordinating all relief and reconstruction work. Praise God for the reuniting of many Ugandan families.

■ **the Niksek people** of Papua New Guinea as they leave behind a fear-ridden past and begin life anew in Christ. Pray for their efforts to wipe out ringworm and malnutrition.

■ **Vietnamese refugees** escaping by sea, and World Vision's efforts to find and help them.

■ **villagers in Upper Volta** who are struggling to attain self-sufficiency under the constant threat of severe drought.

better dissemination of existing data growing out of research being done in Hong Kong and other places. The Evangelical China Committee may be able to serve as an exchange point allowing interested people and agencies to become aware of sources of information and to share their ministries more fully.

"Restraint and sensitivity are urged upon all who are interested in China," says a release from the China committee. "A primary concern of all parties must be the well-being of those in China. Initiatives that may endanger believers in China should not be undertaken.

"Persons involved or interested in China-related projects (literature, broadcasting, orientation, training) should share information and plan together."

The committee urges an orderly development of China-related pro-

grams. "Cooperation among Chinese and non-Chinese organizations is very important in the development of effective culturally-sensitive ministries," says the release.

Calling upon Christians in North America and around the world to pray for China "at specific times and in keeping with reliable information," the group listed several main subjects for prayer:

1. Praise God that despite great hardship and suffering there are still believers in China who have remained faithful and continue to bear witness to Christ.

2. Pray that believers in Christ will continue to be kept by God's power and that they will find greater freedom to serve Christ as China moves along in its modernization program.

3. Pray that additional communication and fellowship will be established by China's believers with

Christians in other parts of the world.

4. Pray that gospel broadcasts that blanket China will be effective in communicating the Christian message. (And praise the Lord that one station received 6000 letters from China in the month of April. The letters came from every province of China except Tibet.)

5. Pray for the development of literature which can help Chinese believers, many of whom must make hand-copied Scripture portions in order to study.

6. Pray for Christian business people and professionals as they travel in China.

7. Pray that all interested parties will be sensitive to the precarious situation in China and that they will avoid actions, statements or programs which may be detrimental to Christian brothers and sisters in that country. □

Uganda documentary to air

A 30-minute television special on Uganda has been produced by World Vision for release in the United States beginning June 6. "Uganda—To Heal a Nation" is narrated by World Vision President Stan Mooneyham on his recent trip to Uganda.

Watch local listings for time and channel in your area. Also see next month's WORLD VISION magazine for a feature on the Uganda deliverance.

Bishop Festo Kivengere (upper right) jubilates on his return to Uganda after two years in exile. Stan Mooneyham (right) gets personally involved in World Vision's initial relief efforts.



Father Colin McLean serves Communion to a parishioner amid the squalor of a Manila slum.

**For lease:
Apartment.
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available.**

Manila (RNS)—He had done his share of preaching, saying the things he ought, to people suffering under the abject poverty which prevails in their Manila slum. But he got a succinct sermon back from his parishioners.

"I'd go to the slum in my parish every day," Father Colin McLean says now, "and they'd hear me sympathizing with their suffering and poverty, but they knew I was living in a comfortable rectory. So they gently suggested there was only one way I'd find out what it's really like—and here I am."

His sermons haven't been the same since. Now he preaches almost precisely the same message, and in his usual way; but what he says carries a new degree of conviction. Because now he lives where they live.

To make the missionary feel at home—one of the crowd—the slum dwellers helped him build his own apartment. A wooden crate, a cube of six feet, became his quarters.

It was too small to take care of his height, so they knocked out one side and extended it slightly. In the three years he has lived in the crate apartment he has never been able to stand up straight inside it. But with the extended side, at least he can stretch out on his mat to sleep at night.

He has plenty of neighbors. In an area of barely two acres, which is about half an ordinary suburban



PERSONALITY PROFILE



block, 4000 squatters are crowded. Water is obtained from only two faucets. Father McLean, fully immersed in the life of his people, stands in line for water every day just like they do.

The wealthy nearby "contribute" their share to the squatters; an open sewer from their homes runs past the slum. As for the 4000 slum dwellers, they have only two toilets.

One of the first problems the American priest faced was what to do with dead babies. To put it bluntly, he found it was cheaper to bury them by the dozen.

"The parents got taken by funeral directors who charged them too much," he said. "What could the parents do? You can't leave a corpse in this heat and shop around for the best funeral price!"

He worked with some young community organizers and started a slum

dwellers' organization. They visited several funeral homes and finally got some results.

"It's enough to make you cynical," Father McLean said. "We got a fair deal because funerals are cheaper by the dozen."

A big need is for more toilets, more faucets, and affordable medical care.

Many of those who survive the rigors of such squalor have tuberculosis. If they go to hospitals for treatment, Father McLean said, they get prescriptions for foreign medicines they can't afford. For the neediest persons the missionary is able to get a doctor and two nurses to brave the conditions.

"I celebrate Mass in a lean-to shed, children play beside an open sewer; flowers grow in a garbage pail," says Father McLean. But he doesn't complain. He feels Jesus would be at home in that slum. □

Thanksgiving Day, 1977. Since 4 A.M., when the milk feeding began, I have been caught up in the activities of the Bethesda Babies' Home, in North Sulawesi, Indonesia. Though I've visited many projects, my visit to this home is a special treat.

The matron is Ni Luh Suwinti, a "graduate" of our World Vision childcare program on Bali. When Suwinti was 11 her mother died, leaving her and four younger brothers and sisters. Soon afterward, her ailing father gave his heart to Jesus. He was the first person to do so in their traditional Hindu village. Then, feeling that he could not adequately care for her, he placed Suwinti in the Christian Bali Orphanage.

It wasn't long before Suwinti, too,

began to open her heart to Christ. Finally, at World Vision's Selecta Bible Camp, she surrendered her life and future to her newfound Savior.

But even with World Vision support, the years have not been easy. When Suwinti felt God's leading to become a midwife, the doors seemed to be closed. So she spent two years as a nurse's aide in a general hospital—and then one year in a midwifery school that closed before she could finish training. She was finally able to study for three years at the outstanding Mardi Sentosa midwifery school, and had a year of practical work. World Vision helped by providing a scholarship for her training.

Then, three years ago, the troubled Bethesda Babies Home needed a

new matron—a midwife/nurse. Suwinti was the obvious choice.

Now, as we talked together, she shared something of the frustration and fears she experienced: inadequate facilities, lack of trained staff, never having quite enough money to do everything needing to be done.

She stayed on anyway. For who would look after the babies if she were to leave? With a radiant face she explained that loving and caring for sick, malnourished children was her response to Christ's love and her thanks for the years of assistance she had received. This was the result of surrendering her life to Christ at the Bible camp.

Suwinti's compassion and joy were evident as we talked and moved among the children. Now there are 11 of them, ranging in age from three months to three and a half years. Each is a different expression of heartbreak and despair.

Take twins Joyce and Jane, who came to Bethesda at a year and a half, each weighing only 11 pounds and too sick to even sit up. Suwinti didn't tell me about the hours of dedicated love and the sleepless nights she had expended for Joyce and Jane. But today the two girls called me "Uncle" and excitedly guided me around sparkling new facilities. Beautiful little girls. They want to go to school as soon as "Mama" will let them.

Suwinti and I prayed together and reflected upon God's goodness and faithfulness. She expressed gratitude for World Vision's involvement in her life—for financial assistance, for the Bible camps and Christian nurture, and for moral support—all of which did so much to shape her life.

Ni Luh Suwinti is one of countless persons who have gained a foothold in life because World Vision sponsors have assisted them during their childhood. Today, too, many thousands of children whose parents are too poor to care for them are receiving such assistance. As a part of the World Vision program, these children's families (and whole communities) are helped toward self-sufficiency. Meanwhile more children need help. Eighteen dollars a month provides for a child's major needs. If you would like to sponsor a child, please use the reply envelope between pages 12 and 13. □

*Ni Luh Suwinti
feeds a baby at the
Bethesda Home.*



**WHERE
ARE THEY
NOW?**

Caring comes full circle

by Gene Daniels

Associate Director of Evangelism
World Vision International

The affliction of adjectivitis

It's one of the most contagious diseases in Western Christendom, and there seems to be no stopping it. Perhaps inflation is the cause. As it takes more and more money to buy the same thing, so it takes more and more words to explain what we mean.

Some of that has been going on for a long time. As far back as Antioch, Christians were called Christians. As the church grew and changed, modifiers came into use. It got so that it was not enough to be a generic Christian—you had to be some particular brand-name Christian. Eventually the modifier became the important identification factor. You didn't say, "I'm a Methodist Christian. I'm a Baptist Christian." You said, "I'm a Methodist. I'm a Baptist." As in the case of the word "Christian," the modifiers were mostly pinned on by others. But we wore them. That was bad enough at home, where "conversion" might consist mainly of a switch of modifiers rather than a change of nature. It was even worse on mission fields, where adjectival competition, baffling and destructive, must have evoked many mutters of "Why don't they go back where they came from until they get their act together?"

I can remember—it was not that many decades ago—when denominational brand-name fervor was of a heat that would put a nuclear meltdown to shame. Christians would fight each other at the drop of an adjective. Churches walled themselves away from each other by their modifiers. Then something happened. We began speaking when we met on the street. We even had a few interdenominational services, especially at Easter. The sharp competitiveness faded.

Ecumenical movements—Christian Endeavor, the Student Christian Movement and others—helped our young people to get acquainted. Mutual friendships led to mutual respect. Church councils sprang up; they did a useful job, but were primarily associations of leaders, not followers.

The evangelical movement, when it came along, was born not only out of reaction against "liberalism" but out of the emergence of crossover fellowships at the grassroots. In some special sense, the great evangelical groupings were bottom-to-bottom and then bottom-to-top movements, rather than top-to-top and top-to-bottom. Their distinctiveness was in the word "evangelical," rooted in the biblical "evangel" or "good news." The good news was that Christ died for sinners, news that some churches were not reporting enthusiastically.

Then something happened among evangelicals. The adjectives got to us. As mistrust again began to sprout, we heard not just about evangelicals but about "conservative evangelicals." To emphasize the rightful place

of the Bible in Christian faith and doctrine, someone slipped in another modifier, "Bible-believing," to make sure *that* loophole was plugged (though almost no one was going around saying that he was a "Bible-nonbelieving evangelical"). Then the modifier "born-again" was added, receiving impetus a few years ago. So now we had "conservative, born-again, Bible-believing evangelicals."

That's not the end. "Real" and "genuine" have also been favorites, though not in the same creative league with, for example, "Christ-honoring." "Socially-conscious" was a belated arrival to the list of modifiers, and "Spirit-filled" another. Put them together and so far we have "genuine, conservative, born-again, Bible-believing, Christ-honoring, socially-conscious, Spirit-filled evangelicals."

And the end, undoubtedly, is not yet.

I think I am all of these. But, for me, "evangelical" says it all. The more words we string together as modifiers, the more we downgrade the word which is modified. In fact, we are saying that "evangelical" doesn't mean anything until we say what it means—like the umpire who in an argument over a play at first base snapped, "It ain't nuthin' till I call it."

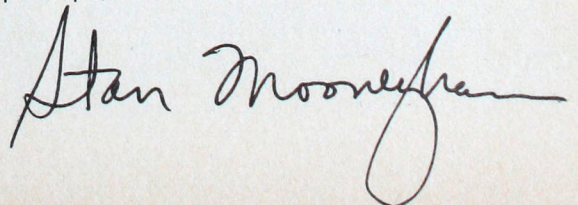
As I said, creeping adjectivitis is catching. We're even hearing about "true truth," which, I must confess, confuses me utterly. Will someone please tell me if there is such a thing as "untrue truth"? Either of these modifiers takes the heart out of rational communication and perhaps out of truth itself.

What can we do about it? As for me, I refuse to give in to modifiers to describe myself or others. When I feel the need for a special label, I'd like to be able to use a certain New Testament expression which has been almost lost but which, in its pure state, contains a wealth of simple meaning—"follower of the Way." But even that has become the appropriated label of a particular group, and I would probably be misunderstood.

Among Christ's followers it shouldn't be necessary to have a scorecard to tell who is what. Except the one that Jesus himself offered: "All men will know that you are my disciples if you love one another" (John 13:35, NIV).

But, of course, that's too easy.

And, perhaps, too hard.



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Juan lived alone on the streets of Caracas, Venezuela. Alone. No father. No mother. No one to care. He survived by eating garbage. By sleeping in doorways. Until we found him, he lived like an animal.

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