year of response and growth

## Also:

- Helping Poland's bungry people
- Translating tribal talk
- Making bouses from straw

## WORD Volume 26, number 2 February 1982



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W. Stanley Mooneyham, international president Ted W. Engstrom, executive director and publisher Bill Kliewer, associate executive director Richard L. Watson, director, creative resources division David Olson, editor Ray Seldomridge, associate editor Konny Thompson, editorial assistant Don Aylard, art director Steven Heassler, layout Paul S. Rees, editor-at-large Carl F. H. Henry, special correspondent



PHOTOS-Bill Chambers: page 19(bottom), Marilyn Laszlo: page 12. Living Bibles International: page 17. Marty Lonsdale: page 21. Eric Mooneyham: pages 1,5,7. Larry Nichols: page 18. Phil Smith: page 22. John Stewart: page 4. Kevin Vivers: page 8. Kenny Waters: page 6. Wycliffe Bible Translators: page 14

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## Look again

Look again. The mother and child on our cover are two of the hundreds you helped save from death when you gave, last year, toward World Vision's provision of food for the starving Bume tribespeople of Ethiopia.

If you were a reader of this magazine in 1981, you saw many of the drought-stricken Bumes, not only in last February's story of their need, but also in November's story of their gratitude for this crisis intervention that saved their lives.

You saw also, in 1981, the pictures shown again this month on pages 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8. And you read reports on World Vision's response not only to crisis but to other kinds of human need. Poverty. The plight of Third World children. Spiritual darkness.

This month we devote six pages to our annual overview of the previous year's whole range of ministries. It's a nutshell version of our 1981 annual report. We think you'll feel affirmed in your participation. And you'll want to keep in touch in 1982-another year of response and growth.

David Olson

A summary of World Vision's annual report

# A year of response and growth

by Ted W. Engstrom and his associates

Last year was one of great growth for World Vision—a year in which God exceeded our greatest expectations.

The number of U.S. supporters grew to 600,000, and income was \$17 million more than in 1980 (a 26 percent increase). But we feel the most important kind of growth was the multiplication of results around the world.

At the beginning of the year, I must admit, we were very cautious—because of double-digit inflation, talk of recession, and international uncertainty. In times such as these, however, it seems that the people of God respond in increasing numbers to the needs of others. As a result, the year 1981 was one of expanding ministry, as we were able to respond to the needs of more than 5.3 million people in every region of the world.

We are so grateful to all who made it possible for us to meet demanding challenges in Kampuchea, Somalia, El Salvador, Ethiopia, the Philippines and 80 other nations.

World Vision is in reality a channel of caring—a



## If there is a poor man with you, ... you shall freely open your hand to him, and shall generously lend him sufficient for his need.

Deuteronomy 15:7,8, NASB



A Dominican Republic woman gets fresh water from one of the wells World Vision belped provide.

channel from you to so many who seek help. Because you have reached out in love, the channel has grown steadily. And in Jesus' name we have responded to crisis, to poverty, to children's special needs, to spiritual needs, to special ministry challenges, and to the need for understanding.

### Responding to crisis

The word *crisis* had an all too familiar ring in 1981. For hundreds of thousands of people in many regions of the world, 1981 was a year of suffering and death. The stark realities of war, political turbulence and natural catastrophe cast an oppressive shadow on innocent victims in dozens of nations.

In response to almost unimaginable human suffering and need, World Vision directly assisted nearly 1.5 million men, women and children in 37 countries with 123 emergency relief projects.

In drought- and famine-plagued Ethiopia, for example, where World Vision's international partnership began one of the most ambitious crisis intervention programs in the organization's history, more than 2.5 million pounds of food, clothing and medicine were airlifted to an estimated 200,000 people. Our total budget for Ethiopia in 1981 was \$4.5 million.

To the east, in the neighboring nation of Somalia, World Vision continued its emergency ministry to the estimated 76,000 inhabitants of the Las Dhure refugee camp, spending more than \$1.7 million to meet the promise of food, medicine, shelter and clean water. At year's end, the camp medical staff reported that the emergency feeding program had produced measurable results: The rate of severe malnutrition among young children dropped to less than 11 percent, and the child mortality rate had been sharply reduced.

Political upheaval and civil war in the tiny Central American nation of El Salvador caused the internal displacement of more than 200,000 people and forced 350,000 people to leave the country. World Vision moved quickly to respond to the needs of both the struggling villagers and the refugees. Some of our childcare centers within El Salvador were converted into emergency relief shelters. A \$769,300 shipment of vegetable seed was made to help ward off a threatening countrywide famine. And in the adjacent nation of Honduras, we helped to organize camps for the fleeing Salvadorans.

Substantial relief projects were also initiated in such nations as Lebanon, Poland, Italy, Zimbabwe and the Philippines. Our mercy vessel, *Seasweep*, continued to ply the waters of the South China Sea, assisting Vietnamese boat people.

### Responding to poverty

The sights and sounds of a country waking from a terrible nightmare are no more evident than in Kampuchea, one of the countries in which World Vision conducted rehabilitation

## Highlights

SUPPORT	1981	1980	1979
Total income <sup>1</sup>	\$82,116,352	\$64,256,997	\$46,681,130
Management expenses <sup>2</sup>	9.9%	9.2%	7.8%
Fund-raising expenses <sup>2</sup>	13.9%	12.4%	11.9%
Number of donors	600,000	460,000	390,000
Number of full-time U.S. employees	494	437	388
Number of cooperating agencies/churches	482	354	293
RESULTS			
Nations with World Vision involvement	87	85	78
Total number of projects	2713	2386	2041
Children with U.S. sponsors	156,000	124,000	109,000
Children sponsored internationally	286,000	229,000	193,000
People assisted through relief projects	1,491,000	870,000	466,000
People assisted through development projects	3,100,000	1,934,000	1,400,000
Number who attended pastors' conferences	1630	3200	1700
Number of direct evangelism and leadership projects	142	unknown	unknown
Groups participating in volunteer programs	4684	4676	2600
Circulation of WORLD VISION magazine	777,000	680,000	460,000

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>Total income of all World Vision national affiliates (Australia, Canada, Europe, New Zealand, South Africa and the United States) was \$123.6 million in 1981.

<sup>2</sup>Total overhead (management and fundraising) has averaged 21 percent over the past five years.

## And whoever receives one such child in My name receives Me.

Matthew 18:5, NASB

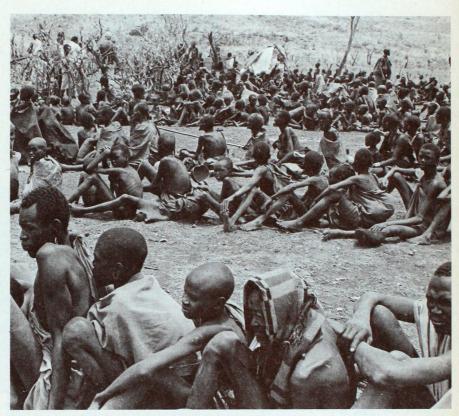
projects in 1981. The images of a newly planted rice field and a net full of fish are now common in Kampuchea, and have replaced the pictures of untilled, overgrown land and piles of rubble that once punctuated the landscape.

In 1981, World Vision bolstered its efforts to help Kampuchea turn the corner in its quest for self-sufficiency and stability. Our international partnership provided \$4.7 million in seed, fertilizer and farming tools for Khmer farmers, simultaneously helping them to improve irrigation methods. World Vision also continued to operate the only children's hospital in all of Kampuchea, the National Pediatric Hospital, which at year's end had treated more than 56,000 patients.

But agricultural training and medical assistance are just part of the total picture in a program that brings lasting change.

A good example of World Vision's commitment to lasting change through development is the Kima Dam project in Kenya. Twenty dams in the Kitui and Machakos regions of the nation have now been completed after five years of work, providing some 300,000 people with an excellent water source and strengthening the outreach of the local Christians who helped carry out the project. Where drought had been a constant problem, there is now water for agriculture, washing and household use. There is enough water to sustain livestock, and fish have been stocked in the newly formed lakes. Each dam is supervised by a village development committee, which will continue to plan for the best and fullest use of the new resource.

We were delighted to complete this project. There, as in all of our relief and development work, we sought to put ourselves out of a job. The people's self-reliance is always our goal. In all development projects, members of the community are encouraged to become involved in the



Surma drought victims await food brought in by World Vision's emergency relief workers.

planning and design. This participation ensures an effective and enduring spirit of cooperation within the community.

Other aspects of long-range assistance in various projects included Christian education, the digging of water wells, and instruction in such matters as sanitation, agriculture, nutrition, literacy and vocational skills. Development projects aided approximately 3.1 million people in their struggle for health, stability and greater self-reliance.

World Vision's U.S. office allocated a total of \$30.7 million for relief and development projects in 1981.

## Responding to children's needs

Jesus taught that we are to care for the little ones—to stretch out our arms and embrace the innocent young victims of war, famine, drought, disease and poverty.

This burden for children has been World Vision's since the organization's founding in 1950 by the late Dr. Bob Pierce. What began as one man's attempt to care for homeless Korean war orphans has now grown into an international ministry of love, help, hope and witness.

In 1981, we celebrated our 31st year of operation by boosting the total number of children we care for to

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Matthew 28:19, NASB

316,881. Of that total, 289,199 children were matched up with their own caring sponsors from around the world. More than 141,000 World Vision sponsors from the United States alone combined to assist 168,112 children. Their sponsorships provided food, clothing, clean water, health care and Christian education for the children and their families. In areas tightly bound by the shackles of poverty, unsponsored children benefited from the assistance provided by individuals contributing to a general childcare fund.

In some childcare projects, sponsorship funds were consolidated with other aid funds to provide a more effective and productive method of helping every member of a community through development efforts.

The most extensive childcare program in 1981 was again conducted in the Philippines, where 41,150 children were supported. World Vision also began new childcare programs in Zambia and Tanzania; childcare projects are now being conducted in 52 nations.

The number of our childcare projects throughout the world rose to 1856, and our U.S. office designated \$22.4 million for childcare, representing a 28 percent increase over 1980.

## Responding to spiritual darkness

With direct words of challenge nearly 2000 years ago, Christ charged His disciples with what would become the greatest responsibility of all time—to give every man, woman and child on earth the opportunity to follow Him and receive eternal life.

Jesus' Great Commission has been the driving force behind our projects for more than three decades. In 1981, we renewed our vow to make Christ known in every project conducted through the witness of workers, the testimony of a local church or other



Salvadoran refugee children respond to the loving care of World Vision staff members.

means of sharing the Word of God. Active demonstration and open declaration of God's love and truth were key objectives in all our projects in 1981, whether they were childcare, emergency relief or community development efforts.

Significant evangelism projects were undertaken in 1981. In Nicaragua, for instance, World Vision began a project in conjunction with the Nicaraguan Bible Society to distribute 800,000 Bibles to inmates of Nicaraguan prisons and to graduates of the country's Great National Literature Crusade.

In northern Burma, World Vision began an evangelical outreach and Christian nurture program for indigenous tribal churches. The project sponsored the production and distribution of Christian literature and teaching materials to local congregations.

Most of our projects were administered in cooperation with national churches and mission agencies, which enabled the members of local churches to share their faith within their own cultural setting.

In the United States, World Vision took an active role in the planning and staging of the American Festival of Evangelism (AFE), a major consultation on evangelization. More than 8000 pastors and Christian leaders from around the nation joined in a week of renewed vision for evangelism.

World Vision bolstered the work of mission organizations and sister agencies through the operation of the

## Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share. 1 Timothy 6:18, NASB

Missions Advanced Research and Communication Center (MARC). Extensive information on unevangelized peoples and the status of the church worldwide was compiled by a team of researchers and was made available for developing effective evangelism strategies. In addition, the 12th edition of the *Mission Handbook*, an authoritative reference study of North American Protestant ministries overseas, was published.

In 1981, World Vision conducted 154 evangelism and Christian leadership enhancement projects in 42 nations.

## Responding to ministry challenges

Because spreading the message and love of Christ is our ultimate goal, we have a great burden for those who lead the body of believers—the thousands of Christian pastors and leaders around the world who have significant influence in the church. This burden is the impetus for providing Christian leaders with the tools and resources they need to carry out their task in a more effective manner.

In developing nations, where church leaders are sometimes isolated and confronted by severe cultural, political and economic hardships, we made it a priority to provide training and instruction in the basics of evangelism, church life and growth, and pastoral care. In addition, numerous seminaries and Bible schools were also given assistance.

The World Vision Pastors' Conference, a week-long session of fellowship and edification for church leaders from developing nations, continued to be one of our primary activities in the area of Christian leadership enhancement. In 1981, conferences were held in India, Chile, Poland, Sri Lanka and

Egypt with more than 1600 pastors in attendance.

In the United States, World Vision conducted "Managing Your Time" Seminars in five cities and published the Christian Leadership Letter and other leadership development literature.

## Responding to the need for understanding

When much of an organization's ministry is focused on the emotional and dramatic images of human suffering and need, another vital element of ministry is sometimes less visible, but not less important. That

Polish Christian leaders gather for the World Visionsponsored pastors' conference in Warsaw.



And the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also. 2 Timothy 2:2, NASB

element is a sharing of understandings.

Educating people in the United States about the needs of others in such nations as Somalia, Ethiopia, El Salvador and Kampuchea was a significant aspect of World Vision's efforts in 1981.

Through a series of television specials and documentaries, publications, speakers and special awareness programs, we helped inform the people of America about the world's needs and challenged them to get involved personally.

The Love Loaf and Planned Famine programs, two of our most effective methods of increasing hunger awareness and acquiring funds for denominational and World Vision hunger projects, continued to command a great deal of attention among American churches and youth groups. Love Loaf projects were

conducted in 2937 churches. Planned Famines were sponsored by 1747 youth groups.

WORLD VISION magazine, a monthly report on Christian outreach worldwide as well as on World Vision's activities, had, by year's end, a monthly circulation of more than 777,098. In addition, informative brochures on hunger, refugees, needy children and spiritual darkness were given to thousands of individuals, as well as to schools and colleges.

A documentary missions film, "Islam: Unlocking the Door," was produced in 1981 and has been requested for use by hundreds of churches around the nation.

The television documentary "Crisis in the Horn of Africa," which detailed the desperate conditions of war refugees in Somalia and drought and famine victims in Ethiopia, was shown across the country. Together with a



Inmates meet the founder of Prison Fellowship, one of the domestic ministries World Vision assists.

series of separate one-hour television specials also aired nationwide, "Crisis" continued our tradition of sensitizing and educating viewers to the needs of a hurting world.

Because most of these informational programs also resulted in funds for World Vision, a share of their costs were charged to fundraising and overhead, a method of allocation that has been approved by the independent certified public firm conducting our annual accounting audit.

We continue to pledge to our supporters accountability, full disclosure, careful and dependable use of funds, our utmost efforts to maximize the value of every dollar, and regular reporting of results. We are most grateful to you, our partners in ministry, for your faithfulness in prayer and in generous financial support.

To obtain a complete 28-page report on World Vision's 1981 ministries and finances, or to make a contribution, please use the return envelope provided in the center of this magazine.

### **Income and Disbursements**

**U.S.** Operations

Individuals and families	\$65,500,620	79.8%
Churches	4,473,440	5.4
Gifts-in-kind	1,891,156	2.3
Corporations, foundations	983,162	1.2
Stewardship programs	2,174,807	2.7
Government	4,782,034	5.8
Miscellaneous	2,311,133	2.8
	\$82,116,352	100%
How it was used		
Program services		
Relief and development	\$30,737,697	37.4% [
Childcare	22,382,650	27.3
Evangelism and leadership	1,003,918	1.2
Mission challenge	7,969,485	9.7
Stewardship ministries	268,991	.3
Supporting services		
Management	8,132,276	9.9 1
Fundraising	11,435,462	13.9
Other expenditures and adjustmen	nt	
Annuity and trust payments	540,471	.7
Adjustment of investments to	,	
market value	976,068	1.2
Realized loss on sale of assets	242,089	.3
Deficiency of support		
to expenditures	-1,572,755 \$82,116,352	-1.9%

## My brother's keeper?

by Lydia Regebr

My brother's keeper? Mine the task
Too menial for which to ask?
I to befriend him, take him in,
A stranger, with my next of kin?
My tired brother, forced to roam,
Thanks me for rest, for warmth of home.
He faces hunger, he seeks sites
Of soil and pasture, free from blights.

My brother's keeper? Spurn his pleas When he's afflicted with disease? Withhold the goods at my command When famine stalks across his land? When droughts scorch fields,

when wells run dry, Could I let him who suffers die? I know my brother's heart must bleed. To share with him is hence my creed.

My brother's keeper? Man of arms, Who's slave to fetishes and charms? Bless him whose manners I call rude, Whose culture, primitive and crude? Yet uncouth savage that he is, I have not seen such strength as his. He is my brother, worth the price That calls for zealous sacrifice.

My brother's keeper? Dry his tears, Whose kindred crowd the hemispheres? A host of brothers at death's door From torrid inland to the shore Are stretching out their hands to me With mute expression of a plea: One Father's race, let us unite Around the bulwark of God's might.

My brother's keeper? Yes, I am.
Through Christ, the sacrificial Lamb,
The Prince of Peace, we are joint heirs.
Delivered from the tempter's snares,
We enter Heaven's holy zone.
As sisters, brothers, at Your throne,
Linked by Your love, saved women, men,
We praise You, Lord, speak Your Amen.



Trilingual poet Lydia Regebr, 78 years of age in 1982, knew extreme bunger in her teenage years, during a famine in Russia. There she also knew the joy of American food gifts that saved her life. Now living in Seattle, she still composespoetry and prose in Russian, German and English.

## Help for Poland's bungry



In a lighter moment during his visit to Warsaw, Dr. Mooneyham and a clergyman of the Polish National Catholic Church open a box of newly delivered foods.

**Describing** the escalating needs of the Polish people, World Vision president Stan Mooneyham has announced a substantial increase in the organization's aid to Poland. World Vision began sending food and supplies to the Polish people in September at a cost of \$250,000; that commitment has now been increased to a total of \$2 million.

"Our concern at this moment," said Mooneyham, "is for millions of Poles who have already suffered from months of severe shortages of food, medicines and all basic commodities. While in the country, I learned that as many as three million people are malnourished. Most of these are the old and handicapped, the pregnant women and small babies."

Mooneyham visited Poland in late November to conduct a series of evangelistic meetings in Protestant and Catholic churches, and to oversee an emergency shipment of canned meat, dry skim milk and other staple products.

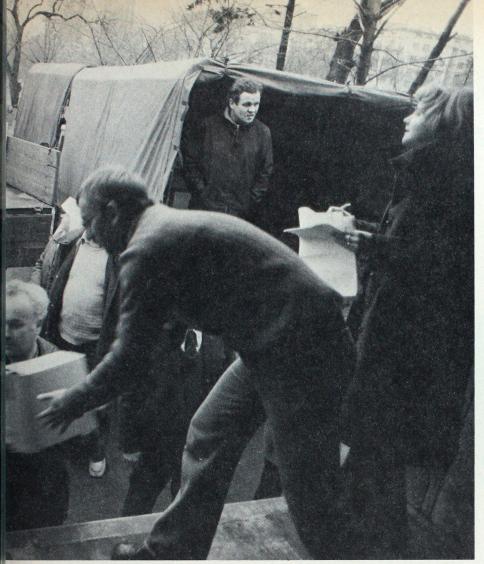
World Vision's aid to Poland includes the shipment of food, medicine and farm tools; and the printing of Bibles. (The Polish Bible Society has been unable to keep up with the demand for Bibles in recent months.) The aid is being channeled through the Polish Ecumenical Council (PEC), an organization that includes Protestant, Polish Catholic and Orthodox churches. About half of the aid is being distributed directly through



those churches to the neediest families, with the balance going to the Ministries of Health and Agriculture for distribution to hospitals and homes for the aged, handicapped and infants. Tools will go to farmers of small, private plots who are responsible for a large part of Poland's food production.

Much of the assistance is targeted for Suwalki County in the northeast part of Poland, where needs are most acute. The director of World Vision's aid to Poland completed a survey of this county just two days before the imposition of martial law. He was accompanied by the Rev. Zdzislaw Pawlik, general secretary of the Polish Ecumenical Council. They visited a hospital and five homes for the needy receiving World Vision aid.

After martial law began, Rev. Pawlik reported that PEC was one of the few organizations being allowed to function. He said all World Vision aid to the Polish people could continue with



Supplies brought to Warsaw in a large truck were transferred to smaller ones for distribution through churches.



no restrictions. "Our situation will be much worse in Poland because various governments are withholding humanitarian aid," Pawlik told World Vision's president in mid-December.

In announcing the \$2 million program, Mooneyham said, "Rarely have we had the opportunity to help a people who are so brave and, at the same time, so needy. God helping us, we do not intend to abandon them. As long as we can be sure our assistance is going to the people for whom it is designated, and as long as Polish borders remain open, World Vision's relief will continue."

A report on the relief effort will appear in next month's issue of the magazine. □

To share in this ministry, please use the return envelope from the centerspread.



Among organizations assisted are Caritas bomes for handicapped children in Suwalki County.

AN ADVENTUROUS TRANSLATOR TELLS HER STORY

## Carving their talk on a banana leaf

by Marilyn Laszlo

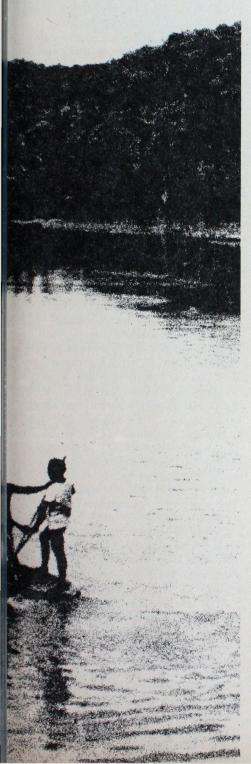
For 13 years I've been working in Hauna, a little village 500 miles up the Sepik River in the heart of the jungle and swamps of Papua New Guinea—an island north of Australia. The people of Papua New Guinea speak in over 700 languages. Many of these languages are unwritten.

The Sepik Iwam people in Hauna village had no idea that the words that came out of their mouths could be written down. What an exciting and rewarding adventure it has been for me to learn their language, develop an alphabet and teach the people to read



and write their own "talk." Come with me now to Hauna village and I'll tell you how it all began.

With my partner, Judy Rehberg, I first entered the village in a 60-foot dugout canoe powered by an outboard motor. What a trip! We had 100 miles to travel, up river from the little grass airstrip where we had landed in our single-engine plane. Beautiful country. Hundreds of varieties of flowers. Hundreds of varieties of birds.



Hundreds of varieties of snakes. Plus crocodiles. After ten hours we arrived at the village.

The village people weren't quite sure about the two of us. They wondered whether we were male or female. They decided we were neither. We were "its"—spirits who had fallen from the clouds. They were afraid of us, which was quite handy because we were afraid of them too. But there were 410 of them and only two of us!

Having taken training in linguistics, we began learning the language one word at a time by pointing to objects and acting things out. One day as I was walking through the village with pencil in hand, trying to "gather" words, I discovered that the word for pencil is nimid, meaning thorn. The word for paper is yokwo, meaning banana leaf, and the word for writing is wini, meaning carving. Friends, for the past 13 years I have been going through this village with my thorn and my banana leaf, carving the language of these people, learning one word at a time so that I could someday teach them to read and write their language and then translate the entire New Testament into their own "talk."

I remember trying to get the word for tree. I was pointing to a tree and trying to get them to say the word for tree. Finally they said, "Ana." So I wrote ana (tree). My first word in the dictionary! Later, as I went around the village practicing the words I had collected, I pointed to a tree and said, "Ana." They all shook their heads and laughed. Something was wrong. Later I discovered that ana was the word for finger!

Next I tried, by acting things out, to

"Korawhowaenanae," he said. So I wrote "jump." But he meant "Wby are you acting so stupid?"

get some verbs. I sat to get *sit*. I stood to get *stand*. I ran to get *run*. Well, one day I was talking to Nokiyan, an older man in the village. (By the way, many of our older men wear no clothes except for a vine around their waist—that's it.) Nokiyan, a delightful man, was giving me some of these words. To get the word for *jump*, I jumped up and down in front of him. He kept staring at me. Finally he said, *"Korawhowaenanae."* 



(above) Marilyn Laszlo works with one of ber translator assistants. (lower left) Translators cross the Sepik River together.

I thought, wow, that's a long word for *jump!* But some of their words are long, and he kept saying, "Korawhowaenanae," so I wrote it in my dictionary as I heard it. Well, six months later, I discovered that what Nokiyan had been saying to me was not "jump" but "Why are you acting so stupid?" So it goes when you learn an unwritten language.

Even when we had been there for six months they still didn't understand what we were doing. One day Nokiyan said, "Marilyn, k+ra, +i kw+r +i kw+r om napr+r+ri. Dimu w+ni?" "Marilyn," he was saying, "every day I see you walking through the village. What are you carving on that banana leaf with that thorn?"

"Nokiyan," I answered, "k+rir yaig+n t+ yokwo w+ni." ("I'm carving your talk.")

"Oh, my talk! You mean the words that are coming out of my mouth, you're carving on that banana leaf like the white man's talk?"

"Yes.

That amazed him. He thought that only the white man's talk could be carved on the banana leaf.

"Nokiyan," I said, "your talk can be carved on the banana leaf too. God created your talk."

That made him so excited he came up very close and looked on the carving and said, "Dimuwinin?" ("What does that say, what have you written?")

"This is what it says," I answered.
"Kara omaka nami."

He rubbed his hand over the carving

and kept saying, "My talk! That's my talk!" And he decided that he was going to be our father. He decided to adopt us and be our teacher to help us learn his language.

After a while the people decided that we weren't learning their language fast enough. "These girls," they said, "their mouths and their tongues are thick and heavy. They just can't talk right. We're going to help them learn the language. So bring them more of our food." The idea was that if we ate more of their kind of food, we would speak their language better. If you know anything about their kind of food, you can imagine that we had a little problem there.

Well, Nokiyan, with just a vine around his waist, came to our house every day to teach us the language. (The house stands on stilts because we work in the swamps where the river floods. In fact, the whole jungle area floods, six months out of each year, so all the houses are on stilts.) Nokiyan would come up the ladder of our house, plop himself down in a chair, and begin to teach us. Usually when he was finished, after three or four hours, we would give him some salt, fishing hooks, cookies or something for his pay.

One day I said to my partner, "Judy, instead of giving Nokiyan salt, why don't we give him a pair of trousers. Every day he comes to our house, and you know, it is kind of distracting." Among some used clothing we found a pair of Bermuda shorts—green with a nice green belt. Those we gave to Nokiyan. He was so excited! It was the first time he had ever held a pair of pants. He went down the ladder of our house, got into his canoe and paddled across the river, holding those trousers

He thought that only the white man's talk could be carved on the banana leaf.

close to him. Then he walked through the village telling everyone, "Look what the two white misses gave me!"

The next day he came back to the house and shouted up, "Marilyno, *kara b+di y+t+n. Kara y+uw+s b+di y+i.*" ("Marilyn, I have come. I am ready for work and I'm dressed up in my new clothes.") I replied, "*Wadega Kira!*" ("Good, Nokiyan, you come on up!") So he climbed the ladder and walked in the door, strutted across the room and plopped himself down in the chair. Judy and I stared at each other in disbelief. He had on just the green belt!

Later I told the Lord, "I guess if you want clothes on these people you'll have to do it your way and in your time, because I am just going to concentrate on learning the language."

Isn't it wonderful that salvation does not depend upon what we wear. Nokiyan was one of the first of our village's older people to accept Jesus into their throats. (In their culture. the heart is not the center of emotion; the throat is. You ask Jesus into your throat—the center of your life.) One day after I had tried many times to witness to him in his language, I said, "Nokiyan, I want you to ask Jesus into your throat." He became very excited about that. He couldn't read-we had translated very little of the Word, and yet, in simple childlike faith he asked Jesus into his throat. And there is something powerful about the name of Jesus.

This narrative account was among presentations heard at the 13th Urbana student missions convention, just before New Year's. Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship sponsors the event biennially at the University of Illinois in Urbana.

Marilyn Laszlo is a former Indiana farm girl who taught history and physical education before joining Wycliffe Bible Translators in 1967. She has put the Gospel of



Mark, the Book of Acts and the Epistles of Timothy into a language previously unknown to anyone outside the Sepik Iwam tribe in Papua New Guinea. Marilyn's goal, with help from her sister Shirley who is now her teammate there, is to put the entire New Testament into that tribe's language.

This story, to be published later this year in a book of selected Urbana 81 addresses, is used with permission of Inter-Varsity Press, which holds the copyright. After figuring out the alphabet, working out the grammar and building our dictionary, Judy and I were ready to teach the people to read and write their own language. That was exciting. The Lord gave us 20 sharp Sepik Iwam fellows to teach. In about six months these guys were reading and writing for the first time in the history of that tribe. And from there I got a team of 14 translators to work with. All 14 of these fellows are beautiful Christians. They have been with us from the beginning.

One verse at a time, we started translating God's carving. As we worked, I became burdened about the older people in the village—those witch doctors, the leaders—who were being left out. Our village had more than 50 witch doctors—one for every house. The most powerful men in the village! These men are always busy because there is always someone sick or dying. Life expectancy in this village is about 35 years. The infant mortality rate is 90 percent.

One day I told the translators, "Somehow we have to reach out to these leaders, these big men of the village, with the Word—with the carving. We must involve them in our work so that someday they too can become believers."

"Well," the translators said, "what can they do? They don't know how to read or write. They know nothing about God. How could they possibly help us?" So I looked at those fellows and told them, "When I first came here you knew nothing either. In fact, you didn't even know which end of the pencil to hold. Now if we aren't going to have some kind of outreach to these older people in the village and to our enemy tribes that are all around us, then I might as well pack up my bags and go home."

I knew what their problem was. They were afraid of those powerful medicine men. But in our translation efforts we work in pairs. So I said, "I want you to go out as a team and go to each clan in the village and get one older man from each clan to join your team."

There are four clans in the village, so each team had to get four older men. They were very hesitant but they went. And to their surprise they had little trouble getting the older men to come.

We wanted them to come from 6:30 to 7:30 every night, after we had finished translating, and listen to the verses that we had translated that



Marilyn teaches the villagers to read and write their own language.

day—just listen and see whether they understood it, whether it was meaningful, whether we were using the right verbs and the right idioms.

When these older men came in, I met with them and said, "This is great. We are delighted to have you help us with this task. You are the leaders of the village—the men who understand the language best. These young fellows who work with me, these 14 translators, they don't understand the language that well." Of course, the older men all shook

## "We're waiting for someone to come and tell us about God in our talk."

their heads and agreed, "Yes, Marilyno, you really do need us." So every day these old men came to listen to the Word of God.

The villagers' word for doctor is *inkam biiswoki*—the man who spits, or the spitter. The doctor is the spitter. The village spitters are busy all the time. If you have malaria, they take a sharp bamboo and cut your forehead where you hurt, to let out the bad blood. Then they chew on a plant that supposedly contains a powerful spirit, and they spit and blow the juice into those cuts. The spittle is their medicine. For pneumonia, they cut your chest and your ribs and then they spit and blow into the cut.

One day, after we had translated the

ninth chapter of John, we read verse 6, which says of Jesus, "When he had thus spoken he spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay." Well, you know the rest of the story: the blind man received his sight! Now our village has blind people, but never has a medicine man been able to heal a blind person. So when we read that verse, the big men said, "He did what?"

"He spit! He spit on the ground and made mud and He put it on the blind man's eyes and the blind man received his sight."

Those big men just rose up out of their chairs and said, "Wow!" Then, leaning over and looking at the carving, they said, "Why, Jesus must be the most powerful spitter in the whole world!"

Right then and there, those men identified with Jesus. They went out into the village, including the spirit house, and spread the story throughout the village: "Jesus spits! He heals the blind!" And from that day those big medicine men started coming to church. They wanted to know more about this man Jesus, the spitter.

Jesus did not have to spit. But it seemed to me He used that method because He wanted to reach the throats of the Sepik Iwam people. Today more than half of the people in Hauna village are believers. Let's never underestimate the power of the Word of God in a people's own language.

As we translated and as we taught the people to read and write their language, we became burdened also for the enemy tribes around us. Hundreds of villages were untouched. Hauna was becoming a shining light throughout the swamp and the jungle in that area. People of other villages began to hear what was going on in our village. One day a canoe load of 15 people came to Hauna village. They had paddled for four days to get to our village. They came for medical help.

Because they spoke another tribal language, I tried to communicate with them through the trade language — Pidgin English. That was difficult because they couldn't speak Pidgin well.

When they came into the house, the smell of the rotten sores, the tropical ulcers, the illness, almost made me sick. I'm not a nurse, and the last thing on earth I ever wanted to be was a nurse. But these people were extremely needy. I tried to tell them they would have to stay in our village at least a week, because they needed penicillin series, and I couldn't do it in one day. So we fed them and they stayed for a week.

While they were there they watched what was going on. They saw 200 people learning to read and write their own language; they saw us carving God's talk on the banana leaf; they went to church and heard the people singing in their own language; they listened to our own Sepik Iwam pastors preaching the Word of God.

One day that week, the leader of that group came to our house holding in his hand a green banana leaf with something wrapped inside. I had learned that in his village when someone brings a green banana leaf with something wrapped in it, it's some delicacy from the jungle. And here he was with this gift, this offering in appreciation for my fixing his people's sores and treating their malaria. As I took it I could tell that he wanted me to open it and eat it right away. Usually when I accept food from the people in the village, I say I'll eat it later-much later! But this man was from another tribe-another language group. His was an enemy tribe, really, and in no way did I want to offend him. So I unwrapped it, and there they were-12 nice, fat, big, white, juicy grubs-the kind of worms you find under rotten logs in the woods.

What a delicacy—full of protein!
The bearer had roasted all 12 on a stick. Grub shish kebab! I held them up and prayed, "Lord Jesus, please, please, I am willing to eat these all up if you are willing to keep them all down."

I popped some into my mouth. Now you must have a strong imagination

when you are in a situation like that. I tried to think of the most pleasant things I could think of—like McDonald hamburgers and hot fudge sundaes. They really didn't taste too bad. A bit like bacon.

When it was time to leave Hauna to return home, this fellow said to me, "Do you think you could come to my village and put our talk on the banana leaf so we can know about God too?" Well, I had to shake my head and say, "I'm not finished here yet. I have several more years of work in this place. There's no way I can come." I could tell he was very disappointed, but before he left I promised that someday I would at least come and visit his village.

After several weeks we organized a group to try to find that village. After traveling all day up a small tributary back in the mountains, we parked our canoe and found the village after walking through the jungle for about half an hour. The fellow who had led a group into our village was thrilled to see us. He called everybody to come and see the two white misses. We were the first white people ever to come into that village, so we were quite an exciting sight. In the center of the village I noticed a new building—one very different from their regular houses. I could see that it had just been built, so I said to this fellow, "What is that building?" "Oh," he said, "that is God's house—our church."

"Your church? Do you have a mission here?"

"No, we have never had a mission here."

"Well, do you have a pastor here—someone who preaches God's Word?"

"No, we've never had a pastor here."
"Well, is there someone here in the
village who can read and write Pidgin
English who holds services in your

church?"
"Oh, no! We have no books. No one here can read or write."

"Then, what is that building for?"
"Well," he said, "we saw the little
church in your village, and our people
decided to build a church too. And
now we're waiting. We're waiting for
someone to come and tell us about
God in our talk—in our language."

I turned away. Tears were coming. I had never seen that kind of faith demonstrated anywhere. Friends, out in the middle of the jungle stands that little church, and today they are still waiting. Waiting for someone to come and tell them about Jesus in their language.

## Have you tasted God's love?

"God has shown us how much he loves us," wrote a man who knew God well; "it was while we were still sinners that Christ died for us!"

That's love!

The writer went on: "By his death [Christ's] we are put right with God" (Romans 5:8,9, TEV).

The love shown in Jesus' death for sinners is the love we all need more than any other love. And the experience of being "put right" with the God we've shunned—that's the benefit we all need more than any other.

Peace with God, so necessary in both this life and the next, is God's great love gift to each person who simply, penitently seeks it through the Christ who shed his blood for us and rose to conquer sin and death.

Many people merely know something *about* that love; they have yet to taste it through personal response. They have not personally responded to the crucified and risen Savior.

Do you know God's love?

If you still lack the relationship with God that spells inner peace, we recommend that you:

1. Read and re-read, open-heartedly, Romans 5:1-11.

2. Seek additional counsel through a Christ-sharing church and/or by writing to WORLD VISION magazine for our free booklet on knowing God through Jesus Christ.

God wants you to know and benefit from his love now and eternally. Seek and find that incomparable love in the Lord Jesus Christ. You'll be glad you did. □

## Wisconsin kids learn, give, write

"Dear World Vision," wrote Mrs. Eugene Schuna of Clear Lake, Wisconsin, 'This summer in vacation Bible school at East Lincoln Church in Amery, we studied Haiti as a mission project. Much of the educational material I used was from your magazine. After teaching the children about the condition of people in Haiti, some of them were so impressed that they emptied their piggybanks. The money they gave weighed 1173/4 pounds, of which \$132.50 were pennies. The total was \$209.80. We would like this money to be used in Haiti in any way needed. The children all wrote letters to World Vision and I'm sending these along."

Following are some of the letters from Mrs. Schuna's pupils.

I learned about HAITI in bible school and I had fun doing it. We collected over 175 dollars for the hungry people in Haiti and other places. I have 1 sister, 1 brother, and no animals. I like fishing and other fun things. And I hope that you guys have a lot of fun doing what you're doing to. Bye. Scott

I live in the country. I like to milk cows but don't have a farm. I like animals and baseball. We have money for the hungry, dieing, starving, and all most dead children, more than \$175.00.

I enjoyed learning about Haiti and was very concerned about the things I bad learned. I think the stuff you do is really great. I think it should keep on. P.S. Please write, I'll be waiting for your letter. Stacy Lyn

It is very boring today because we have a contest and my team lost. I learned about Haiti this week and we took an offering and raised over \$178 dollars for the hungry, poor, suffering, dying children in Haiti. I live in America, Wisconsin, Polk County, Deronda. We own 5 acres and have 12 beehives, 2 horses, and two wormbeds. I love to play baseball. This summer I am going to relax. I love to read comic books. Matt

We are bringing money to the hungry, starving kids. I play the flute and we go to school and we have fun and we learned about you and we learned how you got fish and we learned more stuff about you.

Tammy

## SOME WAYS PEOPLE ARE HELPING OTHERS Sampler Sampler

"Future Scenarios of the City" is the theme for a national congress on urban ministry, scheduled for April 22-24, 1982, in Chicago. Sponsored by SCUPE (Seminary Consortium for Urban Pastoral Education), the congress is geared to help both clergy and laity anticipate trends in urban life. Practical workshops will deal with issues involving food. work, land and shelter, as well as evangelism. Write SCUPE, 30 W. Chicago Ave., Chicago, IL 60610.

Gypsies in Europe will soon have the Scriptures available in their own language, Romanes. Thirty to thirty-five thousand of



Europe's estimated eight million gypsies are professing Christians, and most are hungry for Bibles. Living Bibles International has completed the basic translation work for the gypsy Bible, which is to be published soon.

The Africa Evangelical Fellowship (AEF), an interdenominational mission working in ten different African countries, needs qualified Christians to assist in their work overseas.

Doctors, nurses, church planters, teachers, youth workers, administrators and practical workers are among those needed. For more information about specific positions and length of commitment, write AEF, 733 Bloomfield Ave., Bloomfield. NJ 07003.

China. Learn more about Christians in that country through publications available from CCRC (the Chinese Church Research Center). CCRC is dedicated to studying and analyzing Christian life in China and reporting to the Christian community worldwide. Available from their publications list are interviews, booklets, magazines and occasional papers written by the Center's staff. For a copy of this list, send \$1 to CCRC, 7 Kent Rd., Flat A, Kowloon, Hong Kong.

In England, an organization researching religious movements in tribal societies needs volunteers to assist in an extensive microfilm photography project. Openings are part-time, ranging from six weeks to one year or longer. Interns may also audit missions or other courses without cost. For more information, write Dr. Harold Turner, Center for New Religious Movements, Selly Oaks Colleges, Birmingham B29 6LE, England.

Jubilee Fellowship, a Christian community centered in Comer, Georgia, is helping Khmer refugees adapt to life in America. They teach the refugees English, the basics of good

nutrition, how to use such modern appliances as washing machines and stoves, and how to shop wisely. The program also helps refugees set up their own households, and includes orientation visits to schools, police stations, churches and other places of interest.

**Prisoner Visitation and** Support (PVS) needs volunteers to help meet needs of prisoners in U.S. federal and military prisons. PVS volunteers offer prisoners friendship, moral support and help with special needs such as maintaining ties with family and friends or obtaining study materials. PVS also helps local citizens form prisoner support groups. For information write PVS, 1501 Cherry St., Philadelphia, PA 19102.

Urban ministries is the subject of two seminars to be offered at Overseas Ministries Study Center (OMSC). The first (April 19-23) focuses on Third World cities, the other (April 26-30) on North American. For program and registration information, write to Gerald H. Anderson, OMSC Director, Box 2057, Ventnor, NJ 08406.

JEMS—the Japanese Evangelical Missionary Societyis an interdenominational Christian organization ministering to the needs of Japanese people in North America, Japan and Latin America. Their ministries

include a college campus outreach, short- and longterm mission programs in Japan and Latin America. Bible studies, conferences and retreats, a Christian businessmen's fellowship, multimedia presentations and a musical outreach. For information on service opportunities, write JEMS Ministries, 112 N. San Pedro St., Los Angeles, CA 90012.

ISI (International Students Inc.) is working with Afghan refugees living in the U.S. and elsewhere, equipping them with the skills to work in Pakistani refugee camps. These nationals serve on short-term projects with ISI's Afghan Relief Ministry as well as with other evangelical relief organizations. Each assignment lasts two to three months. ISI is dedicated to evangelizing and discipling internationals who will return to their own countries as witnesses to their own people.

Prison Fellowship has scheduled a series of regional conferences to prepare volunteers for ministering to prisoners, ex-offenders and their families. Included are special meetings for active volunteers as well as for those just learning about Prison Fellowship. The next conference is set for March 5-7 in Dallas, Texas. For more information concerning this or other upcoming conferences, write to Regional Volunteer Conference, c/o Lisa Whitney, P.O. Box 40562, Washington, DC 20016.



**Knock on the wall;** be sure it is genuine rice straw or corn husks. Surprisingly, such agricultural wastes are now being used in the Philippines to make building materials that are tough, resilient and long-lasting. For the poor in underprivileged countries, this inexpensive form of housing promises to be a godsend.

A few years ago, Dr. Ben Bryant at the University of Washington in Seattle



developed a process for making corrugated roofing boards from agricultural residues. Then he asked World Vision to take over further development of the program. World Vision agreed, and in late 1980 was able to engage the capable services of a retired building contractor named Bill Chambers.

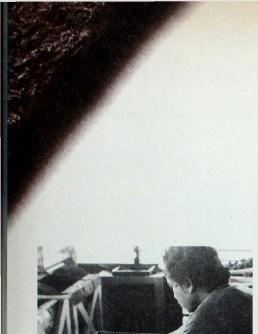
Along with two professors at Silliman University in the Philippines, Chambers made improvements in the process. They simplified it so that the building material could be made at the village level, without electricity or modern machinery.

After much trial and effort, they produced a material that performed well during several months of exposure to extreme weather conditions. The material has since been used to make corrugated roofing board, flat wall board, ridge board, gutters and non-pressure drain pipe. These "A.R.C. (Agricultural Residue

Construction) products" are made with either rice straw, sugarcane bagasse, coogan grass, banana leaves, banana stalk, abaca bracts or corn husks.

A.R.C.'s pilot plant at Silliman University is now a training ground for Philippine workers from other locations who hope to begin production in their area. An A.R.C. plant costs about \$600 to set up, depending on the cost of local labor and raw materials. The Silliman facility is also producing material for model houses to be built

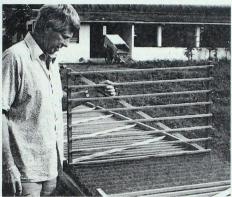
Good news for people who can't afford or even find building materials: A.R.C. is durable, cheap and easy to make from readily available agricultural wastes.



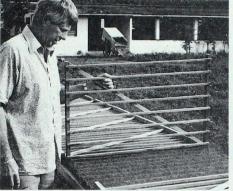
Joaked rice straw is spread out to form a mat while the water is drained



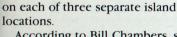
bilippine worker places chopped rice straw in soaking tank.



Bill Chambers inspects some drying A.R.C. boards.



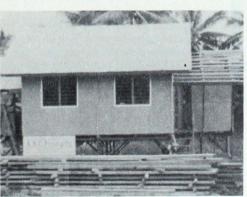
orrugated board is dipped in a tub of molten sulfur.



According to Bill Chambers, six persons can produce 36 boards a day. The process involves breaking the agricultural residues into small fragments and then using a binder like molten sulfur to form the matter into the desired shape.

Since so many countries with a desperate need for low-cost housing have agricultural wastes available, the new technology is generating intense interest. World Vision leaders in other Asian countries are investigating the feasibility of A.R.C. production for their own community development work.

Still, the technology will take time to develop. "The stress and weather tests indicate that we have produced worthy products," says Chambers. "And the need is great. But only time can tell how durable they will be and what God has in mind for A.R.C. products." If the poor benefit, the wait will be worth it.



odel bouse at Silliman University made with agricultural wastes

# People & projects

#### Salvadoran refugees moved

Salvadoran refugees formerly staying in the La Guarita district of Honduras have been moved farther from the border, at the initiative of the Honduran government. The move may increase the safety of these refugees, who had been under attack by the Salvadoran military in recent weeks. However, World Vision expressed concern that the concurrent withdrawal of international relief personnel from the border area would decrease protection for new refugees escaping into Honduras. Subsequently, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and CEDEN (an indigenous evangelical relief agency) asked World Vision to keep

two persons in Guarita to receive new refugees. About 100 refugees arrive each week.

The new camp at Mesa Grande, 35 kilometers from the border, is expected to house 10,000 refugees. A second camp, at La Esperanza, will hold another 10-15,000 refugees. World Vision is responsible for tent construction. CEDEN is handling food distribution. The Mennonite Central Committee is building latrines. Students from the University of Honduras are handling health needs.

#### Aid to homeless

A fire in November left about 14,000 families homeless in the Mathare Valley of Nairobi, Kenya. World Vision has been working to provide the victims with clothing, food and shelter.

#### **Typhoon recovery**

World Vision donors provided assistance for victims of Typhoon Anding when it struck the Philippines in late November. Forty-four thousand people were reported homeless in the typhoon's wake. World Vision obtained emergency housing for 600 families while the government provided food and medicine.

#### Turkana people get help

Lokichoggio, a new World Vision project in the drought-stricken Rift Valley of Kenya, is helping 3000 Turkana people in that community achieve a greater degree of self-reliance. The nomadic Turkana, who live in northwest Kenya near the Uganda and Sudan borders, have lost many of their cattle in the drought and cattle raids. Cattle have played a major role in the people's livelihood in this hot, dry area, which is unfavorable to crop production. This project, done in conjunction with the African Inland Church and Food for the Hungry, has begun with a feeding and medical program. Subsistence farming of maize, beans and small livestock will be encouraged. Other components of the project include handicrafts and cooperatives, literacy and evangelism.



Village women are learning to sew, knit and embroider at the project's social center.

#### Farming co-op in West Africa

Working to end hunger in the Markala area of Mali, the second largest nation in West Africa, the church of Markala is running an agricultural cooperative. Begun in 1979 with the help of World Vision donors, the cooperative is run by Christian farmers who hope to raise their food production and income, as well as show the love of Christ to people in the area. Ten percent of their combined profits go to the church, and half of the remaining profit is given to social work. In addition, the project's social center is teaching women to sew-a skill which enables them to earn money for their families.

#### Love Loaf still rising

The First Baptist Church of Centerville, Ohio, has been conducting a continuous Love Loaf program since 1976. The congregation has made 21 separate gifts to World Vision ministries in the last five years, totaling over \$49,000. Paul Van Oss, director of World Vision's



Midwest regional office, visited the church in January to present a plaque of recognition.

#### Guatemala flood victims aided

World Vision is assisting 725 persons affected by a mid-October flood near Lago Peten Itza in Guatemala. These families are suffering from gastrointestinal illness, conjunctivitis and malaria. Water contamination from the flooding is the cause of much of the illness. World Vision is working with the Guatemalan government, a local evangelical church and a local hospital to provide medicine and clothing.

#### More emergency flights

World Vision is assisting 150,000 Indians living in remote parts of the Peruvian jungle with a new project that will enable those needing emergency medical care to be flown to health facilities. The number of flights will decrease as health care promoters are trained in the isolated communities.

#### Henry appointment

Dr. Carl F.H. Henry, lecturer-at-large for World Vision, has been added to the board of directors of Prison Fellowship. Volunteer members of this Washington-





Smiles express the appreciation of patients recovering at the World Visionoperated National Pediatric Hospital in Phnom Penh, Kampuchea.

based organization minister to prison inmates in institutions across the United States. Their work includes visiting prisoners, leading Bible studies and continuing contact with ex-convicts.

### Please pray for:

- Christians in Poland, that they may be sources of encouragement and strength to their neighbors.
- Salvadorans whose lives are being threatened by the ongoing political violence.
- Bible translators around the world who work under harsh conditions to accomplish their worthy task.
- the unsheltered in city slums around the globe.
- **parents** in poor communities who are struggling to support their children.

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Associate Director, Operations & Adminisration—Relief and Rehabilitation Assist our R&R director in providing management for relief operations, project administration, relief research. contingency planning, reports and supervision. Requires master's degree in administration, international relations or comparable field; 10 years experience in relief or development; two years field and management experience; willingness to travel

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Director-Communications Resources Division Provide leadership in international communications operations. Possess college degree with 15 years experience in communications involving international media agencies, government and non-government voluntary agencies

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Int'l. Communications Associate, Regional/Field Office Communications Manage and train communications personnel. Experience in developing nations, degree in communicationsrelated field, advance degree preferred

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Associate Director-Human Resources Provide generalist background with particular experience in salary administration for Personnel/Human Resources. Requires 10 years experience in personnel, college degree and effective comunication skills.

Data Processing Manager-WV Europe Position in WV Europe Office-Frankfurt, West Germany. Experienced D.P. Manager with solid 10-year background in programming business applications, providing end-user support and contributing an information systems perspective to management. Candidate must be fluent in both German and English.

## Globe News Briefs for Your Information and Intercession at a glance

**Hunger statistics** are only educated guesses, admit UN and World Bank officials whose estimates are being questioned by independent researchers. The UN Food and Agriculture Organization says 440 million people are not receiving their minimum food needs. Researchers at Cornell University, among others, say severe hunger may affect only 100 to 200 million. World Bank's Harry Walters comments, "Even if the number is only 50 million, that's enough to bother me."

The Soviet Union's most serious problem both "economically and politically" is food, said President Leonid Brezhnev in a major report to the Communist Party's Central Committee. Some Western analysts believe that the Soviet grain harvest in 1981 was the worst in six years. A nationwide campaign is under way to conserve grain, bread, meat and dairy products.

**Kenya** is being rapidly infiltrated by religious cults, according to the Nairobi newspaper *Daily Nation*. The article says the cults are "anti-development" and "confuse people about the realities of life." One alleged offender is the Church of Scientology, which the paper described as "a magico-religious movement . . . homegrown in California."

**Extending health care** beyond hospital walls was seen as a high priority by delegates to a MAP International community health development workshop in November. Workshop leaders said that training village people as health workers would provide each community with its own source of health care. An emphasis on preventive medicine would save the lives of millions who do not have access to—or cannot afford—hospital care.

**Uganda** is experiencing "a tremendous upsurge in spiritual interest and response," according to Bishop Festo Kivengere. His own diocese in western Uganda added 14 parishes last year. The bishop said Uganda is open to missionaries who are skilled in teaching, medicine or construction. The church's main role, he said, is still to create a spirit of reconciliation in the midst of continuing strife.

**The Amazon's "poor" jungle soil** can sustain high-yield food crops, according to a team of American and Peruvian scientists. Using crop rotation and other techniques, they produced 23 crops from soil that would normally have been abandoned after two years of slash-and-burn agriculture. The scientists believe their experiment is significant in light of the UN's estimate that 494 million additional acres will have to be cleared by the year 2000 just to maintain present per capita food consumption.

Hmong refugees returning to Laos have received their government's assistance, according to UNHCR officials who are helping with an official repatriation program. In 1981,

about 600 Laotians returned to their country under the program, and many times that number are thought to have returned independently. Some 300,000 Laotians have fled their country since 1975 because of economic hardships, lack of freedom, and hope of a better life outside. Many Hmong, however, wish to return to Laos.

Money for a new intercontinental missle, said Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, "could plant 200 million trees, . . . feed 50 million undernourished children, . . . build 65,000 health care centers . . . or 340,000 schools." Speaking to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, Gandhi asked developing nations to pursue "collective self-reliance" in the face of wealthy nations' poor response to food aid programs.

**Severe housing shortages** have impelled 17 African countries to form a new organization aimed to spark new low-rent housing projects. Shelter-Afrique will try to promote housing that is suited to local conditions and resources, rather



Housing in Mathare Valley, a poor section of Nairobi, Kenya

than import the building standards of wealthier societies. Africa needs three million new houses annually to accommodate the rural poor who, in migrating to the cities, end up in slum "houses" of cardboard and plastic.

One of every six American babies is born to an unmarried mother, according to recent government figures. The number of women of child-bearing age increased by 6.4 million in the last decade, and more single mothers are keeping their children. The U.S. Census Bureau also reports that by 1985 one-half of America's adults will be single, up from one-third in 1979.

**Half of the world's refugees** are in Africa, though the continent has only 10 percent of the world's population. In 1967, Africa had 450,000 refugees; that figure has now increased more than 1000 percent. Most of the displacement is the result of political upheaval rather than natural disasters. Artificial boundaries dividing up ethnic and language groups have been a source of conflict since colonial days.

**Another independent black nation** has been created by South Africa. The new nation is the former tribal homeland of Ciskei, a "native reserve" of more than a million Xhosaspeaking blacks whose rate of unemployment and malnutrition has been among the most severe in the mother country.



## Escape to reality

When it comes to faith, I've observed, it is the present tense that is usually shortchanged. We do well on events that happened decently long ago. Why is it, I wonder, that a Golden Age of anything is always somewhere in the past? Why do we never recognize a Golden Age when we're in the midst of one? Many of us—churches, too—are living in the Land of Was, trying to recapture the glow of victories past, forever telling how it used to be.

Faith's futurism has also received an overshare of attention. We sing about a balm in some ethereal Gilead, scarcely conscious of spiritual ointment available for today's wounds. We sing songs of praise about the sweet by-and-by, but where is the soaring evangelical hymnody of the here and now—songs that make us feel it is an incomparable privilege to be alive, come what may?

This side of the Third World we have almost convinced ourselves that, for Christians, the going is not supposed to be rough; we're not supposed to become depressed, have marital problems, generation gaps, business failures, sorrows. Tragedy, we say, is something that happens to unbelievers, and if it does overtake the faithful, we presume it to be embarrassing evidence of a flawed faith. So we engage in the Big Cover-up, cloaking our humanity, our hurts, our failures—not under a mantle of love, but behind a curtain of deceit—because we cannot face the exposure of being honest and real.

Much of what passes as Bible-believing, Spirit-filled evangelical piety is, I am convinced, little more than Christian role playing. We act the way we think we are expected to act. We admit to nothing that tarnishes our self-projected image. We hide in past and future.

And inside, afraid to be real, we crumble.

Reality is not an abstraction. It is achievable only in specifics. It is what I am and you are at this moment, in this place, with masks off. It is something not to escape from but to escape to. As frightening as the prospect of transparent honesty may appear, reality is not necessarily hostile. It can be friendly. At least, that is my experience. It is where healing must be found, where health must be lived out. It precludes refuge in the drug and alcohol scene or in its religious equivalent.

Reality brings release and freedom as nothing else can, but it cannot be experienced apart from Jesus who gives us courage to take the first timorous step into our threatening Jordan Rivers, without which the waters of pretense and hypocrisy will not and cannot roll back.

The Velveteen Rabbit by Margery Williams (Doubleday), written for children but to my mind even more meaningful for role-playing adults, says it in gentle allegory:

The Skin Horse had lived longer in the nursery than any of the others. He was so old that his brown coat was hald in patches and showed the seams underneath, and most of the hairs in his tail had been pulled out.... He was wise, for he had seen a long

succession of mechanical toys arrive to boast and swagger, and by-and-by break their mainsprings and pass away, and he knew that they were only toys, and would never turn into anything else....

"What is REAL?" asked the Rabbit one day, when they were lying side by side near the nursery fender, before Nana came to tidy the room. "Does it mean having things that buzz inside you . . . ?"

"Real isn't bow you are made," said the Skin Horse. "It's a thing that happens to you. When a child loves you for a long, long time, not just to play with, but REALLY loves you, then you become Real."

"Does it burt?" asked the Rabbit.

"Sometimes," said the Skin Horse. . . . "When you are Real, you don't mind being hurt."

"Does it happen all at once, like being wound up," be asked, "or bit by bit?".

"It doesn't happen all at once," said the Skin Horse. "You become. It takes a long time. That's why it doesn't often happen to people who break easily, or have sharp edges, or who have to be carefully kept. Generally, by the time you are Real, most of your hair has been loved off and you get loose in the joints and very shabby. But these things don't matter at all, because once you are Real you can't be ugly, except to people who don't understand. Once you are Real you can't become unreal again. It lasts for always."

On my pilgrimage toward trying to become real, I have found much help in the writings of Henri Nouwen. In *The Wounded Healer* (Doubleday), this Catholic priest points out: "The Christian leader is not one who reveals God to his people—who gives something he has to those who have nothing—but one who helps those who are searching to discover reality as the source of their existence."

It is possible, I now believe, for a person to be the real thing. But don't expect to see mass conversions. It is still, as I perceive it, only for individual souls who find courage to make a start in spite of timidity and fear.

Most will prefer the anonymity and safety found behind a mask. Many will still choose the comfort of nostalgia. It is a nice place to visit, but I wouldn't want to live there. Others will continue to shortcut or leapfrog the painful present to find comfort in future hope. That is good to have, but we don't live there either. Not yet.

For the rest of us, there is only today. The process of living this day is taking us somewhere. There *is* a destination. On earth our destination, I believe, is to become real persons. If we cannot reach that point and go on from there without pretense, how can God trust us with His heaven?

Stan Mooneyham

President, World Vision International

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