

AUGUST 1982

WORLD VISION

PRESSTIME REPORT: INSIDE LEBANON

*Cairo's
dump
dwellers*





The cross at the edge of hell

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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*
Konny Thompson,
editorial assistant
Don Aylard, *art director*
Steven Heassler, *layout*
Jan Dahring, *typesetter*
Paul S. Rees, *editor-at-large*
Carl F. H. Henry,
special correspondent

PHOTOS—James Greenelsh: page 8. Eric Mooneyham pages 1-15 except page 8. Larry Nichols: page 20 (bottom). ARTWORK—Rich Watson: page 16.



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Now

What you see on pages 3-11 of this magazine is bad enough. What you see in the centerspread—a press-time replacement for a less-distressing article—is considerably worse. Please read both stories with your heart.

You'll find much more about the Lebanon situation in next month's magazine. A moving firsthand report from Stan Mooneyham on location, in fact. But please don't wait to respond with prayer and help. Deeply suffering Lebanese need in-Christ's-name help *now*.

D.O.



Mooneyham with World Vision's Middle East Representative Leonard Rodgers in Beirut.



The cross at the edge of hell

by W. Stanley Mooneyham

The smoldering fires on the mountains of garbage lit the darkness as they leaped into tongues of flame, giving a rosy hue to the smoky pall which hung over the surrealistic scene. Shadowy figures moved in and out of the light as scavenging dogs

Stan Mooneyham tours the garbage dump of Zarayeb with converted former drug dealer Boulas Goda and a young friend.



***In a day which begins at 5:30 a.m.,
Sa'ad may clear 50 cents or a dollar.***

snarled their way around the slopes.

It reminded me of a Salvador Dali painting.

Except for the smell. The smell of Cairo's burning leftovers was not an illusion. It was real.

Acrid. Pungent. Penetrating. The way, I thought, it must have smelled in the Valley of Hinnom outside Jerusalem where in ancient times a fire was kept burning constantly to consume the waste of animals slaughtered for temple sacrifices.

It was from this place of perpetual fire that Jewish writers acquired their word "Gehenna," which first was used to mean "the entrance to hell" and later hell itself.

Yes, I said, that's what it's like.

Gehenna.

And the family of Sa'ad Abed el Said Suher, with whom I had spent the last three days, lived at the foot of those burning mounds.

They lived, I mused, at the edge of hell.

Actually, the name of the place is Zarayeb and it is home to more than 10,000 people, all of whom make their living recycling what Cairo's ten million inhabitants throw away. They represent about one-third of the city's garbage collectors. The rest live in three other such settlements, the largest of which has a population of 14,000.

During my time at Zarayeb, I learned a great deal about how a subculture lives. I discovered that what I thought was merely a garbage dump was actually a town with a life, character, structure and system all its own.

I gained a deep appreciation for the people, their ability to organize themselves, their struggle to beat the odds, and especially their hopes and dreams for themselves and their children.

Among them, I met people I was proud to own as brothers and sisters.

Like Sa'ad and his family.

From the moment I stepped into their little compound, I felt a kinship with this sensitive man who has worked in the garbage since he was ten years old. At least, that's how old he thinks he was when a compassionate uncle brought him to Cairo.

His father had been a mechanic in Tahta, a poverty-stricken village in the upper Nile Valley about 600 miles from Egypt's capital city. But faced with little food for his family and no future for his son, he agreed when his wife's brother who had a garbage route in Cairo offered to take young Sa'ad into "the business" with him.

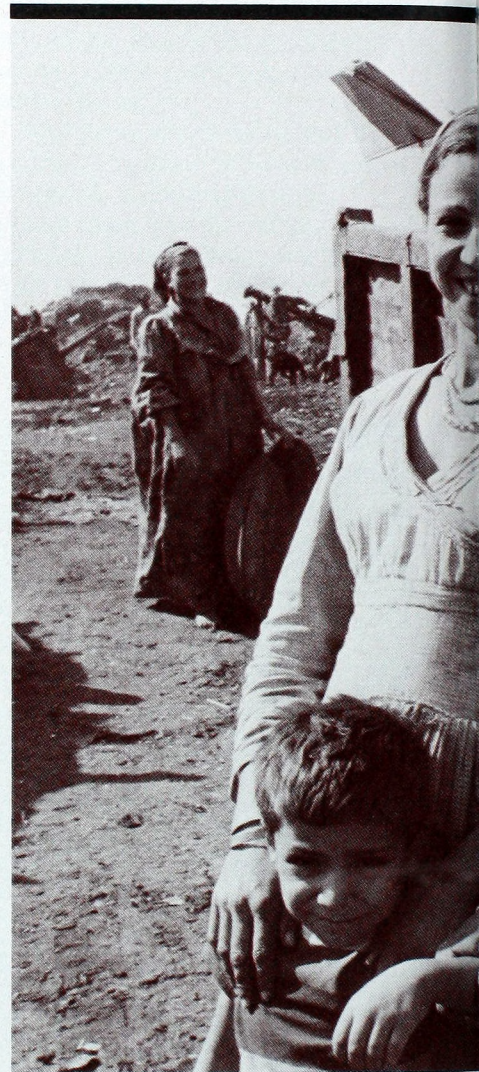
The business, I learned, is a tough one from which every person involved hopes ultimately to escape.

As Sa'ad and I sat down to talk, bottles of warm Pepsi-Cola appeared from somewhere and were placed in the visitors' hands. Since there is no electricity or ice in Zarayeb, the fact that the drinks were warm didn't bother me as much as seeing them uncapped, not knowing when, where or by whom they had been opened. But to have refused this generous act of hospitality would have been unthinkable. So I wiped the top with my own dirty hand and apprehensively sipped the contents.

A brief visual survey of the compound confirmed that life for a collector of garbage is basic indeed. The area, about 30 feet square, served as home for two families—Sa'ad's and that of his sister who had come from Tahta to Cairo and married after Sa'ad established his own collection route.

At the back of the compound was a pigpen with a population of 27.

Scrap sheets of metal separated Sa'ad's compound from his neighbors'. Everything was open to the sky except for two small covered huts in opposite corners where the families slept. The rest of the living was done in the open. The huts were built of scrap—bits of



tin, cardboard, cloth, wood. Virtually everything in the compound, from cooking utensils to clothing, seemed to be what someone else had thrown away.

Including, I was sure, the bench where we sat and drank warm Pepsi as we talked.

"What are some of your problems?." I asked this barely literate, self-taught man whose age we had established at

(left) Sa'ad, his wife and son strike a happy pose before their loaded cart. (right) Day's end brings the gruesome task of sorting through rotting garbage.



somewhere between 30 and 35.

His answer is a revelation in itself: "This whole life is a problem. What do you want to know about?" indicating that I needed to be more specific.

"Well, the police," I said. "What kinds of problems do you have with the police?"

"Sometimes they are very kind and leave me alone," he said softly. "But sometimes they arrest me because I

have no identity card. They keep me for a day or two until they make some kind of report. Then I lose work. I can't get a card because I haven't done my military service, but I can't go into the army because I can't leave my wife and children here."

It is a dilemma for which he has no answer but a shrug of the shoulders.

I am beginning to understand his

statement, "This whole life is a problem."

"What about your health?" I ask. The handling of garbage, the long hours and back-breaking labor, the living conditions all seem designed to contribute to sickness. "Is your health bad?"

Another insight, this time from Pastor Boushra Assaad, my interpreter whose Coptic Evangelical Presbyterian Church is starting a social work here.

"He doesn't know how to answer your question since he wouldn't recognize anything apart from a serious sickness," he explains. "He just thanks God that he is strong enough to work."

"But I can tell you that sickness among the children is a major problem," Pastor Boushra continues. "There are no health services here and the

Facts about Egypt

nearest hospital is five miles away. The children have skin diseases, worms, eye infections and pneumonia. The water is polluted and rats carry disease from hut to hut. I estimate that 10 to 15 children die here every day."

He repeats to Sa'ad what he has told me, and the man nods his head. "Two of our children died," he says simply. I see three others playing around the compound. The oldest looks about eight and the youngest is just walking.

Most of the children in Zarayeb work the donkey carts with their fathers, walking up long flights of stairs and carrying garbage down. Sa'ad works alone. He insists that his son go to school even though it's a four mile roundtrip walk every day.

"I will never allow my children to work in the garbage!" he tells me emphatically.

Pastor Boushra points out that the things I am asking about are only symptoms of a deeper and larger problem which is the garbage collection system itself. Most of the people will always struggle just to survive because they cannot change their status within the system. For the most part, they are illiterate peasants who come from upper Egypt hoping to find jobs in Cairo. But lacking skills, they simply drift to the bottom of the jobless pool and end up as human cogs in the garbage collecting system.

The system itself is privately organized, unregulated except by unwritten rules among those who control it. These "bosses," usually from families who managed to graduate from the carts, stake out territories in the city, each of which has several hundred apartments and houses. The boss charges each household 30 cents a week, but most often the collector sees none of this. The money simply guarantees that the boss will keep the system working smoothly

Population: (est. mid 1981) 43.5 million

Population growth rate: 3 percent annual increase

Area: 386,600 square miles (roughly the size of Texas and New Mexico)

Population density (persons per square kilometer of arable land): 1533

Capital: Cairo. Population: 5.5 million in Greater Cairo; 3.2 million in the suburbs. One of the world's 20 largest cities.

Urban population: 45 percent

Ethnic composition: 93 percent Hamitic. Remaining 7 percent includes Bedouin Arabs, Nubian Negroes, Greeks, Italians and Maltese.

Official language: Arabic

Other principal tongue: English

Chief commercial products: cotton, textiles, rice, petroleum, cement, iron, steel.

Economy: Annual GNP per capita is \$460. Egypt is considered by the U.N. to be one of the world's low-income countries. Industry is 90 percent government-owned. The country imports half of its food. Economic success for the country hindered because population is growing faster than the economy.

Religion: Islam, Christianity (Coptic Orthodox, 3 million members, is principal Christian religion). In its Sunni form, Islam is the official religion of up to 90 percent of the population. Because of Islam's influence, the government enlists the aid of religion to exercise control.

Status of Christianity: Egypt has the largest Christian population of any Arab country. Christians have religious freedom, but are not given full protection from harassment by radical Muslims.



The largest Protestant church in the Middle East is the Coptic Evangelical Church, with which World Vision is in partnership for the Garbage Collectors project in Zarayeb (see accompanying article). The government remains the major protector of the Copts, which adds to the present struggle with Muslim fundamentalists.

History and government: Egypt has the longest recorded history of any nation, with records dating back to 3000 B.C. Its early history was a struggle against a series of foreign invaders, and it became a vassal nation when it was invaded by the Arabs in 7 A.D.

In 1922 Egypt gained independence from Great Britain. In 1953 Egypt became an independent republic under the leadership of Gamal Abdel Nasser as its first president. At his death in 1970, Nasser was succeeded by Anwar El-Sadat. In October 1981, Hosni Mubarak became president when Sadat was assassinated.

The constitution of 1971 proclaims Egypt as an Arab republic with a democratic and socialist system based on the alliance of the working people—a system derived from the country's heritage and the spirit of Islam (Arab Socialism). There is one political party, the Arab Socialist Union. The government faces a continuing threat from the Muslim Brotherhood, supported by Libyan arms.

I gained a deep appreciation for the people, their ability, their struggle, their hopes and dreams.

and prevent other cart operators from competing.

If it seems like protection money, it must be admitted that both the householders and the collectors are afraid of the bosses and no one cares to challenge their right to collect the fee. Nonetheless, it must be said also that the system works and that makes it worthwhile for all concerned, including the government which has been relieved of one more administrative function.

If the boss is humane, he may give the collector five cents a month for each client, but most are not so kind. In fact, if an apartment dweller gives the collector or his children anything of value, the boss is supposed to be told about it so he can decide whether it may be kept or must be turned over to him.

But the outside boss is not the only

one with whom Sa'ad must deal. There is a boss who owns the land on which all the garbage collectors are squatters. He too must be satisfied. The rent on Sa'ad's compound is \$200 a year. By virtue of owning the land, the boss gets one-third of the pigs which grow fat on the garbage Sa'ad feeds them. He is also the middleman for selling the rest of the porkers, taking a substantial cut of the profits, since Sa'ad with his minimal literacy doesn't know how to handle that kind of business.

Then there are the bosses who, through other middlemen, buy what Sa'ad salvages from his daily collections. As I begin to understand the system, it seems to me that like in so many other parts of the world, it was

calculated to victimize and exploit those who put the most labor into it.

At the end of a day which begins at 5:30 a.m., Sa'ad may clear 50 cents or a dollar. The higher amount would be possible only if the garbage contained any "treasure"—a pair of shoes, a toy, or broken household items which could be repaired. He told me that once he found a gold watch valued at nearly \$2000. Being an honest man, he returned it and was given a \$25 reward.

But that happened only once. On the days I was there, he averaged less than 50 cents. I watched as the weary donkeys turned in through the open gates of the compound at two o'clock in the afternoon, having pulled the primitive little cart over a 14-mile course.

Two street-wise cats jumped nimbly



Although the surroundings are meager, the Word of God sounds clearly when believers gather in Zarayeb.

“Ten to 15 children die here every day.”

to the top of the loaded cart and started fighting over a choice morsel.

The children greeted their father with squeals and hugs, the way children all over the world greet fathers coming home from work.

Sa'ad unhitched the donkeys. The creatures immediately proceeded to wallow in a dustbath, relieved that another day was over. But for the man, there was still much to do. He tipped the cart, allowing the garbage to spill out the back into the compound. The flies descended like one of Moses' plagues.

Oblivious to the swarm around them, the man and his wife started the sorting process. Their hands flew as they handled each scrap, separating them for final disposition. Food scraps went into a bucket for feeding the pigs. A pile was started for tin cans. Another for bottles. One for plastic containers. One for paper scraps. And a final one for the residue which could

not be sold or used. It was the smallest of all.

During the sorting process, a woman comes by who regularly buys the plastic containers. There is a bit of good-humored haggling as she says, "You keep all the best stuff for yourself and sell me only the junk." It's the same the world over.

Finally, the pile is weighed on primitive scales and a deal is struck.

Sa'ad turns back to help his wife, who has never allowed her hands to stop sorting. There are no treasures today at the end of the hour-and-a-half process.

Although he is tired, we sit down on the bench to talk again. I want to try to get inside the man, to understand something of what he thinks and feels. Gently, I ask what it is like to be at the bottom of the ladder and be looked down on by other people.

He hesitates a moment. I have touched a nerve.

"The first year I worked with my uncle, I was very ashamed," Sa'ad

admits. "I didn't want to go to the people. I would come back every day feeling depressed. But, finally, I got used to it and it doesn't bother me anymore. I accept this as my trade, my way to live, and I am not ashamed of it.

"In fact, since I became a Christian I am able to thank God for this work because this is why I am still living."

As I look at his face, I see a man at peace.

Peace—just at the edge of hell.

But I know this is not the experience of most of the people who live in Zarayeb. Pastor Boushra confirms that psychological problems abound. Different people handle it in different ways, he tells me. On some, the pressure is so great they become mentally ill. Some turn to criminal activity, using the anonymity found in Zarayeb to cover their crimes. Still others numb themselves with drugs and alcohol.

"Almost everyone in this place uses

World Vision in Egypt

World Vision began its ministry in Egypt in 1975 when funds were given to the Emmanuel Leadership Training Center in Cairo to help construct a new facility.

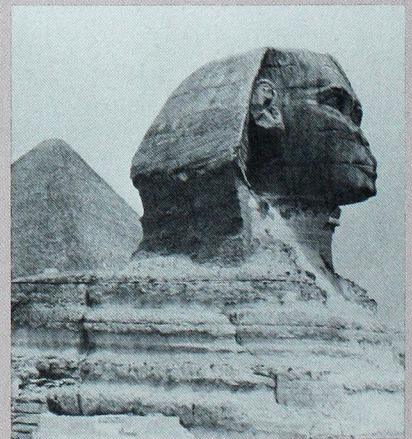
Child sponsorship began in 1976, following a visit to Cairo by Maureen Lampard, then World Vision Childcare Coordinator for Europe and the Middle East. Under the auspices of the Faggala Evangelical Church, she visited two

homes in Cairo in February of that year. Sponsorship began a few months later.

Recent work has included a Pastors' Conference held in August 1981 in Alexandria, which was attended by 220 pastors. The pastors have submitted a request to World Vision for a second conference, which is being considered for September.

Today, World Vision assists more than 900 children in 15 Evangelical Coptic Church homes and projects. Most of the projects are in the slums of Cairo and Alexandria.

In addition to its community development project in the Zarayeb district of Cairo, World Vision provides support for *Magalla*, a monthly magazine about Christianity for young Arabic readers.





drugs," Sa'ad agrees. "It is the only way to forget who they are and what they do. I myself used drugs until I became a Christian. Now those things like smoking, drinking and drugs are . . . rubbish!"

I smile at his use of the word, for it seems incongruous in this situation. But I fully understand what he means.

Sa'ad tells me he became a Christian on July 23, 1975. He remembers the date well. A layman from Pastor Boushra's church, Boulas Goda, a converted drug dealer, came and preached the gospel to those who formerly bought his drugs. Sa'ad was one of the early converts.

As the former drug dealer began to make regular trips to the garbage dump to share his new faith, more people turned to Christ and he saw the need for starting a church. Pastor Boushra agreed to go and preach one Sunday. He told me what he found: "After the service, I went to visit a very sick 15-year-old girl. She was lying on the ground, barely able to move. I told them I'd come back the next day and take her to the hospital, but when I got there she was dead. I was very upset. The people told me that children were always dying here.

"They are malnourished and get sick so easily. Mostly they eat what we call 'white cheese'—milk sealed in a can and allowed to sit for a long time until the curdled milk has separated from the whey. They dip their bread in this and sometimes they have a few vegetables. Only on very special occasions do they get meat.

"I went back and told my elders about the suffering people and they agreed our church should do something. But what to do? Yes, I'd like to deliver Jesus to them, but what kind of Jesus could they understand?

"It is not enough for me to bring words only," Pastor Boushra says

(right) Play areas are both scarce and dangerous for the children of Zarayeb. (far right) Grim realities of daily life begin at an early age.

emotionally. "God never intended for us to sit idle while the restless poor struggle to survive. I have to get involved with their hunger, their diseases, their illiteracy. So we decided to help all the people, Christians and Muslims alike."

Less than ten percent of the people are Muslims, because their religion does not allow them to work with swine. The church bought some land near the garbage mounds and started to build a social service center, but they ran out of money after the foundation was poured.

At the center, which will be for all, they will offer literacy programs, child care, family planning information, public health training and vocational education.

Samuel Habib, director of the Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Service (CEOSS), says, "The goal is not just to move people out of the dump, but to make the dump a habitable place with people who have a sense of human dignity and community pride. After all, they perform an essential service to the city and the recycling is important to the economy."

He helped me see that even as Egypt makes strides to modernize the lives of its people, putting people out of work by mechanizing the garbage collection might not be desirable progress. I have little worry, however, since the country's limited foreign exchange must be spent for things more basic than automated garbage trucks, and there are always jobless peasants moving to Cairo.

For the Christians at Zarayeb, the congregation at Zeitoun is helping build another small chapel for the 40 families who are divided into two congregations. More than a dozen of the church's young people visit the



"I will never allow my children to work in the garbage."

place regularly to conduct Sunday school and bring food for the children. They raised over \$100 to buy scrap metal for the chapel.

Pastor Boushra believes the gospel is the best hope for changing the lives of the garbage workers. He has some pretty convincing evidence to back up his belief.

"When the people accept Christ and stop gambling, drinking and taking drugs," he says, "they are able to save some money. They put their children in school and make a down payment on a small piece of land outside the garbage dump. They start to build a simple house one brick at a time. While all this may take four or five years, they begin for the first time to live with hope."

At least 25 Christian families have moved away through this method.

On the way to church on Sunday, we stopped at the home of one of

them. Boulas Shinouda worked in the garbage for over 20 years. He and his younger brother, Gabriel, built this place themselves and started a business selling reinforcing iron. The house has four rooms and is clean. There are no flies even though it is less than a mile from the garbage dump. All four children go to school.

The only other way out of the garbage dump is to become a boss, using threat and intimidation. I agree with Pastor Boushra that the gospel is the better way.

The church in Zarayeb looks like everything else there. It is a hut made from scrap. Scrap benches with one or two rusty folding chairs sit on the dirt floor. Two recycled lanterns hang from the low ceiling.

A cross over the doorway is pieced

together from scrap plastic. It's not very artistic, but neither was the one raised on Jerusalem's garbage dump, Golgotha.

Packed into the 10-by-25-foot church are about 90 people, men on one side and women on the other. Some sit on the ground for lack of a bench. As we arrive, they are singing a rhythmic song in Arabic accompanied by hand-clapping and the tinkling sound of finger cymbals. Some of the men weep as they sing: "The voice comes from heaven . . . the voice of love . . . I'll never forget you . . . I'll never leave you, my son . . . the sun will be shining after the clouds."

The sermon is punctuated with spontaneous responses from the men, who make up more than half the congregation. The service ends with mass prayer as all the people pray individual prayers at the same time. Then a hymn, "I'm not worthy, Lord, of all the good things you have done for me," followed by the Lord's Prayer.

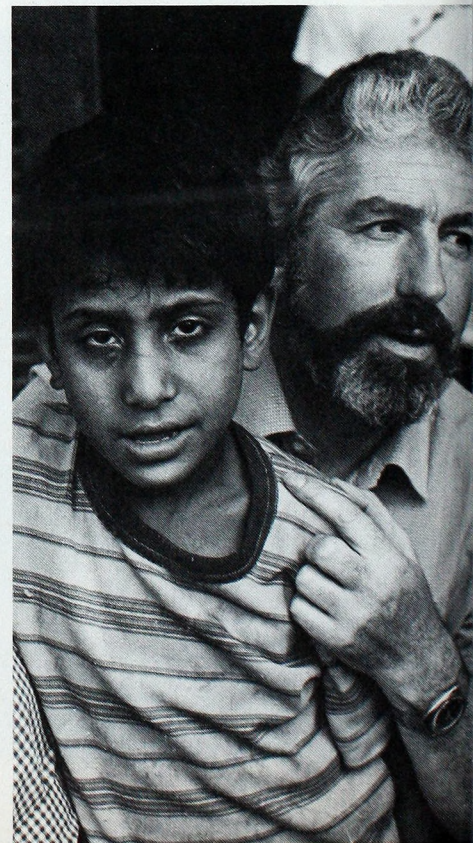
As I step out into the sunlight, I look up at the smoking mounds of garbage and back again at the humble little chapel with the recycled cross over the door. The people coming out still have the joy of the Lord in their faces and their voices.

Somehow, it doesn't seem right. Why should they be happy? But then a happy thought strikes me. Why not? Heaven begins, after all, just at the edge of hell. □

To help World Vision minister to the physical and spiritual needs of Cairo's dump dwellers, please use the envelope from the center of this magazine.



PRESSTIME REPORT: INSIDE LEBANON



An uncertain future lies ahead as now-homeless Lebanese ponder their fate.



(left) "The destruction is awesome and complete," said Stan Mooneyham after his visit to Lebanon.

(below) Len Rodgers, left, in truck, assists with distribution of supplies.

(bottom) Tony Atkins listens as survivors share their stories.



Shortly before this magazine's presstime, World Vision's Middle East Representative Leonard Rodgers, WVI Lebanon Operations Officer Alan Graham, and WVI Rehabilitation and Relief Coordinator Tony Atkins succeeded in entering Lebanon to bring emergency aid and to open the way for President Stan Mooneyham to join them in assessing further needs.

On June 26, Mooneyham entered through an area in which gunfire was flying from both directions. He spent four days in ravaged portions of the besieged country, including the gutted center of Beirut, and began imple-

menting plans for expanded aid immediately.

As of July 9, World Vision has delivered relief supplies to hundreds of civilian casualties. A special Lebanon relief fund of \$400,000 was allocated on June 16. This is in addition to funds already designated for ministries in Lebanon. Of the relief fund, \$250,000 has been channeled through World Vision personnel and volunteers directly toward food, blankets, medical supplies, pharmaceuticals and other goods. Other funding was given to partner agencies who helped World Vision in the distribution of aid: \$100,000 to the Middle East Council of Churches; \$25,000 to the Beirut-based Contact and Resource Center; and \$25,000 toward implementation and distribution costs.

Early delivery attempts were thwarted on several occasions by Israeli blockades, Mooneyham asserted, causing costly delays.

Despite denials of the obstructions

by Israeli officials, Mooneyham stood by his claim, stating that "Israel refused all relief agencies access to occupied areas for more than ten days of the worst need when quick action could have saved many lives. The Red Cross ship *SS Anton* (carrying World Vision relief supplies) was refused permission on security grounds to land critically needed supplies in Sidon two weeks after the invasion, although our people in the city reported total security, with people fishing from the beach."

In a telegram to President Reagan, Mooneyham pointed out that Israel's delay tactics were in violation of international law, which calls for all aid and assistance possible to be provided for civilians. In his message, Mooneyham stated: "Relief goods and services available from such agencies as World Vision are urgently needed. Obstruction

(continued on page 18)

Apostle to Garbage City

When the Apostle Paul wrote, "Not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble are called," he must have had Boulas Goda in mind. Never have I met a man with less likely credentials to become an evangelist.

Maybe that's why God called him. He thinks so.

He knows firsthand about the words *mercy* and *grace*. I heard the story while sitting on one of the two beds in the little sub-basement on the outskirts of Cairo. Boulas and Miriam live with four of their six children. The room is about eight feet by ten feet. Rarely have I seen more simple or congested quarters. In this one room the family sleeps, cooks, eats and lives.

The oldest of the children still at home is 20; the youngest, 15. The three daughters sleep in one bed. Boulas, Miriam and their son Solomon sleep in the other.

Life wasn't always this hard. In fact, Boulas's biography is a story of from riches to rags.

Twenty-five years ago, when he was 35, Boulas owned a shop and lived in a second-floor apartment. Miriam had gold around her neck and he had money in his pocket.

Today they have none of those things. They traded them for peace and joy. And neither of them regrets the exchange.

For when Boulas was a shopkeeper, he was also a drug dealer. It was a lucrative business. People would come to his shop and ask for a "stamp." What they got was a packet of heroin. Among those to whom he sold drugs were people from the garbage dump at Zarayeb who would stop their little donkey carts in front of his shop to buy that ticket to oblivion.

The white powder made life bearable in the garbage dump.

It also made Boulas Goda rich.

But when Boulas was 35, Christ

This Paul is a rug weaver.

apprehended him in a conversion experience that was almost as dramatic as Paul's Damascus road encounter with the risen Christ. The night his life was changed, he came home at midnight and asked Miriam if they had a Bible. She was shocked, but produced one and Boulas started reading at Genesis 1:1. He has never looked back.

He threw away the drugs, left his old crowd and went out into the streets and coffee houses to witness boldly about what had happened to him. People called him crazy and quit buying from him. The business failed and within three months he was a poor man.

"I had to sell everything, including our furniture," he told me with no trace of sadness. "We started at the bottom again, sleeping on one rug."

Miriam added her own comment: "Hallelujah!"

"When I heard that the garbage collectors were asking about me, I decided to go to Zarayeb and tell them I had become a new person in Christ. At first they didn't believe me. They thought I was trying to cheat them out of something. But I went again and again until some of them became believers themselves."

His irregular visits turned into weekly ones and finally into several times a week. In order to support his family and still have time to be a lay evangelist to the garbage collectors, Boulas became a rug weaver. He keeps



Once wealthy, Miriam and Boulas now live in voluntary poverty—to minister to some of Cairo's dump dwellers.

a large hand loom in a tiny room near his one-room apartment. There he weaves simple rugs from used clothing.

People cut their used fabric into strips and roll them into a ball. Then they bring it to Boulas, who weaves the strips into cotton rugs. He weighs each ball and charges only 25 cents a pound for weaving. It provides bare necessities, nothing more.

He keeps a large Bible in the room where he works. Much of each day is spent in reading the Bible and praying. Importantly to him, the occupation also gives him time to spend witnessing at Zarayeb.

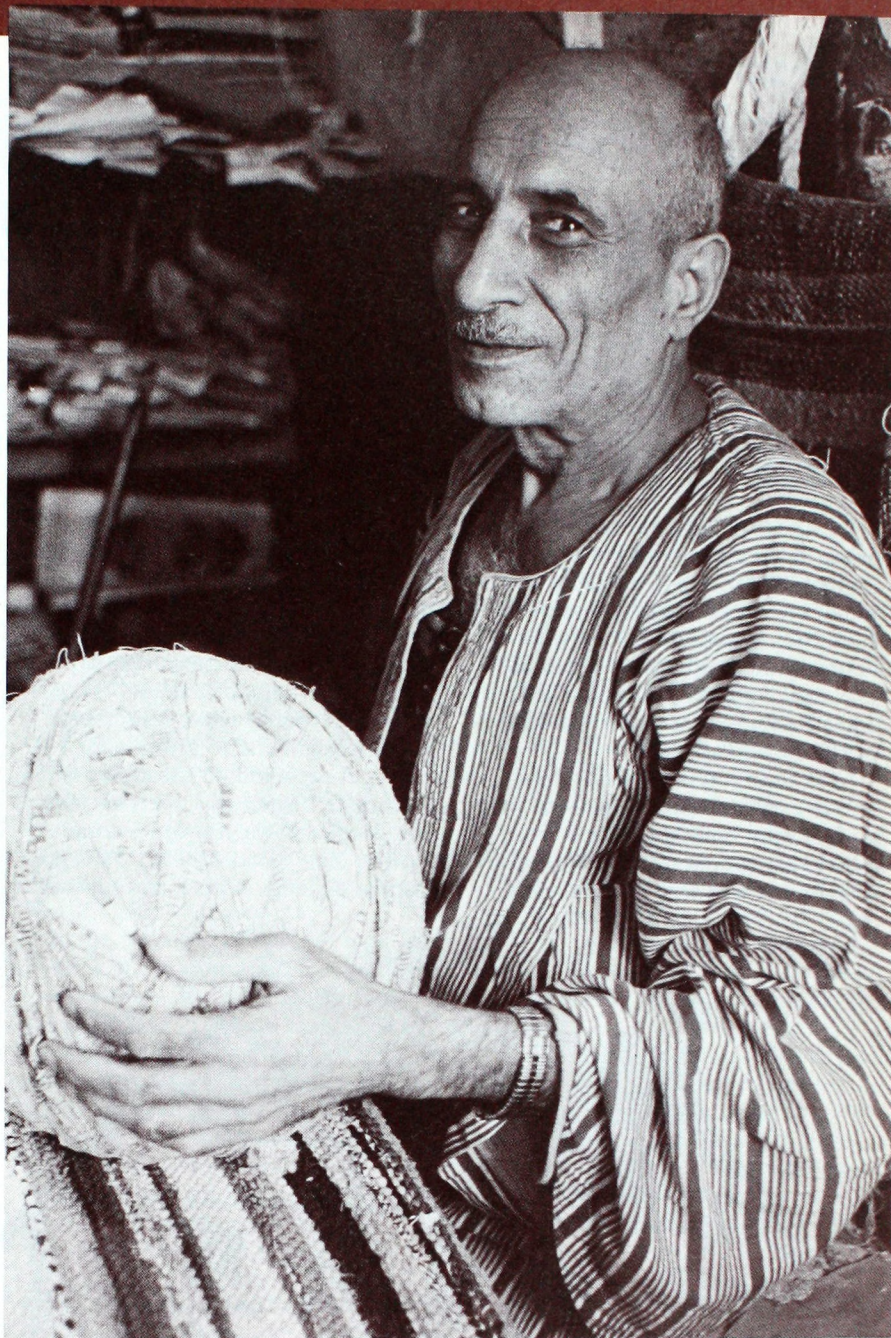
Watching him share Christ is a fascinating experience. In one compound where a man was sorting out his garbage collection, Boulas squatted on his haunches beside the man and held the sack open for the tin cans. When the man got up and moved to the other side of the cart, Boulas went with him.

He talked all the time and it went something like this:

"Your life is just like this piece of rusty iron. What do you do if you want to clean off the rust? You dip it in liquid and rub it clean. Well, that's what you do with your life. You dip it in the blood of Christ and it cleans you up. It changes you entirely.

"You're sorting out all these things, aren't you? The tin cans from the bottles, and the plastic from the paper. God is going to sort us out in the last days. The good people will be on His right hand and the bad people on His left hand. That's what you do when you sort out the good and bad, isn't it? If you're good, you'll be with Jesus, and if you are bad, you'll be with Satan.

"See those pigs? Your life is like a pig. When a pig finds mud, he wallows in it and gets all dirty. That's the way Satan wants you to live. But if you



become a new man in Christ, you won't want to live in the garbage dump with these pigs. Your life will be changed. You'll want to be clean."

Every time I missed Boulas, I looked around and found him witnessing to someone else. Most of the converts in the garbage city are the result of his faithfulness—and tenacity.

Says his pastor, Boushra Assaad, "The only way to get away from him is either to run away or to accept Jesus Christ. Otherwise there is no way to avoid him."

It helps, no doubt, that his witness is

Salvaged rags keep the Godases alive. For weaving them they charge 25 cents per pound.

backed up by a transformed life.

His name, Boulas, by the way, is the Egyptian name for Paul. I think the man who had the dramatic conversion experience on the Damascus road and himself went everywhere sharing Christ, would be proud of his namesake. — WSM

There's no place like people

by Marjorie Phillips



We'll always remember Peter Geddes and his great-granddaughter.

Foreign vacations often resemble prolonged romps through enormous amusement parks. Tourists cram all possible sights and sensations into two or three expensive weeks of seeing the country.

On a visit to Scotland, for instance, one's "must see" list might include a Highland gathering, Gleneagles golf game, a tour of a castle, a look at the Loch Ness Monster, crimson heather on the moors, and a taste of haggis. Exhausted, the vacationer hurtles home to plunge back into a familiar world for another year.

Next time you plan to cross the border or the ocean for vacation, why not consider trading the mad dash around the tourist circuit for *quality time in just one area*? Invest a few

weeks' worth of yourself there. Stay put, unpack, really get to know a few of the local people. By doing this many times during our 40 years of marriage, my husband and I have built a network of friends dotting the globe.

Not long ago we spent several months in the village of Buckie, along the northern rim of Scotland's sea-coast. Two discouraged little churches in adjoining communities took heart simply because we cared enough to live among them for a while. They now have young, active leadership, and are beginning to grow again. I can't get my mind off those sturdy, forthright "fisher folk" who became our friends. Dilys, Jim and Jeannie Bowie. Mrs. Wood. Brother Barr, the Baptist minister, who is like a father to

the whole town. Alec and Nellie. And Peter.

Peter Geddes, an elder in the Buckie church, quickly captured our hearts. Slender, quiet-spoken, the lively curls of his sandy hair combed carefully back, he was, I judged when we met, close to 70 years old. His eyes lighted up when he saw us get out of our car. "Welcome!" he said, his eagerness transparent. "Coom right on in. Let me introduce you around."

The following weeks revealed much about the unique character of this man. I found, for one thing, that I had guessed wrong about his age. He told me, "I passed into my eighties a fortnight ago. With that and the flu last winter, I feel the need of a new pair of legs!"

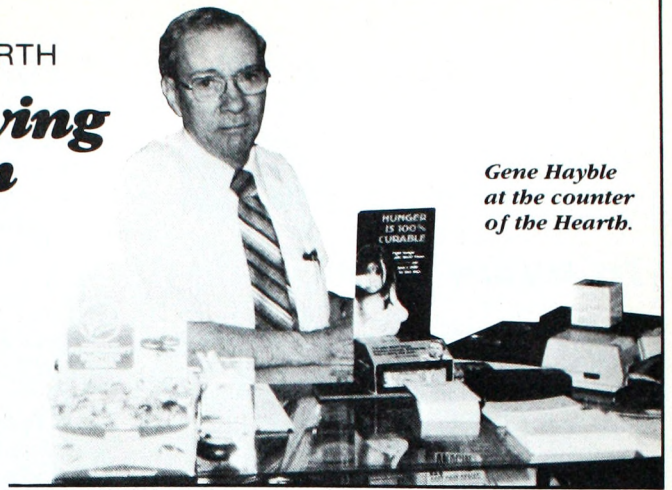
The church missed his strong tenor voice to lead the singing. School teacher Dilys Jappy remarked, "I can tell you, Peter, the singing was tragic the weeks you were laid up, that's for sure!"

In Peter's young days as a commercial fisherman in the herring fleet, music helped him pass many a dark, lonely watch at sea. Every year, the fleet worked their way south along the coast of Britain. He helped his father in the fishing. At every port, his father—one of the last of the Scottish open-air lay preachers—held gospel services. Peter drew the crowds with specially prepared music.



HAYBLE'S HEARTH

Displaying concern



Gene Hayble
at the counter
of the Hearth.

Their boat was caught once in a howling gale off the coast of Skye. Peter was washed overboard. Grabbing hold of the floats on the fishing net, he was brought safely back on board. With the same characteristic Scottish tenacity, he helped hold together the dwindling congregation in Buckie. After we came, followed by young, energetic Sam and Alathia Burton, he told a friend, "They have such high hopes. They've given me fresh faith. I

Make your vacation an investment in people!

intend to do all I can to support them."

As in the U.S., unemployment and inflation have hit Scotland. "Goodness knows what my son's life is going to be, now he's out of work. I could na' sleep last night because I was quite fretted," a woman remarked to Peter. He recalled these lines from an old hymn that his late wife, Mary, used to quote at such times:

Ye fearful saints,
Fresh courage take.
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy,
And shall break
In blessings on your head.

A great Scot, here's a man who showed us how one's Christian faith ought to be lived out every day. He is a vivid part of the warmth and love we found in that small fishing village near the cold North Sea. Had we not spent time in that remote place, we'd not have reaped the dividends that multiplied our fund of love and friendship.

Any Christian with vacation time saved up can do what we did (and see the sights as well). Instead of a hurried, once-over glimpse of someplace, how about an in-person, on-the-scene investment of yourself in real live people who could use a little help? □

His demeanor shouts, "Who, me?" His courage was considered foolishness by the veterans of his trade.

He's Gene Hayble, restaurateur par excellence who integrates his faith and his business. Gene is also leader of a small but growing group of volunteers who place World Vision's counter-top displays where they gather help for the hungry.

The displays, receptacles for loose change from patrons of business establishments, also provide a way for volunteers to become involved in World Vision's ministry.

In the restaurant business since the 1940s, Gene and his wife Ginny now own and operate Hayble's Hearth, a supper club in Greensboro, North Carolina. At the Hearth, lights are subdued and candles flicker on the tables while a pianist plays.

And when patrons leave, they see on the counter a cardboard collection display that asks them to help the people of East Africa.

The restaurant is just one of 55

"I knew I had to help."

locations in which Gene has placed such displays—in restaurants, grocery stores, pharmacies, variety stores and other locations throughout the Greensboro area.

"It's not easy putting them out, Gene says. "It takes a bit of a sales pitch. About half of the proprietors I've asked have allowed me to place the display. I do a lot of praying and a little salesmanship—and I thank the people every time I see them."

Gene began placing displays in March

1980, and has been checking the locations monthly—on the average—ever since. Although monthly collections vary dramatically, depending on type of business (restaurants are best) and placement (right beside the cash register is best), Gene's displays average approximately \$12 each per month. (The national average is \$9).

Gene and Ginny, parents of one daughter and grandparents of two grandsons, have sponsored a child through World Vision for several years. "Five years ago I saw a film at a World Vision banquet," Gene said. "It was a story of a woman in India who went through the garbage cans to find food for her family. That convinced me I needed to get more involved."

Gene, who recommends his project for others willing to spend several hours each month for a worthy cause, has a proper remark for every occasion. Sometimes it's serious, most often it's humorous. An example is his credo for Christian service: "You may give without loving, but you cannot love without giving."

Then there's the other side of Gene. On the cash register at Hayble's Hearth—right next to the World Vision display—is a policy statement: "In God we trust; all others pay cash!" □

If you'd like to place counter-top displays in your area, please write to Jerry Krellwitz, World Vision's special programs director, at Box O, Monrovia, CA 91016.



In severe times

These are challenging days for us to be involved together in real *world vision*—a vision for a world in desperate spiritual and physical need. Rather than hide from or ignore the increasing cries from those who suffer, we must view them as God-given opportunities to express His love in action.

World Vision International's vice-president for field ministries, Graeme Irvine, recently presented a report on the world environment for the 1980s. In that report he comments on some of the needs we can anticipate among suffering people in this decade. A brief excerpt:

"It is no surprise that poverty is generally worsening. The plight of children is described in a recent UNICEF report as 'the most pressing human need in the world today.' Violence and conflict will continue to spawn an endless stream of refugees and dispossessed people. As if all this were not enough, natural disaster will wreak its usual havoc. The cry for justice will become more insistent, though not always strident. More often it is a cry that must be heard with the heart, for those who suffer the greatest injustice have no voice. Already we are working under severe difficulties in some countries. There are likely to be more, not fewer, of such situations. Critics will also abound. We know how quickly they can be heard and believed all over the world, whether what they say is true or not. These are merely a few of the circumstances that will make the 1980s the most difficult and demanding of times in World Vision's history."



Irvine

At World Vision we count it a privilege to deal with those things in our suffering world which certainly must "break the heart of God," to use Bob Pierce's phrase. We are grateful that our involvement produces opportunities for people who do not yet know Jesus Christ to find eternal life through a personal relationship with Him.

Thank you for your partnership which makes it possible to extend the love of God to a world of not only increasing need, but also increasing opportunity to minister.

Ted W. Austin
Executive Director

Come over to life!

"Whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me," said Jesus, "has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life" (John 5:24, NIV).

The fallenness of all persons is a tragic fact. But God has provided a positive solution, which He spells out clearly in such books of Scripture as the Gospel of John.

If you feel the weight of guilt in God's sight and fear the consequences, your heart needs what you can find by responding to the message of the Gospel of John concerning the Savior-Lord.

Read and re-read John's Gospel

openmindedly and openheartedly *today*. Let God release you from eternal condemnation and let Him lead you in a life of joyful service with a future as different as day from night, and as endless as eternity.

As you go on with Christ, meditate also on the entire Bible. And worship God regularly in a Christ-centered church, and serve God wherever you are. □

For a helpful free booklet called "Becoming a Christian," please write WORLD VISION magazine, 919 W. Huntington Drive, Monrovia, CA 91016.

Inside Lebanon

(from page 13)

by Israelis to the delivery of such goods and services is sadly in evidence and is contrary to the principles of the Geneva Convention."

Accompanying the relief convoys lowed into Lebanon, Mooneyham, Atkins and other World Vision personnel were able to witness firsthand the extent of the suffering and destruction borne by some of the Lebanese and Palestinian civilians.

Near Sidon, on the Lebanese coast, over 250 civilians had been hiding in the basement of a Lebanese government secondary school when a bomb penetrated the building and exploded in the basement.

"There were bodies of men, women, children, infants," recalls Atkins. "At first I was foolish enough to start counting, but in one corner of the building there was just a mountain of bodies in traditional Palestinian garb."

Nearby, at the Ein-el-Hilweh Palestinian refugee settlement, Atkins found no bodies, just six survivors of what had been the largest refugee settlement camp in Lebanon, now a pile of knee-high rubble.

Casualty figures vary, especially concerning the civilian population.

However, Mooneyham comments, "If the Israeli figure of 265 killed in Sidon is accurate, I saw all but ten of those bodies in one school basement, still unburied three weeks after the invasion. That says nothing about the township of Ein-el-Hilweh just outside of Sidon which has a normal population of 60,000 and was obliterated by saturation bombing."

Efforts to provide ongoing relief to the suffering in Lebanon continue, as more channels in the country are opened to outside aid.

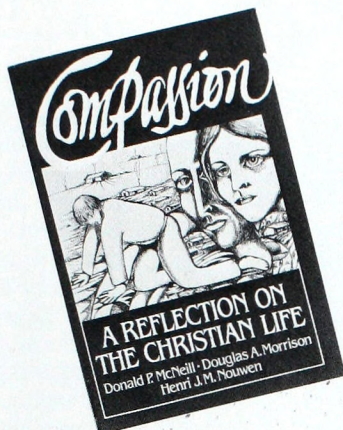
World Vision has joined with others, including the Red Cross and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in its attempts to provide the most effective administration of relief possible. World Vision is continuing to monitor closely the needs of those displaced and victimized by the war in Lebanon as it prays for a speedy settlement. □

The needs of those suffering the anguish of war in Lebanon are real and immediate. If you would like to offer your support for World Vision's relief efforts in Lebanon, please use the envelope found in the center spread of the magazine.

“Living Lightly: New Priorities for Home Economics” is a study guide prepared by the hunger concerns office of the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC). Designed to create awareness of inequalities in distribution of the earth’s resources, the study instills principles of responsible, “more-with-less” living. Topics covered include energy and ecology, food habits, money, clothing, recreation, transportation and celebrations. Each lesson contains creative activities. It’s available for \$2 from MCC Hunger Concerns, 21 South 12 St., Akron, PA 17501.

Twenty-five black and Hispanic college and seminary students are participating in ten-week summer urban development projects. Working with local churches or organizations, they serve both social and spiritual needs in projects selected by the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC). The projects include church administrative leadership, health care visitation, educational tutoring and aiding the handicapped.

Hundreds of volunteers (mostly young people) from 207 church groups are spending part of the summer renovating homes of poor families in Appalachia. The Appalachia Service Project, affiliated with the United Methodist Board of Discipleship, recruits volunteers to spend eight weeks working in Appalachia. Volunteers pay their own travel, donate their time and supply their own tools.



Compassion: *A Reflection on the Christian Life* is the title and theme of a new Doubleday book co-authored by Donald P. McNeill, Douglas A. Morrison and Henri J.M. Nouwen. The authors contrast the world’s definition of compassion as an occasional sympathy, with the compassionate lifestyle of Christ—“a full immersion in the condition of being human.” The book begins with God as compassion’s source and Christ as its perfect example. The compassionate life is first explored through the components of community, displacement and togetherness. The compassionate way is then developed as expressing itself through patience, prayer and action.

Thought-provoking and inspiring for all who follow Christ and want to share in His life of compassion, the book is available in Christian bookstores at \$12.95.

L’Abri seminars, based on the principle that biblical truths are relevant to Christians living in today’s superficial society, are scheduled to be held this fall in 19 U.S. cities. Entitled “What in the World is Real?,” the seminars are designed to help Christians challenge society’s values

and offer a framework of truth to apply to everyday life. For more information, write Communications Institute, P.O. Box 612, Champaign, IL 61820.

World Relief has secured a 70-ton cargo ship to supply relief goods to Miskito Indian refugees in eastern Honduras. Supplies go weekly to a camp run by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees. The goods are then trucked 49 miles inland to the refugees, some 37 miles from the border of Nicaragua from which the Indians fled.

Two new African translations of the entire Bible were recently completed by two Lutheran Brethren missionaries. Dr. Leslie Stennes and his team completed their translation in Fulani, a trade language in Central Africa spoken by 10 million people. Meanwhile, Don Raun and team finished their 15-year project in Mundang, the language of 110,000 people who live in Chad and Cameroun.

Public school children and their parents are in a unique position to be salt and light where needed. For useful information, see the new Abingdon book *The Christian and the Public Schools* by George Van Alstine. (\$5.95 at Christian bookstores.)

COMP, a Conference on Missionary Preparation, is scheduled for December 28-31, 1982, in El Cajon, California. Co-sponsored by the California Association of

Missions Pastors (CAMP) and the Association of Church Missions Committees (ACMC), the conference seeks to educate missionary candidates and leaders on various aspects of missions service. All missionary candidates wishing to attend should be accompanied by a leader from their local church. For more information, write ACMC, 1620 Myrtle Ave., Monrovia, CA 91016.

Understanding Non-Christian Religions is an easy-to-understand new book including separate chapters on Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Shintoism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Islam and Sikhism. Co-authored by Josh McDowell and Don Stewart, the 208-page paperback is published by Here’s Life Publishers. It sells in Christian bookstores at \$5.95.

The Shoulder, a residential treatment center for men with drug or alcohol problems, offers a program designed to meet the needs of the whole person—physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. For more information on the one to two-year program, contact The Shoulder, P.O. Box 4300, Houston, TX 77210.

Aiming to foster practical ministry to the needy, local chapters of Evangelicals for Social Action (ESA) are springing up in many U.S. cities. For information on ESA and on a chapter possibly near you, write Bill Kallio at ESA’s national office, 25 Commerce S.W., Grand Rapids, MI 49503.

People & projects

Sponsored children

According to the latest childsponsor status report, 364,043 children were in World Vision childcare projects as of April 30, 1982. Of this total, 307,716 were individually sponsored.

From superstition to seminary

Hsu Suen was born to hardworking yet superstitious farmers in Taiwan. But Hsu and his family were radically changed when they came to know Christ while Hsu was a boy.

Desiring to serve God, young Hsu studied hard in school. A World Vision scholarship enabled him to meet his school expenses. Three hundred fifty



Hsu Suen in his graduation cap and gown. Hsu is now a missionary to his own people in Taiwan.

other families in his Mo-den Hsaing area are also being helped through World Vision-sponsored health and nutrition programs, agricultural and fishery assistance, Christian education and other social services.

After graduating from school, Hsu attended Ys-Shan Seminary for special training as a missionary. He now serves as a missionary to his own people.

Wiping out disease

World Vision is helping the community of Ampanihy in southwestern Madagascar to wipe out bilharzia, a disease caused by worms. This disease, which broke out ten years ago, has progressively weakened the entire community. Working with the Lutheran Church and the Government Health Institute, World Vision is assisting in a six-month program to examine and treat Ampanihy's 11,000 inhabitants for the disease.

Layperson training

World Vision is helping laypersons in the Tocantins River area of Brazil to spread the gospel and meet the medical needs of their communities through special training in health care and evangelism. After completing the intensive 480-hour course in biblical studies and preventive and curative health care, the lay volunteers will serve as interns in at least ten communities in the area.

MANAGING YOUR TIME

A two-day seminar for pastors and Christian leaders



Ted Engstrom
Executive Director
World Vision



Ed Dayton
Vice-President
Mission and Evangelism
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Mail to:

Norval Hadley/MYT, World Vision, 919 West Huntington Drive, Monrovia, CA 91016

(Check one. \$125 covers all costs. Make checks payable to **Managing Your Time.**)

- October 14-15, Minneapolis, MN
- November 4-5, Pittsburgh, PA
- November 11-12, Houston, TX
- November 18-19, Boca Raton, FL*
- Send complete details.
- I enclose \$25 now, the balance of \$100 to be paid at the seminar.
- I enclose the entire \$125.

*Boca Raton only: \$140, includes meals/lodging

Name _____
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 State _____ Zip _____
 Telephone () _____



Fourth graders from the Baldwin Park Christian School present World Vision's special projects director Jerry Krellwitz with \$103.50, to be used in emergency

relief projects around the world. Through their participation in World Vision's Love Loaf program, the 250 elementary students raised the money in two months.

Poland aid continues

World Vision's relief shipments to Poland continue. From November 1981 through May 1982, more than 1.6 million tons of relief goods had been shipped to Poland through two World Vision projects. The goods included various foods, wheat flour, medicine, blankets, shoes, agricultural equipment, seeds and plant protection, and chicken feed.

Dropouts drop back in

Hundreds of unemployed school dropouts aimlessly roam the streets of Mt. Hagen, a mountainous town in Papua New Guinea. Working with the United Church of Papua New Guinea and its associated Youth Community Center, World Vision is offering these dropouts renewed hope for the future. Through this cooperative program, young people



George, a student in the Mt. Hagen School Leaver Program, digs English potatoes in his agriculture class.

are finding new life values, goals and a sense of belonging in a Christian community. To overcome the unemployment problem, training programs and job placement opportunities are offered in agriculture, carpentry, mechanics, public health, cooking, childcare, sewing and typing.

New manual on emergency housing materials

A manual describing the process of making durable building materials from agricultural waste is available for distribution. The ARC (Agricultural Residue Construction) manual is designed for use in rural settings of developing countries where there is no electricity or gas-powered machinery. It explains how to turn agricultural waste (leaves, brush, crop residue) into strong mate-

rials for housing construction. The ARC products, which can be built by hand at relatively low costs, are currently being field tested in the Philippines.

Tropical storm relief

Tropical storm *Aletta*, which hit Honduras and Nicaragua on May 22, killed 167 persons and left some 45,000 homeless. Thirty-two bridges were damaged or destroyed. Two hospitals were evacuated. Communications, power and drinking water supplies were disrupted. Many export crops were also destroyed.

World Vision, working in cooperation with CEPAD, government representatives, the national Red Cross, a Catholic church,

a labor union and various individuals, is helping provide the victims with rice, beans, corn, oil, utensils, tools, transportation and communications. These goods will help some 20,000 persons in five different provinces.

Please pray for:

■ **Everyone in Beirut** who has been injured, bereaved or made homeless by the destruction there, and for all who are bringing relief supplies to them.

■ **Cairo's dump dwellers** and all who minister to their physical and spiritual needs.

■ **Your church's** involvement in holistic ministry to the suffering and needy in your own community and afar.

Is God calling you . . .

to work where your efforts will be directly related to saving lives and spreading the Good News? Consider these areas of service and send your resume to John Spencer, International Human Resources, 919 W. Huntington Dr., Monrovia, CA 91016.

Assistant to Vice-President, Field Ministries—Field Operations Provide management support to vice president for regional/field operations. Coordination of field planning; establishment of new field or program offices; coordination of action in key problem situations. Requires high level of management ability and sensitivity to issues related to international humanitarian aid.

Assistant to Vice-President, Field Ministries—Special Projects Coordinate major study projects on operational, theological, social and political matters bearing on field ministry. Provide research and information support. Requires good theological education, research and writing skills and keen awareness of international issues.

Systems Analyst Assist departments in defining automated systems that will aid in accomplishment of their business function. College degree in business administration or computer science preferred. Minimum of 4 years experience in data processing field.

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 voluntary agencies.

Operations Associate Provide operational coordination and management support within the executive vice-president's office. Must have administrative/management background with BA in business administration or related field.

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 communication skills.

International Training Associate Design and implement programs for project work and management training worldwide. Requires experience in management training, training curriculum design, cross-cultural issues and use of media and graphics.

Media Information Specialist Responsible for the fulfilling of all requests for project and background information from World Vision communicators in support, regional and field offices. Requires a minimum bachelor's degree, preferably in communications.

Are you in a higher tax bracket?

High tax brackets usually cause us to look for various ways to reduce taxes. One you should consider is a Charitable Lead Trust.

This tax-saving, limited-term trust cannot benefit everyone, but if you are in a tax bracket above 40 percent and have significant assets, there is a good possibility you could profit greatly.

Advantages to You:

1. You can remove current income *now* from your high tax bracket.
2. You can "freeze" the present value of appreciation property that you desire to give to loved ones in the future.
3. At trust maturity, your investment may pass to loved ones, free of gift or estate taxes.

Advantage to World Vision: All or a portion of the *trust income* goes to the ministries of World Vision for the term of the trust.

For more information, please complete and mail this coupon.

World Vision Trust Services

919 West Huntington Drive
Monrovia, CA 91016

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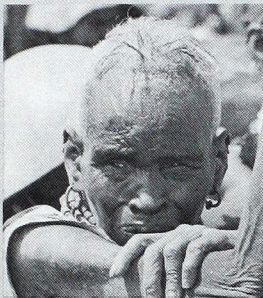
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Almost half of the world's grain production today is fed to livestock, according to respected food critic Frances Moore Lappé. In the U.S. it takes an average of eight pounds of grain to produce one pound of meat, yet the world's hungry "don't have the money to buy the grain they need, much less grain-fed meat." Lappé advocates that the industrialized world shift from its meat-centered diet to vegetable and grain combinations that yield protein as good as meat.

"This is the age of aging," notes William Kerrigan, secretary general of the United Nations assembly on aging. "A unique demographic shift is taking place as more people live into their 60s than ever before." The U.N. predicts more than one billion over-60s by 2025, compared to 350 million in 1975.



Braille Scriptures are now available in 39 languages, reports the American Bible Society. Among the many languages in which Braille Scriptures have yet to be produced are Czech, Hausa and Javanese, which together are spoken by more than 80 million people.

A Kampuchean baby boom has given that country one of the highest population growth rates in the world, notes *Far Eastern Economic Review*. A sample survey by that country's Health Ministry revealed that during the first nine months of 1981, the birth rate was 5.5 percent. Since the death rate for that period was only 0.26 percent, Kampuchea's population increased by 5.24 percent.

And Hispanic birth rates in the United States are soaring, indicates a National Center for Health Statistics report. In 1979, the Hispanic birth rate was 25.5 births for every 1000 population, nearly 75 percent higher than the 14.7 births for non-Hispanics. If current birth and immigration trends persist, say census experts, Hispanics will outnumber blacks in the U.S. before the century ends.

Mother Teresa of Calcutta this year became the only woman besides Coretta Scott King to ever deliver Harvard University's class day address. Harvard University awarded her an honorary Doctor of Laws degree for her work with the poor in 1979. The Albanian-born nun, who won the Nobel Prize for her work among the poor, hungry and distressed, celebrates her 72nd birthday August 27.

Africa showed a net gain of six million Christians in a recent 12-month period, while Europe and North America registered a net loss of nearly half that number, reports the

Nairobi-based Center for the Study of World Evangelization. Missionary-sending agencies in the developing world now account for more than 15,000 missionaries—compared to 17,000 overseas career personnel with the three major North American Protestant mission associations.

Missionary resignations occur for many reasons, but the Southern Baptists' Foreign Mission Board has not found physical danger in violent countries to be a frequent reason. Nor has the board seen any one area of the world consistently produce more resignations than other areas.

After anticipating religion's decline in a modern secular age, academic analysts have been surprised by events such as Islamic resurgency, Catholic political strength in Poland and fundamentalist involvement in U.S. politics. "We remain woefully ignorant about the nature of modern secularism. . . . We have no proper standards of judging the spirituality of our times," recently wrote editor Stephen Graubard in *Daedalus*, journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

A \$200 million grain reserve system must be established in Africa's Sahel region, according to FAO Director-General Edouard Saouma. "In order to ensure continuous food supplies in the event of bad harvests, total reserves of 465,000 metric tons are needed," he said.

Missionaries in Thailand are helping national believers take over all church activities. The government has informed missionaries that new visas will not be issued after 1983. Public evangelism has been ruled illegal. Already, 38 countries are closed to foreign missionaries; mission executives are calling for committed Christian doctors, teachers and engineers to enter many of the closed countries.

Piracy is a way of life for many in southern Thailand; it's been so for hundreds of years. And Vietnamese boat people in the Gulf of Thailand are still being victimized. Of 45 boats that reached Thai shores last year, 34 had been attacked three or four times; 571 passengers had been killed, over 200 abducted and 599 raped, says the U.N. The U.S. is trying to organize an international effort to deter the pirates, who comprise an estimated two percent of the Thai fishing fleet.

Evangelical Christians were cautioned recently to be aware that modern, persuasive marketing techniques are being used on the public to sell occult materials. According to the head of a direct marketing agency, mailing lists of those involved in the occult (7.7 million) have doubled since 1980. Women still constitute a majority of the buyers of horoscopes, books on witchcraft, voodoo pendants and other occult paraphernalia.



The tyranny of things

Every now and again I discover some pretty good theology coming out of modern songwriters. For one thing, it's more comprehensible to me than what comes out of most theologians. My fault, I'm sure, not theirs, but still true. Now I don't know anything about Kris Kristofferson's faith, but you'd be hard pressed to find a more succinct statement of truth than this line in his song, *Me and Bobbie McGee*: "Freedom's just another word for nothin' left to lose."

I can just hear Jesus affirming that: "A man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions" (Luke 12:15, NIV).

I don't believe Jesus is taking a hard-line view of abundance. What he is saying is that the acquisition of things, contrary to general belief then and now, is not where life's true values reside. At issue is not the abundance or scarcity of things (Paul allowed that he was able to co-exist peacefully with either, see Philippians 4:12), but rather the importance one attaches to things, many or few.

I suspect that for most of us, poor as well as rich, Christian as well as not, *things* are what our lives are mostly about. To the extent that this is so, we do not possess things but are possessed by them. We go through life harnessed to their weight like Bryant's "quarry-slave at night" goes "scourged to his dungeon."

No freedom to skip and dance.

Reared in poverty, I've all my adult life had an emotional need for economic security. Looking back from this vantage point, I am appalled that I took so little time out to smell flowers or marvel at meadowlarks. For me, the butterflies were all queasily in my stomach, none gloriously on the wing. I, too, have bent under the burden, ever conscious of what little I had, unaware that it had me; worrying lest I lose even the little. Which is why I know Jesus was talking about an attitude, not an amount.

The crazy thing is that all the time I knew the text by heart. I used to quote it for others in sermons.

Lately, but perhaps not too late, I am learning that freedom from the tyranny of things means letting go, relinquishing the grasping, focusing attention on something other than getting and keeping.

A recent television program showed a method for trapping monkeys. The natives made a hole in a log and put bait inside. The monkey reached his hand in to get the bait, but when his fingers closed on it, he couldn't get his fist back through the hole. Determined to hang on to what he had, he was still hanging on when captured. All he need do to be free was let go. But to let go was to him incomprehensible—his priorities would not permit it.

So he is destroyed by what he supposes he possesses. Silly monkey. Silly people.

And it can happen with so little.

In his story of Russian prison camp experiences, Solzhenitsyn tells of inmates who suffer incredible hardships and have nothing but the barest of essentials, yet learn to be at

peace. Then a rare gift parcel arrives with a few simple things. Immediately, the recipient becomes protective and withdrawn, jealously guarding each small item—an ugly mood, Solzhenitsyn says, worse than prison itself.

Try to recall how quickly the things we "possess" become meaningless when something really important comes along. When a serious illness strikes, it is immediately clear that life does not consist of things. When sirens and flashing lights signal an accident on the road, I think how suddenly life has changed for those involved. All plans and carefully set priorities are suddenly rearranged.

A friend told me the story of a traveler in a far country who was making a long journey by train. He put his valise on the overhead rack and having been warned to guard his bag at all times against thieves, he checked the rack frequently with his eyes.

Darkness fell, lights were turned on, the train clattered through the night. The traveler did not dare sleep, he had to watch his valise. By morning, he was bleary-eyed, but he had kept awake; his valise was secure. Keeping his eyes open became torture and despite his valiant efforts, they closed for a few moments. With a start, he awoke and looked up. The valise was gone.

"Thank God," he sighed, "now I can go to sleep!"

The things which own us don't have to be just cars, houses and lands. Ideas, convictions and prejudices can possess our minds and attitudes. These are the worst kind of tyrants, I've discovered. They make us judgmental, quarrelsome, schismatic. They drive us to all kinds of spiritual excesses under the disguise of "truth." Often they are simply human biases, yet they demand uncritical loyalty even at the sacrifice of relationships.

When that happens, we no longer hold our convictions; they hold us. And they—at least, mine—tenaciously resist being tested against other, possibly higher, priorities. Though we may possess such ideas in abundance, they do not necessarily contribute to abundant living. Instead, they restrict us, imprison us and subtract from our liberty as sons and daughters of God.

Giving another person space in which to grow—and make mistakes while growing—requires greater trust than the more possessive of us are willing to give. Our unbending biases simply will not allow it. Yet there can be no spiritual reality for us or them without the risk.

Jesus was right. Life is more than meat and drink, houses and land, convictions and prejudices. It is also peace and contentment, love and trust, skipping and dancing.

Oh yes. And meadowlarks.

Stan Mooneyham

President, World Vision International

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Meet My Friend John Louie

I met him in a remote mountain village in Haiti.

That little smile you see is rare. John Louie doesn't have much to smile about. Two other children in his family have already died from disease carried by contaminated water and poor sanitation.

Poverty is a way of life here. John Louie's mother makes about 80 cents a day. There has been no work at all for his father.

John Louie doesn't understand poverty. All he knows is that there is little to ease the hunger that gnaws at his insides day after day. His parents love him very much. But when your child is hungry, hurting and cold . . . sometimes love is not enough.

But recently, a miracle came to John Louie's little mountain village. And it came through the World Vision Childcare program.

World Vision Childcare sponsors brought sparkling clean water to John Louie's village by digging a deep-water well. His father is learning how to raise chickens for a new source of family income.

And the family is also learning to believe in a personal God who loves and cares—and in the process, they're learning how to love, understand and appreciate each other. Those are things money can't buy.

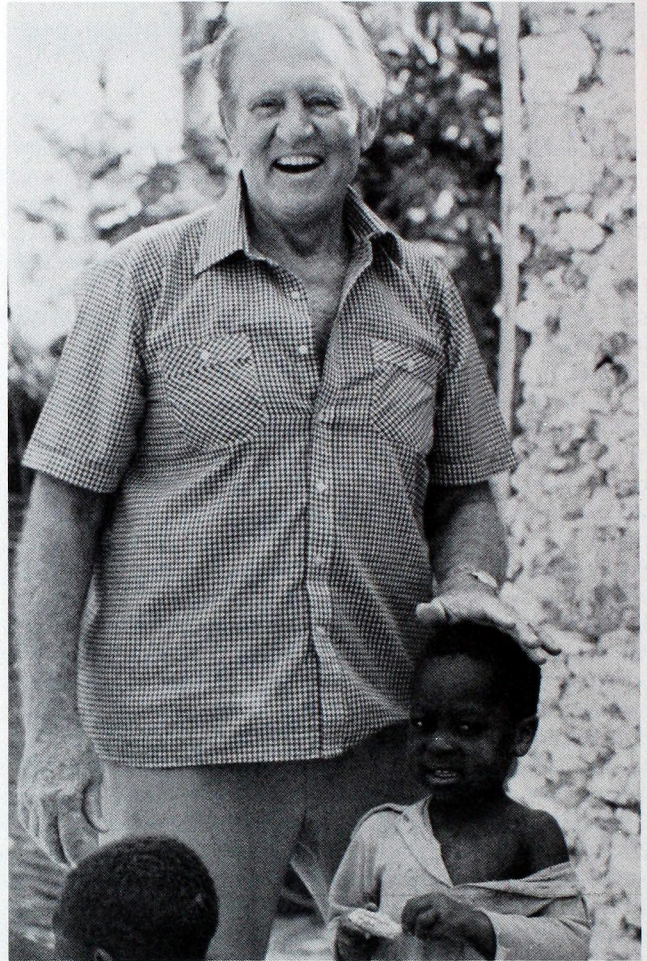
If you can sponsor a child for just \$18 a month, I hope you will, because, believe me, there are thousands more like my little friend John Louie who desperately need help.

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